Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the next votes in the series be limited to 10 minutes each.

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

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the marriage tax penalty bill:

Trent Lott, Kay Bailey Hutchison, Judd Gregg, Tim Hutchinson, Rick Santorum, Connie Mack, Michael B. Enzi, Craig Thomas, Robert F. Bennett, Chuck Grassley, Jim Bunning, Gordon Smith of Oregon, Ben Nighthorse Campbell, Wayne Allard, Jeff Sessions, and Bill Roth.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader.

Mr. DASCHLE. Parliamentary inquiry: What is the next vote?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The next vote is on the cloture motion on the bill.

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, parliamentary inquiry: If a cloture vote is invoked on this bill, would the pending amendment offered by the majority leader fall because it is not germane?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. It would.

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I will vote ''no'' on this cloture in order to protect the majority leader's right to offer his amendment as well as to protect our rights to offer our amendments.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on H.R. 6, an act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to reduce the marriage penalty by providing for adjustments to the standard deduction, 15-percent rate bracket, and earned income credit and to repeal the reduction of the refundable tax credits, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are required under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. NICKLES. I announce that the Senator from Delaware (Mr. ROTH) is necessarily absent.

Mr. REID. I announce that the Senator from New York (Mr. MOYNIHAN) is necessarily absent.

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 53, nays 45, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 83 Leg.]

YEAS—53

Abraham	Burns	Crapo
Allard	Campbell	DeWine
Ashcroft	Chafee, L.	Domenici
Bennett	Cochran	Enzi
Bond	Collins	Fitzgerald
Brownback	Coverdell	Frist
Bunning	Craig	Gorton
Gramm	Kyl	Shelby
Grams	Lott	Smith (NH)
Grassley	Lugar	Smith (OR)
Gregg	Mack	Snowe
Hagel	McCain	Specter
Hatch	McConnell	Stevens
Helms	Murkowski	Thomas
Hutchinson	Nickles	Thompson
Hutchison	Roberts	Thurmond
Inhofe	Santorum	Warner
Jeffords	Sessions	

NAYS—45

Akaka	Edwards	Levin
Baucus	Feingold	Lieberman
Bayh	Feinstein	Lincoln
Biden	Graham	Mikulski
Bingaman	Harkin	Murray
Boxer	Hollings	Reed
Breaux	Inouye	Reid
Bryan	Johnson	Robb
Byrd	Kennedy	Rockefeller
Cleland	Kerrey	Sarbanes
Conrad	Kerry	Schumer
Daschle	Kohl	Torricelli
Dodd	Landrieu	Voinovich
Dorgan	Lautenberg	Wellstone
Durbin	Leahy	Wyden

NOT VOTING—2

Moynihan	Roth

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 53, the nays are 45. Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn not having voted in the affirmative, the motion is rejected.

CONDITIONAL ADJOURNMENT OF THE TWO HOUSES OF CONGRESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the clerk will report H. Con. Res. 303 by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 303) providing for a conditional adjournment of the House of Representatives and a conditional adjournment or recess of the Senate.

Under the previous order, the Senate proceeded to consider the concurrent resolution.

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The question is on agreeing to the resolution. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. NICKLES. I announce that the Senator from Delaware (Mr. ROTH) is necessarily absent.

Mr. REID. I announce that the Senator from New York (Mr. MOYNIHAN) is necessarily absent.

The result was announced, yeas 55, nays 43, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 84 Leg.]

YEAS—55

Abraham	Domenici	Kyl
Allard	Enzi	Lott
Ashcroft	Fitzgerald	Lugar
Bennett	Frist	Mack
Bond	Gorton	McCain
Brownback	Gramm	McConnell
Bunning	Grams	Murkowski
Burns	Grassley	Nickles
Campbell	Gregg	Roberts
Chafee, L.	Hagel	Santorum
Cochran	Hatch	Sessions
Collins	Helms	Shelby
Coverdell	Hutchinson	Smith (NH)
Craig	Hutchison	Smith (OR)
Crapo	Inhofe	Snowe
DeWine	Jeffords	Specter
Stevens	Thurmond	Warner
Thomas	Torricelli	
Thompson	Voinovich	

NAYS—43

Akaka	Edwards	Levin
Baucus	Feingold	Lieberman
Bayh	Feinstein	Lincoln
Biden	Graham	Mikulski
Bingaman	Harkin	Murray
Boxer	Hollings	Reed
Breaux	Inouye	Reid
Bryan	Johnson	Robb
Byrd	Kennedy	Rockefeller
Cleland	Kerrey	Sarbanes
Conrad	Kerry	Schumer
Daschle	Kohl	Wellstone
Dodd	Landrieu	Wyden
Dorgan	Lautenberg	
Durbin	Leahy	

NOT VOTING—2

Moynihan	Roth

The concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 303) was agreed to, as follows:

H. CON. RES. 303

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That when the House adjourns on the legislative day of Thursday, April 13, 2000, or Friday, April 14, 2000, on a motion offered pursuant to this concurrent resolution by its Majority Leader or his designee, it stand adjourned until 12:30 p.m. on Tuesday, May 2, 2000, for morning-hour debate, or until noon on the second day after Members are notified to reassemble pursuant to section 2 of this concurrent resolution, whichever occurs first; and that when the Senate recesses or adjourns at the close of business on Thursday, April 13, 2000, or Friday, April 14, 2000, on a motion offered pursuant to this concurrent resolution by its Majority Leader or his designee, it stand recessed or adjourned until noon on Tuesday, April 25, 2000, or such time on that day as may be specified by its Majority Leader or his designee in the motion to recess or adjourn, or until noon on the second day after Members are notified to reassemble pursuant to section 2 of this concurrent resolution, whichever occurs first.

SEC. 2. The Speaker of the House and the Majority Leader of the Senate, acting jointly after consultation with the Minority Leader of the House and the Minority Leader of the Senate, shall notify the Members of the House and the Senate, respectively, to reassemble whenever, in their opinion, the public interest shall warrant it.

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I move to reconsider the vote.

Mr. DODD. I move to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

FISCAL YEAR 2001 BUDGET—CONFERENCE REPORT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to the consideration of the conference report to accompany the concurrent resolution on the budget, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The committee of conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the amendment of the Senate to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 290) establishing the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2001, revising the congressional budget for the United States Government fiscal year 2000, and setting forth appropriate budgetary levels for each of fiscal years 2002 through 2005, having met

have agreed to recommend to their respective Houses this report, signed by a majority of the conferees.

The Senate proceeded to consider the conference report.

(The conference report is printed in the House proceedings of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD of April 12, 2000.)

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will now be 4 hours of debate, as follows: 90 minutes under the control of the Senator from New Mexico; 90 minutes under the control of the Senator from New Jersey; and 1 hour under the control of Senator REED of Rhode Island.

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, on our side, I do not intend to yield back time until Republican Senators have indicated to me they do not want any time. I do not know why we need a full hour and a half on our side, and I do not know why they need a full hour and a half plus 1 hour, which is 2½ hours on their side.

I yield myself time off my hour and a half.

I noted a minute ago that present on the floor was Senator SNOWE. While I wish to discuss a number of issues, I want to say to her, and to those who supported her, that because of her diligence, this budget resolution has a reserve fund of $40 billion to be used for Medicare prescription drugs and Medicare reform.

Frankly, I note that the House, at least on the majority side, is already discussing what they would do. Clearly, this $40 billion will go to the Finance Committee of the Senate because Senator SNOWE, Senator WYDEN, and Senator SMITH in the committee worked very hard to get it done. I will say what has changed so I will not, in any way, overstate the case as to what Senator WYDEN did.

But essentially because of OLYMPIA SNOWE's dedication, we put $40 billion in a reserve fund. That means the Finance Committee can go to work on a bill, and the money is waiting for them to do a bill that meets the mandates or the qualifications of this reserve fund. We have, as she requested, up to $20 billion for prescription drugs and up to $20 billion for reforming the system so that it will do a better job and a more efficient job while we are adding some new benefits.

I think everybody who has looked at it thinks that is what we ought the do.

In committee, there was a mandatory date by which this had to be done. In conference with the House, that was refused. So we won half the battle. We got the $20 billion and the $20 billion, as I have described, which is $40 billion, but we did not get the mandatory date. We are going to have to rely upon the impetus that will accrue over the ensuing days because of the House action and the desire of this body to have our Finance Committee produce a bill. I have every confidence that they will.

Having said that, I yield myself about 10 minutes to describe where we are.

If, in fact, we adopt this budget resolution this evening, I say we are getting better all the time at getting our job done. The occupant of the Chair will be pleased to know we have had a Budget Act for a long time, since 1974. For all those years, if we produce this budget tonight, we will have produced three budget resolutions on time. That means April 15 had come and gone most years, and we could not get our job done because it was so contentious and so difficult. It will mean that 2 years in a row—last year and this year—for the first time in history, we adopted a budget resolution on time, by April 15.

That speaks for itself. It means, however, that we can get started on the work that must be done to implement this work. We can get started sooner, earlier. With the hard work that is going to be done predominantly by the Appropriations Committees, and the Finance Committee in our body, we may very well get most of our work done in a very timely manner and be able to leave here before our respective conventions with the people's business having been accomplished.

I think that would be a pretty good achievement. I will agree that it has been a very hard job. I will also indicate openly, it was very difficult for me. This work is about as difficult as any I have done in getting something accomplished. Again, it is partisan. We produced it with Republican votes. That is the way it normally is on a budget resolution. Then we will proceed to try to implement it. We will do our best.

Let me summarize, so everybody will know what this resolution does. Then, in due course, we can hear from the other side as to what they think it does not do and what they would like to do.

But I say to the Senate, I have seen an atmosphere that indicates the theory which I adopted—starting last year when we had a big surplus—that we better take a little bit of this money and allocate it to the taxpayers is resonating every day, with more and more assurance that if we do not, there will not be any surplus.

I know the occupant of the chair is a fiscally responsible person. He has his ideas. I see new bills being proposed because, indeed, we have a surplus. People have not done anything for 40 or 50 years, and they are introducing a bill that would cost anywhere from $2 to $5 billion, and all of a sudden it becomes expedient that we do it, and we must do it now.

We hear about all kinds of new bills that are now big-need items in America. Let me suggest, for those who say it is too early to have tax relief, if we do not do it pretty soon, there will be no surplus left for the taxpayer.

Our budget resolution says: If you can, Senate and House, produce some tax relief. It says if you cannot, all that money, over 5 years, goes to the debt, I say to my good friend, Senator GORTON.

But let me suggest that we are right; we ought to put in money to have some tax relief. I will give you the paramount reason for that. On this floor, immediately prior to the consideration of this budget resolution conference report, what were we discussing? We were discussing the marriage tax penalty reform—meaning married couples in America, including the couples married this year, when they file that April 15 tax return early next week, they are going to be penalized, on average, $1,400 because they are married.

Why should we wait around for another decade, when there are the kind of surpluses we have seen in this budget resolution, to provide tax relief for the American people?

The Democrats have been arguing: The Republicans are going to enhance the rich of America with their tax bill. They are going to use this relief and give it all to the rich people.

It should come as no surprise that 50 percent of the tax relief we are talking about—$64 billion; almost 50 percent—is going to go to cure the marriage tax penalty. There may be some who will get up and say that is helping the rich. But I am saying, it is something most Americans do not believe is American law. Most Americans say: Are you kidding? Are we punishing two people who are married, who work, who file joint returns? The answer is yes, and we want to fix it.

For those who say wait until we fix Social Security, wait until we fix Medicare, wait until we fund all these programs we now see as desperately needed, wait until we fund the President's programs—I say to Senator GORTON, that is a 14-percent increase in domestic spending—just fund it, there will not be any money for Social Security. If you do that 3 years in a row, there is no money for tax relief, and you are using the Social Security surplus, which is for 3 years of domestic funding at the level of the President.

So what is risky? They say it is risky to have marriage tax penalty relief provided for in this bill. I say it is not risky; it is absolutely necessary. It is urgent.

America must show we are concerned about married couples. There is a very longstanding belief in America and in the world, that we ought to try to promote family life, if we can, and married couples trying to struggle through it.

It is not too early. It is the right time. But if we do not do it, I can see it coming between all the new needs that are going to be prescribed for this budget that we have not done in the past, that we are going to have to add to this huge Federal expenditure called the budget, and there will be nothing for marriage tax penalty relief or any kind of tax relief.

So once again, this budget says, over 5 years, $150 billion can be used in tax relief. Right off the bat, when somebody on the other side says it is for the rich, I want everybody to understand

almost half of it is for the marriage tax penalty reform. Second, we don't touch a nickel of Social Security. We have Senator ABRAHAM's part of this resolution which for the next year says the lockbox applies and makes it part of the budget resolution that you need 60 votes to touch or use the Social Security surplus. Then to make it even more logical, we put $170 billion against the public debt this year, the biggest installment on the debt in the history of the Republic, $1 trillion over the next 5 years. This is an enormous payment on the debt. Nothing similar was ever assumed 5 years ago or 10 years ago or, I imagine, for the last three or four decades.

In addition, because of Senator SNOWE's initiative, we provide $40 billion on Medicare and prescription drugs.

On the tax relief—just to show the equity of it all—we put $170 billion on the debt, and we have $13 billion in tax relief in the first year, between 12 and 13. The ratio is about 12 to 1, almost 13 to 1 of debt reduction versus tax relief. Over the 5 years, it is about 8 to 1 in debt reduction versus tax relief. That is pretty good fairness, since we are talking about tax fairness in this budget resolution.

All spending will increase $212 billion over the next 5 years. That includes the $40 billion for prescription drugs. There will be NIH, science, funds for military, funds for health, funds for military retirees, veterans and other high-priority items.

Frankly, I hope we pass this resolution and proceed to prove we tried to try to do this. We think this is the right budget for our time. If we don't hold down spending, except for high-priority items such as defense, education, science, NIH and the like, then the married couples of America can say goodbye to any tax relief as it might affect them and make their commitment to the institution of marriage and family life a little less difficult. After we have done marriage tax penalty relief, we will do something on the tax side for small business, which is the cornerstone of our great success in the last 6 years. We will talk about that later.

With that, unless one of my Republican Senators wants part of my time, I yield the floor and reserve the remainder of my time. I thank the Senate for its attention.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Mr. President, this is the last budget resolution on which I will be working. It has been quite an interesting exercise.

I start off by saying that I hope and believe firmly the goodwill that exists with the chairman of the Budget Committee and myself will not evaporate as we discuss this budget. We are good friends, and we have been good partners in debate and discussion. We disagree on the conclusions. That means no disrespect flowing either way, and I am sure I speak for Senator DOMENICI. It is with esteem and—I use the term carefully—affection that we have worked together.

Now that we have said the good things, we will get on to the others; that is, I firmly believe this is the wrong budget resolution at the wrong time because we are still in the position that, with rare exception, we have almost no bipartisan agreement. I heard Senator DOMENICI describe the former occupant of the chair as fiscally responsible. I assume that ''fiscally responsible'' is kind of a catchall for the side of the aisle that one is on; that others on this side may appear to be fiscally irresponsible.

We can't buy that. We have a difference of view. The difference of view is clearly marked in this budget resolution. What should we do to use the funds we have available on behalf of the American public? Should we focus on those whose incomes are at the middle or the lower end of the scale or should we give the tax breaks primarily to the wealthy of the country? It clearly reflects the values and priorities we each have.

This budget conference report calls for costly and risky tax breaks that would, contrary to the statements made, raid Social Security surpluses. It proposes deep cuts in domestic programs such as education and health care and law enforcement and veterans' benefits and environmental protection. It fails to ensure that seniors will be provided with a meaningful prescription drug benefit. It talks about it, but it doesn't arrange for it to happen. On debt reduction—the Holy Grail that Chairman Greenspan held out as being the cardinal first step, the principle by which we operate in terms of maintaining our fiscal responsibility, paying down the debt—this fails to pay down the debt as much as we can. It fails to make it a priority. It hides the long-term cost of its tax breaks and it puts our economy at risk by weakening our commitment to fiscal discipline.

To understand my contention that the tax breaks in this conference report would raid Social Security, I will take a quick look at the numbers.

The Congressional Budget Office, CBO, says that over the next 5 years, the non-Social Security surplus will be $171 billion. We don't dispute that. The sides have not argued on that count. This assumes that Congress freezes discretionary spending at current real levels. ''Current real levels'' means adjusting only for inflation. In fact, if Congress increases domestic spending at the same rate as it has done in recent years, which has been greater than inflation, the actual surplus would be substantially smaller. Still, to give the majority the benefit of the doubt, let's ignore history for a moment and optimistically assume that the non-Social Security surplus will be $171 billion. The conference report—that report which was debated and agreed upon between the House and the Senate, their budgeteers, our budgeteers, and finally both bodies, they have already passed this so we are being asked to pass it—calls for tax breaks of $175 billion. Now, that is in the face of a $171 billion non-Social Security surplus.

This reduction in future surpluses also would require the Government to pay about $21 billion more in interest payments because we would have more debt. Thus, the real cost of the tax breaks isn't $175 billion; it is $196 billion, $25 billion more than the entire non-Social Security surplus of $171 billion. In clear words, this budget would raid Social Security of $25 billion.

Now, if the tax breaks use the entire non-Social Security surplus, plus $25 billion of the Social Security surplus, how can the conference report also provide funding for any of the new initiatives it claims, such as increases in military spending, prescription drug coverage, and agriculture, to name just a few high-priority items?

The real answer is, it just can't be done. The numbers don't add up. Unfortunately, the majority seeks to sidestep this problem by assuming huge, unspecified cuts in domestic programs. The resolution calls for a 7.5-percent cut in nondefense discretionary programs over the next 5 years. The cut would be, in the fifth year, 9.8 percent. In fact, since the majority claimed it would protect some specific programs, the cuts in other areas would be substantially higher.

We only received a single copy of the conference report last night at about 10 o'clock. So we haven't had the time to fully analyze the impact of cuts such as this. But these cuts are even more dramatic than the cuts proposed in the Senate version of the legislation, which were 8.2 percent in the fifth year. That was the Senate version of the legislation, before it merged with the House in the conference report we are examining now.

