United States of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 109th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 152 WASHINGTON, THURSDAY, MARCH 16, 2006 No. 34

Senate

(Legislative day of Wednesday, March 15, 2006)

The Senate met at 9 a.m., on the expiration of the recess, and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. STEVENS).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

God of lights, who into chaotic darkness commanded brightness, shine into our world with the fullness of Your love. Illuminate our minds so we will be Your ambassadors.

Empower our Senators to release reconciliation forces that will bring harmony and concord.

Bless our world leaders, who agonize for strategies that will bring sanity during insane times. Help them to remember that there is no time when You will fail us and no moment when we do not need You.

Bless, also, our military people who have left home and homeland to sacrifice for freedom. Keep their families and loved ones secure in Your love.

We pray in Your sovereign Name. Amen.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The PRESIDENT pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET FOR THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2007

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of S. Con. Res. 83, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 83) setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2007 and 2008 through 2011.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the time from 9 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. shall be evenly divided between the Senator from New Hampshire, Mr. GREGG, and the Senator from North Dakota, Mr. CONRAD.

Pending:

Specter amendment No. 3048, to increase the advance appropriations allowance in order to fund health, education and training, and low-income programs.

Reid (for Clinton/Reid) amendment No. 3115, to increase funding in fiscal year 2007 by $347 million to restore funding or provide increased funding over fiscal year 2006 for programs and policies that support the delivery of contraceptive services and medically accurate information in order to reduce the number of unintended pregnancies, including Title X of the Public Health Service Act, and to restore funding or provide increased funding over fiscal year 2006 for programs that help women have healthy pregnancies and healthy children, including the Child Care Development Block Grant, Maternal and Child Health Block Grant, Healthy Start, and the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children paid for by closing corporate tax loopholes.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, this morning we are returning to the budget resolution for what we hope will be the final day. Chairman GREGG and Senator CONRAD will be managing the time until 10:30 a.m. At 10:30, we have an order for a series of four stacked votes. The first two are on the debt limit extension, and the last two votes are in relation to the avian flu amendments to the budget resolution. The two managers will then control the remaining time until 1:30 this afternoon when all time expires.

At 1:30 today, we begin disposing of the pending amendments and any additional amendments that are offered. This is the beginning of the so-called vote-arama. This is a difficult process. These votes will likely continue for a while today and possibly into the evening. I urge my colleagues to remain in or around the Chamber.

I was talking to the Democratic manager, and we both agreed, as does the Republican manager, that our colleagues must and we encourage them to show restraint during the day and recognize not every amendment needs to be offered. Yesterday, Senators missed some votes because they did not show up on time. The managers will be very clear in terms of how much time is allowed for each vote. We encourage Members to stay close to the Chamber so they do not miss the votes. The only way to finish the budget is to have that discipline and not to drag the votes on for 15 minutes or more. I also encourage Members to rethink whether they need to offer their amendments, as I stated earlier.

Finally, I note that we have some nominations to consider before we adjourn. On the list of nominations are two district judges we will finish. If votes are needed, then we will need to schedule those votes with the budget votes as well. However, I hope we can work on a nominations list that will be agreed to by unanimous consent.

I thank Senator GREGG and Senator CONRAD for their efforts so far. I thank everyone in advance for their patience during this budget process.

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

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

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 3133

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I am offering an amendment on avian flu. I offered this same amendment in the committee because after testimony by Secretary Leavitt before the Committee on the Budget, we are clearly still unprepared to meet any potential pandemic.

Here is what the U.N. said on March 9:

''Bird flu is likely to spread to birds in the United States within six months and could produce an epidemic among humans 'at any time,' said a U.N. official. The prediction by David Nabarro was the first by a top global health official pinpointing when birds carrying the flu will arrive in the lower 48 States.''

He went on to say, and I hope my colleagues and their staffs are listening:

''There will be a pandemic sooner or later,'' Nabarro said. ''It could start any time. We have a virus capable of replicating inside humans. We have a virus that humans are not resistant to. We have a virus about which we don't understand everything.''

The administration's assessment of what could happen if there were a pandemic is truly sobering. I will discuss the Bush administration estimates of possible consequences from avian flu pandemic. In terms of illness, if it were severe, 90 million people could be affected in this country. The requirement for outpatient medical care: 45 million people.

Colleagues, we are totally unprepared for something of this magnitude.

Hospitalization, if it were severe, 9.9 million people in this country would require hospitalization. ICU care—that is intensive care—almost 1.5 million people would need intensive care. We do not have the ventilators, we do not have the facilities, and we do not have the beds to accommodate that level of illness. Mechanical ventilation, almost 750,000 people would require ventilation. Again, we simply are not prepared for that.

And most sobering of all are the deaths. They anticipate in this country alone almost 2 million people could die.

Right now, the death rate is running far above that. We know, for everyone who has been diagnosed with this illness, roughly half are dying. Because these viruses tend to burn out, we would not get that same effect if we have a widespread outbreak, but nonetheless the potential is truly sobering. Again, we are not prepared.

Local communities will require Federal assistance if a pandemic strikes. This is from the director of public health in Seattle in King County, WA, as quoted in the USA Today on February 21, of this year:

Our hospitals and our public health system are funded for normal levels of operation . . . but have always relied on the federal government should we have need for more ventilators, for example, in the event of an earthquake or other mass-fatality event. ''What the federal planners are not getting,'' she says, ''is that if there is a pandemic, every community will be asking for ventilators from the national stockpile at the same time.''

Clearly she has that right. We are not prepared.

The Secretary said in his testimony before the Committee on the Budget that what is different about a pandemic is that it happens everywhere at once. You do not have the option of dealing with a few hotspots.

It is very clear we need more resources. What we most need additional resources for is to develop vaccines. We also need antivirals and more resources for public health. But clearly the top priority has to be developing vaccines that can safeguard people against this illness.

Here is the summary of our situation with respect to vaccines. We have limited vaccine production capacity, relying on only three companies. The bird flu virus is mutating, making current vaccines less effective. Current vaccine production is egg based and could be threatened by bird flu itself. That is a very important point. The way they make vaccine now, they use eggs, but of course the eggs are in the bird population. This is a bird flu. The population we would currently count on to produce vaccine may itself be threatened.

Finally, we need alternative technologies, since companies have few incentives to build expensive cell-based production facilities.

Mr. President and colleagues, it is very clear we cannot rely on eggs. Currently, there is not the production of the number of eggs to produce a max vaccine in a rapid way. So we have to move to a cell-based technology. But companies have few incentives to build these expensive cell-based production facilities unless they are guaranteed there is going to be a market.

The amendment I am offering would increase funding by $5 billion to combat an avian flu pandemic and increase local preparedness. The amendment would distribute that money as follows—this is based on testimony before the committee and our own outreach to the scientific community—an additional $1.5 billion to increase the stockpile of antivirals and necessary medical supplies, including masks, gloves, ventilators, antibiotics, and ongoing medical treatment needs for chronic-care patients.

With respect to antivirals, we know by the end of this year we are slated to have some 20 million courses of treatment of Tamiflu. The administration's goal is 80 million. So we are well short of having the necessary stockpiles of the antiviral Tamiflu. Clearly, we need more resources there. Clearly, we need more resources for ventilators. We already heard public health officials say that will be one place where there will be an extreme shortage should we face a pandemic.

Next, the amendment provides $2.5 billion to accelerate vaccine research, development, and manufacturing. And finally, it provides $1 billion to increase State and local preparedness. The amendment also ensures that the additional funding is fully offset, completely paid for.

I hope very much my colleagues will support this amendment. I know there is a resistance on the other side to increasing the top-line spending number. If there were ever a time to make an investment in protecting America, this is it. We could face the tragedy of our time.

I am reading a book called ''The Great Influenza.'' It is about the 1918 flu epidemic in which they estimate 50 to 100 million people died in this world. We have not had a pandemic since. Pandemics typically occur every 50 years or so, so we are well overdue. We did have a widespread, very severe flu in 1968.

The Secretary says we are not prepared, says we are not ready. Local health officials say we are not ready. International health officials say we are not ready. I hope very much we get ready and make this investment.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Senator OBAMA, Senator CLINTON, Senator DURBIN, and Senator SCHUMER be added as cosponsors of this amendment.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. CONRAD. Finally, the Senator from North Carolina, Mr. BURR, will have an amendment that will be considered at the same time as mine. His amendment is an empty vessel. Mr. President, let me send my amendment to the desk. I am sensing they do not have a copy there.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report the amendment.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from North Dakota [Mr. CONRAD], for himself, Mr. OBAMA, Mrs. CLINTON, Mr. DURBIN, and Mr. SCHUMER, proposes an amendment numbered 3133.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To increase funding to combat avian flu, increase local preparedness, and create a Manhattan Project-like effort to develop a vaccine to inoculate the U.S. Population against a pandemic by $5 billion in FY 2007 paid for by requiring tax withholding on government payments to contractors like Halliburton)

On page 3, line 13, increase the amount by $5,100,000,000.

On page 3, line 15, increase the amount by $100,000,000.

On page 3, line 17, increase the amount by $200,000,000.

On page 3, line 19, increase the amount by $200,000,000.

On page 3, line 21, increase the amount by $200,000,000.

On page 4, line 1, increase the amount by $5,100,000,000.

On page 4, line 2, increase the amount by $100,000,000.

On page 4, line 3, increase the amount by $200,000,000.
On page 4, line 4, increase the amount by $200,000,000.
On page 4, line 6, increase the amount by $200,000,000.
On page 4, line 13, increase the amount by $5,000,000,000.
On page 5, line 4, increase the amount by $1,000,000,000.
On page 5, line 6, increase the amount by $2,800,000,000.
On page 5, line 8, increase the amount by $800,000,000.
On page 5, line 10, increase the amount by $300,000,000.
On page 5, line 19, increase the amount by $4,100,000,000.
On page 5, line 21, decrease the amount by $2,700,000,000.
On page 5, line 23, decrease the amount by $600,000,000.
On page 5, line 25, decrease the amount by $100,000,000.
On page 6, line 2, increase the amount by $200,000,000.
On page 6, line 8, decrease the amount by $4,100,000,000.
On page 6, line 10, decrease the amount by $1,400,000,000.
On page 6, line 12, decrease the amount by $800,000,000.
On page 6, line 14, decrease the amount by $700,000,000.
On page 6, line 16, decrease the amount by $900,000,000.
On page 6, line 22, decrease the amount by $4,100,000,000.
On page 6, line 24, decrease the amount by $1,400,000,000.
On page 7, line 2, decrease the amount by $ 800,000,000.
On page 7, line 4, decrease the amount by $ 700,000,000.
On page 7, line 6, decrease the amount by $ 900,000,000.
On page 19, line 24, increase the amount by $5,000,000,000.
On page 19, line 25, increase the amount by $1,000,000,000.
On page 20, line 4, increase the amount by $2,800,000,000.
On page 20, line 8, increase the amount by $800,000,000.
On page 20, line 12, increase the amount by $300,000,000.
On page 53, line 1, increase the amount by $5,000,000,000.
On page 53, line 2, increase the amount by $1,000,000,000.

Mr. OBAMA. Mr. President, on Monday, we heard Secretary Leavitt tell us that the avian flu will arrive in the United States by this fall. And if our worst fears are realized and it becomes a virus that can spread easily from human to human, the avian flu could be here within 30 days.

As Dr. Julie Greenberg, Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, has said, ''This is the most important threat we face right now.'' We are not talking about hundreds or thousands of lives here—we are talking millions. Millions.

The question, then, is not whether we have taken steps to prepare ourselves for the avian flu. Instead, the question is whether we have taken every imaginable and necessary precaution—whether we have done everything we possibly could do—to combat potentially the greatest global health threat in a century.

I don't believe that we have. But I know that we must. The United States cannot afford to have a Katrina-level of preparedness or a Katrina-like response to an international outbreak of avian flu. With so many warnings and so much knowledge of the threat we face, there is no excuse for failure this time around.

The first thing we need to do is increase our supply of Tamiflu and other medications. Countries such as Japan, France, England, and others have now stockpiled enough Tamiflu to cover a quarter of their populations. The United States has enough to cover just 2 percent.

If the avian flu mutates and is able to spread between humans, we will also need a new vaccine to treat the new virus. But as we saw during last year's flu season, our vaccine industry remains fragile and even the supply and distribution of something simple like a flu shot poses a challenge. This has to change.

Of course, as Secretary Leavitt has pointed out, the time it takes to develop a new vaccine means that we could be without any treatment for up to 6 months after the avian flu first breaks out. And that means that if we have an outbreak, it is imperative that our public health infrastructure be prepared to handle the crisis.

First, we need a clear chain of command. We can't be wondering who is in charge of dealing with an outbreak.

Second, we need an aggressive outreach campaign to warn and educate the American public about what to do in the event of an outbreak.

Third, it is still unclear how much assistance the Federal Government is willing to provide already cash-strapped States to strengthen their fragile health infrastructures. Although States such as Illinois are rapidly increasing their efforts to prepare, many States will need substantial assistance to buy antivirals and other supplies. And our hospitals and health professionals still don't have the capacity to care for large numbers of sick Americans.

The devastation wrought by Katrina last year has shown us that we cannot stop the forces of nature. But as the wealthiest country on Earth, we can prepare, and we can respond in a way that saves as many lives as possible.

