

**REPORT OF THE FISCAL YEAR 1999  
BUDGET REQUEST OF THE DIS-  
TRICT OF COLUMBIA COURTS—  
MESSAGE FROM THE PRESI-  
DENT—PM-112**

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was referred to the Committee on Governmental Affairs.

*To the Congress of the United States:*

In accordance with the District of Columbia Code, as amended, I am transmitting the District of Columbia Court's FY 1999 budget request.

The District of Columbia Courts has submitted a FY 1999 budget request for \$133 million for its operating expenditures and authorization for multiyear capital funding totalling \$58 million for courthouse renovation and improvements. My FY 1999 Budget includes recommended funding levels of \$121 million for operations and \$21 million for capital improvements for the District Courts. My transmittal of the District Court's budget request does not represent an endorsement of its contents.

I look forward to working with the Congress throughout the FY 1999 appropriation process.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON.

THE WHITE HOUSE, March 16, 1998.

**INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND  
JOINT RESOLUTIONS**

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second time by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. BYRD:

S. 1761. A bill to provide that the performance of duties by Federal officers of certain vacant offices of the Federal Government shall comply with the requirements of sections 3345 through 3349 of title 5, United States Code (commonly referred to as the "Vacancies Act"), and for other purposes; to the Committee on Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. BAUCUS (for himself and Mr. BURNS):

S. 1762. A bill to amend the Agricultural Market Transition Act to authorize the Secretary of Agriculture to extend the term of marketing assistance loans; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

By Mr. WELLSTONE:

S. 1763. A bill to restore food stamp benefits for aliens; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

By Mr. THURMOND (for himself and Mr. LOTT):

S. 1764. A bill to amend sections 3345 through 3349 of title 5, United States Code (commonly referred to as the "Vacancies Act") to clarify statutory requirements relating to vacancies in certain Federal offices, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. THOMPSON:

S. 1765. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on the chemical DMT; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. MCCAIN:

S. 1766. A bill to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to permit Bell operating companies to provide interstate and intrastate telecommunications services within one year after the date of enactment of this

Act; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. DODD:

S. 1767. A bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act to require notification of recalls of drugs and devices, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Labor and Human Resources.

**STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED  
BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS**

By Mr. BAUCUS (for himself and Mr. BURNS):

S. 1762. A bill to amend the Agricultural Market Transition Act to authorize the Secretary of Agriculture to extend the term of marketing assistance loans; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

THE EMERGENCY MARKETING ASSISTANCE ACT

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, I rise today to introduce the Emergency Marketing Assistance Act of 1998. I am pleased to be joined in this effort by the rest of the Montana delegation—Senator BURNS and Congressman HILL. The Emergency Marketing Assistance Act is the product of cooperation between our Montana delegation, local communities, and agricultural producers in our state.

Farming is never easy. It is a challenge that requires work, knowledge, faith and courage. But this year has been a particularly difficult time for producers. A large number of wheat growers in our state and across America are facing a bleak market year.

Many have not even sold their 1997 crop. Instead, they have taken out nine-month USDA Marketing Assistance Loans which will soon come due. But unless there is a dramatic upsurge in our current prices, they will be forced to sell at a low price, inadequate to cover their debts.

Currently, the total volume of grain under loan in Montana is 43.5 million bushels. This is not an unusual figure during normal marketing years when farmers know they'll get a fair price for their product.

Two years ago we could get over five dollars a bushel for our wheat. But today the current price languishes under the three dollar mark. Couple that with our abnormally high shipping rates, and it is no wonder our farmers are reluctant to sell. They would a serious hit. And some might lose the farm.

However, it is important to remember, Mr. President, this difficult situation is temporary. In time, prices will rebound and wheat producers will be able to sell their grain at a fair price. That is why we are asking the Secretary of Agriculture to extend these loans for up to six months. Our producers would be able to weather the storm of these dreadful prices.

For many of our farmers, this is a make-it or break-it year. They have survived tough winters and dry summers. They compete with the monopolistic practices of the Canadian Wheat Board. They struggle to overcome the

high cost of shipping. And they are completely shut out of China's market.

But we expect them to somehow go into the field day after day, season after season, to make certain that we have an abundant supply of food at a fair price. A six-month marketing assistance loan extension is a partial solution to the problems our farmers are facing. And that is why I am speaking here today.

We also need to take immediate action to ensure that this price depression does not happen again. As we give our producers this tool to stay on their farms, we must also work to improve markets and stimulate prices. I am constantly reminded that many of our producers got behind the Freedom to Farm bill with the express understanding that the U.S. Department of Agriculture would aggressively seek export markets.

Clearly, we need to do a better job of moving our products, especially wheat. I believe that by using a combination of the Export Enhancement Program, food aid and credit programs available through the USDA, we can assist our farmers during this difficult period. If we do not take action now, the results will be disastrous in farm country.

I would like to thank my Montana colleagues for their assistance in this endeavor. I also want to recognize the efforts of our producers back home who have worked hard to make ends meet this past winter and brought this idea forward. You do a good job, and we are pulling for you.

Mr. President, I strongly encourage my fellow senators to join me in supporting this important effort.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 1762

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

**SECTION 1. EXTENSION OF MARKETING ASSISTANCE LOANS.**

Section 133 of the Agricultural Market Transition Act (7 U.S.C. 7233) is amended by striking subsection (c) and inserting the following:

“(C) EXTENSION.—The Secretary may extend the term of a marketing assistance loan made to producers on a farm for any loan commodity for 16-month period.”.

Mr. BURNS. Mr. President, I rise today and join with my colleague from Montana, Senator BAUCUS, to introduce an amendment to the current farm program. The amendment will assist our farmers in Montana. I think we have sort of an isolated circumstance in Montana. But I think it will also help others, too, because of the depressed price in wheat.

This bill is not a fix. It doesn't do everything maybe that we want to do. But it will assist many of our farmers in getting back in the fields this season, and it will also allow a little time to deal with some of the pressures that