Here are some of the examples of the impact of the less severe Senate cuts—once again, the bill we sent over to merge with the House—as estimated by the Office of Management and Budget. We would have 20,000 new teachers not being able to be hired to reduce class size; 5,000 communities would lose assistance to help construct and modernize their schools; 62,000 fewer children would be served by the Head Start Program, which is a very successful program that says early education helps kids prepare to learn. We find that is necessary in our society. Then, there would be 19,000 fewer researchers, educators, and students who would receive support from the National Science Foundation. They do the research that talks about climate variations. We all see what the impending disasters might be like, such as tornadoes and other windstorms with higher and higher velocities and more frequency. And funding for all new federally led cleanup of toxic waste sites would be eliminated. Nine-hundred fewer FBI agents could be retained.

I wonder how the public feels about 900 fewer FBI agents—when we are looking not only at reduced rates of criminality, but also understanding what the need might be; that includes domestic terrorism, it includes fraud, and it includes all kinds of things for which we know the FBI has responsibility. We are going to work with 900 fewer FBI agents?

There would be 430 fewer Border Patrol agents available to safeguard our borders. Well, there isn't anybody I have talked to who thinks we need less protection on our borders.

The list goes on. The actual cuts will be even deeper than those suggested since the conference report calls for substantially deeper cuts than the Senate-passed version of the budget resolution.

As most people around here recognize, cuts of this magnitude are just completely unrealistic. They are not going to happen. Neither Republicans nor Democrats are going to tolerate them. It is kind of putting it off in the future. It may get us through an election cycle, but reality will come home and we will not be able to stand these cuts.

This is not the first time the Senate has assumed deep, unspecified cuts in the budget resolution. Last year's resolution included similarly unrealistic assumptions. Not surprisingly, by the end of the year, the Republican majority of Congress had approved appropriations bills that spent about $35 billion more than it assumed earlier. No doubt something similar is going to happen this year.

Unfortunately, the Republican budget relies on these unrealistic cuts for its tax breaks and its various increases in mandatory spending.

Just to explain, mandatory spending is funding those programs that are decided by the legislature, the Congress—that these programs get a high priority. We recently voted $2 billion more for the FAA—not that people disagree with the need for improving FAA's operations, but the fact is, it is mandatory. That means it gets priority, and no matter what happens behind it, the increases in FAA take place. Well, it has to come from someplace. It can come from transportation, from the Coast Guard, with all of the services they provide, or it can come from other sensitive places. The cost of that spending and the new tax breaks will be locked in up front. The savings, however, will.

When Congress later fails to make the assumed cuts in appropriations bills, funds for the tax breaks and for new spending will require deeper raids on Social Security. We should not let that fact escape. We want everybody to think about it. We want the Congressmen and the Senators who are going home and looking toward reelection to be able to explain to their constituents about how we had to dip into Social Security a little bit, even though everybody basically swore on the sword it would not happen. But it has to happen if this budget is going to stand.

One might think the assumption of deep, unrealistic cuts in discretionary spending would allow the Republicans to claim significantly more debt reduction than the budget proposed by Democrats. However, if one assumes GOP spending cuts actually materialize, which is highly unlikely, the Republican budget would still reduce much less debt than President Clinton and the Senate Democrats. The Republican plan claimed to use non-Social Security surpluses to reduce only about $12 billion of debt over 5 years. By contrast, the President's budget would reduce $90 billion of debt over that same period—more than seven times as much. So it is $90 billion under the President's budget and $12 billion in the Republican budget. This difference in debt reduction helps to show just how extreme the GOP tax breaks really are.

Throughout the debate on the resolution, the Republicans have claimed that their budget contains over a trillion dollars of debt reduction. However, this figure is based almost entirely on Social Security surpluses. These surpluses are called off-budget, and both parties are committed to protecting them. Yet when it comes to the portion of the budget that remains subject to congressional discretion, Republicans have refused to devote significant resources for debt reduction. In doing so, they have rejected repeated calls by Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan to make debt reduction our first priority.

My next concern about the budget resolution is that it fails to ensure that Congress will really act on legislation establishing a prescription drug benefit—another program that is saluted, generally. But it is not real. This is in marked contrast to treatment of the tax breaks. Tax breaks have an instruction to the Finance Committee that they must report out a way to get tax breaks. They have to do it. There is quite a distinction between saying we should and they have to. The conference report includes two $20 billion reserve funds that, theoretically, could be used for prescription drugs, but there is no requirement for the Senate to act. It is very unspecific.

The second reserve fund contains vague language that would allow virtually the entire $20 billion to be used for purposes other than prescription drugs. That could leave little more than $20 billion for prescription drugs, which is far short of what is needed to provide an adequate benefit. The Medicare reserve fund, applicable to the House, would allow virtually the entire $40 billion fund to be diverted to purposes other than prescription drugs.

While they say we have to have it, they don't arrange for the mechanism to make it happen.

Compounding matters, Mr. President, the language of the second Senate reserve fund requires that the solvency of the Medicare Program be extended before a single penny can be used either for any prescription drug benefit, or new provider payments. In other words, if you want access to this money to help seniors with prescriptions, you have to cut somewhere else within Medicare first. And that seems very unlikely to happen.

Mr. President, there is only one conclusion to draw from all this: the Republican Party simply is not committed to providing our seniors with prescription drugs. The senior population has to listen to that. For the Republican Party, tax breaks for the wealthy are a much higher priority.

Mr. President, my final concern about the conference report is that it covers only 5 years, not the 10 included in last year's resolution.

People might say: Well, what is the difference between 5 or 10? It matters a lot because a tax break has an effect of compounding significantly in the second quintile. It is going to grow by leaps and bounds.

This has the effect of hiding the long-term cost of its tax breaks. It also weakens the budget resolution as a means of enforcing long-term fiscal discipline, since points of order would not be available against tax breaks that explode in cost after 5 years.

Mr. President, as of last year, CBO has been producing 10-year numbers. There's no excuse for Congress not doing the same. And if we were serious about preparing for the baby boomers' retirement, we would be sure to plan for longer term costs.

In sum, Mr. President, the Republican majority has made tax breaks that go largely to the wealthy their highest priority. Higher than Social Security. Higher than education. Higher than prescription drugs for our seniors. Higher than reducing our debt. This is unacceptable. And higher than maintaining fiscal discipline.

In so doing, they have produced a budget that is fundamentally at odds with the priorities and values of the American people. A budget that puts our economy at risk. And a budget that fails to prepare for our future.

Just to confirm something I earlier said, the budget resolution, as it came out of the Senate, says the Senate Committee on Finance shall report to the Senate a reconciliation bill. That means they must do it. That is the only place we have any force of law in the Budget Committee. Otherwise, ours is generally a guideline or blueprint for how the Congress should act, putting a ceiling on total spending. It is up to the Appropriations Committee to divide that spending. They say this reconciliation bill shall be done not later than July 14 in the year 2000, and not later than September 13 in the year 2000. So they have 2 days. That is a realistic assignment for the Finance Committee.

There is no such thing for prescription drugs. The Republicans are not asking that we treat prescription drugs

with the same force and the same outcome as we do the tax breaks.

One thing is apparent. One thing is very clear. They are going to protect the tax breaks no matter who they have to take the money from to make it happen—no matter what program they are going to take the money from to make it happen; no matter what it does to the budget and its balance; no matter what it does to debt reduction; no matter what. The primary thing is tax reduction and tax breaks for the wealthy. If you make $800,000, which is kind of the median figure for the top 1 percent, you might get a $50,000 tax cut, if plans go as they are. But if you make $35,000, you could be looking at $1 a week, or maybe even $2, if things go right.

We have to make decisions. There is no room for amendments. There is no room for change. This has been decided. The majority decided. The majority will have to carry it because I predict that there is going to be little, if any, support from Democrats. We don't believe it is fiscally responsible. We don't think it is fair. We don't think it is equitable. We don't think the wealthy ought to be the largest beneficiary of the outcome.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Mexico.

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I wonder if the distinguished ranking minority member would agree with me on a request. Senator GORTON is going to preside at 4 o'clock. He wonders, if he arrives on the floor 4 or 5 minutes before having to preside, if he could speak on my time for 5 minutes.

Mr. LAUTENBERG. I have no objection assuming that we don't interrupt right in the middle. We will do our best to provide for Senator GORTON.

Mr. DOMENICI. I thank the Senator.

Mr. President, I yield myself 5 minutes in rebuttal. Then I will be glad to yield time to the distinguished Senator from New Jersey.

First, let me explain what we have done on Medicare.

Before any tax relief is provided in terms of dollar numbers, we have already used $40 billion of the non-Social Security surplus for Medicare. That is waiting for the committee, at which time it is assigned to them. We are not gambling. We are saying that is it. As a matter of fact, we are saying if you do not do it, it goes to the debt.

What do we provide with the $40 billion? There is a little, tiny bit of difference between the way we and others see it. And we think there will be a majority for this view when the bill finally gets considered. We say there is $40 billion. We say if you do no reform of the program, there is $20 billion. Let me repeat that. If you do no reform, there is $20 billion for prescription drugs. If you do some reform to stabilize the program, you can use the whole $40 billion for prescription drugs.

That is what Senator OLYMPIA SNOWE of Maine had as the underpinnings of her approach. She wanted some reform. But she wanted to make sure, even if we could not do that, we started a prescription drug program with $20 billion.

If the committee does something like the Breaux-Frist—that is a bipartisan approach—with some reform in Medicare, you understand the Medicare program will be insolvent in about 13 years. I don't think seniors want us to add a benefit that will make it run out of money sooner. I think they would be asking us to see if we could fix it and make it more responsive, more modern, to give them more money for prescription drugs.

Let me repeat that we are not taking this money from anyone. It is aside and apart from the tax relief we are asking for, such as the marriage tax penalty reform that the other side has been delaying here on the floor.

We are saying $40 billion is set for Medicare, and it has two purposes. If you do not reform and make the program more modern so it has a chance of surviving longer, you can use $20 billion of it. It says so in the resolution for prescription drugs. But if you do something such as the Breaux-Frist reform, which is fixing the program, you can use the $40 billion of new money for prescription drugs.

Frankly, I think it is a responsible way to handle a very difficult problem because if you do not ask for some reform to get the full $40 billion, we are going to have $40 billion, and the program next year is not going to be any better off. Then seniors are going to ask: Now what happens? We have prescription drugs, but we are still not going to have any money to pay our regular bills in about 13 years.

I think we are pushing both at the same time.

Let me make my last observation with reference to the difference between the two parties.

All of them are going to vote against this. It really says you cannot pass the marriage tax penalty which is going to cost the Treasury about $64 billion over 5 years in the name of fairness to married couples. You can't pass that, they say, until you have done all of these other things that Government wants done for the Government. And there will never be a time when we are going to have a surplus to give to the hard-working people of this country, in particular, relief items such as the marriage tax penalty. There is not going to be any money around. Don't kid anyone. There is a very big difference.

I ask that you take a visual inventory with me about the announcements of late by the administration, the Secretary of Energy, and many others: We have new programs on which we have to spend money. It isn't enough that the President already provided a 14-percent increase in domestic discretionary. There are all the new needs.

What money will they use for the ''pay fors''? Does anybody have any idea? Is the money coming from heaven? New manna in the desert? Of course not. It will be the surplus we think ought to go back to the taxpayer in the form of tax relief after we spent money to increase government.

We have money to increase government, but how much is enough? I think there is enough money available to leave a little bit. I rechecked my notes, and the tax relief in this first year is $11.6 billion; the debt reduction is $170 billion. How can anyone say we are not reducing the debt when that is the largest payment on the national debt in the history of the Republic? This resolution says: Don't touch Social Security. You will reduce it by $1 trillion—hardly a number we can understand—and still have a little bit left over for such things as tax relief for married couples in America.

That is the big difference. They want to wait, we don't know how long, but perhaps until we solve every problem we have in government with reference to Medicare and everything else. Don't give the taxpayer back even this little tiny amount.

I hope the Republicans will support this. I am very proud of the difference.

They would not have put more than $40 billion in for Medicare if they were producing their own resolution. That is about the right number on which they could get consensus on their side of the aisle. They would not put 50 or 60 or 80. If you put 40 in, there is money left over for the taxpayer. That is the truth of the budget resolution.

There will be a historic debate on education reform in a couple of weeks. I am very pleased to know we have probably had something to do with precipitating that reform debate. There is enough money to increase education. It is obvious to this Senator the Republicans are not going to go for an increase in education money if it is status quo for education, if we are going to do more of the same, because more of the same isn't good enough. We need to do something very different in education and spend more money doing it. We are going to have an opportunity to have that discussed.

This conference report assumes $45.6 billion in 2001 for the Department of Education. That is overall, for everything—a $10 billion increase. Not exactly for what the President wants but overall in this function. That is what is provided.

This is an election year. The administration and Secretary Richardson have the latest idea to take care of anyone who worked in a nuclear facility over the last 50 or 60 years. I know they are good sounding bills, but it is also an election year.

I say to the taxpayer and to married couples of America, beware of an election year. In this country, an election year means they want to spend all your money and try to convince you that is right, leaving nothing to repair problems in tax law such as the marriage tax penalty. Beware. They will have more spending programs than you ever

heard of, including a 14-percent increase in domestic discretionary spending by the President in his budget in an election year.

The Republicans say: We want a change; we don't want the huge add-ons to government. We think in the scheme of things, over the next 5 years, the taxpayer ought to get a little bit of relief.

That is the difference in the two bills. I think it is a good difference. When they say rich people are going to get the benefit of the tax relief on the marriage tax penalty, that is unfair. We want to fix it. How many want to do that? We win that. We have to use some of the surplus to pay for that kind of reform. That money doesn't grow on trees. That money has to come out of the coffers of the United States. It doesn't belong to the Government.

I am pleased to yield 5 minutes to Senator GORTON, and then I yield back to the Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. LAUTENBERG. I appeal to my friends on the Democrat side, as well as others, we only have a total of 3 hours, plus an hour that Senator REED has, for Members to talk. Members need to be prepared to come to the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Mr. GORTON. Mr. President, there are, in my view, two remarkable aspects to the budget resolution conference report before the Senate this afternoon.

The first is, I believe for only the third or fourth time since the Budget Act was passed, the promptness with which the Senate is dealing on a final basis with a budget resolution that is the springboard from which we will do the substantive work of the appropriations for the balance of this year. For that promptness, for the efficiency with which the Senate has dealt with this issue, we owe our deepest and sincerest thanks not only to the chairman of the committee, my friend, PETE DOMENICI, but to the staff who have labored so long and so hard on a highly technical and complicated task.

More significant perhaps than the significance of finishing our work on time is the substantive nature of this budget resolution. It is exquisitely balanced among three separate needs: The need to adequately fund those programs that are already major responsibilities of the Federal Government; the need to provide for additional programs of considerable interest, the most significant of which being the Medicare program about which Senator DOMENICI spoke earlier, but also including priorities with respect to education—particularly close to my heart—and to our national defense.

The second substantive element of this budget resolution is the dramatic reduction in the national debt it will cause. It is only a short period of time since we were discussing how we could reduce annual national deficits of upwards of a quarter a trillion a year. Now we face the equally difficult but far more pleasant prospect of paying off the national debt at a very substantial rate.

The third element in this budget resolution is the opportunity to provide tax relief for hard-working Americans who pay taxes. The chairman of the committee, Senator DOMENICI, pointed out the importance of the bill, which regrettably was subjected to a filibuster earlier today, to end the unconscionable penalty against married Americans, both of whom are at work. The thought that a couple in love, even in relatively modest professions, should pay a penalty for getting married rather than receiving the approbation of society for doing so is bizarre. To have the ability to provide for that marriage tax penalty relief, amounting, as the chairman pointed out, to almost half of the allowed tax relief in the bill, is a vitally important part of this budget resolution.

As the chairman himself pointed out, if for some reason we cannot pass tax relief, or if for some reason we pass a tax relief bill that is vetoed by the President, then that money should go to further pay down the national debt. Regrettably, many of the Members on the other side, as evidenced by their actions just a week ago when we were debating this issue on the floor of the Senate, would prefer to spend it. I suspect if we added up the expenditures contained in all of their unsuccessful amendments, we not only would have spent the entire general fund surplus, but we would have once again eaten into the Social Security surplus as well.

In summary, we have a budget resolution that allows us adequately to fund the functions of government. It allows us to meet some new needs and desires of the American people. It allows us modest but still significant room for tax relief. It makes dramatic payments on the national debt.

For each and every one of those reasons, we not only owe our thanks to the chairman of the Budget Committee and to his staff, I believe we owe our votes in favor of the resolution.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. GORTON). Who yields time? The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I request to be recognized out of my time under the unanimous consent agreement.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is so recognized.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, we are spending a few moments discussing the budget. There are obvious differences on both sides with respect to this budget. I commend the chairman, Senator DOMENICI, and the ranking member, Senator LAUTENBERG, for their efforts over many months to fashion a budget and bring it to us.

My focal point is not on the vote that is forthcoming; it is on the vote we just concluded with respect to adjournment. In many respects, I share the overall sentiments of the Senator from West Virginia that it is about time we get down to work and business, and if we need to take time to consider the marriage tax penalty and other provisions, we should do that, rather than arbitrarily and conveniently walking away.

The concern I have goes to another critical issue, and that is the issue of our inability over many months to bring to this floor a conference report on the juvenile justice bill which includes sensible gun safety measures we all adopted in the wake of the Columbine tragedy.

The first-year anniversary of that tragedy is just 7 days away, and we will not be in Washington working on this issue; we will be scattered around the country. I believe—and that is why I joined many of my colleagues voting against adjournment—that we should be here working rather than off about the country on April 20 saying, I am sure, thoughtful and pious comments about our outrage at what happened at Columbine High School and the need to do something. We should be here instead doing something, and our departure should be tempered with the realization that we have for months foregone effective action to provide sensible gun safety rules in this country.