We must do that now with the avian flu. The Conrad avian flu amendment will provide the necessary funds for Federal agencies, working with the States, to prepare for potential pandemic. I am pleased to be a cosponsor of the amendment, and I encourage my colleagues to vote in favor of it.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, Senator BURR will be offering an amendment at the same time as mine. What he is offering is a reserve fund that is deficit neutral but has no money attached to it. But later in the process, if funding were provided, that reserve fund would provide a receptacle. That is an empty vessel. There is nothing there.

It has value. I will support Senator BURR's amendment. It has value because at least there is a receptacle, at least there is a vessel, at least there is a way of taking funds that might be provided for later. But I want colleagues to know there is no new funding provided for in the Burr amendment.

The only amendment being offered here that is going to have additional resources to meet a possible pandemic is this one. So I hope colleagues think very carefully before they cast this vote.

With that, Mr. President, I note that Senator LIEBERMAN is in the Chamber. He is next up to offer an amendment on homeland security. Senator LIEBERMAN, of course, is the ranking member of the authorizing committee. He is, I think all would acknowledge on this floor, a leading voice on the question of homeland security.

Mr. President, I ask the Senator, how much time would he require?

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, in a tradition that is associated with my family, I would ask the Senator from North Dakota, how much time does he have to offer?

Mr. CONRAD. Well, could the Senator do it in 10 minutes?

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Yes, indeed.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I am happy to yield 10 minutes off the resolution to the Senator from Connecticut.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SUNUNU). The Senator from Connecticut is recognized for 10 minutes.

Mr. LIEBERMAN. I thank the Chair.

AMENDMENT NO. 3034

Mr. President, I call up amendment No. 3034, which is at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Connecticut [Mr. LIEBERMAN], for himself and Ms. MIKULSKI, proposes an amendment numbered 3034.

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To protect the American people from terrorist attacks by providing $8 billion in additional funds for homeland security government-wide, by restoring cuts to vital first responder programs in the Department of Homeland Security and Justice, by providing an additional $1.2 billion for first responders, $1.7 billion for the Coast Guard and port security, $150 million for chemical security, $1 billion for rail and transit security, $456 million for FEMA, $1 billion for health preparedness programs and $752 million for aviation security)

On page 3, line 13, increase the amount by $2,151,000,000.
On page 3, line 15, increase the amount by $2,700,000,000.
On page 3, line 17, increase the amount by $1,729,000,000.
On page 3, line 19, increase the amount by $1,039,000,000.
On page 3, line 21, increase the amount by $203,000,000.
On page 4, line 1, increase the amount by $2,151,000,000.

On page 4, line 2, increase the amount by $2,700,000,000.
On page 4, line 3, increase the amount by $1,729,000,000.
On page 4, line 4, increase the amount by $1,039,000,000.
On page 4, line 6, increase the amount by $203,000,000.
On page 4, line 13, increase the amount by $7,977,000,000.
On page 5, line 4, increase the amount by $2,151,000,000.
On page 5, line 6, increase the amount by $2,700,000,000.
On page 5, line 8, increase the amount by $1,729,000,000.
On page 5, line 10, increase the amount by $1,039,000,000.
On page 5, line 12, increase the amount by $203,000,000.
On page 16, line 21, increase the amount by $1,889,000,000.
On page 16, line 22, increase the amount by $892,000,000.
On page 17, line 1, increase the amount by $412,000,000.
On page 17, line 5, increase the amount by $252,000,000.
On page 17, line 9, increase the amount by $135,000,000.
On page 17, line 13, increase the amount by $72,000,000.
On page 17, line 22, increase the amount by $3,747,000,000.
On page 17, line 23, increase the amount by $793,000,000.
On page 18, line 3, increase the amount by $1,350,000,000.
On page 18, line 7, increase the amount by $959,000,000.
On page 18, line 11, increase the amount by $646,000,000.
On page 19, line 24, increase the amount by $1,000,000,000.
On page 19, line 25, increase the amount by $125,000,000.
On page 20, line 4, increase the amount by $540,000,000.
On page 20, line 8, increase the amount by $185,000,000.
On page 20, line 12, increase the amount by $100,000,000.
On page 20, line 16, increase the amount by $20,000,000.
On page 24, line 24, increase the amount by $1,341,000,000.
On page 24, line 25, increase the amount by $341,000,000.
On page 25, line 4, increase the amount by $398,000,000.
On page 25, line 8, increase the amount by $333,000,000.
On page 25, line 12, increase the amount by $158,000,000.
On page 25, line 16, increase the amount by $111,000,000.
On page 53, line 1, increase the amount by $7,977,000,000.
On page 53, line 2, increase the amount by $2,151,000,000.

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, I thank the Chair.

I thank my friend from North Dakota. I thank him for his leadership on these matters of budget and really for his steadfastness.

Mr. President, I rise today to offer this amendment to the fiscal year 2007 budget resolution to strengthen our homeland security efforts in the face of the administration's budget, which in this regard—considering the fact we are in the post-9/11 world, in a long war against Islamist terrorism—I consider the administration's budget to be shortsighted and short funded, to be ill-considered and inadequate.

In my capacity as the ranking Democrat on the Homeland Security Committee, I have worked very closely with our chair, Senator COLLINS of Maine. This year, for the third year, I have worked with my staff, with experts from outside of the Government, to construct what I believed would be a wartime budget for homeland security. A budget that would do what really needs to be done to secure the American people against an enemy that has shown it will strike us not on the battlefields of conventional war but in our neighborhoods, where we live and where we work here in the United States of America.

The total I would add to the President's budget for homeland security is $8 billion. That, of course, is a significant sum, but in the overall context of the Federal budget submitted, it is less than one-third of 1 percent of the Federal budget—and it would be used to secure our homeland against an enemy of unprecedented inhumanity and against the forces of nature, which struck us badly in Hurricane Katrina, and, unfortunately, will again.

I propose to pay for this additional funding by tightening a number of tax loopholes. Therefore, the amendment would not add to the deficit.

Of the $8 billion in additional spending I am proposing, $6.2 billion would go directly to the Department of Homeland Security. The remainder is divided between the Department of Justice for law enforcement grants and the Department of Health and Human Services for public health preparedness in the face of a potential biological attack or a pandemic.

The money would restore what I consider to be unjustified cuts for first responders who, in the war against terrorism, are also our first preventers—hundreds of thousands of eyes and ears, of equipment, to detect and stop terrorists.

It would restore cuts for emergency managers and public health officials and make needed new investments in first responder programs. It would strengthen rail, transit, port, aviation, and chemical plant security, as well as Coast Guard readiness and bioterrorism preparedness.

Let me just look at a few of the details.

We know our first responders do not have the training, equipment, and frequently even the manpower they need to do their jobs properly whenever danger strikes.

Here, shown on this chart, is first responder funding. It is unbelievable when you see it charted in this way, in the midst of the long war against terrorism, in which our homeland has been struck. And we must assume the enemy will try to strike us again.

First responder funding in fiscal year 2004 was $3.95 billion. On this chart, you see a steady line going down, to the proposal here: $1.97 billion for the firefighters, the police officers, the emergency responders we depend on to protect us.

The President's budget in this regard would cut preparedness funding by 16 percent overall. It would cut $802 million from the first responder programs—a 23-percent cut from last year and a 50-percent reduction, as shown on the graph, from fiscal year 2004.

The administration's budget would entirely eliminate the Law Enforcement Terrorism Prevention Program and the Justice Assistance Grant Program—totally eliminate them—in a time of war against terrorism, and slash by 78 percent the highly successful, much depended upon COPS Program, Community Oriented Policing Services Program, which has put police officers on the beat throughout America and by and large reduced the incidence of crime.

For the second year in a row, the administration is also proposing to eliminate all funding for the Metropolitan Medical Response System, which supports planning and preparedness for potential mass casualties in a catastrophe. The administration is also proposing to eliminate funding for the SAFER Program, which helps recruit, hire, and train local firefighters. The budget given to us cuts grants that State and local emergency planners rely on to help them prepare for catastrophe. The fact is, without more support, our local communities will remain unprepared. That is dangerous in this age.

My amendment would begin to rebuild that support. It would restore $1.6 billion in proposed cuts to first responder programs and add an additional $1.2 billion to help improve State and local capabilities, especially in the area of interoperable communications. That would bring the total funding for first responders to $4.1 billion. Can we afford it? Honestly, we cannot afford not to afford it.

We would also restore funding for the programs I have talked about that will be cut in the Justice Department.

What about port security, because this is a comprehensive homeland security budget proposal? Moving on to port security, perhaps the silver lining of the Dubai Ports World disagreement is greater public recognition of the urgent need for port security. Ninety-five percent of all of the goods coming into America flow through our ports. A terrorism attack at a port would cause economic havoc, let alone human loss. And experts, of course, worry that weapons of mass destruction could be smuggled into this country in a shipping container.

We, therefore, must invest strategically in our defense, which is why this amendment would add an additional $1.7 billion for port security and for the Coast Guard, which performed so admirably in response to Hurricane Katrina but still does not have the capitalized, updated equipment it needs to do the job—enormous job—we are asking it to do.

On chemical security, we know too many facilities remain vulnerable and

that an attack on one near a high-population center could have the same effect as a weapon of mass destruction. The administration's proposal is only $10 million. It is inadequate when compared with the $102 million the Coast Guard spent in 2005 and the $131 million it will spend in 2006 to protect chemical facilities at ports.

We face, as Senator CONRAD has said, the threat and danger of bioterrorism and bioterrorist attacks and pandemics, and yet inadequate funding is provided. Thus, my amendment would increase the money given to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, funding for State and local bioterrorism programs by $500 million and add another $500 million to the Health Resources and Services Administration bioterrorism program.

We have to absorb the painful dual lessons of September 11, 2001, and of August 29, 2005, the day Katrina struck. Our enemies are ruthless and choose to fight us at points of vulnerability. That is why we have to close those vulnerabilities. Nature will strike in unpredictable ways year after year. Yet so much of our national homeland security structure continues to have gaps. There is no cheap way to provide for the common defense, our constitutional responsibility. We have the best military in the world, and we have it because we have invested in it. We have the best personnel to carry out the protection of our homeland. We will never have the homeland defense we need unless we are prepared to spend for it. There is no more urgent need the American people have.

I urge my colleagues to support this amendment.

I thank the Chair and yield the floor.

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

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I appreciate the extraordinary commitment of the Senator from Connecticut to national defense, to a responsible policy in fighting terrorism. He is clearly one of the leaders in the Senate and the Nation on the issue of how we should protect ourselves as a nation. I respect him immensely. I admire him. It is good to have his voice on the issues of foreign policy and international terrorism and how we fight it.

On this issue, however, I respectfully disagree relative to the need for these additional dollars at this time. In this budget, we have robustly funded the fight on terrorism. The defense budget will be increased in the core budget by $30 billion. A lot of that goes toward fighting terrorism. We have set aside $90 billion of additional money, the purpose of which is to fight the war on terrorism. That is $40 billion more than the administration asked for. In addition, within those funds we have dedicated an additional $4 billion specifically to the issue of port security and border security. Quite honestly, as chairman of the committee that has jurisdiction over port security and border security, that is probably more money than those agencies can handle in 1 year. We will have to be careful to be sure that that money is spent effectively and not pushed out the door in purchasing blue lights and whistles. We want to make sure it purchases real assets and adds real manpower that will assist us in the war on terrorism. We have made a huge commitment in this budget to the issue of fighting terrorism.

The Senator from Connecticut correctly points out that first responder funds are down in this budget. That is a decision that has been made because of the fact there was so much first responder money that came so quickly, it simply hasn't been spent effectively yet. There was $13 billion that we have put into first responders across the country. That is a huge number, so large, in fact, that $5.5 billion of it, which has already been appropriated, which is sitting there, has not been spent, going back to 2004. There is literally $5.5 billion sitting in the pipeline that first responder groups have not spent, in part because State planning has not caught up to adequately meet the need for using the available funding. As soon as they are, those dollars will go out. As soon as that pipeline of $5.5 billion starts to get drawn down—remember, we are adding another several billion dollars on top of it in this bill—we are going to refill that pipeline to make sure that first responder funding is adequate.

It is not an issue of lack of dollars. It is an issue of lack of programmatic and systematic infrastructure, to a large degree—and planning, to a large degree. You could put another $40 billion or $8 billion or whatever billion on top of this, and you would still get little improvement in the amount of money flowing out to first responders because the necessity of having the money flow in a way that actually produces programmatic results has not been resolved yet.

It should not be our purpose as the Federal Government to be hiring people for local police forces and local first responder teams. What this money is supposed to be used for primarily is to give them the support so they have the necessary interoperability equipment, the necessary tactical equipment, and the necessary training to be effective as first responders. We should not be taking Federal first responder dollars and replacing local dollars that are already being used for the purposes of putting people on the street. States are making progress. As they come at us, we will put more money out there.

In addition, in the appropriating process we have taken the view, which is a little different than the authorizing committee, that risk should be where the money goes first. If a community has a high likelihood of risk from a terrorist attack, that community should be the place where we put the dollars. This has actually worked to the disadvantage of the State of New Hampshire. But my view is strong that these dollars, which are being used to basically upgrade the capacity of first responders to handle a terrorist attack, should go first to those places most likely to be on the front lines. We know where those places are. They know who they are. That is why we have basically funded it in that manner.

