

last year. They pleaded with Congress. They pleaded with the Republican Congress: "Take action right now because it is going to be easier to do it now than it will be in the year 2001 or 2002 when it is just about ready to go under." This had not been anticipated to occur until 1997.

What we learn now through the newspapers, the chief actuary giving this report last year, is the Medicare hospital trust fund lost \$35.7 million. In other words, it took in that much less than we had anticipated.

He was not sure when part A would be depleted, but he did say that it could be earlier than 2002.

In any case, according to the actuary, this recent finding does not help the trust fund. It gives more insecurity to the people on Social Security and it, of course, emphasizes what we were trying to say when we passed this Balanced Budget Act of 1995 which saved Medicare.

So I hope that the President comes around to a point of view of cooperating with the Congress to a greater extent than he has on the saving of Medicare, because this is one time the Republican Congress is way ahead of the White House.

I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. HATFIELD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. The Senator from Oregon.

#### FAMILY PLANNING PROGRAM

Mr. HATFIELD. Mr. President, 2 weeks ago, the Senate was compelled to pass H.R. 2880, the Balanced Budget and Downpayment Act, to avert another Governmental shutdown. As I observed on the day of consideration, we did so under great duress, being forced to set aside our right and duty to amend the legislation.

Of particular concern to me remains the harsh treatment given to the Agency for International Development's family planning program. Though it was known at the time that the formulation of this account was nearly calamitous, closer examination of the provision has revealed that the situation is far worse than had been imagined at that time.

The provisions that passed the Senate and the House halts family planning assistance programs until July 1 of this year. Following July 1, funding may be provided at 65 percent of the fiscal year 1995 level, apportioned on a monthly basis for 15 months.

What this means is that only 14 percent of what was available for obligation in fiscal year 1995 for family planning will be available for obligation this entire fiscal year—14 percent.

None of us would normally tolerate a cut of this magnitude, made without the benefit of any debate, particularly on a program which enjoys such strong bipartisan support. And yet we did it.

Stated differently, and more important, what we did is bar access to family planning services to approximately 17 million couples, most of them living in unimaginable poverty. We opened the door to the probability of at least 14 million unintended pregnancies every year, tens of thousands of deaths among women and nearly a million deaths among infants and young children annually. Indeed, we embrace the probability of at least 4 million more abortions that could have been averted if access to voluntary family planning services had been maintained. This is what we did.

These numbers, which are calculated through statistics from organizations like UNICEF and the World Health Organization are as disturbing as they are astounding, particularly to those of us who are faithfully and assertively pro-life. To doubt these numbers may bring temporary relief to people of conscience, but doubters should consider the experience of families in the former Soviet Union where family planning services have been unavailable for decades.

The abortion rate in Russia spans from a conservative estimate of 4 abortions per woman to a shocking high of 12 abortions for some women over their reproductive years. Since there have been virtually no, and I suggest that you underscore when you are listening as well as when I speak, no planning services available in Russia, abortion has become the chief method of birth control.

The framers of the family planning language in H.R. 2880 ensured, perhaps unintentionally, that the gruesome experience of Russian women and families will be replicated throughout the world starting now.

In each of the last two foreign operations appropriations bills, I have made sure that adequate money has been devoted to starting family planning programs in Russia. Similar programs in Hungary have shown a 60-percent reduction in the abortion rate there, 8 years after the introduction of family planning. We had hoped for such success in Russia, but now the future is uncertain.

The family planning language in H.R. 2880 is not prolife, it is not prowoman, it is not prochild, it is not prohealth, and it is not profamily planning. It inflicts the harm of a profound misconception on very poor families overseas who only ask for help in spacing their children through contraception, not abortion.

Some of our colleagues appear unaware that the prohibition on funding abortions with U.S. foreign aid money has been in place since 1973. AID's excellent family planning program, widely recognized as the most efficiently run in the world, has taken a strict and

conservative interpretation of this prohibition, and seeks instead to prevent abortions by offering alternatives. Demand has always exceeded supply, and unmet needs continue to grow.

We urgently need to correct the mistake we made in H.R. 2880. We need to restore, with rhetoric and with resources, support to AID's family planning program. For those of us who take a prolife position, this is the most effective way to reiterate our profound opposition to the practice of abortion. All the antiabortion speech this Chamber can tolerate will not reduce the number of unintended pregnancies as swiftly or as surely as our support for voluntary family planning.

I intend to do what I can to rectify this situation as soon as possible, and urge my colleagues to join in this effort.

#### AGRICULTURAL MARKET TRANSITION ACT

Mr. GRAMS. Mr. President, as the Nation's farmers look ahead to the new planting season, I rise today in support of moving forward on much-needed farm bill legislation.

Over the past year, I have met with farmers, businesses, bankers, and community leaders across Minnesota. They have told me of the urgent need to develop a farm bill which will show them the direction farm policy will move over the next couple of years.

Clearly, our farmers and agribusinesses deserve a reasonable and responsible roadmap of the Nation's long-term agricultural policy. If Washington continues to delay action, decisions about planting, equipment purchases, fertilizer and seed sales, and credit hang in the balance. And as a result, our agricultural economy will suffer.

This current predicament is a perfect example of how Government interference in the area of agriculture has taken its toll on the productivity of our farmers, agribusinesses, and the other sectors of our economy which depend on them.

By expanding the role of Government so deeply into the business of farming, Washington has taken much of the decisionmaking authority away from the real experts—those who have planted, plowed, and harvested for generations—and handed it over to bureaucrats, some of whom are thousands of miles away from America's heartland.

I have always said with pride that Minnesota's farmers are among the most productive in the world. Historically, Minnesota agriculture has ranked first in sugarbeet production, third in spring wheat and sunflower production, fourth in barley and oat production, sixth in corn production, third in swine products, and second in turkey processing. Of course, Minnesota has always been among the Nation's leaders in milk and cheese production. It is also quickly becoming a leading exporter of raw and value-added products.