We all were shocked last April 20 by the carnage and horror at Columbine High School. Within a month, in May, we passed extremely sensible provisions as part of the juvenile justice bill to provide for child safety locks, to close the gun show loophole, ban the importation of large-capacity ammunition clips for automatic weapons, and many other provisions. Yet all of our efforts have languished for months. In fact, the conference committee met just one time in August in a perfunctory meeting, and since that time, it has not even come together to consider these difficult issues and to seek a compromise resolution so we can send this measure to the President to become law.

We are leaving today with our work undone. I had hoped we could have stayed. I had hoped we could have worked harder and more efficiently so that we could, in fact, have a conference report with gun control measures that would be sent to the President for his signature.

The Columbine tragedy is just one aspect of a pervasive climate of gun violence in this country that claims 12 children a day. We have to take effective steps to prevent that tidal wave of gun violence.

I note the other body, responding to the pressure of public opinion and the sensible nature of the provisions we are talking about, moved last Tuesday to enact legislation that provides enhanced penalties, mandatory minimum sentences on any person who uses a gun while committing a crime of violence or is involved in serious drug trafficking offenses.

No one is going to argue about the need for strong enforcement and stiff

penalties, but enforcement without adequate, sensible, comprehensible laws misses the point. We have to do both. Indeed, we insist both be done.

My colleague, Senator DURBIN of Illinois, has been very forceful in trying to, within the context of this budget, enhance the resources devoted to the enforcement of our gun laws. He has met opposition. That opposition, I believe, should fade. We can and must do both: Prevent gun violence by good, sound, commonsense laws, and enforce those laws so we further add to the prevention of violence in our community.

One other aspect of this enforcement issue is the simple fact that we cannot enforce loopholes. We have to have legislation that is sensible, practical, and works. We found, particularly in the case of the gun show legislation, that the current regime just does not work. Senator LAUTENBERG's amendment on the juvenile justice bill will effectively close that loophole and give our authorities credible and effective means to prevent easy access to firearms by those individuals who are prohibited, either through criminal records or a history of mental instability.

There are other aspects within the bill that are so clearly and obviously necessary and, indeed, noncontroversial. In poll after poll, 89 percent of Americans support child safety locks, support the notion that these safety locks should be sold with a weapon and, indeed, should be incorporated in the design of a new weapon. The State of Maryland last week, in a very courageous legislative act, passed legislation that will do just this.

The need is quite clear. For children under the age of 15, the rate of accidental gun deaths in America is nine times higher than the rate of 25 other industrial countries combined. Often, I believe, there is a misperception about the nature of gun violence in this country; that it is the result of hoodlums attacking innocent citizens, victimizing them with handguns, when, in fact, there is an extraordinary number of children who are killed accidentally. Here, certainly, is a situation where a child safety lock can and should make a difference.

There is another aspect of gun violence in America and, again, it is not the gangs with guns attacking innocent citizens. It is the fact that guns are frequently used in suicides. For young children under 15, suicide deaths from guns are 11 times higher than that of the other 25 industrial nations combined. In fact, 54 percent of all firearms-related deaths in 1996 were suicides. Once again, a child safety lock might have helped, might have deterred for a moment a child, or even an adult, who was so desperate, so distraught that they contemplated and sadly acted out a death wish.

These statistics alone warrant the legislation—in fact, demand the legislation. There is a wealth of research that suggests the likelihood of suicide among adolescents increases by the ease of access to firearms—suicide by firearms.

According to the National Journal, one study last year found that three-fourths of adolescents who use a gun to commit suicide obtain the gun from the family home.

The Injury Control Research Center at the Harvard School of Public Health found in a 1999 survey that 20 percent of gun owners stored their guns loaded and unlocked. This is a situation, again, that cries out for sensible control of weapons to prevent these tragic and unnecessary deaths.

There is a national survey—the largest ever conducted—on gun storage by the American Journal of Public Health which found that more than 22 million children in the United States live in homes with firearms; and in 43 percent of those homes, the guns are not locked up or fitted with trigger locks.

Simply by the adoption of a national requirement to have trigger locks on weapons, we cannot ensure that each and every gun will be locked up and secured. But certainly, we will have a much higher percentage of those weapons that are secured if we pass legislation of this kind.

If we require a safety lock to be provided when a gun is sold, if we give parents and adults who buy these weapons not only the incentive but the actual lock, we can, I hope and expect, reduce these types of deaths among children.

In fact, we probably should be doing more because there are many States that have child access prevention laws—or CAP laws as they are called—which encourage the safe storage of firearms by holding adults accountable if they knowingly keep a firearm within their home where a child might have access to it and that child, in fact, obtains the weapon and uses it to harm themselves or to harm others. Senator DURBIN has such a bill. I am proud to be a cosponsor of that legislation. This legislation is working.

A 1997 article published in the Journal of the American Medical Association analyzed the effect of CAP laws in 12 States. The JAMA study found that, on average, there was a 23-percent drop in accidental firearm-related deaths among children younger than 15 years old.

There has been an overall downward trend in unintentional shootings in the United States since 1979. That is encouraging. But indeed, we saw a much steeper decline in those States that had child access prevention laws.

But if we are not yet ready to consider a child access prevention law, the least we can do, the minimum we can do, is follow through on our vote of last May and ensure the conference committee sends to us quickly the child safety lock legislation that we passed.

There is another important part of the legislation that is pending in the conference committee, and that is the legislation that was sponsored and championed by Senator LAUTENBERG with respect to the gun show loophole. This particularly resonates at this moment when we are days away from the Columbine tragedy, because, in fact, three of the weapons used in the Columbine tragedy were bought at gun shows from unlicensed dealers who did not have to perform background checks.

The two killers, Dylan Klebold and Eric Harris, along with an older woman friend, Robyn Anderson, went to a gun show and obtained these weapons. In fact, it is reported that both Harris and Klebold went from table to table, from booth to booth, trying to find an unlicensed dealer, knowing they would not be subjected to a background check.

In fact, Robyn Anderson herself testified before the Colorado Legislature that she would not have helped these young men if she knew she had to face a background check.

What more compelling evidence can we have of the need and the effects of this legislation than the reality of the tragedy at Columbine High School?

There has been a lot of talk by the gun proponents that a 72-hour waiting period is involved in this amendment. It is not the case at all. There is not a waiting period. What it requires, though, is that the law enforcement authority would have 72 hours to fully conduct the background check. The gun lobby and their allies say that would completely undermine gun shows, which are weekend events, which start up on a Saturday and end perhaps in midafternoon the next day, Sunday. They say they could not do that.

In fact, not only could they do it in the vast majority of cases, but they should do it because we should have the same Brady law applying to all dealers at a gun show.

It turns out that the FBI indicates, in their statistics, that most gun purchases are processed extremely quickly. In fact, using the national instant check system, the FBI clears 72 percent of gun buyers within 30 seconds; another 23 percent are cleared within 2 hours. So 95 percent of the people who attempt to obtain guns are cleared within 2 hours. It is only that other 5 percent who might require an additional day or two.

But of that 5 percent, they are 20 times more likely to be prohibited from possessing a firearm. So the reality is that those people who argue for no background checks at gun shows or they have to be limited to 24 hours are simply protecting those who are most likely to be prohibited under the law from purchasing a firearm, a handgun.

In fact, the vast majority of gun purchasers, those law-abiding citizens, those individuals that the NRA points to as their sterling members, would not be impeded at all. They would be checked within 2 hours.

The other aspect of this, in terms of requiring additional time for law enforcement officers, is that if there is a problematic application for a purchase, if there is a suggestion or indication

that the individual is not qualified, then those law enforcement officers need the time to check out records, to go to a county courthouse or to go someplace else to get the records that would be virtually impossible if this was limited to 24 hours on a Saturday or a Sunday.

Frankly, they have to do it because there is a due process requirement. If you are going to turn down an individual from obtaining a firearm, that police officer has to have sufficient evidence, real evidence—not hearsay, not the feeling that something is wrong, not a thought that they heard about this individual someplace, in the coffee shop, that he is unreliable or might have been convicted of a crime—they have to have tangible evidence. Otherwise, they will be sued, probably by advocates and proponents of the gun lobby. So this is a real, practical and necessary need for enforcing the law.

But what we hear consistently from the gun lobby is lots of misinformation: It will close down gun shows. There is a waiting period.

All of this is wrong. The Lautenberg amendment is sound, practical, pragmatic legislation that will deal with the problem, that will not at all impede the vast majority of purchases of firearms at gun shows, and will contribute significantly to the elimination of, we hope, or at least a diminution of the gun violence we are seeing in the country today.

In the Senate last week, we had the opportunity to vote on a resolution I proposed that would urge the conferees to send a report back to us before April 20, including all of the provisions I have spoken about, that would, in fact, give us the chance to send this to the President for his signature. The vote on April 6 was 53–47, with a bipartisan majority. That vote has started some wheels turning.

On April 11, Mr. HYDE, chairman of the Judiciary Committee in the other body, and JOHN CONYERS, the ranking member, sent a letter to Senator HATCH saying:

> We write to request a juvenile justice conference meeting as soon as possible.

We are making progress, but we are going to lose this momentum and this progress as we leave this week. Perhaps that is intentional. Perhaps this is about stopping the momentum that is building up, playing for time, hoping that we forget about Columbine, hoping that when the anniversary comes, we will be all around the country and the world and not here to respond to the concerns of families in this Nation who are deeply concerned about this issue.

I have spoken about the aspects of the legislation. I have spoken about the logic behind it, the statistics that strongly support it. Ultimately, this is about people's lives in America —sadly and too often, about children's lives.

On February 29, a 6-year-old, Kayla Rolland, was shot to death by her 6-year-old classmate in Mount Morris Township, MI. I have said this before and it bears repeating: If any of us last May stood on this floor and said a 6-year-old child would be shot to death with a handgun by another 6-year-old child in a school in America, we would have been accused and lambasted as a hysterical demagog who was trying to stir up unreasonable fears and concerns for political advantage.

The truth is, it has happened. A 6-year-old is dead, shot by another 6-year-old in a school in this country. That week, Kayla's death was just one of other deaths of children that go unheralded because 12 children die a day. For example, one young woman in Carroll County, MD, 18 years old, died of an accidental gunshot wound to the head after she and her friends were admiring her father's .22-caliber revolver. Where were her parents? They were in Costa Rica as missionaries. Had there been a law requiring a trigger lock, had the gun salesman been required to provide a trigger lock with this weapon, I have to believe parents such as that would have locked up the weapon. As those teenagers were admiring the weapon, it wouldn't have discharged. We might have been able to save a life if we had acted. Think of the lives that are being lost because we are not acting.

Another 16-year-old boy in Shopiere, WI, and his friend were horsing around with a .22-caliber pistol his mother kept for protection. It was usually stored in a dresser, but they got ahold of it. After posing with the gun for pictures, the boy pointed the gun to his head. It went off, killing him. As his grandmother said: It was kid's play, total kid's play. Ask yourself, had that weapon been secured with a child safety lock, would it have gone off as two young kids horsing around posed with it? Probably not.

Then a 15-year-old boy in San Bernardino, CA, found his stepfather's handgun, while his pregnant mother slept, and used to it shoot himself. Perhaps at the height of desperation, if he had seen a lock on that weapon, he might have been deterred for a moment, enough time perhaps to somehow come back off the edge rather than to plunge into the abyss and take his own life.

A 16-year-old girl in Altoona, PA, argued with her father about her curfew. He was a gun collector; he had handguns. She found one and killed herself—over a curfew. Perhaps, again, if there had been a child safety lock, some other protective device, that momentary pique, that momentary anger we have all had with our parents, would have resulted in perhaps an annoyance but not death.

That is just one week in America, the week Kayla Rolland died. But it is every week in America, 12 children a day. We can do more. We should do it, rather than leaving today and going off on our recess. That would be the greatest tribute to the 12 young people and the 1 teacher who died in Columbine High School.

I would like to say the conference committee has been working, but that is not accurate. They have been waiting for a year. We have been waiting for a year. We can do more. We should do more. We must do more. The American people want it. The American people expect it. The American people deserve it—certainly the families of those children who were killed at Columbine and the 12 children a day who are victims of gun violence in this country.

I realize we have lost that vote on adjournment. We will be back. We will come back again and again and again until we pass sensible gun safety legislation to make this country a bit safer and, hopefully, do what the American people sent us here to do: To protect their children and ensure a rule of law and not an error of violence that claims the lives of children each and every day.

I yield the floor and reserve the remainder of my time.

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Mr. President, I yield the Senator from Massachusetts 10 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, the budget resolution that Republicans put before the American people today proposes an unacceptable change of course, at a time when the Nation needs to stay the course of the investments that are driving our historic economic expansion. This is a budget that reverts to the days of trickle-down economics, despite all the evidence that it will only widen the unconscionable gap that already exists between rich and poor in our society. It fails to respond to the challenges the Nation so obviously faces in education, health care, prescription drugs for the elderly, youth violence, firearm safety, hunger, scientific research and development, and environmental protection.

The Senate improved the House budget resolution in important respects last week, but the House position prevailed on every issue during conference. The document before the Senate today is far less satisfactory than the budget the Senate sent to conference last Friday. The Senate resolution dedicated just $2.7 billion of the $150 billion Republican tax cut to Pell Grants that help low-income, high-achieving students attend college. But the House Republicans killed even this modest incentive for college education, preferring to keep every possible dollar for more tax breaks for the wealthy.

The Senate resolution included an $8.5 billion reserve fund to expand early learning opportunities, so that young children enter school ready to learn. This was a bipartisan amendment that Senator STEVENS, Senator JEFFORDS and I offered. But House Republicans blocked it.

The Senate resolution included a pledge that the minimum wage should be increased by $1, but the House Republicans rejected it.

The Senate minimum wage provision expressed our fundamental commitment that many of the hardest working Americans working 40 hours a week, 52 weeks of the year, ought not to have to continue to live in poverty, nor should their children. But it was rejected by the House conferees.

The Senate resolution even included a provision by Republican Senator ARLEN SPECTER to increase funding for medical research. But again, House Republicans rejected it.

Instead, the Republican budget resolution that emerged from conference is a shortsighted scheme to protect narrow special-interests instead of the national interest. I'm proud to join my Democratic colleagues in voting against it. We will continue the battle for a fair budget in weeks and months ahead. But the final battle may well be on election day, when the American people at long last will have the choice to elect the Congress that will make the right investments, not the wrong investments, for the Nation's future.

During last week's budget debate we heard many statistics that are misleading at best. When we cut through all the ''smoke and mirrors,'' what matters is that this unacceptable budget resolution supports a huge tax break for the wealthy that the Nation can't afford.

The independent Congressional Budget Office confirms that the Republican budget resolution reduces domestic discretionary spending by an average of 6.5%. It is impossible for this Congress to write honest appropriations bills with cuts that drastic. Our Republican colleagues couldn't make the numbers add up without massive accounting gimmicks last year, and they can't do it this year.

Our Republican friends say that they designed this budget resolution to curb the gimmicks used last year. But we all know there will be new ones used to pretend to meet the urgent needs our country faces.

This budget also prevents us from acting to reduce the number of low-income working families who have no health insurance—to rebuild our crumbling public schools, to reduce the hunger that still afflicts 3 out of every 100 American households—to make college affordable for low-income students—and to achieve the scientific advances that are so close.

Tax breaks for the wealthy are what this budget resolution is all about. No other subject is treated so often and so thoroughly. There are reconciliation instructions on tax cuts, reserve funds for tax cuts, and even provisions for more tax cuts if the surplus grows. The only things that this budget resolution requires committees to report are tax cuts. The only procedural protection under ''reconciliation'' provided by the resolution is for tax cuts.

Democrats support affordable, targeted tax cuts, and they should be enacted promptly. But the merit of a tax cut depends on its size and its distribution. It is obvious that these GOP tax cuts are excessive and irresponsible. They offer plums for the rich and crumbs for everyone else, and President Clinton will be right to give them the veto they obviously deserve.

The budgets we vote for say a great deal about our values. It is easy to pay lip service to meeting the Nation's unmet needs. But a budget clearly shows whether we are willing to allocate resources to address those needs effectively.

This budget does not pass the laugh test. It does not seriously address the range of important challenges facing America. It does not meet our national needs in education, in health care, in medical and other scientific research, in security for senior citizens, in environmental protection, and in public safety. On all these issues, it is a failed budget, because it fails America. It gives the most to those who already have the most. It pretends that the Nation has no unmet needs—and it deserves to be defeated.

Mr. President, one very important aspect of the budget that was altered and changed in the budget conference report concerns the issue of prescription drugs. This issue was before the Senate Finance Committee. We had debate on this measure on the floor during the budget consideration. We hoped to be able to have debate on this issue when we talked about the marriage tax penalty. Look at the contrast between the way the budget conference considered tax breaks and how the conference committee addressed prescription drugs—an issue that is calling out for action by this Congress, and calling out for action now.

We made some progress in the budget resolution that passed the Senate earlier, but look at what happened in that conference. Look at what happened on one of the most important issues in this country today. Providing America's seniors with the help they need in order to survive, through a responsible, comprehensive prescription drug benefit that will be affordable and that will include basic benefits, as well as catastrophic coverage must be a priority.

Look at the difference on what we call reconciliation of revenue reductions in the Senate. In other words, what did the budget resolution say in the conference with regard to tax cuts? It says that the Senate Committee on Finance shall report to the Senate a reconciliation bill not later than July 14 of the year 2000, and not later than September 13, 2000, that consists of changes in laws within its jurisdiction sufficient to reduce the total level of revenues by $11.6 billion in 2001 and $150 billion for fiscal years 2001–2005. Not later than July 14 or September 13. This is what is in the conference report with regard to prescription drugs.

Whenever the Senate Committee on Finance reports a bill which improves access to prescription drugs for Medicare beneficiaries, the chairman of the Committee on the Budget may revise to accommodate such legislation $20 billion over the period of fiscal years 2001 through 2005. Then the (b) section talks about Medicare reform.