That is where we stand today. Very simply stated, there is an extremely robust commitment to fighting the war on terrorism in this bill: a $30 billion increase in defense spending; $90 billion in a separate budgeting process for fighting the war on terror, $40 billion more than the President asked for; $4 billion of new funds directed right at border security and port security; $2.3 billion directed right at avian flu and the purchasing of necessary supplies and antitoxins and hopefully vaccines, to address that issue. In the pipeline already from prior appropriations, there is $5.5 billion of funds out of the $13 billion that has been appropriated which is available for first responders from prior appropriations onto which we will put another chunk of money here.

The issue is not dollars in almost all these accounts. It is not dollars in terms of this budget. In terms of the President's budget, there may be a difference of opinion, but in terms of this budget the issue is not dollars. The issue is getting those dollars out effectively.

I oppose this amendment. I would have opposed it, anyway, because it basically raises taxes and spends money and breaks the caps. I think that is bad fiscal policy. I also oppose it on substance.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I yield 5 minutes to the Senator from Rhode Island for his amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island is recognized.

AMENDMENT NO. 3074

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I call up amendment No. 3074.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Rhode Island [Mr. REED], for himself, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. KERRY, Mrs. CLINTON, Mr. LIEBERMAN, Mr. DORGAN, Mr. ROCKEFELLER, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. DAYTON, Mr. KOHL, Mr. BAYH, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. HARKIN, Mr. LEAHY, and Mr. JOHNSON, proposes an amendment numbered 3074.

Mr. REED. I ask unanimous consent that reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To increase funding for the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program by $3,318,000,000 for fiscal year 2007, increasing the funds available to carry out that program to the fully authorized level of $5,100,000,000, to be paid for by closing corporate tax loopholes)

On page 3, line 13, increase the amount by $2,489,000,000.

On page 3, line 15, increase the amount by $763,000,000.

On page 3, line 17, increase the amount by $66,000,000.

On page 4, line 1, increase the amount by $2,489,000,000.

On page 4, line 2, increase the amount by $763,000,000.

On page 4, line 3, increase the amount by $66,000,000.

On page 4, line 13, increase the amount by $3,318,000,000.

On page 5, line 4, increase the amount by $2,489,000,000.

On page 5, line 6, increase the amount by $763,000,000.

On page 5, line 8, increase the amount by $66,000,000.

On page 21, line 24, increase the amount by $3,318,000,000.

On page 21, line 25, increase the amount by $2,489,000,000.

On page 22, line 4, increase the amount by $763,000,000.

On page 22, line 8, increase the amount by $66,000,000.

On page 53, line 1, increase the amount by $3,318,000,000.

On page 53, line 2, increase the amount by $2,489,000,000.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, my amendment is straightforward. It would increase funding for the LIHEAP program, the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program, by $3.318 billion. It is paid for fully by the closing of corporate tax loopholes and is cosponsored by Senators KENNEDY, KERRY, CLINTON, LIEBERMAN, ROCKEFELLER, DORGAN, LEVIN, DAYTON, SCHUMER, KOHL, BAYH, JOHNSON, LEAHY, MENENDEZ, and HARKIN.

The President's budget request and the level of funding assumed in this budget resolution for LIHEAP is $1.782 billion. That represents a $379 million cut from the fiscal year 2006 enacted level. Last week we were struggling to pass an additional $1 billion. The question before us is, are we going to accept this inadequate funding knowing full well it is inadequate today. I hope we don't do that. My amendment, the increase of $3.318 billion, would reach the authorized level of $5.1 billion set by the Energy Policy Act of 2005. On five separate occasions during the course of the debate over LIHEAP in the last 6 months, the majority of the Senate has voted for this full funding level. I call upon all of those Members to join me today to ensure we have full funding. We understand this year we are short of money. The President's budget starts us off with even less.

This year we benefited from unusually warm temperatures. I don't think anyone would bet that next winter's heating season will be as mild and as forgiving as this season's. With higher energy prices—and we know they are going up—with probably lower temperatures, we are going to be in a very serious position unless we adopt this amendment.

In the course of the debate about LIHEAP, many of our colleagues from warmer States pointed out that they are not getting as much as they should. If we get to the $5.1 billion level, this will truly be a national program. Warmer weather States will have the money in the hot season where they need air conditioning to help low-income people. I hope we can do so. For example, Alabama will receive $15 million from the block grant formula under the President's budget. It would receive $87.2 million under my amendment, a 479-percent increase, and so on throughout the country.

I hope we can pass this amendment. I hope we can have the foresight to recognize that we can't start off in the hole. We cannot expect warm temperatures this next heating season. We have to do more for the most vulnerable.

I yield whatever remaining time I have back to the Senator from North Dakota.

AMENDMENT NO. 3136

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. CONRAD. I thank the Senator from Rhode Island for his amendment. I thank him also for his courtesy and graciousness.

The situation we have is, I have very few minutes left this morning. We don't have another Senator. I have asked other Senators to come to the floor. While we are waiting, I will do my final amendment. I send an amendment to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from North Dakota [Mr. CONRAD] proposes an amendment numbered 3136.

Mr. CONRAD. I ask unanimous consent that reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To provide a reserve fund for bold energy legislation that is deficit neutral)

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC.____. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND FOR ENERGY LEGISLATION.

The Chairman of the Senate Committee on the Budget may revise the allocations, aggregates, and other appropriate levels and limits in this resolution for a bill or joint resolution, or an amendment thereto or conference report thereon, that would reduce our nation's dependence on foreign sources of energy, expand production and use of alternative fuels and alternative fuel vehicles, promote renewable energy development, improve electricity transmission, encourage responsible development of domestic oil and natural gas resources, and reward conservation and efficiency, by the amounts provided in such legislation for that purpose, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over the total of the period of fiscal years 2007 through 2011.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, in many ways this may be one of the most important amendments we offer on our side. I say that because if I look across the horizon at the challenges facing America, energy dependence would be right at the top of the list.

In his State of the Union Message, the President said:

[W]e have a serious problem: America is addicted to oil, which is often imported from unstable parts of the world.

I think the President has that exactly right.

We can see in this chart that imports now account for 60 percent of total U.S. consumption; that is, of the oil that we are consuming, 60 percent of it is imported. That creates a vulnerability for America. This dependence on imported energy is dramatically adding to our record trade deficit; $266 billion of the trade deficit over the last year is due to imported petroleum products. We ran a trade deficit during that period of about $700 billion. More than a third of it is due to our reliance on foreign energy.

That represents over a third of the total trade deficit. The President made very strong statements in the State of the Union about the need to reduce our dependence, reduce our vulnerability. But if you look at his budget, you see something quite different: the clean coal power initiative, cut 90 percent; weatherization assistance grants to improve conservation of energy in homes reduced almost a third; electricity delivery and reliability, cut 23 percent; fossil energy R&D, cut 21 percent.

Mr. President, several weeks ago, President Bush had a small group of Senators to the White House to talk about energy. I told him I was going to be introducing legislation that would provide substantial incentives to do what Brazil did. It is very instructive to look back over the last 30 years. Thirty years ago, Brazil was 80 percent dependent on foreign energy. They reduced that to less than 10 percent today. If we look at our story, it is just the flip. Back in the 1970s, we were 35 percent dependent upon foreign energy; today it is 60 percent.

I think the question presents itself: What did Brazil do? Brazil very aggressively promoted biodiesel, ethanol, and flexible fuel vehicles. In fact, the vast majority of their vehicle fleet in Brazil are now flex fuel vehicles. They have very aggressively promoted ethanol and biodiesel. We should do the same. Those are the key components of the energy plan I will be presenting to our colleagues—aggressive promotion of biodiesel and ethanol, alternative fuel vehicles, wind energy, and coal-to-liquid fuel technology and energy efficiency in conservation.

Mr. President, my energy reserve fund creates a deficit-neutral reserve fund for bold and balanced energy legislation that reduces our Nation's dependence upon foreign sources of energy, expands the production and use of alternative fuels and alternative fuel vehicles, promotes renewable energy development, encourages responsible development of oil and natural gas resources right here in America, and rewards conservation and efficiency.

Mr. President, this is a deficit-neutral reserve fund. Only if we find a way to pay for this initiative will it be able to go forward. My own view is that this is such a high priority for our country and raised, I think, to national attention by the President in his State of

the Union, but we don't have a budget to match bold words. We need bold initiatives to match bold words, to really do something to reduce our dependence. It makes us vulnerable. It is weakening our economy.

I said to the President: What a difference it could make. Would it not be wonderful if the President could wake up and instead of turning to the Middle East for oil, he could look to the Midwest of our own country where we could help grow our way out of this crisis by growing the feedstock that could produce biodiesel and ethanol, soybeans, corn, and canola? We are about to build in North Dakota the biggest biodiesel plant in North America. That is going to help us wean ourselves from this ongoing dependence upon foreign energy. I hope very much my colleagues will support this amendment.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The Legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Who yields time?

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I yield 4 minutes to the Senator from New Jersey.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey is recognized for 4 minutes.

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Mr. President, I will soon offer an amendment to remove the airline passenger tax increase from this budget. It is fundamentally unfair for the President to raise taxes on everyday families as he doles out massive tax cuts to the wealthy.

Hidden among the thousands of pages in this legislation is a proposal to double the minimum amount that airline passengers pay as a security tax. President Bush wants to increase this tax from $2.50 per flight to $5 per flight. That is a 100-percent tax increase.

The impact on a family of four traveling roundtrip on nonstop flights is illustrated by the chart that we have here. An increase in security tax for a family of four traveling roundtrip on nonstop flights, typically, if it is $20 now, is going to be $40 obviously. That is quite a burden.

The traveling public is already too heavily taxed. Air travelers pay an enormous amount of Federal taxes on every airline ticket—nearly 20 percent of the base fare price now. For example, the tax on the average domestic roundtrip flight of $230 is $45. That is a tax rate of almost 20 percent.

Air travelers are taxed every time they turn around. They pay the Federal excise tax—on top of the Federal segment tax, on top of the passenger facility charge, on top of the security tax. Now the President wants to double the security tax.

To make matters worse, this tax increase will hit families the hardest. Sixty-three percent of the domestic air trips in this country in 2004 were taken for personal purposes, including vacations and visits to families and loved ones.

I am one of the strongest advocates for transportation security resources for our country, but we have to provide these necessary resources by spreading the tax burdens across this country fairly and not targeting everyday Americans while special interests raid the Federal Treasury.

I also want to point out to my colleagues that this amendment is offset by closing abusive tax shelters. So when we look at this, if the airlines don't pass along this tax increase to the average family, they themselves will have to experience further losses. There was $10 billion in losses in 2005 by the aviation industry. That is on top of $32 billion from 2001 to 2004. There were 150,000 jobs lost since 9/11. They just cannot handle it.

So I urge my colleagues to support the amendment and say no to the Bush airline passenger tax increases, keeping in mind that those tax increases are put upon the average family to give the wealthiest among us huge tax breaks. It is unfair and it ought not to be permitted. I urge you in this instance to vote no on further tax increases for the average American family.

With that, I yield the floor.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from New Jersey for accommodating the schedule of his colleagues by coming this morning and offering his amendment. Next in the queue is Senator BURR with an amendment on avian flu.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. If the Senator will suspend, the Chair advises that the Senator from New Jersey did not send up an amendment.

AMENDMENT NO. 3137

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Yes. We neglected to do the most important part of it. I was overcome by the speech, Mr. President.

I send the amendment to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from New Jersey [Mr. LAUTENBERG] proposes an amendment numbered 3137.

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that further reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To eliminate the President's proposed tax increase on American airline passengers in fiscal year 2007 and to provide adequate funding for commercial aviation security and to offset these costs by closing corporate tax loopholes)

On page 3, line 13, increase the amount by $1,230,000,000.

On page 4, line 1, increase the amount by $1,230,000,000.

On page 4, line 13, increase the amount by $1,230,000,000.

On page 5, line 4, increase the amount by $1,230,000;000.

On page 16, line 21, increase the amount by $1,230,000,000.

On page 16, line 22, increase the amount by $1,230,000,000.

On page 53 , line 1, increase the amount by $1,230,000,000.

On page 53 , line 2, increase the amount by $1,230,000,000.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. BURR. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to set the pending amendment aside.

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

AMENDMENT NO. 3114

Mr. BURR. Mr. President, I send an amendment No. 3114 to the desk and ask for its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from North Carolina [Mr. BURR] proposes an amendment numbered 3114.

Mr. BURR. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To provide for the establishment of a reserve fund concerning pandemic influenza preparedness planning)

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____. RESERVE FUND FOR PANDEMIC INFLUENZA PREPAREDNESS PLANNING.

If the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate reports a bill or joint resolution, or if an amendment is offered thereto, or if a conference report is submitted thereon, that—

(1) rebuilds the vaccine industry in the United States which has shrunk from over 25 to less than 5 companies;

(2) improves the United States capacity to produce life-saving pandemic influenza vaccines and antivirals;

(3) ensures adequate funding for advanced development and acquisition of needed medical countermeasures for biodefense and pandemic influenza protection;

(4) enhances the Strategic National Stockpile of pandemic influenza vaccines, antivirals, and other medical products;

(5) strengthens the Federal, State, and local public health infrastructure to effectively respond to a pandemic influenza outbreak;

(6) increases the domestic and international surveillance and outbreak containment capabilities; and

(7) improves public awareness and education of pandemic influenza preparedness planning;

assuming that the Committee is within its allocation as provided under section 302 (a) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, the chairman of the Committee on the Budget may make the appropriate adjustments in allocations and aggregates to the extent that such legislation would not increase the deficit for fiscal years 2007 and for the period of fiscal years 2007 through 2011.

