happened over the issue of Medicare over the past 6 months as this administration and this President specifically have consistently misrepresented the Republican position and have failed to step up to the plate to address what is a critical issue for seniors. Basically this administration can no longer hide on the issue. The fact is their trustees have said it is going to happen, and now their actuary has said it is not only going to happen, but it is happening. It is happening in reality. We are now into a bankruptcy spiral in the Medicare trust fund.

So, Mr. President, I suggest you stop running for reelection and that you sit down and do the job you are paid for, which is to come forward with a proposal which puts the Medicare trust fund back in balance or, alternatively, accept ours.

Mr. President, I thank you for your time.

Mr. BURNS addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Montana.

Mr. BURNS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I might be yielded 5 minutes as if in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BURNS. I thank the Chair.

THE RETIREMENT OF REPRESENTATIVE PAT WILLIAMS

Mr. BURNS. Mr. President, I rise today to salute my colleague from Montana, Congressman PAT WILLIAMS.

PAT surprised all of us last month when he announced he would not seek his 10th term in the U.S. House of Representatives. PAT says he wants to get back to Montana to do a little fishing and hiking. Well, few people know better than me what it is like to miss Montana, so his annoucement—although unexpected—was understandable.

Mr. President, it is no secret that PAT WILLIAMS and I come down on opposite sides of just about every issue. He is a New Deal liberal and proud of it. While I may not always like where he stands, at least I know where he stands. I respect him for that and I think the people of Montana do too.

Despite the differences between us, I think there is a unique civility in the Montana congressional delegation. Our debates over the years have been passionate and heated, but I believe they have never been personal. PAT has been a worthy adversary during my 7 years in the U.S. Senate, and I will miss that relationship.

This does not mean that PAT and I were not able to come together on some issues. In fact, when outsiders tried to impose there will on Montana, I would bet that PAT and I were on the same side more often than not.

We both agree that fair trade does not always mean that our neighbors to the north can run roughshod over the Montana farmers and businesses. We both agree that NAFTA and GATT are bad news for Montana. Any State that is on the border feels the effect of that. We both agree that our Nation's job-training programs need to be streamlined and consolidated. We both agree in the need to repeal a federally mandated speed limit, of which my State caught a little criticism. And even though he supported his President, he broke ranks with his Democrat colleagues by opposing the Brady bill and the President's crime bill.

So, Mr. President, I commend PAT for his service to my home State of Montana. In addition to his legislative duties, he has been a servant of our constituents. Montanans of all stripes could count on PAT to answer their questions. They might not have liked the answers all of the time, but he always answered them. And when they had problems with the Federal Government, he was there, too. So for 18 years he has traveled one of the largest congressional districts—both the western district when he first came to Congress, and then, of course, the full State in the last two terms. So I think he will be missed by the State of Montana.

This kind of public service can take its toll on a person. PAT would show up at countless meetings, and I can remember them. There might be 5 or 500; it did not make any difference, PAT was always there.

So I wish him the best as he chooses retirement. If you come across him fishing in one of our prized trout streams in Montana or hiking a scenic trail, I hope you tip your hat and say, ''Thanks, PAT, for a job well done here in the House of Representatives of the U.S. Congress.''

THE FARM BILL

Mr. BURNS. Mr. President, I want to talk a little bit about the problem before us; that is, trying to get a farm bill through this Congress. We are not very far away, even though the snowflakes are flying around us in the northern part of the hemisphere, it will be soon that we will see the combines starting to roll in Texas. We are just finishing planting our spring wheat in Montana when the combines start in Texas. We still do not have a farm bill or a farm policy.

A lot more people live in urban areas than farm, but it is pretty important to us in this country because the first obligation of any society is to feed itself. I have always made the speech that the second thing we do every day is eat. I do not know the first thing you do. You have a lot of options the first thing in the morning, but the second thing is you eat. We do a pretty good job of it in this country, but the main challenge for all of us, both in Government and in our commodity groups that represent the livestock industry or the grain industry or the fresh vegetable industry or the nut industry or the fruits and vegetables that are grown in this great and plentiful Nation is to make sure that we get at least a fair share of the consumer dollar back on the land.

Would it surprise you to know that only 3 cents out of every consumer dollar spent for food is all that gets back to the farmer? We are to the point where we cannot hardly make it on 3 cents out of every dollar. There is a little imbalance here—$3.46 a pound for Wheaties in the grocery store, and up until this year we were having a hard time getting $3.46 for a bushel of wheat of which there is 60 pounds. I have a hard time relating $5 T-bone steaks to $60 fat cattle. Maybe I am in the wrong business, or I understand the other business, but it is about time our processors, purveyors, our distributors, and our retailers understand that we have to give something back to the man who produces the raw product.

There are a lot of automobiles and a lot of boats and a lot of vacations that are paid for because we only expend about 16 percent of our expendable income on food in our homes to feed this society. We are truly a blessed Nation, but we still need policy for food and fiber in this country. And, of course, with 1 farmer feeding 120 other folks both in this country and abroad, it makes it a very large industry. This bill changes the direction and the culture of farm programs.

In the Freedom to Farm Act, yes, there are some areas I would like to change. Nobody ever gets a perfect bill. But nonetheless, we have to take a look at it and see what it really does, if it gives our business people who live on our farms and ranches the flexibility to operate their farms and ranches the way they think they should and also at a profitable level.

I know if I had to go back to agriculture, where I was raised—on 160 acres of 2 parts rock and and 1 part dirt in northwest Missouri—I probably could not make a living now, but I know some people are trying to and it is a struggle. This particular bill helps out those folks. It moves us into a marketing mode and takes us away from a program that is dependent on the Government. We are not going to take the full step all at once. And to my critics who say this does not go far enough to eliminate guaranteed subsidies to agriculture, I say we have to take it maybe one step at a time. At least let us change the structure. Let us change the structure in which our farmers and ranches can operate and still provide food and fiber for this Nation.

Foreign market development is a good investment just like education is a good investment. As for ARS, the Agriculture Research Service, I happen to think we must never stop doing research in food production. Maybe a lot of folks do not know this either, but for the first time in the history of agriculture production in this country yields of wheat are declining just a little bit. Why? Because we do not have the plant breeders and the scientists