We have changed some rather specific instructions on prescription drugs—improving access to prescription drugs. The seniors of this country know the difference between access to prescription drugs and a benefit package that includes prescription drugs. Access to prescription drugs may mean a bus ticket for a senior living in Maine or any of the border States to go over to Canada. That is access to prescription drugs. We are not talking about access. We are talking about a benefit package that is going to be meaningful to our senior citizens.

That is what this debate has been about. Our seniors understand which benefits they receive and they understand which benefits they don't receive. One benefit they do not receive is a prescription drug benefit. In addition, the $20 billion which may have access to prescription drugs at this time is half the amount the President has recommended.

This is a clear abdication of this body's responsibility to our seniors. We cannot go home without taking action on an effective prescription drug program. We on this side of the aisle feel strongly that one of the priorities that should have been attended to prior to a tax break is an effective prescription drug program; one that is universal, basic and catastrophic, and affordable—affordable to the individuals and affordable to our government.

But, no, we get lip service on the issue of prescription drugs in this particular proposal. That in and of itself should be enough reason to reject the proposal. If you vote for this budget, you are not serious about making sure our seniors are going to have prescription drugs. You cannot vote for this budget and say you are serious about prescription drugs because this budget does not provide the necessary assurance to our senior citizens.

I will take a final minute to talk about the drug crisis America's seniors are facing. Prescription drug coverage is going down at the same time drug costs are going up. I shared with the Senate the other day the reality our senior citizens across this country face. A third of all senior citizens don't have any prescription drug coverage at all; another third are losing coverage. These seniors have employer-based coverage, which is declining dramatically every single year. Then there are seniors with coverage through HMOs; their coverage is being squeezed out. The only group that has reliable coverage are the poorest of the poor who are covered under the Medicaid program. Prescription drug coverage is not just another benefit, it is life and death for our seniors.

This chart demonstrates what has been happening to drug costs. We are seeing double-digit increases in drug

costs. From 1995, going up; in 1997, up 14 percent; and in 1998, up 15 percent; in 1999, up 16 percent. These increases were at a time when we had an average of a 2-percent increase in the rate of inflation.

This issue affects Americans all across this country; it isn't an issue just in the Northeast. It is an issue in the Northeast, the Southeast, the Midwest, the Northwest and the Southwest. It is a universal issue. Our senior citizens deserve better action by the Budget Committee in the conference. It is a tragedy. But we are strongly committed on this side of the aisle not to give up on this issue. We are going to take every opportunity to fight for prescription drugs. We believe our seniors are entitled to an effective drug program. We think a prescription drug program is absolutely essential. It has to be one of our top priorities. It should have been done right by the Budget Committee.

The prescription drug benefit is more deserving than the tax breaks which are included in this resolution. That was the issue that was before the Budget Committee. That is the issue that is before the Senate of the United States this afternoon. That is the most important reason I will vote ''no.''

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I note the presence of Senator BOXER on the floor. I have 45 minutes remaining and I will take a few minutes to discuss Senator KENNEDY's remarks.

Mr. President, fellow Senators, nothing could be further from the truth than this budget resolution and this budget conference does not provide for Medicare prescription relief for senior citizens.

Let me state what I think the triggering mechanism would have ultimately done. It would work in favor of those who don't want a bipartisan solution because they could have stonewalled this until the date arrived and then produce a partisan solution to Medicare on the floor of the Senate. But nobody should deny the work and the authenticity of what is in this budget resolution as suggested in our Budget Committee by the distinguished Senator from Maine, Senator SNOWE.

Senator SNOWE recognizes seniors don't want a prescription drug added to a Medicare program that is going bankrupt. We provide in this budget resolution if there is some reform in this program, $40 billion in new money can be used for prescription drugs. I don't want to let my voice grow any louder because I have on different occasions wondered whether talking extremely loud helps with one's case or not. I have no illusions but that I am speaking to myself and I will speak very moderately about this. The truth of the matter is, the Finance Committee of the Senate is challenged by this budget resolution to produce a bipartisan solution to the issue of prescription drugs. Some in this body do not want a bipartisan solution because it will have some of the good points of experts on our side about how to fix this, including the distinguished Senator from Tennessee, Mr. FRIST the distinguished Senator from Maine, Ms. SNOWE, a Republican, and many others.

Let me repeat, this budget resolution says whatever you do on taxes or tax relief, such as the marriage tax penalty, there is in addition to that, $40 billion for Medicare. That is $40 billion that can be used for prescription drugs. If the committee in charge of this wants to use it all for prescription drugs, they have to provide some reform to the system.

Frankly, there is a big split over whether that is what the bill ought to do. But the Budget Committee opted, in this budget resolution, to try to be on the side of pursuing a bipartisan solution in the committee of jurisdiction, which has had 14 hearings, and is going to do something. The House is going its way. Before the year is out, we will have a bipartisan solution on this floor. That is precisely what would be good for seniors. We will take the politics out of Medicare, and we will put money into prescription drugs. That is really what we want to do in this budget resolution.

Some may call it irresponsibility. I call it the height of responsibility. I believe to do otherwise is an invitation to election year politicking about Medicare prescription drugs that is, in the end, apt not to help with the Medicare program which everybody wants to try to fix and add prescription benefits.

I want to repeat, the reason we have tax relief in this budget, and tell the committee to produce it, is the very issue we debated 4 hours ago on this floor called marriage tax penalty reform. It will cost, if we do it right, somewhere between $50 and $65 billion. Where will we get that relief for the millions of married couples? We will get it in this budget resolution and get $40 billion for Medicare, prescription drugs, and reform.

If the seniors understand the two positions, they will say let's go try this; let's have Senators on that committee of finance, Democrat and Republican, working on a solution that belongs to everybody. It will probably be a right solution for the trust fund if it is a bipartisan solution.

So I repeat, there is money for prescription drugs and there is money for tax relief, such as the marriage tax penalty reform that must be adopted.

I reserve the remainder of the time I have on the resolution.

Mr. REED. I yield 10 minutes to the Senator from California from the time I control.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SMITH of Oregon). The Senator from California.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I want to say to Senator REED, he is a very powerful voice in favor of sensible gun laws. He is taking every opportunity he can. He has stated this many times, to bring this matter of the juvenile justice bill that contains all these important gun control laws to the floor of the Senate. Today he said we should not adjourn until we take care of this. I think he is making a very important point. We have five important, sensible gun control measures in the juvenile justice bill. We voted for them here. On one of them, it was AL GORE, the Vice President, who broke that tie vote on closing the gun show loophole on which Senator LAUTENBERG had worked so hard, to keep away from children, and to keep away from people who are mentally unstable, and keep away from criminals, access to weapons.

It is a very sad day indeed that we are going home, now, right on the heels of the tragic anniversary of Columbine—those killings occurred a year ago—and we have done nothing.

I want to state for the RECORD, every time my friend Senator REED comes to the floor, I will be there with him as long as it takes. We are going to have a Million Mom March. I don't know whether a million moms will come, but thousands will come to march in favor of these very responsible gun laws. I intend to be there, and many of us will be there with them. We will not stop the pressure.

Mr. President, every budget is a roadmap. This budget takes us down the wrong road at almost every turn. I agreed with one thing that happened in the conference, and I want to say thank you to the House. I am very careful not to say thank you to my chairman, who told me not to thank him for this because he is on the other side. The language calling for drilling in the Arctic wildlife refuge was removed. I am very pleased about that. I thank the House for doing that. I hope we do not have to face that fight this year, next year, or the year after.

But in terms of everything else that happened, this budget got decidedly worse. It is leading us down the wrong road, a road that does not adequately fund education or prescription drug benefits, a road that doesn't reduce the debt enough, a road that leads to risky tax cuts that can derail our economic recovery and therefore endanger Medicare and even Social Security.

This is a road that lacks fiscal responsibility. It has no room in it for a lands legacy bill that people on both sides of the aisle want to see, where we can take offshore oil revenues and put them into good use by expanding our public ownership of precious lands we are losing and preserve historic areas. I think this budget puts America in a risky, dangerous position and it does not meet the needs of our people.

We know what will happen if this budget goes into effect, as it will, and the appropriators carry it out. We will see cuts to the most vulnerable population—cuts in the Women, Infants and Children feeding program, cuts in Head Start, in the Job Corps, in child care, in children's mental health. Those cuts will be perhaps more than 10 percent.

We could not get more funding for afterschool programs even though we

had some bipartisan support. The police chiefs all across this land know that is the best crimefighting program. We could not get that. We know juvenile crime peaks between 3 p.m. and 6 p.m. What does this budget say? We are holding the line on afterschool programs, and the million kids waiting to get in will simply have to wait. One million kids are waiting to get into afterschool programs. That is how popular they are. Ninety percent of the American people want them. The police want them. The President put it in his budget, and they have cut his request in half, leaving 1 million people out of the loop.

I do not understand how we can say we speak for the people when we walk away from a program that has 90 percent approval and one we know works.

Senator KENNEDY has talked about the flimsy prescription drug benefit. It is not going to help our seniors if we make them think we are doing something for them but we do not back it up with funding. Senator CONRAD, who will speak after I finish my remarks, has talked long and hard about a lockbox for Medicare. That was voted down. That is gone.

We agreed to lock up Social Security but not Medicare. It does not do us any good if our people get their full Social Security benefit and they have to turn around and pay more and more for Medicare. They are going to be poor one way or the other. If my colleagues support Social Security, they have to support Medicare. This budget simply does not do it.

My colleagues should see the letters that come from the people in my State who are forced to cut their medicine in half in order to make ends meet. They are choosing between prescription drugs and eating dinner. This is America. This is wrong.

Why does this budget turn out this way? Because of a risky tax cut.

Maybe some say it is good to have a tax cut; maybe they look at the tax cut as helping people who really need it. One roadmap we have is George W. Bush's tax cut. Let's look at that one. What happens if one earns over $300,000? They get back $50,000 a year. They will be popping those champagne corks in the boardrooms. But if one earns $38,000 a year, they will get back about $260 or $280 a year.

Summing up, this budget takes us down the wrong path any way one looks, whether it is looking at tax cuts that are fair and targeted, sensible and fiscally responsible, or it is a prescription drug benefit that makes sense for our seniors, protecting Medicare that makes sense for our seniors, or investing in education which makes sense for our children, or having a reserve fund for our environment.

By the way, on energy efficiency, they slash and burn the President's proposal, and then they say he has no energy policy. This budget takes us down a bad road. It should be rejected, Mr. President.

Mr. ROBB. Mr. President, I regret that I am unable to support the budget resolution that is before us today. Our annual budget resolution supposedly represents our nation's fiscal blueprint, but this document comes up short in terms of what our priorities ought to be. Instead of large, untargeted and unwarranted tax cuts, we ought to be dedicating our resources towards rebuilding our nation's schools, providing Seniors with affordable medication, strengthening Social Security and building up our national defense—in addition to paying down the national debt, so that the federal government can stay out of the capital market and be better equipped to handle dips in the economy in the future. In all of these categories the budget resolution falls woefully short. Through fiscal discipline the past seven years, we finally have the ability to begin to address our real needs. We cannot allow this golden opportunity to slip through our fingers. We owe it to our children and our parents to do a better job.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I am disappointed that the conference committee dropped an amendment I offered with Senator KOHL that would have applied additional surpluses estimated by CBO to debt reduction rather than tax cuts. I had hoped that this fiscally responsible amendment, which was unanimously adopted by the Senate, would be included in the final version of the budget resolution. Instead, the Committee accepted a House provision that would allow the budget chairman to use additional surpluses for tax cuts above and beyond the $150 billion in cuts already in the resolution. I find it disheartening that Congress is not even willing to commit unexpected surpluses to debt reduction.

In the 1980s, Congress went on a tax cut binge and left the bill for our children. During those years we all saw the lip service paid and the sloganeering about balancing the budget, while we simultaneously tripled the national debt and ran the biggest deficits of any nation in the history of the world. As a result, the national debt now stands at $3.6 trillion and the Federal government pays almost $1 billion in interest every working day on this debt. Now that we have surpluses, we have a chance and an obligation to pay off that debt. This budget resolution fails to live up to that responsibility.

Nothing would do more to keep our economy strong than paying down our national debt. Paying down our national debt will keep interest rates low. Consumers gain ground with lower mortgage costs, car payments, credit card charges with low interest rates. And small business owners can invest, expand and create jobs with low interest rates.

Alan Greenspan and nearly every other economist who has testified before the Senate Budget and Finance Committees has stated that our nation's budget surpluses should be used to pay down the debt. And yet, the Republican budget resolution proposes far less debt reduction than the budgets developed by President Clinton and Senate Democrats. This resolution would use 98% of the non-Social Security surplus for tax breaks which would primarily benefit the wealthy. By dropping our amendment, Congress is in danger of using an even higher percentage of the surplus for tax cuts, and even less for debt reduction. This does not make fiscal sense.

During markup, Senator LAUTENBERG offered an alternative budget that would have reduced $330 billion in debt over ten years, while providing almost $300 billion in targeted tax cuts—cuts that would go towards eliminating the marriage tax penalty, permitting the self-employed a full tax deduction for their health insurance and providing estate tax relief for family farmers and small business owners. Such cuts would be fair and targeted to help all Vermonters, not just the wealthy. Unfortunately, this amendment failed.

In 1993, Congress charted a course of fiscal discipline and the country has reaped the benefits of this successful plan. Republicans and Democrats can rightfully claim their shares of the credit for getting the nation's fiscal house in order. The important thing now is to keep our budget in balance, to pay down our debt, and to keep our economy growing. Unfortunately, this budget resolution fails to make a real commitment to debt reduction, which is why I must vote against it.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields time? The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I ask for time off our side off the resolution and ask to be notified when I have consumed 15 minutes.

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

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, this is one of the most important decisions we make every year: the question of the budget outline for the United States; what are our priorities; where is the money going to be spent; what are the revenue sources for the United States. The fundamental question is, Are we going to maintain fiscal discipline? Are we going to maintain a strategy that has produced the longest economic expansion in our country's history?

This article appeared in the Washington Post in the business section announcing that the expansion was, at that time, the Nation's longest. This is back in February. Of course, the expansion has now been extended even further. But even then, we had created the longest economic expansion in our country's history. I say when ''we'' created; I am talking about all of us as Americans.

Part of it is a result of Federal policy: the fiscal policy of the country, which is controlled by the Congress and the President of the United States, and the monetary policy, which is controlled by the Federal Reserve. The two work hand in glove to produce economic results for this country.

Obviously, the underlying strength of America is the people of this country. Their hard work, their innovation, their creativity, their entrepreneurial spirit and drive makes this country the greatest economic power on the face of the globe.

It is important to remember the economic strategy and the economic plan that brought us to where we are today. If we look back at the last three administrations and look at the question of the budget deficits that are so important to the fiscal policy of this country and the monetary policy, this is what one finds: The Reagan administration inherited a deficit of about $80 billion and promptly ran it up to over $200 billion and dramatically expanded the Nation's debt over the period of that administration. In fact, they more than tripled the national debt during this period.

Then we had the Bush administration, which inherited a deficit of $153 billion and promptly ran it up to a $290 billion deficit. It actually was somewhat worse than that because this is counting the Social Security surplus. The true deficit, at least as I define it, was well over $300 billion.

The Clinton administration came in, and in 1993, we passed a 5-year budget plan that was designed to reduce the deficit dramatically to take pressure off interest rates and to get this economy moving again. That plan passed without a single Republican vote in either the House or the Senate. These are the facts.

That 5-year plan was put into place, and here are the results. They are clear; they are unambiguous. They show that each and every year that 5-year plan reduced the budget deficit, first, to $255 billion; then to $203 billion; then to $164 billion; then to $107 billion; then to $22 billion. By the end of the 5-year plan, we had done what was perhaps thought impossible when we started. We had balanced the Federal budget.

Now we anticipate a $176 billion budget surplus in this year. This is a plan that worked.

This shows the trend in receipts and outlays, the expenditures of the Federal Government that made this plan work. The blue line shows the spending of the Federal Government; the red line shows the receipts of the Federal Government. This is over a 20-year period.

What it shows is obviously our spending was higher than receipts for an extended period in the eighties. That is why we were running massive budget deficits. When Democrats voted for a 5-year plan to get our fiscal house in order, spending came down each and every year in relationship to the size of our economy, revenue went up each and every year because, in part, we raised taxes on the wealthiest 1 percent in this country, and spending was cut. That is what allowed us to balance the budget, get our fiscal house in order, and kick off the longest economic expansion in our history. That is the record. Those are the facts.

The question is, Are we going to put all this at risk and go back to the old, bad days of ''debt'' and ''deficits'' and ''decline,'' what I call the three Ds? I very much hope we do not return to those policies and those plans and that set of results: debt, deficits, and decline. That would be a profound mistake. Why would we ever turn our back on an economic strategy that has worked so well?

Let's look at the results.

Federal spending is now at its lowest level since 1966. We cut spending with that 5-year plan in 1993. Democrats cut spending because we did not have any help from the other side of the aisle—none. We cut spending because it was necessary to get our fiscal house in order.

The results of reducing those deficits has been the virtuous cycle: Reduced deficits, reduced debt, and reduced interest rates that helps spur investment in the private sector, that helps spur private growth in the private sector, that led to the creation of over 20 million jobs, that gave us the lowest level of inflation since 1965. The virtuous cycle does not end there because it also gave us the lowest rate of unemployment in 42 years.

These are the results of an economic plan that was put in place in 1993. It has also brought down the debt. What a remarkable circumstance. But we have actually started bringing down the publicly held debt. We are in a position to nearly pay it off by the year 2010. We are in a position to pay off the publicly held debt of this country by the year 2013, if we stay on course.

Alan Greenspan, who is in charge of monetary policy—the Congress and the President are in charge of fiscal policy; the Federal Reserve is in charge of monetary policy—the head of monetary policy for our country says: Pay down the debt first. That is what he is urging us to do.