Mr. BURR. Mr. President, I rise on the Senate floor today to not only offer

this amendment and talk about it, but to speak on an amendment of another Member of the Senate, an amendment that also focuses on the avian flu.

Our country faces threats, some of which we know and some of which we don't know today. One real threat is the threat of pandemic bird flu. The President of the United States was ahead of the curve on this with a proposal to the Congress of over $7 billion for advanced development of vaccines, for the preparation the country needs to go through, and for the stockpiles of antivirals and countermeasures.

The fact is that Congress has responded to his request. This year the budget resolution highlights the fact that the President's request of $2.3 billion of taxpayers' money is in this budget resolution.

My colleague from North Dakota, for whom I have a tremendous amount of respect and who has helped, along with Senator GREGG, to move this budget resolution through this body, has asked we increase that amount by $5 billion. If for 1 minute I thought $5 billion would make America safer, I would be on the floor as a cosponsor of that amendment. But the reality is, we are at a point where we are absorbing all the money we can, given where we are in this process.

I just left a hearing with the Secretary of Health and Human Services. My direct question to him was: The President's budget asked for $2.3 billion. Is that sufficient for 2007?

He looked at me and said: Senator, where we are in the development of vaccines, where we are in our need for stockpiles, that amount fulfills everything we can do in preparation.

So I urge my colleagues not to support the amendment for an additional $5 billion of taxpayers' money to potentially go into a black hole. I remind my colleagues that the way this is funded is to raise taxes on the American people. We have used tax loopholes for corporations to fund many items suggested in amendments on this floor. The fact is, once again, the American people realize this is a covert way of raising taxes on them.

My amendment does something very simple. It creates a reserve fund. It has been described as hollow because it has no money. I believe the American people demand that we bring fiscal responsibility to this institution, to the Congress of the United States. I don't want to tie the hands of individuals within the agencies if they see a need for something, but the creation of this reserve fund allows them to do it in a budget-neutral way.

I believe this will be overwhelmingly supported because, in fact, it doesn't spend any new money, but it provides the flexibility and authority to those who are charged with addressing this threat.

The amendment establishes a reserve fund, and that can help to rebuild our domestic vaccine industry, support advanced development and acquisition of needed drugs and vaccines, strengthen the public health infrastructure, and increase surveillance and outbreak containment.

We are at a point in this Congress where we have the opportunity to reauthorize the Public Health Security and Bioterrorism Preparedness and Response Act, and we are considering legislation on advanced development of vaccines and countermeasures against chemical, biological, or radiological and natural threats. There are many issues that we have to decide exactly how we are going to handle. But to throw money at them is, in fact, not the answer today.

Those who are charged with the responsibility of making sure this country is prepared, in fact, have sufficient funding today. I urge my colleagues to vote against the Conrad amendment, to vote for the Burr amendment, and to make sure this administration is able to carry out what has been a well-planned preparation for a known threat to this country and, I might add, to the world.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I ask that 10 minutes of the chairman's time be yielded to me.

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

Mr. CONRAD. I thank the chairman very much. We have been trying to distribute time so we can most efficiently use time on the floor. I yield 3½ minutes to the Senator from Colorado.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado is recognized.

AMENDMENT NO. 3081

Mr. SALAZAR. Mr. President, I thank my colleague from North Dakota. I call up amendment No. 3081 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, the pending amendment is set aside. The clerk will report the amendment.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Colorado [Mr. SALAZAR], for himself, Mr. BINGAMAN, and Mr. LEAHY, proposes an amendment numbered 3081.

Mr. SALAZAR. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To fully fund the Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) program. Adds $152 million to Function 800 (General Government) for PILT. Paid for by closing $152 million in corporate tax loopholes)

On page 3, line 13, increase the amount by $152,000,000.

On page 4, line 1, increase the amount by $152,000,000.

On page 4, line 13, increase the amount by $152,000,000.

On page 5, line 4, increase the amount by $152,000,000.

On page 25, line 24, increase the amount by $152,000,000.

On page 25, line 25, increase the amount by $152,000,000.

On page 53, line 1, increase the amount by $152,000,000.

On page 53, line 2, increase the amount by $152,000,000.

Mr. SALAZAR. Mr. President, this amendment aims to fully fund the Payment in Lieu of Taxes Program for our country. It is an issue of vital importance to rural America. I am pleased to be joined in this effort today by Senator BINGAMAN and Senator LEAHY who are cosponsors of this amendment.

As I have said often on this floor before, rural America continues to wither on the vine. I will continue to come to this floor and sound the alarm of the plight of rural America because I am absolutely certain it doesn't have to be this way.

The heartland of this country is a vast reservoir of American potential and strength, and the values, common sense, perseverance, and work ethic embodied in the 50 million people who live in rural America are national treasures in and of themselves.

These people are also the stewards of our many public lands, and they deserve support in that effort. That is where PILT comes in. Created in 1976, PILT compensates local government for the presence of nontaxable Federal lands within their boundaries, as well as the associated costs of providing work, such as road work and law enforcement, to visitors on those lands.

Over the years, inflation has taken its toll. Repeatedly underfunding the PILT Program has also sent precisely the wrong message to rural America. Full PILT funding for fiscal year 2007 will likely be close to $350 million, but the President's budget for PILT was reduced by $38 million, or 16 percent, from where it was last year.

This is not just about my State of Colorado where some counties are owned by the Federal Government to the extent of 95 percent; it is about governments in at least 49 of our States where there are significant public land holdings within those States.

This amendment is fully offset by tax loophole closures. Some colleagues have approached me about alternatives, and I will work with them to explore other ideas in terms of funding alternatives.

I strongly encourage my colleagues to support this modest, commonsense amendment. When I travel through the rural counties of Colorado, I hear the voices of proud, hard-working rural Americans who feel neglected by Washington. Let's take an opportunity in a very small way in this budget resolution to send a different signal that we in Washington care about rural America.

I urge my colleagues to support this amendment. Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I thank my colleague from Colorado. This is an important amendment, certainly an important amendment to Western

States such as ours that all too often are shortchanged in terms of what they get in lieu of taxes where the Federal Government owns vast tracts of land and then is not a good neighbor, doesn't pay its fair share of the tab.

I thank the Senator from Colorado for his excellent amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. MURKOWSKI). Who yields time?

Mr. CONRAD. Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. CONRAD. Madam President, I ask that Senator BAYH be added as a cosponsor to my avian flu amendment No. 3133.

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

Mr. CONRAD. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. CONRAD. Madam President, I see the Senator from Maryland is now on the floor. I say to the Senator from Maryland, I now have 6 minutes left, and I am wondering if I could give 4 minutes to the Senator from Maryland.

Mr. SARBANES. Yes, that would be fine.

Mr. CONRAD. I have to give some time to Senator BAUCUS before the debt limit vote. So I yield 4 minutes to the Senator from Maryland.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland is recognized.

Mr. SARBANES. I thank the Senator. Does that leave the Senator with enough time for his other purposes?

Mr. CONRAD. I am sure Senator GREGG and I will be able to work it out.

Mr. SARBANES. Madam President, I thank the Senator very much.

AMENDMENT NO. 3103

Mr. SARBANES. Madam President, I offer amendment No. 3103.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Maryland [Mr. SARBANES], for himself, Mr. LIEBERMAN, and Mr. REED, proposes an amendment numbered 3103.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To restore funding for the civil works programs of the Corps of Engineers, the Federal Water Pollution Control State Revolving Fund, the National Park Service, the Forest Service, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Federal conservation programs, and other natural resource needs, through an offset achieved by closing corporate tax loopholes)

On page 3, line 13, increase the amount by $1,718,000,000.

On page 3, line 15, increase the amount by $699,000,000.

On page 3, line 17, increase the amount by $320,000,000.

On page 3, line 19, increase the amount by $116,000,000.

On page 3, line 21, increase the amount by $58,000,000.

On page 4, line 1, decrease the amount by $1,718,000,000.

On page 4, line 2, decrease the amount by $699,000,000.

On page 4, line 3, decrease the amount by $320,000,000.

On page 4, line 4, decrease the amount by $116,000,000.

On page 4, line 6, decrease the amount by $58,000,000.

On page 4, line 13, increase the amount by $2,912,000,000.

On page 5, line 4, increase the amount by $1,718,000,000.

On page 5, line 6, increase the amount by $699,000,000.

On page 5, line 8, increase the amount by $320,000,000.

On page 5, line 10, increase the amount by $116,000,000.

On page 5, line 12, increase the amount by $58,000,000.

On page 13, line 21, increase the amount by $2,912,000,000.

On page 13, line 22, increase the amount by $1,718,000,000.

On page 14, line 1, increase the amount by $699,000,000.

On page 14, line 5, increase the amount by $320,000,000.

On page 14, line 9, increase the amount by $116,000,000.

On page 14, line 13, increase the amount by $58,000,000.

On page 53, line 1, increase the amount by $2,912,000,000.

On page 53, line 2, increase the amount by $1,718,000,000.

Mr. SARBANES. Madam President, this amendment is to restore funding for function 300 Natural Resources and Environment, and for other purposes. I ask unanimous consent that Senator LIEBERMAN and Senator REED of Rhode Island be added as cosponsors.

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

Mr. SARBANES. If the Chair would tell me when 1 minute is left on my time, I would be most appreciative.

Madam President, the purpose of this amendment is to restore funding for a number of important environmental programs under function 300. The President's budget request and the chairman's mark on the resolution cut funding for water resources, conservation and land management, recreational resources, pollution control and abatement, and other natural resources and environmental activities by nearly $3 billion from the baseline, or almost 10 percent. This amendment would seek to add $2.9 billion to bring the function 300 total back up to baseline. It is offset with revenues from the closing of corporate tax loopholes.

We have a list of possibilities, many of which have passed the Senate before and have been strongly supported by very large majorities in this body. Let me just give a few examples of the kinds of programs we are trying to at least provide some additional support for, although it falls short of what the need is; but we are trying to get back to baseline.

The Army Corps of Engineers civil works program, flood control, navigation, storm protection, environmental restoration—I hardly need, in the aftermath of Katrina, to emphasize the importance of such programs. The EPA budget has been sharply cut, including nearly $200 million from the clean water State revolving loan fund, which is now in this budget at the lowest funding level ever for clean water infrastructure. It has been cut by nearly 50 percent from the 2004 level because there has been a steady decline, and, of course, this impacts every State's and every community's ability to upgrade their waste water infrastructure and meet Clean Water Act requirements.

The National Park Service is being cut. Our National Parks have a desperate need for funding in order to carry out their activities.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has 1 minute remaining.

Mr. SARBANES. Madam President, the National Park Service is falling well short of what they need in order to sustain the park system. NOAA is being cut in this budget, including the National Marine Fisheries Service. There is a lot of emphasis on our oceans. Two commissions have studied it. Yet the Oceans Commission says we are falling well short of any real commitment there. The NOAA budget is cut, the Fish and Wildlife Service budget, and the Forest Service. This amendment seeks to at least bring back this funding to function 300 for all of these very important environmental and natural resource problems to baseline, to current funding levels.

I very much hope my colleagues will support this amendment and contribute to protecting the environment and health of our Nation's citizens, helping to ensure that we have clean water and that we breathe clean air.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired.

Mr. CONRAD. Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. CONRAD. Madam President, I yield 2½ minutes to Senator DORGAN from North Dakota.

Mr. FEINGOLD. Madam President, I support Senator SARBANES' effort to restore funding for our agencies and programs directed at natural resource conservation and management and some of our fundamental environmental responsibilities. The programs and agencies include the Clean Water State Revolving Fund, the National Park Service, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the Forest Service, the Army Corps of Engineers, and others. I do believe that we must meet our stewardship responsibilities and the President's budget simply doesn't cut it.

I do, however, want to flag a problem related to the Army Corps of Engineers. It is a problem that cripples the Corps: The minute its budget arrives on our doorsteps, Members of Congress scramble for Corps earmarks. We must move away from this earmarking and focus on national priorities. I will continue working to change the way this agency operates.

Mr. DORGAN. Madam President, I am going to be offering an amendment. I have noticed an amendment dealing with Indian program funding. I think most who understand these issues understand that we have a bona fide crisis in Indian health care, Indian housing, and Indian education. We have had hearings. I have had hearings in my State, and we have had hearings in the Indian Affairs Committee, and we have to address these issues. The issue of Indian health care is not an optional issue. When there is a young child on an Indian reservation or an elder on an Indian reservation who is sick, they need health care.

This is interesting. We have trust responsibility for health care for a couple of groups of Americans. One is Federal prisoners. If they are incarcerated, we have a responsibility to Federal prisoners for their health care. We also have trust responsibility for health care for American Indians. That is our trust responsibility. We spend nearly twice as much—twice as much—per person to provide health care for Federal prisoners as we do for American Indians. That is wrong.

Housing: We have a bona fide crisis in housing. In many cases on many of America's Indian reservations we have people living in Third World conditions.

Education: Do we really want a young child who is 6 or 8 years old to be walking through the doorway of a grade school and receiving an education that is much less of an education than other children are simply because we don't have the money? Shouldn't these young Indian children be given the opportunity for a good education? I think with respect to education, the GAO report shows quite clearly that facilities in BIA schools are inferior to other schools.

My point is this: When we take a look at our priorities, what is important, what we should be doing, we see that we have Americans living in Third World conditions on many of these Indian reservations. We have a crisis in health care, in education and housing, and we ought to do something about it. You can't go to these places and look at their health care system or look at their schools or look at people living in substandard housing and believe that it is not a priority for this Congress to meet its responsibilities.

I have offered this legislation before in the form of an amendment. I do so again today. I have a number of cosponsors I would like to add for the RECORD.

I yield the floor.

Mr. GREGG. Madam President, what is the time situation?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire controls 7 minutes.

Mr. GREGG. Madam President, although I don't agree with him, I yield 3½ minutes to the Senator from Montana.

Mr. DORGAN. Madam President, might I, with the indulgence of my colleagues, simply read the cosponsors? They are Senators CANTWELL, MURRAY, BINGAMAN, and JOHNSON are added as cosponsors.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator will suspend. The amendment has not yet been offered.

The Senator from Montana is recognized.

DEBT LIMIT EXTENSION

Mr. BAUCUS. Madam President, I am speaking on an amendment I have offered to the debt limit. This amendment would simply require the Treasury Department to report on the economic and security implications of our debt to foreigners. Massive budget deficits are forcing America to borrow heavily. Last year, foreigners bought 96 percent of the Treasury bills that our Government sold to finance our debt—96 percent. That is an astounding statistic. The debt purchased last year, almost all of it, was purchased by foreigners, 96 percent.

Foreigners are becoming our bankers. America is becoming a debtor to foreign powers.

I think we need to understand this change. This amendment asks the Treasury to investigate what the full cost of our indebtedness will be, in higher interest rates, the value of a dollar, lower economic growth, less power to negotiate trade agreements, and diminished national security. We should let taxpayers know how big the cost of this foreign debt really is. This amendment will help to get the answers.

Some will make breathless arguments that passing this amendment will endanger the full faith and credit of the U.S. Government. I say that is hogwash. If the Senate passes this amendment, the House of Representatives could pass it and have the bill on the President's desk before suppertime, on the President's desk this evening.

The real reason some are opposing this amendment is to save the House of Representatives from having to vote on the debt limit even once—to save the House of Representatives, to save those folks on the other side of the body, on the other side of the Capitol, from having to vote on the debt limit. That is really what is going on here. I think if Senators vote on the debt limit, certainly House Members should vote on the debt limit, too. That is an embarrassingly poor reason to vote against a study that would help protect America's economic and security interests.

Last year, foreigners bought 96 percent of the Treasury bills that our Government sold—actually 96 percent—just to remind everybody. I therefore urge my colleagues to adopt this amendment to help find out what our foreign debt really means for America.

Mr. GREGG. Madam President, I know the chairman of the Finance Committee is coming over, and he may want to speak to this issue, but the time may lapse before he gets here so let me make this point: The study which the Senator is asking for could occur and would occur—and I can't speak for the chairman of the Finance Committee, but I would certainly be willing to sign the letter, and I suspect the chairman would, too. But simply writing the letter down there from the committees of jurisdiction—I don't happen to be a committee of jurisdiction, although it is an interesting issue—and then the chairman and the ranking member could get the study.

The reason this amendment is being put on this bill is to try to send it back to the House to delay the process so that the debt ceiling ends up with some political votes somewhere along the line. That is just gamesmanship and there is no need for it.

We should have this amendment taken off this bill. If there is a desire for this information, which we could certainly obtain rather easily by sending a letter demanding that they do the study, and then have GAO do the study—a little independence on the study might even be good—do a joint task force and get the information. So the amendment really isn't necessary at all.

So I agree with what I think is the leadership's position on this side, that this amendment is just dilatory and will end up delaying the debt ceiling legislation, which is a mistake. That is why it is opposed.

Has all my time expired?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has 2½ minutes remaining.

Mr. GREGG. Madam President, I see the Democratic leader, and I will yield back my time and let the Democratic leader take leader time.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I will use leader time.

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

Mr. REID. Madam President, President Thomas Jefferson said:

> I place economy among the first and most important government virtues, and public debt as the greatest of the dangers to be feared.

That was President Thomas Jefferson.

Today the Senate is considering a bill to increase the Nation's debt by $781 billion. If adopted, it would be the fourth such increase in the 5 years this administration has been in office. I will be opposing this latest request, and I hope that people on both sides of the aisle will do the same.

Any objective analysis of our country's fiscal history would have to conclude this administration and this rubberstamping Republican Congress are the most fiscally irresponsible in the history of our country. In fact, no other President or Congress even comes close. When this administration came to office, the Federal Government was running large annual budget surpluses that were projected to continue as far as the eye could see. These projected surpluses were so large that the Congressional Budget Office estimated the Federal Government would pay off all its publicly held debt by the year 2009. In fact, Alan Greenspan, then the Chairman of the Federal Reserve, and other economists expressed concern that these surpluses would be so huge they risked unsettling the financial markets.

Because of the reckless fiscal policies of this President and the Republican-controlled Congress, 2009 will be a year to recognize President Bush's multi-trillion-dollar red-ink special. Over the past 5 years, rather than running record surpluses and reducing record amounts of debt, our Nation suffered record deficits and debt increases. In fact, when it comes to deficits, this President owns all the records. The three largest deficits in our Nation's history have all occurred under this administration's watch. The deterioration of the Federal Government's finances is the direct result of the misguided priorities of this administration and this rubberstamping Republican Congress.

These deficits have resulted in an unprecedented and dangerous borrowing spree. The total debt during this spree has grown by trillions of dollars. President Abraham Lincoln said:

> As an individual who undertakes to live by borrowing soon finds his original means devoured by interest and next no one left to borrow from, so must it be with government.

O, if the Republican President and Republican-dominated Congress had followed the advice of Abraham Lincoln.

The legislation on the floor today will push the Nation's borrowing limit to nearly $9 trillion. Compounding matters, the President's most recent budget—much of which Senate Republicans have placed before the Senate this week—would make matters substantially worse, leading to $12 trillion debt by 2011, just as the first wave of baby boomers is beginning to retire.

Not only is debt exploding at the worst possible time, increasingly we are borrowing from foreign lenders. Since this administration took office, U.S. debt financed by foreigners has more than doubled, increasing by well over $1 trillion. That is more foreign-held debt in 5 years than the Nation accumulated in the first 224 years of this Republic. By contrast, during the last 3 years of the Clinton administration, we paid off hundreds of billions of dollars of debt, including $200 billion in debt to foreign lenders.

Given the explosion of debt in recent years, it is long past time for Washington to change the course and adopt a new fiscal policy. After all, the future of our economy and our Nation is at stake. The Comptroller General of the United States, David Walker, told the Senate Budget Committee recently:

> Continuing on this unsustainable fiscal path will gradually erode, if not suddenly damage, our economy, our standard of living and ultimately our national security.

If my Republican friends believe that increasing our debt by almost $800 billion today, and more than $3 trillion dollars over the last 5 years, is the right thing to do, they should be upfront about it. They should explain why they believe more debt is good for our economy. How can the Republican majority and this Congress explain to their constituents that trillions of dollars of new debt is good for our economy? How can they explain that they think it is fair to force our children, our grandchildren, and our great grandchildren to finance this debt through higher taxes? That is what will have to happen. Why is it right to increase this Nation's dependence on foreign creditors? They should explain this.

Maybe they can convince the public they are right. I doubt it, because most Americans know that increasing the debt is the last thing we should be doing. After all, I repeat, the baby boomers are about to retire. Under the circumstances, any credible economist would tell you we should be reducing debt, not increasing it.

Again, on debt—Thomas Jefferson. These are his words:

> And to preserve our independence, we must not let our rulers load us with perpetual debt. We must make our election between economy and liberty—or profusion and servitude.

That was President Thomas Jefferson.

Democrats will not be making arguments to support this legislation which will weaken our country. The President often speaks of personal responsibility. In a speech before African-American leaders earlier in his administration, the President stated that a President is judged not by the words he speaks but by the work he leaves behind. By that benchmark, the President and this Republican-controlled Congress will not be judged kindly with respect to the stewardship of our Nation's finances.

We are being asked to do what should not be asked of us, to increase the debt to almost $9 trillion. I hope everyone walking down to these desks today will understand what they are doing, what they are doing to our country. On this side of the aisle, we know.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

AMENDMENT NO. 3102

Mr. DORGAN. Madam President, let me ask for consideration of amendment 3102, as I had previously filed. That is the legislation I described previously. Senators CANTWELL, MURRAY, BINGAMAN, and JOHNSON join me in proposing this amendment as cosponsors. I ask for its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

> The Senator from North Dakota [Mr. DORGAN], for himself, Ms. CANTWELL, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. JOHNSON, and Mr. BINGAMAN, proposes an amendment numbered 3102.

Mr. DORGAN. I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

The amendment is as follows:

> (Purpose: To increase funding by $1 billion for various tribal programs and provide necessary additional funding based on recommendations from Indian country, by closing corporate loopholes.)

On page 3, line 13, increase the amount by $285,000,000.

On page 3, line 15, increase the amount by $197,000,000.

On page 3, line 17, increase the amount by $230,000,000.

On page 3, line 19, increase the amount by $263,000,000.

On page 3, line 21, increase the amount by $302,000,000.

On page 4, line 1, increase the amount by $285,000,000.

On page 4, line 2, increase the amount by $197,000,000.

On page 4, line 3, increase the amount by $230,000,000.

On page 4, line 4, increase the amount by $263,000,000.

On page 4: line 6, increase the amount by $302,000,000.

On page 4, line 13, increase the amount by $1,000,000,000.

On page 5, line 4, increase the amount by $299,000,000.

On page 5, line 6, increase the amount by $385,000,000.

On page 5, line 8, increase the amount by $154,000,000.

On page 5, line 10, increase the amount by $126,000,000.

On page 5, line 12, increase the amount by $15,000,000.

On page 5, line 19, decrease the amount by $14,000,000.

On page 5, line 21, decrease the amount by $188,000,000.

On page 5, line 23, increase the amount by $76,000,000.

On page 5, line 25, increase the amount by $137,000,000.

On page 6, line 2, increase the amount by $287,000,000.

On page 6, line 8, increase the amount by $14,000,000.

On page 6, line 10, increase the amount by $202,000,000.

On page 6, line 12, increase the amount by $126,000,000.

On page 6, line 14, decrease the amount by $11,000,000.

On page 6, line 16, decrease the amount by $298,000,000.
On page 6, line 22, increase the amount by $14,000,000.
On page 6, line 24, increase the amount by $202,000,000.
On page 7, line 2, increase the amount by $126,000,000.
On page 7, line 4, decrease the amount by $11,000,000.
On page 7, line 6, decrease the amount by $298,000,000.
On page 13, line 21, increase the amount by $25,000,000.
On page 13, line 22, increase the amount by $13,000,000.
On page 14, line 1, increase the amount by $8,000,000.
On page 14, line 5, increase the amount by $4,000,000.
On page 14, line 9, increase the amount by $1,000,000.
On page 17, line 22, increase the amount by $120,000,000.
On page 17, line 23, increase the amount by $29,000,000.
On page 18, line 3, increase the amount by $33,000,000.
On page 18, line 7, increase the amount by $27,000,000.
On page 18, line 11, increase the amount by $18,000,000.
On page 18, line 15, increase the amount by $2,000,000.
On page 18, line 24, increase the amount by $120,000,000.
On page 18, line 25, increase the amount by $17,000,000.
On page 19, line 4, increase the amount by $90,000,000.
On page 19, line 8, increase the amount by $8,000,000.
On page 19, line 12, increase the amount by $2,000,000.
On page 19, line 24, increase the amount by $540,000,000.
On page 19, line 25, increase the amount by $187,000,000.
On page 20, line 4, increase the amount by $203,000,000.
On page 20, line 8, increase the amount by $75,000,000.
On page 20, line 12, increase the amount by $75,000,000.
On page 21, line 24, increase the amount by $125,000,000.
On page 21, line 25, increase the amount by $46,000,000.
On page 22, line 4, increase the amount by $25,000,000.
On page 22, line 8, increase the amount by $18,000,000.
On page 22, line 12, increase the amount by $15,000,000.
On page 22, line 16, increase the amount by $13,000,000.
On page 24, line 24, increase the amount by $70,000,000.
On page 24, line 25, increase the amount by $7,000,000.
On page 25, line 4, increase the amount by $26,000,000.
On page 25, line 8, increase the amount by $22,000,000.
On page 25, line 12, increase the amount by $15,000,000.
On page 53, line 1, increase the amount by $1,000,000,000.
On page 53, line 2, increase the amount by $298,000,000.

INCREASING THE STATUTORY LIMIT ON THE PUBLIC DEBT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the hour of 10:30 having arrived, the Senate will resume consideration of H.J. Res. 47, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A joint resolution (H.J. Res. 47), increasing the statutory limit on the public debt.

Pending:

Baucus/Lincoln amendment No. 3131, to require a study of debt held by foreigners.

AMENDMENT NO. 3131

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the question is on agreeing to amendment No. 3131.

Mr. BAUCUS. Madam President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second? There is a sufficient second. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Delaware (Mr. BIDEN) is necessarily absent.

I further announce that, if present and voting, the Senator from Delaware (Mr. BIDEN) would vote ''yea.''

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

The result was announced—yeas 44, nays 55, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 53 Leg.]