He is not alone because virtually every economist of whatever ideological persuasion who has come before the Budget Committee and the Finance Committee, on which I sit, has told us: The highest priority ought to be to continue to pay down the debt, to put us in a position to deal with the baby-boom generation when it starts to retire and puts enormous demands on Medicare, on Social Security, on veterans programs; that the best way to prepare for the day when they retire is to build this economy, to grow this economy. And the best way to grow this economy is to lift the debt burden that is on this economy.

That is what will hold down interest rates. That is what will keep the Government out of competition in private markets for scarce resources. That will allow additional resources to go into private investment.

This plan, this strategy, has been working. Now, all of a sudden, our friends on the Republican side, who opposed putting in place that strategy that has worked so well, tell us: Ah, well, we were wrong then, but trust us, let's go back to that failed strategy we were pursuing before, and let's try it again.

Why would we do that? It makes no earthly sense.

What will happen if we take this risky approach they are proposing? I submit to you, in their plan they use all of the non-Social Security surplus—all of it—for a tax cut, a tax cut that goes to the wealthiest among us. Senator MCCAIN said it well during the campaign. He questioned the Bush plan to take 60 percent of the benefits of their tax plan and to give it to the wealthiest 10 percent.

Mr. Bush has said, over and over, in his campaign: What they don't know in Washington is, this is the people's money. He is right about that. It is the people's money. The question is, What should be done with the people's money? Should it be given to the wealthiest 10 percent—disproportionately given to the wealthiest 10 percent—or should our top priority be to use the people's money to pay down the people's debt? I submit to you, the highest priority ought to be to pay down the people's debt. But that is not the Republican priority.

It is true they take all of the Social Security surplus and reserve it for Social Security. We do the same thing in our budget. That is the right thing to do. I applaud them for it. But on the non-Social Security surplus, they have quite a different approach.

I think, objectively stated, the non-Social Security surplus is most likely to be about $170 billion over the next 5 years. The Republican plan has a $150 billion tax cut, a $25 billion reserve for tax cuts, and costs another $21 billion in interest. So they have $196 billion reserved for a tax cut that goes primarily to the wealthiest among us when we have only $171 billion available in a non-Social Security surplus.

Where is the rest of the money going to come from? I think it is going to come right out of the Social Security trust fund. We are going to go back to the old, bad days of raiding the Social Security trust fund surplus. I hope not. I do not know how else it happens.

Our priority on the Democratic side is to use the vast majority of the projected surpluses over the next 10 years for debt reduction. In fact, we use 82 percent of the projected surpluses for debt reduction. That is, every penny of the Social Security surplus for Social Security, since it is not used for that purpose immediately, goes to pay down the debt. The Republicans do the same thing. But, in addition, we take 36 percent of the non-Social Security surplus and use that for further paying down the debt.

We also have a chunk of money for tax relief—not nearly as much as they do; we will stipulate to that. Their priority is a big tax cut to the wealthiest among us. Our priority is to pay down the debt.

As I indicated, we take all of the Social Security surplus and use that to pay down debt. But, in addition, we take, of the non-Social Security surplus, 36 percent of it for debt reduction. We take 29 percent of it for tax cuts because we, too, believe tax relief is important.

We would like to solve the marriage tax penalty. We would like to ease the estate tax burden. We would like to deal with some of the other inequities in the Tax Code.

We also reserve 23 percent for high-priority domestic needs such as defense, education, agriculture, and, yes, a prescription drug benefit.

We believe these are the priorities of the American people.

Let me conclude by saying there are some on the Republican side who have argued over and over that the tax burden on the American people is the highest it has ever been.

The tax revenues are high, but the tax burden, the tax rates, on individual taxpayers are not high. That is odd. How can the revenues be high but the tax rates on individuals not be high? The reason is, we have a booming economy that produces lots of revenue. That is part of the virtuous cycle we have created by getting our fiscal house in order.

But if we look at the individual tax burden, what we find is, contrary to what our friends on the Republican side say so often and so repeatedly, the Federal tax level has fallen for most people in this country.

Let me quote from the Washington Post of March 26 of this year:

> Studies Show Burden Now Less Than 10%
>
> For all but the wealthiest Americans, the federal income tax burden has shrunk to the lowest level in four decades, according to a series of studies by liberal and conservative tax experts. . . .

What we see is that the tax burden on individual Americans has been reduced, and reduced dramatically.

The article further states:

> The Congressional Budget Office estimates the middle fifth of American families, with an average income of $39,100, paid 5.4 percent in income tax in 1999, compared with 8.3 percent in 1981. The Treasury Department estimates a four-person family, with a median income of $54,900, paid 7.46 percent of that in income tax, the lowest since 1965.

The article continues: The Conservative Tax Foundation figures that the median two-earner family, making $68,000, paid 8.8 percent in 1998, about the same as 1955.

This is a question of priorities. We ought to reject this budget and pass the alternative.

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Mr. President, I yield 10 minutes to the Senator from Washington,

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. First, I thank the Senator from New Jersey, Mr. LAUTENBERG, for his tremendous leadership on the Democratic side of the Budget Committee. I have truly enjoyed working with him and will miss him a great deal in the coming years. His leadership has been so important to all of us.

I come to the floor today to address the Republican budget proposal and to tell my colleagues that I will be a ''no'' vote because I believe it fails to reflect the priorities of families across this country. In fact, if this budget were submitted to any math class, it would get an F because, frankly, the numbers do not add up.

The reality in this budget does not meet the rhetoric. Despite all the claims, when we do the math, the things Americans care about—improving their education, reducing the debt, saving Social Security, strengthening and modernizing Medicare—have all been left behind. The things that matter to families have been sacrificed in the name of an irresponsible tax cut.

I am disappointed that this budget abandons the progress we have made since 1993. Since I first joined the Budget Committee, our Nation's financial strength has grown dramatically. Through the hard work of the President, the Vice President, and Congress, we have turned deficits into surpluses. We learned many important lessons. We learned that budgets must be realistic. They have to take into account what our Nation needs and what we are capable of providing.

This budget is neither realistic nor responsible. It does not provide the necessary investments in education and health care. It does not ensure that prescription drug coverage for Medicare beneficiaries will be considered before we enact tax cuts. Instead, this Republican budget sacrifices our priorities for a $200 billion tax cut.

I am extremely concerned that this tax cut could eat up all of the on-budget surplus. Given this Congress' track record on tax cuts, it is fair to assume that, as usual, the top 10 percent of the people will get more than 60 percent of the benefits. The President and the American people rejected that tax plan last year, and I expect they will reject it again. We can have responsible and fair tax cuts that are fiscally prudent, but you won't find them in this budget.

I am also disappointed that this conference report dropped two important priorities during the conference committee. First, an important amendment I introduced to ensure programs that help victims of domestic violence was dropped. Another amendment concerning pipeline safety was also left behind. In the Senate Budget Committee, I introduced an amendment to ensure that pipeline safety efforts are funded at levels that were called for in my bill. My amendment was unanimously passed by the Senate Budget Committee. Unfortunately, this budget makes it almost impossible to fully fund the Office of Pipeline Safety. Our budget should help us make our pipeline safer. I fear this budget moves away from our responsibility.

I will be talking later this evening about the issue of pipeline safety as well.

While those two key amendments were dropped, I am pleased that my amendment concerning women and Social Security was affirmed. After 2 years, the Republican budget conferees have finally committed that Social Security reform should not penalize women. I am pleased it is in this budget.

Overall, to make room for their tax cut, Republicans shortchanged the investments that really matter to the American people. In fact, in key areas, this budget doesn't even keep up with inflation.

I will give a few examples of how this budget leaves America's priorities behind. The decisions in this budget will be felt in classrooms across America. The budget before us would decimate the progress we have made over the last 2 years in reducing overcrowded classrooms. In the last 2 years, we have hired 29,000 new, fully qualified teachers to reduce class sizes in first, second, and third grades. Today, because of that action, 1.7 million students are learning in classrooms where the basics are taught in a disciplined environment. We should be building on our progress. This Republican budget before us today abandons our progress. This budget tells students: Sorry, you are going to have to sit in an overcrowded classroom next year because, under the Republican tax plan, you are not a priority.

It should be a priority that we pay down our national debt instead of passing that burden along to our children. This budget tells every young American: Sorry, you better start saving money now to pay off the national debt because, under the Republican tax plan, you are not a priority.

It is a priority that we strengthen and modernize Medicare. It is a priority that seniors get help buying the medicine they need because no one should have to choose between buying medicine and paying for food. This budget tells seniors: Sorry, you can't get the prescription drug coverage you need because, under the Republican tax plan, you are not a priority.

The American people want real budgets, not gimmicks. They want to know that our Nation's vital priorities are being treated as priorities. They don't want the things that matter in their lives to be squeezed out by unbalanced tax cuts that only benefit a few people.

We should be using the surplus we have today to honor our commitments to our children and to our seniors. Now is the time to address the long-term solvency of Social Security and Medicare and to provide resources to local communities to make our classrooms ready for the 21st century. Those are the things a responsible budget would do. We should pass a budget that reflects the priorities of the American people and one that is realistic. I believe the budget before us fails the American people on both counts. Therefore, I must oppose it.

I thank the Chair and yield the remainder of my time to the Democratic side.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Mexico.

Mr. DOMENICI. Would the Chair inform me how much time remains?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Mexico has 40 minutes; the Senator from Rhode Island has 26 minutes; the Senator from New Jersey has 20 minutes.

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I don't intend to use the entire time I have. I would like to make sure I understand where they are going on the other side. If we are going to make an effort to vote earlier, I will be yielding back some of my time. I yield myself 6 minutes.

First, let me identify the occupant of the chair. The occupant of the chair is one of our new Senators, Mr. SMITH, from way over on the West Coast. I am very proud to have him in the Senate, but I am more proud that he is on the Budget Committee. There are people talking about what happens in this budget resolution, such as the distinguished Senator, Mrs. MURRAY, talking about a sense-of-the-Senate resolution as if it were binding on somebody. It is nothing more than what it says. It doesn't affect anything. To the extent we dropped some of her provisions, there were scores of sense-of-the-Senate resolutions in this budget that we did not take.

What we did keep was something for which the distinguished occupant of the chair fought hard. I am told there are so many people watching C–SPAN. Sometimes I wonder how many times they want to hear the same speech, but I believe, when it is given again on that side, I have to say a few words.

I repeat: Because of the distinguished Senator who occupies the chair, working in concert with the distinguished Senator from Maine, Ms. SNOWE, helped by Senator WYDEN from the same State as the occupant of the chair, we have a real provision we did not drop that has to do with Medicare prescription drugs and Medicare reform. I was so pleased to hear a freshman Senator, the occupant of the chair, say he wanted to support the Snowe amendment for $40 billion and that we might as well face up and get a bill. It says we can use the whole $40 billion for prescription drugs, and it is not crowded out by tax relief. It is separate and distinct; it is available.

We have said if you do some reform to preserve the well-being of the Medicare system, you can have $40 billion in new money for prescription drugs. Now, if you choose to only do prescription drugs and do nothing to Medicare, it gets $20 billion to go ahead and add some prescription drugs. Frankly, I believe the Senator occupying the chair, Senator SMITH of Oregon, was on the side of a very large majority of Senators. I think so long as we keep it bipartisan there is going to be an effort to repair the Medicare system for the senior citizens, which is going broke, and we can say we reformed it and modernized it and at the same time we have added $40 billion for prescription drugs.

No matter how many times the other side repeats it—and I don't know that I am going to answer it again today—I will tell you what I know is in the budget resolution. If I had to read the words, you would see I am paraphrasing the words quite accurately. With reference to education, we can continue to hear specifics, that we didn't provide classroom teachers. Let me repeat, the only time we are going to find out what we really do for education is when the Appropriations Committee, headed by Senator SPECTER, produces an appropriations bill, because anything we say in this budget resolution about specifics on education are only assumptions.

Many times, if not most of the time, the Appropriations Committee decides what they are going to spend on education, which programs they are going to fund, and whether it is going to be less children per classroom or more. That is not going to be decided by this resolution. What is going to be, or could be, decided is how much is available for education—not specifics but education.

I say that this conference report assumes $45.6 billion in the year 2001 for the Department of Education—a $10 billion increase, or 30-percent increase, over last year's level. Over the next 5 years, most interestingly, assumptions on education are $21.9 billion in new money, additional money, which is essentially what the President asked for.

Now, whatever they want to say in the next hour in repetition, I don't know that I will answer it again. I am trying my very best to say that these specific things Senators bring to the Senator floor and say there is a sense of the Senate on it and that would have gotten it done, I want to be kind; I don't want to say what I might say. But the fact that it is in, or not, doesn't mean very much. It is what the Appropriations Committee does with the money. Then there is going to be a bipartisan debate, for which I am grateful, on whether we should have the status quo on education programs or whether we should have reform.

Essentially, for anybody interested in what is going to determine where we spend the money and how we spend it, it may be that we are going to leave all these categorical programs—money for more teachers and less students per classroom and all the other specifics that some people think are important—it may be that we will let the schools keep doing that. We are probably going to give them an option not to do that; in a way, that is more accommodating to them, with flexibility and accountability.

That is essentially what we set up. We don't preclude that debate and its conclusions, which I understand from the majority leader will occur before this year is out. It is historical because it is coming out of committee of jurisdiction. It is not going to be done on the floor. It is headed by Senator JEFFORDS. Nobody thought there would be major reform. There is major reform, and it comes out to the floor to be debated.

I don't know that I can do more on the issue of debt reduction other than to tell the Senate that this budget resolution has over $1 trillion in debt service over the next 5 years. It is most interesting that, all of a sudden, there is a difference between reducing the debt held by the public through Social Security surpluses and reducing it with other surpluses. Let me say, dollar for dollar, it is the same debt reduction, or reduction held by the public. It doesn't matter whether it comes out of the Social Security surplus that we don't spend or whether it comes out of the surplus that is on budget. We have a different way of accounting for them.

We think there is a lot of money available during the next 5 years. In fact, we think over a freeze there is $400 billion in non-Social Security surplus. There is already a basic budget. Looking at this chart, we think it is $400 billion. Interestingly enough, that is over freezing everything. The Democrats assume what they call a freeze in real spending, that would bring the spending way up to here because they add inflation every year and call it automatic. It is not spending new money. We said let's start over. So we put $212 billion in domestic programs—domestic and defense. We put $150 billion in tax relief, which we ask today, how many more times do we have to hear that our tax proposals are for the rich? The biggest tax proposal is the marriage tax penalty. Is that what they are saying is a typical Republican effort to help the rich? I hope all the married people in America listen to that argument.

In addition, we take that surplus and we put $40 billion of it in this non-Social Security on the debt. I don't believe the argument is about debt reduction. It may be today, but the argument is: Let's spend that tax relief money. Let's spend this. That is what the argument is about. I repeat, if we don't get tax relief, all this money, $150 billion, goes to debt reduction for the debt held by the public, adding to the $1 trillion I have just told you about that is in this.

I will conclude by thanking the Budget Committee. The Republican majority produced this format. Obviously, from the newest Senator, to me as the most senior Senator on our side, we followed the lead of OLYMPIA SNOWE on Medicare and the leadership of my friend who is occupying the Chair, in getting a real Medicare proposal and that will drive a bipartisan solution. Let me repeat, in an election year, praise the Lord, if we can get a bipartisan solution to Medicare because it will be the right one if it turns out to be a partisan solution. I am afraid it

will be a political solution, and I am not sure the Medicare trust fund for our seniors is going to come out very well. So that is why I think this is a good approach.

My last observation is that the Appropriations Committee has to take all this money and decide what to do with it. Senator TED STEVENS is the chairman and that is his principal responsibility. I assure those who voted for this and who will vote for it today, it depends on how you allocate the money among priorities. But if they happen to be priorities we have been expressing today and that we expressed in this resolution, there will be plenty of funding for education, plenty of funding for the National Institutes of Health, plenty of funding for Medicare—and that is not an appropriated account—and we will have plenty of money to prepare our defense for this new 100 years we are entering where we need to make up some lost ground.

I yield the floor and reserve the remainder of my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey is recognized.

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Mr. President, I yield 5 minutes to the Senator from Florida.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, I have a lot to say and not much time in which to say it. The fundamental point is that this budget resolution represents a statement of the values of the Members of Congress, representing the 270 million citizens of the United States of America. What this budget resolution says is that we are giving a priority to tax cuts over meeting the moral, ethical, and legal obligations of the U.S. Government to its citizens by failing to make a commitment to strengthen Social Security and to strengthen the Medicare program. That is the fundamental message of this budget resolution.

This budget resolution requires the Senate Finance Committee to report two bills with tax cuts totalling $150 billion in the next 5 years. The Finance Committee can report separate legislation cutting taxes by an additional $25 billion over 5 years.

The Finance Committee can report even greater tax cuts if in July the Congressional Budget Office projects higher on-budget surpluses.

There is no similar set of mandates or permission as it relates to strengthening Social Security and strengthening and expanding Medicare. We must do these things. And we can do these things relative to tax cuts. There is no similar provision relative to our obligation to Social Security and Medicare.

We already have embarked on a serious and, I say, unfocused tax-cutting process. If you add up what we have already done in the educational savings account, the Patients' Bill of Rights, the minimum wage, small business tax cut, and what was proposed this week in terms of marriage penalty tax cuts, and suspension of the gas tax, with that hole in our transportation funding being filled by the non-Social Security surplus, we have already spent approximately two-thirds of the non-Social Security surplus we anticipate for this next fiscal year and approximately two-thirds of what we anticipate for the next 5 years with those actions alone.

I suggest that is not a prudent way to go about using the non-Social Security surplus—that we ought to do first things first. The first thing we should do is to meet the obligation this Government has to its citizens in the areas of Social Security and Medicare. Why are those two such priorities? They are priorities because the citizens of the United States every payday are paying into those trust funds for Social Security and for Medicare. They have a legal, contractual obligation from the Government to meet those benefits which they anticipate. We need to have a similar commitment to assure that those programs are going to be capable of meeting those obligations.

We also have not been faithful in this budget resolution to some commitments both Houses have made in terms of a prescription medication benefit.