YEAS—44

Akaka	Feinstein	Mikulski
Baucus	Harkin	Murray
Bayh	Inouye	Nelson (FL)
Bingaman	Jeffords	Nelson (NE)
Boxer	Johnson	Obama
Byrd	Kennedy	Pryor
Cantwell	Kerry	Reed
Carper	Kohl	Reid
Clinton	Landrieu	Rockefeller
Conrad	Lautenberg	Salazar
Dayton	Leahy	Sarbanes
Dodd	Levin	Schumer
Dorgan	Lieberman	Stabenow
Durbin	Lincoln	Wyden
Feingold	Menendez	

NAYS—55

Alexander	DeWine	McConnell
Allard	Dole	Murkowski
Allen	Domenici	Roberts
Bennett	Ensign	Santorum
Bond	Enzi	Sessions
Brownback	Frist	Shelby
Bunning	Graham	Smith
Burns	Grassley	Snowe
Burr	Gregg	Specter
Chafee	Hagel	Stevens
Chambliss	Hatch	Sununu
Coburn	Hutchison	Talent
Cochran	Inhofe	Thomas
Coleman	Isakson	Thune
Collins	Kyl	Vitter
Cornyn	Lott	Voinovich
Craig	Lugar	Warner
Crapo	Martinez	
DeMint	McCain	

NOT VOTING—1

Biden

The amendment (No. 3131) was rejected.

Mr. GREGG. I move to reconsider the vote and I move to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the next vote in this series be 10 minutes in length; further, that when the votes begin at 1:30, all votes after the first vote be limited to 10 minutes.

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

The Democratic leader.

SENATOR SARBANES 11,000TH VOTE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, we just completed a vote that is a landmark for one of our Senators. Senator PAUL SARBANES cast his 11,000th vote.

It was only a few days ago that we stopped the proceedings of the Senate to underline and underscore the voting record of the senior Senator from Vermont, Senator LEAHY.

Senator SARBANES has decided not to run for reelection, as we all know, but what a legacy he has in the Senate. There is no one with a better academic record than PAUL SARBANES: Princeton University, summa cum laude, Phi Beta Kappa; a Rhodes scholar; he studied, of course, because of that, at Oxford; Harvard Law School.

Those who have had the privilege of working with PAUL SARBANES know that not only does he have this great intellect, he has so much common sense. Legislation he works on is detailed, very thorough.

He, of course, is our ranking member of the Committee on Banking. I have traveled with the distinguished senior Senator from Maryland. We have traveled various parts of the world. I have fond memories of PAUL SARBANES and all the things he has done. His wife Chris is a wonderful, caring person, just like PAUL.

Even though I have a lot of stories, I share one with the Senate. One of the things people do not realize about Senator SARBANES is his athletic ability. He is a great athlete. I was told a story about Senator SARBANES that for me is a classic. I love baseball. I follow the history of baseball. In high school, he was a star baseball player. He was selected to play on an all-star team. He was a shortstop. He comes to the all-star team as the shortstop from the Eastern Shore. The manager coach announces the starting lineup and he has SARBANES at second base. PAUL went up to the coach and said, I am a shortstop. I was selected as an all-star shortstop. The coach ignored him. He went back again, and finally the coach said, Kaline is starting shortstop. Al Kaline was a better shortstop, at least the coach thought so, than PAUL SARBANES. Al Kaline went to the Major Leagues when he was 18 or 19 years old and is in the Baseball Hall of Fame.

I know we have a lot of things to do today. People are going to the White House. There are a lot of places to go and this is a very important bill, but I could not let the time go by without acknowledging one of the great Senators in the history of our country, Senator PAUL SARBANES of Maryland.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, I ask to speak not to exceed 3 minutes.

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

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, one of the greatest orations ever uttered was the

oration on the Crown. And it can be said that the theme of that oration was a question: Who least serves the State? Demosthenes answered that question: He who does not say what he thinks.

Socrates was asked which great oration of Demosthenes he liked best. Socrates answered, ''The longest.'' In other words, he liked the longest oration Demosthenes ever uttered. The Greeks taught the world to think.

This man who is going to leave us after this term, regrettably, and to our great loss, has always impressed me as a thinker, one in the train of Demosthenes.

PAUL SARBANES is a great Senator, a great Senator.

I can remember when he went with me and other Senators to Panama. There we talked to Torrijos and the other leaders of Panama, including our own people. It was there that I changed my mind about the Panama Canal Treaty. PAUL SARBANES was one of those who was there, who walked with us, who talked with us, who was on plane with Torrijos.

PAUL SARBANES has not only been a thinker, he has been a great inspiration to those who have served with him. He will be missed. He will not be replaced. There are no more PAUL SARBANES. I shall never forget him. He leaves a great void when he goes.

One might say: Whence cometh another?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for 2 minutes.

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

The Senator from Maryland.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, much is being said about my dear and esteemed colleague, Senator SARBANES. He has been the longest serving Senator in Maryland's history. And I would put to the Senate, he has been the best serving Member of the U.S. Senate from Maryland.

Sure, he cast 11,000 votes, but each and every one of our colleagues will know that when those 11,000 votes were cast, they were cast with thoughtfulness, with due diligence, with the idea of how would that vote serve the Nation and how would it help Maryland.

If we want to honor Senator PAUL SARBANES, let's make sure every vote we cast brings to it the same kind of integrity, the same kind of intelligence, and the same kind of devotion and dedication. That is what I would like to do as the junior Senator, and say thank you for being side by side with me.

Mr. BYRD. Yes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. SARBANES. Mr. President, I know we want to proceed with our business, but if I could just be recognized for 1 minute.

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

Mr. SARBANES. Mr. President, I thank my colleagues for their very gracious remarks and all of my colleagues for their expressions of respect and affection.

My colleague, Senator MIKULSKI, said I was the longest serving Senator in Maryland's history. I want you to know, it is a little bit like being like Cal Ripken; every day you go to work, you set a new record—one more day than the day before.

It has been, obviously, one of the great focuses and joys of my life to be able to work here in the Senate with all my colleagues. I am extremely grateful to all of you.

I will just close with this story, because I am still here until the 3rd of January 2007. So there is still time to go.

But I once got an award. My mother was there at this dinner. This was a few years ago. And they asked her to speak as well. So she got up to speak, and she said how honored she was they had given this recognition to her son, and so forth, and how much she appreciated it. And then she closed her remarks by saying: He has been a good boy—so far.

I carry that comment with me.

Thank you all very much.

(Applause, Senators rising.)

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The assistant majority leader.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, if I could just briefly say to our good friend from Maryland that Republican Senators, too, join in wishing him well on this extraordinary accomplishment. And if he would like to resign any time before January, that would be all right, too. But in the meantime, we are glad to have you around.

Congratulations, Senator SARBANES.

Mr. OBAMA. Mr. President, I rise today to talk about America's debt problem.

The fact that we are here today to debate raising America's debt limit is a sign of leadership failure. It is a sign that the U.S. Government can't pay its own bills. It is a sign that we now depend on ongoing financial assistance from foreign countries to finance our Government's reckless fiscal policies.

Over the past 5 years, our federal debt has increased by $3.5 trillion to $8.6 trillion. That is ''trillion'' with a ''T.'' That is money that we have borrowed from the Social Security trust fund, borrowed from China and Japan, borrowed from American taxpayers. And over the next 5 years, between now and 2011, the President's budget will increase the debt by almost another $3.5 trillion.

Numbers that large are sometimes hard to understand. Some people may wonder why they matter. Here is why: This year, the Federal Government will spend $220 billion on interest. That is more money to pay interest on our national debt than we'll spend on Medicaid and the State Children's Health Insurance Program. That is more money to pay interest on our debt this year than we will spend on education, homeland security, transportation, and veterans benefits combined. It is more money in one year than we are likely to spend to rebuild the devastated gulf coast in a way that honors the best of America.

And the cost of our debt is one of the fastest growing expenses in the Federal budget. This rising debt is a hidden domestic enemy, robbing our cities and States of critical investments in infrastructure like bridges, ports, and levees; robbing our families and our children of critical investments in education and health care reform; robbing our seniors of the retirement and health security they have counted on.

Every dollar we pay in interest is a dollar that is not going to investment in America's priorities. Instead, interest payments are a significant tax on all Americans—a debt tax that Washington doesn't want to talk about. If Washington were serious about honest tax relief in this country, we would see an effort to reduce our national debt by returning to responsible fiscal policies.

But we are not doing that. Despite repeated efforts by Senators CONRAD and FEINGOLD, the Senate continues to reject a return to the commonsense Pay-go rules that used to apply. Previously, Pay-go rules applied both to increases in mandatory spending and to tax cuts. The Senate had to abide by the commonsense budgeting principle of balancing expenses and revenues. Unfortunately, the principle was abandoned, and now the demands of budget discipline apply only to spending.

As a result, tax breaks have not been paid for by reductions in Federal spending, and thus the only way to pay for them has been to increase our deficit to historically high levels and borrow more and more money. Now we have to pay for those tax breaks plus the cost of borrowing for them. Instead of reducing the deficit, as some people claimed, the fiscal policies of this administration and its allies in Congress will add more than $600 million in debt for each of the next 5 years. That is why I will once again cosponsor the Pay-go amendment and continue to hope that my colleagues will return to a smart rule that has worked in the past and can work again.

Our debt also matters internationally. My friend, the ranking member of the Senate Budget Committee, likes to remind us that it took 42 Presidents 224 years to run up only $1 trillion of foreign-held debt. This administration did more than that in just 5 years. Now, there is nothing wrong with borrowing from foreign countries. But we must remember that the more we depend on foreign nations to lend us money, the more our economic security is tied to the whims of foreign leaders whose interests might not be aligned with ours.

Increasing America's debt weakens us domestically and internationally. Leadership means that ''the buck stops here.'' Instead, Washington is shifting the burden of bad choices today onto the backs of our children and grandchildren. America has a debt problem

and a failure of leadership. Americans deserve better.

I therefore intend to oppose the effort to increase America's debt limit.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of final passage.

Raising the debt limit is necessary to preserve the full faith and credit of the U.S. Government.

We cannot as a Congress pass spending bills and tax bills and then refuse to pay our bills.

Refusing to raise the debt limit is like refusing to pay your credit card bill—after you've used your credit card.

The time to control the deficits and debt is when we are voting on the spending bills and the tax bills that create it.

Raising the debt limit is about meeting the obligations we have already incurred.

We must meet our obligations. Vote for this bill.

Mr. COBURN. Mr. President, the spending process in the Congress is broken. Some will argue that now is not the time to debate spending reform or budget reform. They will say that now is not the time to have a debate about our country's spending priorities. They will argue that right now we need to just ''pay our bills'' for past transactions and discuss reforms some time in the future. Raising the debt limit, however, does not count as ''paying the bills.'' We are not paying our bills.

Last fiscal year, the real Federal deficit—the amount by which the Federal debt increased—was $538 billion. When we raise the debt limit, we are not ''paying our bills.'' We are merely taking out another line of credit—another loan—to allow for more spending that we can't afford. It is akin to a deeply indebted family getting a loan for a new car or getting a new credit card or line of credit without cutting up the old credit cards that got them in trouble in the first place.

According to the Congressional Budget Office, the Federal Government spent roughly $2.5 trillion during the last fiscal year. Let's look at that amount of spending another way. If the Federal Government spent $2.5 trillion last year, that means that on average, $6.8 billion was spent each day, or $78,418 was spent per second by the Federal Government.

I believe that it is absolutely necessary to have an open and honest debate about our spending priorities. We are getting ready to increase this country's debt limit to almost $9 trillion. Over the past 5 years, our national debt has increased by $3 trillion, or nearly $9,000 per American. That is a lot of money. In 1990, our total national debt was about $3 trillion. That means that it took our country more than 200 years to accumulate that amount of debt—200 years to increase our debt by $3 trillion. We just added that much new debt in only 5 years.

In 2001, the share of Federal debt per person in this country was a little over $20,000. That includes everyone—not just those in the workforce. According to the Office of Management and Budget and the Census Bureau, total Federal debt per American will rise to $29,000 per American by the end of 2006. That is an increase of $9,000 per man, woman, and child in this country since 2001. But a lot of people are quick to dismiss that figure. They will say that it doesn't matter, that we only need to worry about how debt and deficits compare to economic growth or to the size of the economy. I think a better rule of thumb is how Government growth compares to the growth of wages and earnings.

If regular Americans are tightening their belts, the Federal Government should do the same instead of engaging in yet another spending binge. Since 2001, total Federal debt per American has increased by $9,000. But over that same time period, the average wages of American workers have only increased by $4,200. Over the past 5 years, the growth of Federal debt per person has doubled the growth of average wages of American workers. What makes this situation even worse is that that $9,000 increase in debt per person is just going to get bigger and bigger because we are not doing anything to cut spending or prepare for the impending fiscal crisis that will result from the retirement of the baby boomer generation. Interest on that debt is just going to get larger.

Last year, interest costs—the costs of Federal debt that the Government must pay to those who buy U.S. Treasury bonds—were about 8 percent of the total Federal budget. In contrast, the average American spends roughly 5 percent of his or her income on credit card debt and car loans according to the Federal Reserve. The Federal Government spent close to $200 billion on interest costs alone last year. According to the Government Accountability Office, or GAO, interest costs will consume 25 percent of the entire Federal budget by 2035. Let's put that figure into perspective. Twenty-five percent of the Federal budget is a huge amount.