Both the Senate- and the House-passed resolutions infer—and the leadership of both Houses publicly stated—that we would be reserving $40 billion over the next 5 years for purposes of a prescription medication benefit.

We received from the conference committee a commitment to spend $20 billion for additional access to prescription medication—not a specific modification of the Medicare program that would incorporate prescription medication as a benefit of Medicare. The other $20 billion would be available only if there were changes in the structure of the Medicare program which would be scored by the Congressional Budget Office as increasing the solvency of the Medicare program.

This is not the prescription medication benefit the American people expected. This is not the benefit we anticipated when we passed the budget resolution in the Senate. It is not a prescription medication benefit that will respond to the realities of modern medicine.

One of the reasons many of us believe it is so important to have a prescription medication benefit is to change the fundamental culture of the Medicare system. Medicare was adopted in 1965 as an acute-care program. If you were sick enough to go in the hospital, or if you were run over by a truck, Medicare would provide financing for your health care.

What we need to be thinking about as we start the 21st century is the approach to health care most Americans want. That is an approach that emphasizes prevention and wellness and the maintenance of quality of life. Almost every step required to do that, whether it is to moderate diabetes, to reduce the prospect of stroke and heart disease, to deal with hormonal imbalances, all of those things that are fundamental to the quality of life, particularly of older Americans, requires prescription medication as a key to this accomplishment.

Providing this prescription medication benefit is not just adding another benefit to Medicare, as has been asserted; rather, it is changing the fundamental orientation of Medicare to one that will focus on the wellness of the American people, and not just wait until they get sick enough to go in the hospital.

That is the fundamental issue that is at risk with this budget resolution which puts at the top of the pyramid of American values providing unspecified tax cuts and puts at the bottom of American values meeting our contract with the Americans who have built this great Nation through strength in Social Security and Medicare.

I urge the rejection of this budget resolution. Hopefully, we will have an opportunity to adopt one that is more in keeping with the desires of the American people.

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Mr. President, I yield 5 minutes to the Senator from Minnesota.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from New Jersey.

We have an economy that is booming. We have record low levels of unemployment. We have Government coffers that are overflowing. We have a predicted $3 trillion surplus over the next 10 years.

We are still being told by this budget resolution that we can't afford in our country to provide a good education for every child; we can't afford good health care for citizens; we can't afford to do something about the poverty of 14 million children in our country.

In the words of Rabbi Hill, ''If not now, when?'' This Republican budget resolution provides a very discouraging answer to Rabbi Hill's question. This budget resolution says to Rabbi Hill, ''Not now and probably not ever.''

The tradeoff is simple. You have huge tax cuts disproportionately flowing to wealthier, high-income citizens. You have in a post-world-war era a bloated military budget. But you have a budget resolution that does not invest in the health, the skill, the intellect, and the character of our children, and you have a budget resolution that in nondefense discretionary spending calls for cuts with a booming economy.

We will see cuts in Head Start, new teachers, reducing class size, home-delivered meals to seniors, and environmental cleanup.

We will not do well in this new century, and we will not have the successful economy or the successful moral nation Senator GRAHAM talks about, if we don't provide a good education for every child. We will not do as well as we can do as a nation in this new century if we don't invest in the skills development of our children. We will not

do as well as we could and must do as a nation and national community if we don't invest in the health of our children. We, the United States of America, the good country, will not be better unless we make this investment in our children. By that standard, this budget is sorely lacking. I will vote against it.

I yield the floor.

Mr. LAUTENBERG. I yield 10 minutes to the Senator from Iowa.

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, 7 years ago we ended a failed economic policy of trickle down economics. It brought ballooning deficits, a quadrupling of the national debt, high interest rates, and low growth. But we made some tough decisions and tough votes. We changed the course of the new economic policies that invested in people and imposed needed fiscal discipline.

The results are in: 21 million new jobs, 4 percent unemployment rate, the lowest in 30 years, the fastest growth rate in 30 years, and the lowest crime and welfare rate in 30 years. There is the highest home ownership ever, 108 months of straight economic growth, productivity-breaking records, and inflation outside of energy is tame. Why do we want to change this? Why return to the days of risky tax schemes, the days of trickle down economics, and fiscal irresponsibility?

That is exactly what the conference report budget before the Senate does. This budget resolution before the Senate provides $175 billion to tax cuts, skewed to the wealthiest of Americans. The Congressional Budget Office, however, projects $171 billion in non-Social Security surpluses over the next 5 years. Add the higher interest we have to pay on the public debt because we did tax cuts instead of paying down the debt, and what does that add up to? This budget conference report before the Senate means we will have to tap into the Social Security surplus in order to pay for these tax cuts.

It is fiscally irresponsible. We ought to take a different course and follow the adage that when times are good, prepare for the future. That means the budget should put the highest priority on paying off the debt, securing Social Security and Medicare for the future.

I have said time and time again on this floor, if you want to save Medicare and cut down on Medicare expenses today, invest in medical research. To that end, 3 years ago, the Senate, in a unanimous vote, went on record as saying we ought to double NIH basic medical research in 5 years. Last year, we had a historic increase of $2.3 billion to keep on the track of doubling NIH research in 5 years. This next year would require $2.7 billion. Keep in mind the Senate voted unanimously to double NIH funding.

When the budget came out of committee, it was short by $1.6 billion for NIH research. Senator SPECTER, chairman of the appropriations subcommittee on health and human services that funds NIH, offered an amendment that I supported to add back the $1.6 billion to medical research. Nine Republicans joined the Democrats, and it passed 54–46.

As anyone who has even opened the newspapers lately knows, we are on the verge of many breakthroughs in biomedical research, stem cell research, and the human genome, which is being mapped and will be done shortly. Now we need to push ahead to invest in medical research, to find the causes, the cures, and the preventions for many of the illnesses that cost Medicare so much today. Yet this conference report ignores the bipartisan vote in the Senate. It completely obliterates the $1.6 billion that was added by the Specter amendment. It has been wiped out.

Let's bring it to concrete terms. What does it mean? The conference report that took out that $1.6 billion, when spread over the different research being done by NIH, means, for example, that in AIDS research, $179 million less than what we had in the Senate; cancer research is $261 million less than what we had in the Senate; prostate cancer is down $21 million; arthritis is down $24 million; Alzheimer's is $41.8 million less than what we had in the Senate.

If the conference report had kept in what we had voted for in the Senate, we would have an additional $261 million for cancer research; we would have an additional $179 million for AIDS research; we would have an additional $111 million for mental health research; we would have an additional $14 million for Parkinson's; we would have an additional $13 million for osteoporosis; we would have an additional $1.9 million for multiple sclerosis; we would have another $24 million for kidney disease; we would have another $38 million to study infant mortality; we would have another $47 million for diabetes research if this budget report has the $1.6 billion added by the Senate.

I thought the budget we passed was inadequate before; it is woefully inadequate now. For the life of me, I don't understand why the $1.6 billion was taken out of this critically needed part of meeting our obligations of the future for NIH basic research.

There is another point. The Senate resolution had increased Pell grants by $400, bringing them up to $3,700. We have needed to do that over the last 20 years. The purchasing power of Pell grants went down 25 percent. A poor student in college today can spend 25 percent less with the maximum Pell grant than 20 years ago. The education was also dropped in conference. That is deeply, deeply disappointing.

This budget needs to be sent back to the drawing board. It targets fiscally irresponsible tax breaks to the wealthiest of Americans. It shortchanges the critical investments we need: First, in medical research; and, second, in investment in education to keep our economy and our people healthy and strong.

I yield back the remainder of my time.

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, in the last week, this budget has gone from bad to worse. That is the only ''progress'' we've seen. After a conference from which Democrats were excluded, our Republicans colleagues are now proposing even bigger tax cuts. Last week, Senate Republicans voted for $150 billion in tax cuts over five years, plus a ''summer surprise'' of more tax cuts. This resolution calls for $175 billion over five years, plus a ''summer surprise.''

To pay for those bigger tax cuts, this resolution calls for even deeper cuts in education, health care, other critical priorities. It still calls for 6 percent across-the-board cut in discretionary spending next year. That hasn't changed—for obvious reasons; our colleagues don't want to make things even worse just before an election.

But things do get much worse after the election—and every year for the foreseeable future—under this plan. The additional cuts all ratchet up in the ''out years.'' Instead of 8 percent across-the-board cuts by 2005, this plan calls for cuts of nearly 10 percent across-the-board by 2005.

This plan dramatically weakens—in fact, it all but eliminates—any commitment to a prescription drug benefit. Last week, this Senate passed a plan that dedicated $40 billion over five years for prescription drugs. That commitment is not included in this resolution. This resolution includes $20 billion to quote—''improve access to prescription drugs''—whatever that means. There's another $20 billion—but that's available only after we cut Medicare benefits.

As if that's not bad enough, this plan says the money for a prescription drug benefit will be available ''whenever'' the Finance Committee reports out a prescription drug bill. ''Whenever''? Why don't they just say the money will be available ''if we feel like it,'' or, the money will be available ''if there's anything left after we pass all our tax breaks''?

The Senate-passed Republican budget at least included a date. It said money for prescription drug benefit would be available by Sept. 1, 2000—whether or not the Finance Committee did its job. Now they've scratched out that date and written in ''whenever.'' You can practically see the budget writers winking! What they really mean is ''never.''

Last week, a majority of Senators voted that Congress should put prescription drugs ahead of tax cuts. Fifty-one Senators—Republicans and Democrats—said we should not spend one dollar on tax cuts until we pass a real prescription drug bill. This resolution directly contradicts that statement. It says, ''Forget what we said last week. Spend nearly $200 billion on tax cuts now. Worry about prescription drugs whenever.'' The contradiction would be laughable if it weren't so deadly serious.

Our Republican colleagues claim that, under their plan, total discretionary spending next year would be $14 billion above freeze. The operative word is ''total.'' What they don't like to say about their budget is defense spending is $21 billion above a freeze; non-defense discretionary spending is $7 billion below a freeze.

There's another thing our colleagues don't like to talk about: According to the Congressional Budget Office, the total non-Social Security surplus over the next five years will be $171 billion. The reason our colleagues don't like to talk about that is their tax cut costs $196 billion over 5 years—$25 billion more than entire non-Social Security surplus.

I am tempted to recycle that classic old Yogi Berra line—''It's deja vu all over again.''—because it seems like we've had this same debate every year for the last five years. Instead, let me use a different Yogi Berra quote: ''It ain't over 'til it's over.'' This is just the beginning of the budget process. We have many months to go.

This budget does not meet the priorities of American people. If we pass this flawed plan, America would miss a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to sustain and expand this economic prosperity; protect Social Security and Medicare; and invest in America's future—in education, medical research, safe communities, clean water—all the things we need to remain strong and competitive.

In the five years since they regained control of Congress, Republicans have never passed a budget without a major ''train wreck.'' This budget, unfortunately, sets us up to extend that record. To quote the Republican Chairman of the House Appropriations Committee, these numbers are ''unrealistic.'' They do not add up. It's obvious. We know it, and they know it.

We hope that this year, our colleagues will admit their plan can't work—before the train wreck. If they do, Democrats are ready, willing and determined to work with them to get the budget process back on track. We want to work with Republicans to write a responsible budget. A budget that extends the solvency of Social Security and Medicare, so we can avoid a Baby Boomer retirement crisis; a budget that includes a real Medicare prescription drug plan that is voluntary, affordable and universal.

We want to work with Republicans to pass a budget that pays down our national debt—so we can stop wasting $220 billion a year—$600 million a day—on interest payments. We want to work with our colleagues to pass a budget that provides tax cuts to help working families with real needs—like child care, day care, and caring for older parents—a budget that invests education, health care and other critical priorities. We want to work with Republicans to pass a budget, in short, that allows us to seize, not squander, the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity now before us.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I will reluctantly vote against the Conference Report on the Budget Resolution for Fiscal Year 2001. Although the budget resolution includes most of the mechanisms approved by the Senate to ensure better budgetary discipline, the resolution fails to address the pressing issues of the impending financial insolvency of Social Security and Medicare, and the massive burden of debt that will be passed along to our children and grandchildren.

Mr. President, for the first time in history, economic projections show a surplus of nearly $1.9 trillion over the next ten years, exclusive of the surplus in the Social Security Trust Funds. At the same time, we know that the Social Security system is projected to be bankrupt by 2037 and Medicare will be broke in 2023, leaving millions of elderly Americans without the promised benefits they need to live comfortably in their retirement years.

Yet, this budget resolution uses none of the surplus to shore up either Social Security or Medicare. Nor does it apply any significant portion of the surplus to reducing the burden on future generations of our $5.7 trillion national debt. In fact, debt will actually continue to accumulate because the resolution allows most of the non-Social Security surplus to be spent on more big government programs.

Mr. President, as I traveled around the country over the past several months, I listened to the American people. Everywhere I went, they told me that they wanted us to protect and preserve Social Security and Medicare. They said they wanted to pay down the debt. I proposed a plan to use the bulk of the non-Social Security surplus to do what the people told me they wanted to do, and still provide much-needed tax relief to those who need it most—lower- and middle-income families. Unfortunately, this budget spends too much and saves too little for the future, and I cannot support it.

Mr. President, there are some very good provisions in the budget resolution.

I support the increase of $4.5 billion in defense spending over the President's budget request, which represents real growth in the defense budget for the first time in many years. I am pleased that the conference includes the $25 million added to the defense budget to get 12,000 enlisted families off of food stamps and end the disgrace of the food stamp Army once and for all. For too many years, the Clinton Administration has neglected the people who volunteer for military service. With this increase, and money freed up from eliminating waste and inefficiency in the defense budget, we can make progress toward restoring the morale and readiness of our Armed Forces.

The addition of $1.9 billion to the budget request for veterans health care is the amount identified in the Independent Budget of the veterans groups as the minimum necessary to provide appropriate care for our veterans. I hope the Congress sees fit this year to restore the ''broken promise'' of free lifetime medical care that was made to our nation's oldest veterans, and I intend to work with my colleagues to ensure all of our military personnel have access to the quality, affordable health care they deserve.

Many of the specific funding assumptions in the resolution are laudable, but I disagree with funding most of these increases from the surplus. I have identified billions of dollars of pork-barrel spending in annual appropriations bills over the past several years—programs that are wasteful, inefficient, or low-priority. Because of the compelling need to deal with the problems in Social Security and Medicare, we should look within the budget to ferret out waste in order to fund higher priority requirements, rather than spend the entire surplus on more government.

Some of the objectionable provisions in this resolution are earmarks that would qualify as pork-barrel spending if they were included in an appropriations bill. For example, the resolution identifies $700 million to construct, or site and design, more than ten new courthouses in 2001. It assumes $25 million will be set aside for the construction of a Metro station on New York Avenue in the District of Columbia. And it earmarks $510 million for NOAA's Pacific coastal salmon recovery program. As I have always said, I am not making a judgment on the merits of these programs, but their mention in this resolution leads me to assume that they will show up as earmarks in the appropriations process—a process not noted for its reliance on merit over politics.

I also note the significant cut in the International Affairs budget in the resolution, which is $2.7 billion less than the President's request and $2.2 billion below last year's level. I am concerned that, as in past years, the foreign affairs budget is seen as an easy target for cuts to offset spending in other areas. Clearly, the United States is and must remain a global power with global interests, both related to our security and that of our allies, as well as our economic health. Our continued international involvement requires not just a strong military, but a robust diplomacy. I will be looking carefully at the Foreign Operations Appropriations bill to ensure that the programs that are cut to meet this budget target are appropriate and do not in any way hinder our ability to influence world affairs to our advantage.

Mr. President, I am pleased to note that the resolution includes several Senate-passed provisions to ensure Congress complies with the revenue and spending levels in the resolution to limit the amount of emergency spending and budgetary gimmicks, including:

A Social Security ''lockbox'' point of order which can be raised against any

budget resolution that dips into the Social Security Trust Funds.

A permanent 60-vote point of order in the Senate challenging any ''emergency'' in any spending or revenue bill, to ensure that emergency spending is truly used for emergencies and not simply to avoid accounting for routine spending.

A restored firewall between defense and non-defense spending for FY 2001, with any funds unused in either account to be used for debt reduction.

Two new 60-vote points of order to prevent the use of advanced appropriations and delayed obligations to circumvent spending limits.

Mr. President, there are many good provisions in the budget resolution, and I thank the Chairman and Ranking Member of the Budget Committee for taking on some very tough fights. The fact is that we simply have different opinions about budget priorities. I cannot support this resolution because it spends the surplus on more government, without guaranteeing funding for Social Security or Medicare reform or significantly reducing the debt, and I will vote against the resolution.

Mr. L. CHAFEE. Mr. President, I rise today to express my opposition to H. Con. Res. 290, the Budget Resolution for FY 2001 Conference Report that the Senate is voting on today. I feel it is important to note that despite my opposition, I have deep and abiding respect for Budget Committee Chairman DOMENICI and recognize and appreciate the hard work, expertise, and excellent leadership that he has displayed in the Senate's consideration of the federal budget.

There is much to praise in Chairman DOMENICI's budget. Increased funding for education and defense. A reserve fund of $40 billion for a prescription drug benefit. Provisions to do away with budgetary gimmicks. A Social Security Lock-Box. But, there is just too much money set aside for tax cuts, and not enough for paying down the debt.

While I support some targeted tax cuts, such as the low-income housing tax credit, and marriage penalty relief, I believe that $150 billion over five years in tax cuts is too much. Instead, I believe it makes more sense to pay down the debt. The federal debt—currently $5.7 trillion, with interest costs of over $200 billion per year, or almost 12 percent of annual federal outlays—represents a huge burden that should not be passed on to our children and to our grandchildren. Not only is this massive debt a problem, but by paying down the debt we would free up more than $200 billion per year. That money eventually could be used to ensure the solvency of Social Security and Medicare; to increase funding for education, specifically, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA); needed infrastructure and environmental improvements; and to provide for tax relief.