By way of comparison, the Department of Education's share of Federal spending in 2005 was approximately 3 percent of all Federal spending. The Department of Health and Human Services was responsible for approximately 23 percent of all Federal spending. Spending by the Social Security Administration was responsible for about 20 percent of all Federal spending. Spending on Medicare was about 12 percent of all Federal spending. Spending in 2005 by the Department of Defense—in the midst of two wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and a global war against terrorism—comprised about 19 percent of all Federal spending. Thus, if we do not change our current spending habits, GAO estimates that as a percentage of Federal spending, interest costs in 2035 will be larger than defense costs today, Social Security costs today, Medicare costs today, and education costs today.

No family in America would ever be able to manage its finances this way. No family would be able to build up insane amounts of debt, unilaterally increase all of its credit card limits with no ability to ever pay them off, and still be able to spend, spend, spend without any accountability. We have some very serious problems to address regarding spending priorities in this country.

According to the Congressional Research Service, Congress appropriated $64 billion in earmarks for 2006, the current fiscal year. That doesn't even include the earmarks from the highway bill that was passed in 2005. We are going to spend $64 billion on earmarks and pork projects across the country this year even though it is estimated that the real Federal deficit—including the money that is regularly stolen from Social Security—will again surpass half a trillion dollars.

Earmarks are a serious problem because they put parochial interests ahead of national priorities. They put the interests of the next election ahead of the interests of the next generation. Some, however, argue that earmarks are not really a problem because they comprise a small percent of the budget. They argue that entitlement spending is the problem and that we ought to address that problem instead of focusing on earmarks. These arguments completely miss the point.

If entitlements are the real problem and earmarks are not a problem, then why did entitlement savings passed in the last budget resolution for fiscal year 2006 only amount to $5 billion? If entitlements are the real problem, why did we spend 13 times more money on earmarks last year than we saved in entitlement programs? At that rate, we will solve our country's fiscal problems some time after never. The budget resolution we passed last year created entitlement savings of about $40 billion over the next 5 years. We spent more on earmarks in 1 single year than we saved from entitlement programs over 5 years. Over the past 3 years—since 2004—we have spent nearly $160 billion on earmarks and special interest pork projects according to the Congressional Research Service.

Since 1994, the number of individual earmarks has more than tripled, increasing from 4,126 in 1994 to 12,852 in fiscal year 2006. Of those 12,852 earmarks, over 95 percent were not even included in bill language. Instead, they were hidden within conference reports. Many never even saw the light of day until they were snuck into unamendable conference reports that were sure to be rammed through at the last minute. Earmarking is a very serious problem that needs to be addressed before we can get our fiscal house in order. However, there are also other spending issues that this body should address.

The issue of improper payments by the Federal Government is one that

can and should be fixed. The subcommittee that I chair—the Subcommittee on Federal Financial Management—has examined this issue in depth. We have uncovered numerous examples of improper payments that waste taxpayer money and harm those who aren't receiving the assistance they need. An improper payment is basically a payment that was either made to the right person in the wrong amount or a payment that was given to the wrong person, regardless of the amount. Improper payments include payments that were too high and payments that were too low.

According to estimates by the Office of Management and Budget, improper payments last year totaled $37 billion. That figure is larger than last year's expenditures by the Departments of Commerce, Interior, State, and Environmental Protection Agency combined. The amount of improper payments just from last year could have completely funded four major Federal agencies. Improper payments are a very serious problem. For example, 28 percent of all payments within the earned income tax credit program are incorrectly made. Thus, for every dollar we spend in that program, 25 cents are completely wasted. Improper payments within the Social Security Administration totaled nearly $6 billion. And these figures don't even take into account the seven major programs with outlays totaling about $228 billion that are not yet even reporting their improper payments.

There are some who wish to make the issue of spending a partisan issue, but it is not a partisan issue. Members of both parties are guilty of putting short-term interests ahead of long-term priorities. Last week, Members of both parties voted to ignore Senate budget rules in order to spend an additional $1 billion that is not paid for on home-heating costs even though the month of January was the warmest on record and winter will be over in less than a week. Both parties appear to lack the political courage to make the hard choices to address our impending fiscal crisis. This issue has nothing to do with Republicans and nothing to do with Democrats—it has to do with what is best for the American public.

Mr. President, the spending process in this body is broken. Our priorities are completely out of whack. Earmarking and wasteful spending are out of control. It makes no sense to effectively max out our credit cards and ask for a higher credit limit when we have no intention and no ability to ever actually pay for our debts.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, the outcome of today's vote on raising the debt ceiling to nearly $9 trillion is not in question, but our future economic security will be if we do not change from our current disastrous course. We will raise the debt limit today so that the United States does not default on its obligations, but we cannot for a second think that we have solved the problem or even moved in the right direction.

This will be the fourth time in 5 years that we have had to raise the amount the Government is allowed to borrow. This is a direct result of the fiscal irresponsibility of this administration. These policies have taken the Nation from 2 years of record surpluses just 6 years ago—when we were paying down our debt—to record deficits and debt. We are passing on a crippling burden to our children and grandchildren and threatening our economic security.

Since 2002, we have increased the debt limit by an astounding $3 trillion. And unless we make a significant change in our fiscal policies, there are additional increases in our future. The Congressional Budget Office forecasts that our gross Federal debt, which includes debt the Government owes to the public plus funds owed to Federal trust funds, including Social Security and Medicare, will climb from its current level of $8.3 trillion to $12.8 trillion by 2016. Even this extraordinary estimate does not include either the coming costs of military operations in Iraq or the substantial cost of fixing the alternative minimum tax, which if left unchanged will impose unintended tax increases on middle-income taxpayers, which most agree need to be changed.

The burden this massive debt puts on our children is staggering. Today, each American citizen's share of the debt is over $27,000, and it will rise to over $39,000 by 2016. Paying off this debt will require either extraordinary tax increases or significant cuts in critical areas such as defense or Social Security. Tragically, it will mean that an increasing number of taxpayer dollars will be spent not on moving America forward but simply on treading water by making interest payments to our creditors. Even under the CBO's conservative estimates, interest payments on the gross debt will rise from $352 billion in 2005 to $662 billion in 2016. That means over the next 10 years, we will spend an estimated $5.6 trillion on interest payments alone. Making these interest payments means fewer resources are available for our national priorities such as shoring up the Social Security and Medicare trust funds as the babyboom generation begins to retire.

Equally disturbing is what this rampant borrowing will mean for our economic security. As we go deeper into debt to foreign countries we are losing control of our own destiny. Over 90 percent of our newly issued debt is being purchased by foreigners. By the end of 2004, U.S. Treasury debt held by foreigners was close to $2.2 trillion, more than double the amount that was held at the beginning of this administration. This large amount of foreign debt leaves us vulnerable to the priorities of foreign creditors. If foreign investors, including countries, were to decide, for economic or political reasons, to stop financing our debt, the U.S. economy would be in for a severe shock.

Even without a catastrophic event, our unbridled foreign borrowing erodes our power by providing other countries with leverage during trade or other negotiations. We cannot delude ourselves into thinking we can maintain our position in the world if we can't even balance our checkbook.

We need to turn away from this administration's irresponsible fiscal policies. One of the best steps we could take would be to reinstate pay-as-you-go budget enforcement rules that require tax cuts and not just spending to be paid for. This approach worked during the 1990s to help bring about the first surpluses in a generation, and it can work again.

We should also revisit this administration's irresponsible and unfair tax cuts that have driven us so deeply into this deficit ditch. It is unconscionable that middle-class Americans will be paying for years for tax cuts that went primarily to the wealthiest among us. In fact, the top 5 percent of households in our country, whose average income is more than $250,000 a year, received almost half of the President's tax cuts.

Today's action to raise the debt limit will hopefully be a reality check on what Republican fiscal policies have wrought. We need to change course. We need to return to fiscal responsibility. And we need to start climbing out of this deficit ditch before we are buried in it.

Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, I was necessarily absent this morning when we considered Senator BAUCUS's amendment to the debt limit increase. If I had been here, I would have supported the Baucus amendment.

The Baucus amendment is clearly needed. The massive scale of other nations' accumulation of our debt has added another level of danger and complexity to our international economic relations.

This is a two-way street. The tsunami of debt created by the policies of this administration has to go somewhere. China is one of the major purchasers of that debt. Japan, Great Britain, and others have major holdings, too. In the short term, that has soaked up a lot of our bonds, and helped to keep interest rates down. That is a good thing.

However, that has kept the Chinese currency artificially low, and ours artificially high. So they can sell their products at a discount, and our exports are more expensive. That is a bad thing.

Our trade deficit was a record $726 billion last year; $202 billion of that was our trade deficit with China alone.

But as the rest of the world copes with the waves of U.S. debt, we are now all in the same leaky boat. There is just so much of our debt other nations want to hold. The more of it they accumulate, the closer we are to the day when they will not want any more.

When that happens, slowly or rapidly, our interest rates will go up, the value of their U.S. bonds will drop, and

we will all have big problems. We need both more awareness, and more understanding, of this fundamental threat to our economic well being and the global economy.

But the roots of that threat lie in the disastrous policies of this administration.

Because this massive accumulation of debt was predicted, because it was foreseeable, because it was unnecessary, because it was the result of willful and reckless disregard for the warnings that were given and for the fundamentals of economic management, I am voting against the debt limit increase.

In the 5 years he has been in office, President Bush has added more to our foreign debt that the 42 Presidents before him. It took 224 years to accumulate $1 trillion of debt to other nations. It took President Bush just 5 years to more than double it.

Over $3 trillion in debt, foreign debt and debt held by Americans, has been piled up by this administration.

When he set out on the course that brought us to this sorry state, the President was clearly and repeatedly warned that massive tax cuts would leave us vulnerable to natural disasters, economic slowdown, or threats to our national security. ''Don't worry,'' the President told us. ''I know what I am doing.''

After 9/11, in the face of what he has himself called the moral equivalent of the World War II, or the Cold War, he insisted that while everything else had changed, he would not change his economic policies.

Facts had changed. His promise to balance the budget, his promise to pay down the debt, were proved to be false.

But he refused to take responsibility for his policies. He refused to admit that a changed world demanded a change of course. His refusal has pushed us deeper and deeper into the hole.

His refusal added $450 billion to the debt in 2002; it added $984 billion in 2003; it added $800 billion in 2004. And here we are again today, adding another $781 billion. With that addition, our national debt will be $8.6 trillion at the end of this year.

The President's budget plans will bring that number to $11.8 trillion at the end of the next 5 years.

This is a record of utter disregard for our Nation's financial future. It is a record of indifference to the price our children and grandchildren will pay to redeem our debt when it comes due.

History will not judge this record kindly.

My vote against the debt limit increase cannot change the fact that we have incurred this debt already, and will no doubt incur more. It is a statement that I refuse to be associated with the policies that brought us to this point.

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, the Bush administration seeks for the fourth time in 5 years to increase the indebtedness of the United States—this time by $781 billion. This body's consideration of that increase allows us a moment to take stock of the abysmal fiscal health of our country.

As a Washington Post editorial pointed out yesterday morning, this President solemnly pledged upon taking office to payoff $2 trillion in debt held by the public over the next decade. It is patently obvious that President Bush has not just failed but failed spectacularly to deliver on his pledge. He has managed to amass more debt than any President in history, with no end in sight.

By the end of this year, our gross Federal debt is expected to surpass $8.6 trillion, or nearly $28,000 for every man, woman, and child in America. This amount represents an increase of approximately $3 trillion since President Bush took office.

This dramatic runup in the debt has real costs for America's families—both today and for future generations. It puts upward pressure on interest rates for things like student loans, home mortgages, and automobile loans. It raises the cost of capital for business investment. Each of these, in everything but name, represents a tax increase on American families and businesses.

More directly, instead of investing in America's most important priorities—like education, health care, and homeland security—the taxpayers of today and tomorrow must spend more money paying off yesterday's debts. In the late 1990s, interest on the debt represented a declining share of our total budget. Today, that share has begun to rise once again, a trend that would continue under the budget put forward by the administration and the leadership in this body. For 2007 alone, taxpayers will spend $247 billion dollars on interest on the debt instead of American troops and veterans or American families and children.

Our leaders have to be candid with the American public about the sources of this unprecedented level of indebtedness.

The administration is not incurring these debts in order to invest in education. They are not supporting States and local communities struggling to meet their school funding needs out of property taxes.

The administration is not incurring these debts to improve our infrastructure. States, municipalities, and local communities are struggling desperately just to maintain the infrastructure they have—roads, bridges, ports. They are struggling to maintain a 20th century infrastructure, let alone build a 21st century one.

Certainly, the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have had a cost. So have the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, and natural disasters. Though the President has been quick to blame factors like these, the truth is the tax policies of his administration have played a far greater role in creating the budget deficits accumulated on his watch.

Under those policies, this administration has spent close to $125 billion on tax benefits for the few most fortunate households in America—those 0.2 percent of individuals making more than $1 million per year—while doing little, if anything, for families in the middle and those working hard to get themselves in the middle.

In a time of war and fiscal and economic strain, this administration has delivered a tax windfall to the most fortunate. Never before has a President made this choice during a time of war.

Regrettably, this kind of shortsighted leadership has been rubberstamped repeatedly by the leaders of this Congress on the other side of the aisle.