Let me take a few moments to explain a number of my votes from last week during the Senate's consideration of the Budget Resolution. I voted for an amendment offered by Senator CONRAD that would have reduced the tax cuts in the Budget Resolution from $150 billion over five years to $75 billion for tax cuts and $75 billion for debt relief. I also voted for an amendment offered by Senator VOINOVICH that would have struck all tax relief from the Budget Resolution so that it may be used for debt relief. Believing that the approach taken by Senator LAUTENBERG was more fiscally responsible, I voted in favor of his amendment because it contained only $59 billion in tax cuts and provided for more debt relief. Finally, I voted against the Budget Resolution as it was reported from Committee because it contained a too high level of tax cuts and not enough debt relief.

All of us who have had to pay interest—be it on our house, car, credit card, or other payment—know that these costs are painful. We need to apply the same fiscal discipline here in Congress that we apply at home. To pay out 12 percent of our revenues annually on interest costs rather than on education, needed infrastructure construction and improvements, and to ensure the solvency of the Social Security and Medicare programs, seems to me to be a poor investment of taxpayer dollars. Therefore, in an effort to encourage fiscal discipline and responsibility, I am casting my vote against the Budget Resolution Conference Report.

Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President, first I must congratulate the Chairman of the Budget Committee, Senator DOMENICI, for producing an on-time budget for only the third time in the 24-plus-year history of the Budget Act.

Thrifty, cautious, and conservative. These adjectives describe the Yankee qualities of many Vermonters when someone tries to get them to open their wallets, and are in the genes of anyone who represents our great state in Congress. I am pleased that this resolution protects social security. Not one penny of the social security surplus is touched. Second, it balances the budget every year without using the social security surplus. Thirdly, this resolution retires the national debt held by the public—nearly $170 billion in the first year and $1 trillion over the next five years.

I am greatly troubled, however, about certain elements in the budget, and will vote against the fiscal year 2001 budget resolution now before the Senate.

What would a cautious farmer do when times are good—invest in new equipment to become more efficient, pay off debts, and put some away for a rainy day. There is no question that tax relief is warranted, but not at the expense of education, veterans health, job training, child care and other important discretionary programs.

A farmer cautiously guards his seed corn for future harvests. Our nation's seed corn is its youth and investments in education are needed to protect our prosperity. The conference report now before us rejects funding added on the floor of the Senate for three important education programs. It not only rejects funding that a majority of this body supported but it takes a giant step backward by reducing funding for education $3 billion below what was contained within the original Senate-passed resolution.

When I first arrived in Congress, one of the very first bills that I had the privilege of working on was the Education of All Handicapped Act of 1975. As a freshman Member of Congress, I was proud to sponsor that legislation and to be named as a member of the House and Senate conference committee along with then Vermont Senator Bob Stafford.

At that time, despite a clear Constitutional obligation to educate all children, regardless of disability, thousands of disabled students were denied access to a public education. Passage of the Education of All Handicapped Act offered financial incentives to states to fulfill this existing obligation. Recognizing that the costs associated with educating these children was more than many school districts could bear alone, the Federal government pledged to pay 40 percent of the costs of educating these students.

The budget resolution that is before us makes a mockery of this pledge. The original Senate budget resolution assumed that the Federal government would only fund between 15 and 18 percent of the cost of educating disabled students. My amendment to increase this percentage was narrowly defeated last week and was then watered down by an amendment by my colleague Senator VOINOVICH. I had hoped, nonetheless, that passage of the Voinovich amendment meant that a serious effort would be made in conference to increase funding for IDEA. This hope was clearly misplaced.

Let me also speak for a minute about early childhood education.

Research into the development and growth of the human brain clearly demonstrates that learning begins at birth. The sheer magnitude of this scientific research is difficult to fathom. When talk turns to 100 billion neurons or connections with axons and dendrites, confusion is the most likely outcome. What this research basically says is something that parents and grandparents have know for decades, very young children need a nurturing, stimulating environment in order for their brains to make the myriad of connections they need to grow into competent, caring adults.

Research on the brain has shown that the years between birth and six are critical for future success in school, at work, and in society. I believe that education provides the cornerstone from which all other things become possible. Our Nation's first educational goal is that all children should begin

school ready to learn. In order to achieve that goal, parents and caretakers need support and assistance to better ensure that they have the tools necessary to incorporate early childhood learning into the daily lives of our Nation's children. Senator STEVENS offered an amendment that was adopted by unanimous consent that provided mandatory funding for this program. This funding was rejected in conference and is not contained within this budget resolution.

Senator KENNEDY and I offered an amendment that provided for a $400 increase in the maximum Pell Grant. These funds make it possible for millions of students to attend college each year. Again, this funding was rejected in conference and is not contained within this resolution.

Prosperity also dictates that we redouble our efforts to protect society's most vulnerable. Unfortunately, this budget does not go far enough to provide drugs to seniors who need them now. I agree with Vermonters who tell me that prescription drug costs are too high, and that it doesn't make sense for Medicare to cover hospital charges, but not cover the drugs that could keep beneficiaries out of the hospital.

Let me be clear, Mr. President, I believe that we need Medicare reform that includes a broad prescription drug benefit. But even if we are not able to enact Medicare reform this year, I believe we need to provide sufficient funds now, in this budget, that will provide relief to Medicare beneficiaries that need help the most—those low-income seniors whose income is high enough that they don't qualify for Medicaid, but still do not have enough income to afford the prescription drugs that they need.

Mr. President, I am very disappointed with the prescription drug provision in this Budget Resolution. I supported the approach of Senator SNOWE's amendment in the Budget Committee that would have provided $40 billion for prescription drugs for Medicare beneficiaries even if Congress is unable to enact Medicare reform. We should not let Congress' inability to enact broad Medicare reform stand in the way of providing seniors with the medicines that they need to live longer, healthier lives.

I am further dismayed that this budget resolution does not fulfill our Nation's commitment to its veterans. Years of underfunding coupled with spiraling health care costs have left the veterans health care system struggling to provide the quality care that veterans expect and deserve. This trend must be stopped and reversed. We owe it to future generations to keep federal spending under control. But we must first recognize the prior claim of veterans who have already given of themselves and who expect to receive the medical care and benefits they were promised.

This budget, like all budgets passed by Congress, is an expression of political intent, priorities, and a starting point for bargaining. Much work remains to be done to pass the 13 appropriations bills that actually fund the government. In areas where I disagree with the budget resolution, I plan to work hard with appropriators to adjust spending levels and turn this budget into reality.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

Mr. ASHCROFT. Mr. President, the Budget Resolution before us is a responsible budget framework. Senator DOMENICI has done a superb job in helping to craft this budget on the Senate side, and he deserves our praise. This budget resolution balances the important goals of debt reduction, tax relief, and prudent spending levels.

Most importantly, the budget will fully protect Social Security now and in the future. This represents a sea change in the way business is done in Washington. When I came to Washington, Congress routinely spent money out of the Social Security trust fund. This resolution ends the raid on Social Security, and does so in two ways.

First, the budget is based on the premise that Social Security funds will not be used to pay for additional deficit spending or tax relief. Second, as part of this budget's commitment to protect the entire Social Security surplus, Senator DOMENICI included a point of order against any budget that spends money out of the Social Security surplus. This rule is the same as the one I proposed last year, and that was included in the FY 2000 budget.

As a result of this hard-fought fiscal discipline, this budget will retire $1.1 trillion in publicly held debt over 5 years, and approximately $170 billion next year. If we continue upon the path laid out by this budget, we will completely eliminate the publicly-held debt over the next 13 years.

We have already made great progress in this regard. When this budget is enacted, we will have reduced the national debt by $533 billion over the past three years.

I was particularly pleased that the Senate unanimously accepted my amendment objecting to the President's plan to have the government invest Social Security surpluses in the stock market. This risky scheme would have put both Social Security and the stock market at risk.

In addition to responsibly paying off our publicly-held debt, this budget allows for approximately $150 billion in tax relief over 5 years, including $13 billion in FY 2001. These actions include significant marriage penalty relief, which already has passed the House, and is working its way through the Senate. In fact, during the debate on the Budget Resolution, the Senate passed the Hutchison-Ashcroft amendment calling for marriage penalty relief 99–1.

In addition to providing a judicious mix of tax relief, debt reduction, and Social Security protection, the FY 2001 Budget Resolution also includes responsible spending levels. This budget, which is a balanced budget for the third year in a row, calls for approximately $600.5 billion in discretionary spending.

This budget will fully fund Medicare, rejecting President Clinton's Medicare cuts of $14 billion over 5 years. In addition, Congress' spending plan calls for a $40 billion reserve fund to pay for Medicare reform and Medicare prescription drugs.

As I said, this budget focuses spending towards our national priorities, including a $4.5 billion increase in education spending in FY 2001, and $5.5 billion in agriculture spending in FY 2000. The FY 2001 budget also increases funding for domestic priorities such as Head Start; embassy security; the National Science Foundation; the National Institutes of Health; the Park Service; and highways and airports.

Of course, this budget isn't perfect. I was disappointed that the Senate did not adopt the effort to protect the Medicare surplus with my Medicare lockbox amendment. This amendment, which would have extended the protections that now apply to Social Security to the Medicare Part A Hospital Insurance trust, did not overcome a point of order in the Senate.

Despite this setback, I am pleased with the overall package agreed to by Congress. It meets the vital national needs of protecting Social Security, reducing debt, cutting taxes, and funding our domestic priorities. I plan to vote for the FY 2001 Budget Resolution.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I rise today in support of the budget resolution conference report. This budget before us today continues the momentum we started last year to provide additional funding for defense in an effort to correct the most critical readiness, modernization, and recruiting and retention problems in our military.

I thank the Majority Leader, the distinguished chairman of the Budget Committee and his staff and the distinguished chairman of the Appropriations Committee and his staff, for working with me to provide the additional $4.0 billion in much-needed funding for the Department of Defense, the reserve for military retiree healthcare, and the important language necessary to allow the military thrift savings plan to become a reality. I also recognize members of my own committee staff—Les Brownlee, Staff Director, Judy Ansley, our Deputy Staff Director, and especially Larry Lanzillotta, our Budget Chief—whose expertise in budgeting matters is invaluable not only to the Armed Services Committee, but to the entire Senate as well.

The funds which have been added in this Budget Resolution for defense are absolutely critical in providing readiness, modernization funding, and the personnel incentives necessary to reverse the negative trends in recruiting and retention. The increase of $4.0 billion will allow us to bring defense

spending to a more appropriate level and address some of the urgent unfunded requirements of the military chiefs. For too many years, the size of our defense budget has been based on constrained funding, not on the threats facing our country or the military strategy necessary to meet those threats. This budget will go a long way in allowing us to ensure the safety and security of our people by maintaining a strong and capable military.

Making the Thrift Savings Plan available to military personnel comes at a critical time for the military services. Participation in a thrift savings account will encourage personal savings and enhance the retirement income for service members, who currently do not have access to a 401(k) savings plan. When the TSP program is implemented, military personnel will be able to join federal workers in a savings program that will enhance the value of their retirement system and permit them to improve their quality of life. The Service Chiefs have indicated that this plan, combined with the pay raise, the repeal of the Redux retirement system, and the increased bonuses in the FY 2000 Defense Authorization Act, will reduce the hemorrhage of trained and experienced military personnel we are now experiencing.

The Secretary of Defense, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, and the Service Chiefs have all said that fulfilling our commitment for healthcare to our military retirees should be among the highest priorities for this year. I believe there is overwhelming support in the Senate to correct many of the shortfalls in the military healthcare system for our service members, their families, and our military retirees. It is critical that we enact the important initiatives contained in the bipartisan healthcare legislation introduced by the leadership of the Senate and the leadership of the Armed Services Committee earlier this year. This budget resolution makes it possible to fund these important health care initiatives for our military retirees.

I want to again express my appreciation to the distinguished Chairman of the Appropriations Committee, Senator STEVENS, and the Chairman of the Budget Committee, Senator DOMENICI, and also their highly professional staff members for assisting us in securing these much-needed funds in support of a stronger national defense.

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, once again, I am trying hard to accommodate Senators. I will not use more of our time if they want to give back. I have one Senator who has not spoken. I yield 5 minutes to Senator SNOWE.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Ms. SNOWE. Mr. President, I rise today to speak in support of the conference report on the fiscal year 2001 budget resolution and to highlight a reserve fund that Senator DOMENICI has been referring to with respect to a new prescription drug benefit.

In advance, I would like to thank the chairman of the Senate Budget Committee for his unwavering commitment to a balanced budget and fiscally responsible decisionmaking over the years. Thanks to his leadership and efforts, the turbulent waves of annual deficits and mounting debt have certainly been calmed. And if we adhere to the principles as contained in this year's budget resolution, and retain these principles in the years to come, clearly, we will have provided security for many generations.

The conference report we are now considering not only maintains fiscal discipline but it also ensures that critical priorities are protected in fiscal year 2001 and beyond, which is the purpose of the balanced budget: to be able to provide a constraint on Federal spending but at the same time determine how best to invest in the future.

I commend the chairman of the Budget Committee for having taken the step last year to protect every dollar that belongs to the Social Security trust fund and devoting it solely to reducing the publicly held debt. Ultimately, this commitment and this conference report will ensure that we reduce the publicly-held debt by approximately $1 trillion over the next 5 years and eliminate it entirely by the year 2013. Clearly, it is a paradigm shift, not only with respect to the fact we are no longer using surpluses that belong to Social Security, but also the fact that we are able to reduce the publicly held debt and make a commitment to protecting Social Security.

The second issue in this budget that is critically important is that we are making investments where we should be making investments for the future—in education, health care, child care, and defense. In addition, this budget provides modest tax relief. The American people do deserve tax relief, given the burdens they have faced over the years to achieve debt reduction, and the constraints we have had to adhere to over this last decade. Certainly they deserve to have a piece of that pie through the elimination of the marriage tax penalty, through a deduction for college tuition expenses and a credit for the interest paid on student loans. Those are the priorities that could be accommodated in this conference report that the American people deserve. I think they are the right priorities.

Third, as the chairman of the committee has indicated, we have now included and have taken a giant step forward in ensuring our Nation's seniors have a prescription drug benefit program. Senator WYDEN, Senator SMITH, and I offered an amendment in the committee that would have laid out a bifurcated approach that would provide a down-payment of $20 billion for a new benefit in the first 3 years, and $20 billion in years 2004 and 2005 contingent on Congress moving forward on Medicare reform. Of importance, the initial down-payment of $20 billion would allow us to move forward in creating a new benefit this year with or without Medicare reform—and that structure has been retained in this conference report.

We also included a date certain by which the Senate Finance Committee would be required to report a new prescription drug benefit bill. If that date was not met, we would be able to proceed with the stand-alone prescription drug benefit on the floor. That time certain was dropped.

But the fact of the matter is, the conference report retains the reserve fund language, and we still have the ability to create a stand-alone prescription drug benefit this year. As a result, the Senate Finance Committee still has $20 billion available to develop a prescription drug benefit program for our Nation's seniors that is not contingent on Medicare reform or other legislation—and an additional $20 billion will be made available if they proceed with broader Medicare reform.

Accordingly, I thank Chairman DOMENICI for his efforts in ensuring that provision would be included in the conference report. The significance of it is twofold. One is that we have $20 billion that would be immediately available for such a benefit. As a result, this reserve fund gives us the opening we need to consider and pass a prescription drug benefit program this year. Furthermore, it not only provides a downpayment for such a benefit over the next 5 years, but it also provides an additional $20 billion if we move forward reach a consensus on Medicare reform. This total allotment of $40 billion over the coming five years is more than was contained in the Chairman's mark, and even more than was provided in the President's own budget proposal for a prescription drug benefit.

There are no caveats, there are no conditions. The Senate Finance Committee has the ability to proceed with a comprehensive Medicare reform package. But in the event they cannot grapple with this issue, if they fail to reach a consensus and Congress fails to reach a consensus, we can proceed and enact a prescription drug benefit program.

So the overall structure of this fund is the same as it was when we offered it as an amendment during the markup, as it was supported unanimously by Republicans and Democrats on the Budget Committee. As a result, it provides the Finance Committee with both the means and the motivation to act on this legislation in a timely manner.

In conclusion, I again applaud the efforts of the chairman of the Budget Committee, Senator DOMENICI, for preserving the essential structure of this reserve fund which enables the Senate and the Congress to create a prescription drug benefit in a timely fashion. I congratulate him because this is a significant step forward and gives us the opportunity, for the first time in a

very long time, to enact this very significant and critical benefit for our Nation's seniors.

Thank you, Mr. President. I yield the floor.

Mr. DOMENICI. I will propound a unanimous consent request. It is cleared on the other side.

I ask unanimous consent vote on adoption of the budget conference report occur no later than 6:30 p.m. this evening.

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

Mr. DOMENICI. I thank the Chair and Senate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I conclude my remarks, regretfully noting we are leaving without passing the juvenile justice bill conference report, without adopting sensible gun control legislation, missing the opportunity, I think, to do what the American people want us to do.

I have long been a supporter of effective gun controls, working hard for the Brady bill and for the assault weapons ban while I was in the other body. But I have been galvanized to an even more concerted effort by an event that took place very recently in Providence. This, I think, is an example of the gun violence we face.

Two young men were horsing around wrestling. One got offended by the other one. Unfortunately, this happened in a neighborhood, like so many neighborhoods, where it is easier to get a gun than it is to get a library book. Someone in the crowd had a handgun. In an act of absolute recklessness, one young man fired at the other young man, critically wounding him in the head. That young man, the shooter, was so distraught that he rushed off and took his own life. That is the face of gun violence in too many places in America today.

We can do something about it. We should do something about it. We should not leave until we do something about it. Regretfully, we are leaving but we are coming back, I hope, with a renewed commitment to ensure we will, in fact, pass the provisions in the juvenile justice committee report.

I yield 5 minutes to the Senator from New Jersey, who has particularly championed the legislation to close the gun show loophole.

I yield to the Senator from New Jersey.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Rhode Island for the work he has done on trying to limit the damage from gun violence in this country. He reminded us it is time. We are days away from April 20, the anniversary of the terrible tragedy at Columbine. We are days away. That means in this full year that passed, we could not find time to get on with doing our best to control gun violence by examining what the possibilities are, by closing the gun show loophole, by making sure those who are going to apply for gun ownership were fit to do it.

Here is a picture of a fellow who is on the FBI Ten Most Wanted Fugitives list. He could walk up to an unlicensed dealer in a gun show and purchase all the guns the money in his pocket can buy. We ought not permit that. The American people do not want us to permit that.

Mr. President, we are closing the debate now. I congratulate my friend and colleague from New Mexico for his ardent work on getting this done. They have a majority, and the one thing we know about our democratic system is if a majority has been sent here by the American people, we have to acknowledge that, and they have the choice of a majority. I wish we had the majority, and we would be kinder and gentler, although I am not sure everybody would agree with that.

That is the die as it was cast. It was cast by a majority. In the process, I see substantial loopholes in this budget conference report. It proposes deep cuts in programs such as education and health care, law enforcement, veterans benefits, and environmental protection. Also, based on just the most simple arithmetic, it is going to raid the Social Security surplus, regarding which so many of us have taken an oath: Touch not a hair on yon gray Social Security head. Here we are, preparing to violate it, even as we present a program for the fiscal year 2001.

They did purport—and I am not talking about as a deception; I am talking about it as an analysis of the arithmetic, the mathematics as it is there—that prescription drugs were going to be taken care of.

I read from the conference committee report under the heading of prescription drugs. It says: Whenever the Committee on Finance in the Senate reports a bill, a joint resolution or conference report thereon submitted which improves access to prescription drugs for Medicare beneficiaries. It does not say we are going to develop a program that is going to make prescription drugs more available, cheaper, et cetera. It does not talk about that. It says access. Maybe it means the Government is going to produce lists of places where one can buy drugs off the Internet cheaper. Maybe access means if you visit country X, Y, or Z, you will be able to buy prescription drugs cheaper.

Access is a broad term. It does not say anything about having to get it done, but it does say in the tax section that the Finance Committee must reconcile. That means they have to produce a sufficient amount of funding for tax breaks for whomever it affects, and this is going to be principally the wealthy.

We leave the prescription drug section and go to the Medicare reform on page 48. It says: Whenever the Committee on Finance in the Senate—they are the people who can do it; we cannot do it in the Budget Committee—whenever the Finance Committee reports a bill, joint resolution, or conference report thereon submitted which improves the solvency of the Medicare program without the use of new subsidies from the general fund—to me that says we are going to dip into the Medicare trust fund in order to reform Medicare.

If that is reform, Heaven protect us, keep us from the kind of reform that says we will have to take funds from cuts in the Medicare trust fund.

Mr. President, in conclusion, this is my last attempt to work on the Federal budget. As disappointed as I am with the outcome, I am pleased to say I very comfortably and very forthrightly worked with Senator DOMENICI. He is a distinguished Senator. He knows his subjects, oh, so well. I will miss the chance for the fray, but also the chance for the pleasant contact we have had through this experience.

Mr. DOMENICI. Does the Senator from New Jersey yield back his time?

Mr. LAUTENBERG. I yield back my time.

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I am going to respond to the Senator for 1 minute, and then I will have remarks about the Senator from New Jersey and our relationship.

I say to the distinguished Senator who spoke about the National Institutes of Health and what we are going to do and not going to do, everybody should know when and by whom the NIH increased in the most dramatic manner in its history.

In the last 3 years, when Republicans controlled both Houses, we increased the National Institutes of Health—cancer, AIDS, all those diseases—let me give the numbers to my colleagues. Since 1998, NIH has increased 40 percent: In 1998, $13.7 billion; in 1999, it was $15.6 billion. That is a 14-percent increase. In 2000, it went up 13.8 percent, one of the largest domestic program increases in this whole budget. In 2001, this conference report, NIH funding is going to $19.3 billion. That is an increase of 8 percent. We are doing pretty well trying to find cures for serious ailments, thanks to the Republicans who in conference and elsewhere pushed so hard for it.

I ask that it be in order to ask for the yeas and nays.

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

Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, when Senator LAUTENBERG of New Jersey came to this committee, I do not know if he was like me, but I never thought I would be ranking member, much less chairman. I am not sure he had a plan to be ranking member, especially when he had to put up with me.

It has been not only a joy, in terms of getting our committee work done, but it has been healthy from the standpoint of adversaries who believe

strongly about their position but understand the other fellow can have a different opinion and it is all right, they are OK. That is how I feel about him. He has different views than I, but he brought a lot of stability to this committee. The minority ought to be very grateful for the way he handled matters. They all had a chance to contribute.

Today is his last effort on the floor of the Senate as ranking member. I thank him. I hope the whole Senate understands what he has done.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Mr. President, if I may take 1 minute from the time remaining of the Senator from Rhode Island. I yielded back all my time.

I ask unanimous consent to print in the RECORD documents prepared by OMB that explain the impact as they see it.

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

POTENTIAL IMPACT IN FY 2001 OF THE BUDGET RESOLUTION CONFERENCE REPORT

The following programmatic impact statements illustrate reductions (by function) to the FY 2001 Budget request contained in the Budget Resolution Conference Report.

EDUCATION, TRAINING, EMPLOYMENT, AND SOCIAL SERVICES

Class Size. The Conference Report appears to freeze the Class Size Reduction program at the FY 2000 level and would therefore prevent the hiring of the third group of teachers meant to reduce class size in grades 1–3, to a nationwide average of 18 students per class. Twenty thousand new teachers could not be hired.

21st Century Community Learning Centers. The Conference Report could cut $547 million from the President's request, denying approximately 1.6 million school age children in over 6,000 new centers access to before- and after-school and summer programs in safe, drug-free environments.

School Construction. The Budget Resolution Conference Report could eliminate $1.3 billion in loan subsidies and grants to repair 5,000 public schools.

Small, safe, and drug-free schools. The Conference Report could prevent 400 additional high schools from developing schools-within-schools and career academies that could create smaller, safer learning environments for students. It could also severely compromise the President's proposed 40-community expansion of the popular interagency Safe Schools/Healthy Students initiative, which supports comprehensive, community-wide approaches to drug and violence prevention, and eliminate Project SERV, an initiative to provide emergency assistance to schools affected by serious violence or other traumatic incidents.

Funding for the Dislocated Worker program would be cut by about $213 million, denying training, job search assistance, and support services to approximately 118,000 dislocated workers.

Adult training services for over 45,000 of the 380,000 adults who would otherwise be served in FY 2000 would be eliminated.

Funding for the Youth Activities Formula Grant program would be cut by about $123 million, denying 73,000 low-income youth summer jobs and training opportunities.

The Community Service Employment for Older Americans program would be cut by about $57 million. About 12,000 low-income older Americans would lose their part-time jobs.

The budget resolution would cut the Job Corps program by $163 million—preventing Job Corps from opening the final two centers of the recent four center expansion and possibly resulting in the closure of 8–11 additional Job Corps Centers, denying job training opportunities to over 5,000 disadvantaged youth.

Funding for the Youth Opportunity Grants program would be cut by $45 million, denying over 10,000 youth in high-poverty communities access to education, training, and employment assistance.

A $845 million cut to the President's request would force Head Start to provide services to approximately 70,000 fewer children in FY 2001 than would otherwise be served.

The 12-percent cut to the Administration on Aging assumed in the Budget Resolution would result in 20 million fewer home-delivered meals to ill and disabled seniors than would otherwise be served.

COMMUNITY AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The final Budget Resolution reduces funding for Community and Regional Development below last year's level and is a decrease of approximately $3 billion from the President's budget. Given the competing demands within this program category, this funding level would almost certainly result in no increase in the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program, and would probably end up reducing CDBG funding by eight percent below the President's budget level. This would reduce local communities support of housing activities, including a loss of more than 28,000 people from benefiting from programs providing housing rehabilitation, construction, and homebuyer assistance, and 6,900 fewer jobs being created using CDBG assistance for economic development. The resolution funding level would seriously impair the ability of the New Markets initiatives to provide businesses with funding and assistance, which they would use to invest in low income neighborhoods around the country.

The Conference Report's funding level would seriously impair the ability of the New Markets initiatives to provide businesses with funding and assistance, which they would use to invest in low-income neighborhoods around the country.

FEMA Emergency Funding. Contingent emergency appropriations provide a means to make emergency disaster response funding available to handle the disaster activity that is expected to occur, based on recent experience. By stripping out contingent emergency funding from the President's budget request, the Budget Resolution makes it more difficult for the President to release appropriate funding as quickly as possible to enable Federal agencies to respond rapidly when a disaster strikes. Postponing consideration of contingent emergency appropriations until disasters strike could lead to circumstances in which disaster victims are left without shelter and communities are left without critical clean up and rebuilding assistance for days, weeks, and sometimes even months.

Super-Majority for FEMA Emergencies. Requiring a super-majority of the Senate for an emergency appropriation would make it much more difficult for the Federal Government to respond quickly and appropriately to disasters. A super-majority requirement could lead to some circumstances in which disaster victims are left without Federal disaster assistance for lengthy periods—and perhaps even some cases in which disaster victims will not receive the assistance they need.

INCOME SECURITY

The Budget Resolution explicitly states its intention to provide funding for the renewal of all expiring Section 8 housing contracts. However, the large and competing demands on Income Security activities assumed in the Budget Resolution indicate that full renewal funding cannot be achieved within the resolution's functional total. As a result, the resolution would necessitate significant cuts in housing renewals from the President's request of $13 billion. The resolution would also eliminate the Administration's efforts to assist more needy families with 120,000 new incremental housing vouchers. The deletion of new housing assistance would come at a time when a record 5.4 million low-income households in this country have worst-case housing needs—defined as spending over 50 percent of their income in rent or living in substandard housing.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

International Organizations and Peacekeeping Accounts. A 17-percent reduction to funds for the international organizations and peacekeeping accounts would prevent the United States from making its full assessed payments to the UN and other international organizations that directly promote vital U.S. interests. This would substantially increase U.S. arrears to the UN and jeopardize the negotiations for reforms that would lead to the payment of approximately $800 million in arrears. This cut would also cripple continuing and critical new peacekeeping missions seeking to redress the instability and suffering caused by conflicts in East Timor, Kosovo, and Africa.

African Development Foundation (ADF) and Inter-American Foundation (IAF). The abolition of ADF and IAF would eliminate the only U.S. Government institutions that work exclusively with local, grassroots organizations in Africa and Latin America to expand economic opportunities and develop basic democratic values and institutions.

SCIENCE AND SPACE

Reduced Support for Basic Research. A reduction of about $365 million to NSF would result in almost 14,000 fewer researchers, educators, and students receiving NSF support—affecting the high-tech workforce and well-trained students needed for the Nation's future. A reduction of this magnitude would result in over 3,000 fewer awards for state-of-the-art research and education activities.

NATURAL RESOURCES

The Budget Resolution would cut farm loan programs at the USDA, resulting in 800 fewer loans to American farmers and ranchers.

EPA's Superfund program would be cut by $69 million. This would eliminate funding for all 15 new federally-led cleanups and five ongoing federally-led cleanups in FY 2001, needlessly jeopardizing public health for citizens living near affected sites and making it more difficult to meet the 900-site cleanup goal in 2002.

The cut to EPA's Enforcement Program assumed by the Budget Resolution would significantly hamper the environmental cop on the beat, jeopardizing our ability to assure adequate protection of public health and the environment. Nearly, 1,000 fewer inspections could contribute to a higher non-compliance rate and an increase in pollution.

The reduction assumed by the Budget Resolution to the Children's Health Initiative would impair efforts to train health care workers on the environmental control of asthma; limit outreach programs to children, parents, and care-givers on avoidance of second-hand smoke and other indoor allergens; and, hinder critical research into the role that pesticides and chemicals may play

in the onset of asthma. In addition, EPA's lead program, which focuses on enforcing lead regulations and community-based programs that are aimed at reducing children's exposure to lead, would be curtailed.

The Budget Resolution reduces most Interior Department and Forest Service programs by six percent below the President's request. Such a reduction would hinder Wildland fire suppression and protection programs, delay or limit the construction and rehabilitation of needed visitor facilities, and diminish the ability to oversee coalmining operations and the ability to assist States and Tribes in cleanup of almost 9,000 acres of abandoned mine lands.

HEALTH

Funding for the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) could be cut by over $191 million. Such a reduction would result in extended product review times for new vaccines, new food additives, and complex emerging medical technology, making it difficult for the FDA to meet congressionally-mandated performance levels. This reduction would also impede FDA's efforts to ensure the safety of the Nation's food supply and would strain the agency's ability to respond to outbreaks of food borne illness.

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration funding would be reduced by $305 million, which would deny treatment to roughly 66,000 people who receive mental health and substance abuse services.

TRANSPORTATION

A reduction of four percent, or $21 million, below the President's request of $521 million for Amtrak would jeopardize Amtrak's ability to achieve self-sufficiency. The recently announced route expansions would be postponed, and the frequency and level of service on Amtrak's remaining trains reduced. This will further reduce revenues, leading to additional service reductions.

ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE

The Budget Resolution rejects the President's $1.335 billion request for the 21st Century Policing Initiative (COPS). It does not appear to provide any funds for the hiring of additional police officers, or for community crime prevention programs, and it is well below the President's request for law enforcement technology and gun prosecution. Without continued funding for the COPS hiring program, it will be impossible to meet the President's goal of funding up to 150,000 additional officers by 2005.

GENERAL GOVERNMENT

IRS. The Budget Resolution assumes cuts in the IRS's resources by $1.2 billion below the President's Budget—nearly $0.8 billion below the level needed to maintain current operations. The IRS would lose 12,000 workers needed to provide service to taxpayers and to ensure that the tax laws are enforced fairly. IRS modernization efforts mandated by the 1998 Restructuring and Reform Act would be halted. Instead of the improvements in performance proposed in the President's budget, audit rates—which have already fallen by half over the past decade—would drop to unacceptable levels. Taxpayers would face greater frustration, and the Treasury would lose billions of dollars in enforcement revenue. Such a dramatic cut in both compliance efforts and taxpayer service would put at risk the voluntary compliance system, which collects over $1.7 trillion in revenue each year.

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Mr. President, I thank Senator DOMENICI. I thank staff in the person of Bill Hoagland and Bruce King on my side.

I yield the floor.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I yield back my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time has been yielded back. The question is on agreeing to the conference report. The yeas and nays have been ordered. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. NICKLES. I announce that the Senator from Delaware (Mr. ROTH) is necessarily absent.

Mr. REID. I announce that the Senator from New York (Mr. MOYNIHAN) is necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 50, nays 48, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 85 Leg.]

YEAS—50

Abraham	Fitzgerald	McConnell
Allard	Frist	Murkowski
Ashcroft	Gorton	Nickles
Bennett	Gramm	Roberts
Bond	Grams	Santorum
Brownback	Grassley	Sessions
Bunning	Gregg	Shelby
Burns	Hagel	Smith (NH)
Campbell	Hatch	Smith (OR)
Cochran	Helms	Snowe
Collins	Hutchinson	Stevens
Coverdell	Hutchison	Thomas
Craig	Inhofe	Thompson
Crapo	Kyl	Thurmond
DeWine	Lott	Voinovich
Domenici	Lugar	Warner
Enzi	Mack	

NAYS—48

Akaka	Edwards	Levin
Baucus	Feingold	Lieberman
Bayh	Feinstein	Lincoln
Biden	Graham	McCain
Bingaman	Harkin	Mikulski
Boxer	Hollings	Murray
Breaux	Inouye	Reed
Bryan	Jeffords	Reid
Byrd	Johnson	Robb
Chafee, L.	Kennedy	Rockefeller
Cleland	Kerrey	Sarbanes
Conrad	Kerry	Schumer
Daschle	Kohl	Specter
Dodd	Landrieu	Torricelli
Dorgan	Lautenberg	Wellstone
Durbin	Leahy	Wyden

NOT VOTING—2

Moynihan	Roth

The conference report was agreed to.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I move to reconsider the vote.

Mr. DOMENICI. I move to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I thank the distinguished chairman of the Budget Committee, Senator DOMENICI, and the ranking member, Senator LAUTENBERG, for their work on the budget resolution, and for the way they have handled it throughout the process.

CRIME VICTIMS RIGHTS

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now turn to S.J. Res. 3, regarding the rights of crime victims.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. LEAHY. Reserving the right to object.

Mr. President, I notice that the adjournment order has already been adopted. Respectfully, I do not believe that there is any intention of completing this matter today, tomorrow, or even next week. We have just barely filed a committee report.

This is a constitutional amendment. I think we ought, at least, to make sure Senators know that this is going to be the next matter coming up and that they have a chance to consider the report and the proposal. A constitutional amendment should not be rushed through this way, with all due respect. So I will object.

I will be happy to work with the distinguished majority leader, who has the added problems of having to make sure that the Senate does its work at the appropriate time. I will be happy to work with him on schedules and everything else on this, but because it is a constitutional amendment, I think we should treat it with more care and not just zing it off like this. We should have a real debate. I am not going to stop it from coming forward. I only want to make sure that everyone knows about it, that everyone has a chance to debate it and that everyone has the opportunity to offer amendments.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

PROPOSING AN AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES TO PROTECT THE RIGHTS OF CRIME VICTIMS—MOTION TO PROCEED

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I move to proceed to S.J. Res. 3 and send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 299, S.J. Res. 3, a joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States to protect the rights of crime victims:

Trent Lott, Jon Kyl, Judd Gregg, Wayne Allard, Robert Smith of New Hampshire, Richard Shelby, Gordon Smith of Oregon, Bill Frist, Mike DeWine, Ben Nighthorse Campbell, Jim Bunning, Chuck Grassley, Rod Grams, Connie Mack, Craig Thomas, and Jesse Helms.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, this cloture vote will occur on the motion to proceed on Tuesday, April 25.

I ask unanimous consent that the vote occur at 2:15 p.m. and that the mandatory quorum under rule XXII be waived, and I withdraw the motion to proceed.

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