I would have hoped, at a minimum, that we as a body could adopt measures to restore some semblance of fiscal sanity, such as pay-as-you-go budget procedures or a smaller debt limit increase. Unfortunately, neither of these common sense reforms was adopted. Indeed, the majority even rejected an amendment by the Senator from Montana to merely study the impact that foreign-held U.S. debt is having on our Nation's long-term well-being.

We cannot erase what has happened in the past, but we can demonstrate to the people of our country going forward that the Senate is willing to take commonsense steps to put our Nation back on firmer budgetary footing. That, regrettably, has not happened in the Senate today. However, many of us will continue the effort to place our nation's fiscal house on firmer ground.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on the third reading of the joint resolution.

The joint resolution was ordered to a third reading and was read the third time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Shall the joint resolution pass?

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, is there time to speak on the debt limit?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is not.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

The result was announced—yeas 52, nays 48, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 54 Leg.]

YEAS—52

Alexander	Coleman	Graham
Allard	Collins	Grassley
Allen	Cornyn	Gregg
Bennett	Craig	Hagel
Bond	Crapo	Hatch
Brownback	DeMint	Hutchison
Bunning	DeWine	Inhofe
Burr	Dole	Isakson
Chafee	Domenici	Kyl
Chambliss	Enzi	Lott
Cochran	Frist	Lugar

Martinez
McCain
McConnell
Murkowski
Roberts
Santorum
Sessions
Shelby
Smith
Snowe
Specter
Stevens
Sununu
Talent
Thomas
Thune
Vitter
Voinovich
Warner

NAYS—48

Akaka
Baucus
Bayh
Biden
Bingaman
Boxer
Burns
Byrd
Cantwell
Carper
Clinton
Coburn
Conrad
Dayton
Dodd
Dorgan
Durbin
Ensign
Feingold
Feinstein
Harkin
Inouye
Jeffords
Johnson
Kennedy
Kerry
Kohl
Landrieu
Lautenberg
Leahy
Levin
Lieberman
Lincoln
Menendez
Mikulski
Murray
Nelson (FL)
Nelson (NE)
Obama
Pryor
Reed
Reid
Rockefeller
Salazar
Sarbanes
Schumer
Stabenow
Wyden

The joint resolution (H.J. Res. 47) was passed.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I move to reconsider the vote.

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

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET FOR THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2007—Continued

AMENDMENT NO. 3133

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of S. Con. Res. 83.

Under the previous order, the vote now occurs on the Conrad amendment No. 3133.

Mr. SANTORUM. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The question is on agreeing to amendment No. 3133.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. The following Senator was necessarily absent: the Senator from Ohio (Mr. VOINOVICH).

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

The result was announced—yeas 44, nays 55, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 55 Leg.]

YEAS—44

Akaka
Baucus
Bayh
Biden
Bingaman
Boxer
Byrd
Cantwell
Carper
Clinton
Conrad
Dayton
Dodd
Dorgan
Durbin
Feingold
Feinstein
Harkin
Inouye
Jeffords
Johnson
Kennedy
Kerry
Kohl
Landrieu
Lautenberg
Leahy
Levin
Lieberman
Lincoln
Menendez
Mikulski
Murray
Nelson (FL)
Obama
Pryor
Reed
Reid
Rockefeller
Salazar
Sarbanes
Schumer
Stabenow
Wyden

NAYS—55

Alexander
Allard
Allen
Bennett
Bond
Brownback
Bunning
Burns
Burr
Chafee
Chambliss
Coburn
Cochran
Coleman
Collins
Cornyn
Craig
Crapo
DeMint
DeWine
Dole
Domenici
Ensign
Enzi
Frist
Graham
Grassley
Gregg
Hagel
Hatch
Hutchison
Inhofe
Isakson
Kyl
Lott
Lugar
Martinez
McCain
McConnell
Murkowski
Nelson (NE)
Roberts
Santorum
Sessions
Shelby
Smith
Snowe
Specter
Stevens
Sununu
Talent
Thomas
Thune
Vitter
Warner

NOT VOTING—1

Voinovich

The amendment (No. 3133) was rejected.

VOTE ON AMENDENT NO. 3114

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question now is on agreeing to the Burr amendment No. 3114.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

The result was announced—yeas 99, nays 1, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 56 Leg.]

YEAS—99

Akaka
Alexander
Allard
Allen
Baucus
Bayh
Bennett
Biden
Bingaman
Bond
Boxer
Brownback
Bunning
Burns
Burr
Cantwell
Carper
Chafee
Chambliss
Clinton
Coburn
Cochran
Coleman
Collins
Conrad
Cornyn
Craig
Crapo
Dayton
DeMint
DeWine
Dodd
Dole
Domenici
Dorgan
Durbin
Ensign
Enzi
Feingold
Feinstein
Frist
Graham
Grassley
Gregg
Hagel
Harkin
Hatch
Hutchison
Inhofe
Inouye
Isakson
Jeffords
Johnson
Kennedy
Kerry
Kohl
Kyl
Landrieu
Lautenberg
Leahy
Levin
Lieberman
Lincoln
Lott
Lugar
Martinez
McCain
McConnell
Menendez
Mikulski
Murkowski
Murray
Nelson (FL)
Nelson (NE)
Obama
Pryor
Reed
Reid
Roberts
Rockefeller
Salazar
Santorum
Sarbanes
Schumer
Sessions
Shelby
Smith
Snowe
Specter
Stabenow
Stevens
Sununu
Talent
Thomas
Thune
Vitter
Voinovich
Warner
Wyden

NAYS—1

Byrd

The amendment (No. 3114) was agreed to.

Mr. GREGG. I move to reconsider the vote, and I move to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. GRAHAM). The time until 1:30 p.m. shall be equally divided.

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, at this point, we are going to begin the amending process again. The sequence on our side will be Senator CORNYN, Senator VITTER, then I understand we go to Senator STABENOW and Senator AKAKA.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, on our side it is Senator STABENOW, Senator AKAKA, Senator LINCOLN. I should intercede, Senator VITTER will be paired with Senator LANDRIEU on an amendment for Louisiana.

Mr. GREGG. We will do Senator CORNYN and then Senator VITTER, and then I presume we will go to Senator STABENOW and then Senator AKAKA, then Senator COLLINS, then Senator LINCOLN; right?

Mr. CONRAD. Very well.

Mr. GREGG. I yield Senator CORNYN 5 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas is recognized for 5 minutes.

AMENDMENT NO. 3100

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I call up amendment No. 3100 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Texas [Mr. CORNYN], for himself, and Mr. GRAHAM, proposes an amendment numbered 3100.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To provide for reconciliation instructions to the Committee on Finance to reduce mandatory spending)

On page 4, line 15, decrease the amount by $1,279,625,000.

On page 4, line 17, decrease the amount by $1,340,125,000.

On page 4, line 19, decrease the amount by $1,403,250,000.

On page 4, line 21, decrease the amount by $1,469,500,000.

On page 5, line 6, decrease the amount by $1,279,625,000.

On page 5, line 8, decrease the amount by $1,340,125,000.

On page 5, line 10, decrease the amount by $1,403,250,000.

On page 5, line 12, decrease the amount by $1,469,500,000.

On page 5, line 21, decrease the amount by $1,279,625,000.

On page 5, line 23, decrease the amount by $1,340,125,000.

On page 5, line 25, decrease the amount by $1,403,250,000.

On page 6, line 2, increase the amount by $1,469,500,000.

On page 6, line 10, decrease the amount by $1,279,625,000.

On page 6, line 12, decrease the amount by $2,619,750,000.

On page 6, line 14, decrease the amount by $4,023,000,000.

On page 6, line 16, decrease the amount by $5,492,500,000.

On page 6, line 24, decrease the amount by $1,279,625,000.

On page 7, line 2, decrease the amount by $2,619,750,000.

On page 7, line 4, decrease the amount by $4,023,000,000.

On page 7, line 6, decrease the amount by $5,492,500,000.

On page 21, line 3, decrease the amount by $1,250,000,000.

On page 21, line 4, decrease the amount by $1,250,000,000.

On page 21, line 7, decrease the amount by $1,250,000,000.

On page 21, line 8, decrease the amount by $1,250,000,000.

On page 21, line 11, decrease the amount by $1,250,000,000.

On page 21, line 12, decrease the amount by $1,250,000,000.

On page 21, line 15, decrease the amount by $1,250,000,000.

On page 21, line 16, decrease the amount by $1,250,000,000.

On page 27, line 3, decrease the amount by $29,625,000.

On page 27, line 4, decrease the amount by $29,625,000.

On page 27, line 7, decrease the amount by $90,125,000.

On page 27, line 8, decrease the amount by $90,125,000.

On page 27, line 11, decrease the amount by $153,250,000.

On page 27, line 12, decrease the amount by $153,250,000.

On page 27, line 15, decrease the amount by $219,500,000.

On page 27, line 16, decrease the amount by $219,500,000.

On page 29, strike lines 14 through 19, and insert the following:

(a) SPENDING RECONCILIATION INSTRUCTIONS.—In the Senate, by May 16, 2006, the committees named in this section shall submit their recommendations to the Committee on the Budget of the Senate. After receiving those recommendations, the Committee on the Budget shall report to the Senate a reconciliation bill carrying out all such recommendations without any substantive revision.

(b) COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES.—The Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources shall report changes in laws within its jurisdiction sufficient to reduce budget authority and outlays by $0 in fiscal year 2007, and $3,000,000,000 for the period of fiscal years 2007 through 2011.

(c) COMMITTEE ON FINANCE.—The Senate Committee on Finance shall report changes in laws within its jurisdiction sufficient to reduce budget authority and outlays by $0 in fiscal year 2007 and $10,000,000,000 for the period of fiscal years 2007 through 2011.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I further ask unanimous consent that Senator GRAHAM of South Carolina be added as a cosponsor.

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

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, last year, Congress made some real progress in getting a handle on mandatory spending by passing the Deficit Reduction Act. The Deficit Reduction Act will reduce mandatory spending by nearly $100 billion over the next decade, and it is the first time Congress has taken a hard look at how to find savings and reduce the budget deficit on the mandatory spending side since 1997.

The Deficit Reduction Act is a good first step. My amendment builds on the savings of the Deficit Reduction Act. My amendment lowers the Federal budget deficit, lowers the Federal debt, and does not increase taxes on the American people.

Today, the Federal budget, as we all know, is heavily weighted in favor of mandatory spending—entitlement spending, so to speak. As people live longer and the baby boom generation retires, that spending will increase and eat up a larger and larger share of our budget.

Just in Medicare and Medicaid alone, in the last 5 years, we have seen a 22-percent increase in entitlement spending for those two programs. And if we don't do something in the next 30 years about entitlement spending, we won't have a dime of revenue to pay for other items that are important, such as defense, education, NIH research, and payments to health care providers to reimbursement under Medicare and Medicaid.

My amendment directs the Senate Finance Committee to find $10 billion in additional savings over the next 5 years. One proposal for the Finance Committee to consider under this amendment would be to repeal the stabilization fund included in the Medicare Modernization Act. Let me explain what that is.

This is essentially a bonus provision to preferred provider organizations—insurance companies, in other words—over and above the regular Medicare share to encourage them to participate in the Medicare Program. There simply is no reason to increase the Federal subsidy for these insurance companies over and above regular Medicare payments. We should eliminate that bonus and use that money, which is not necessary, to pay down the debt by $7 billion.

There are other good areas I believe for the Finance Committee to find the $10 billion this amendment would require. The problem is this: If we don't do something about the autopilot our budget is on when it comes to the mandatory side of spending, we have only ourselves to blame because no one is at the wheel, and I am afraid the plane will crash all too soon. We are feeling the squeeze already. The appropriators, I know, are trying to squeeze more and more out of the discretionary spending portion of the budget because as the mandatory and entitlement side rose, there was less and less flexibility for spending on important programs that represent America's priorities under the discretionary portion of the budget.

So I encourage my colleagues to support this amendment. It is one that can be done without detracting from current Medicare spending, but eliminates this bonus provision, this additional cash or Federal subsidy that is provided for under the law that could be saved and be put to more constructive use, showing that we are serious about fiscal responsibility and paying down the debt.

I yield back the remaining time.

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I rise to support this amendment. I think it is an excellent idea and hopefully it will be successful. Stabilization money is certainly available. It is walking-around money. We don't need to have it sitting there, and we should use it for reducing the deficit.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, this is a difficult matter for this Senator because I have proposed many times to my colleagues doing away with the stabilization fund. So this amendment puts me in a quandary to the extent that if we can assure that with this amendment we would eliminate the stabilization fund, I would be with the Senator.

The problem we face here is, No. 1, the stabilization fund is $6.2 billion, it is not $10 billion. No. 2, because of the way the budget resolution works, we cannot direct the Finance Committee on how to make the reduction. I wish we could, but we cannot.

What we would be doing, in effect, by the Senator's amendment is telling the Finance Committee to cut $10 billion out of Medicare. They could do that in any number of ways without affecting the stabilization fund at all. In fact, colleagues may recall last year the Senate told the Finance Committee to take out the stabilization fund. I call it the slush fund. I think it is an absolute waste of money. I absolutely agree with the Senator on that point. But we all know at the end of the process, the stabilization fund was left intact because the way the budget process works, we give an instruction about how much finances to cut, but we cannot tell them how to do it.

So I want my colleagues to know that is the circumstance we face with this amendment. I thank the Senator for the good faith of his amendment.

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I yield 5 minutes to the Senator from Louisiana.

AMENDMENT NO. 3025

Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, I rise in support of my filed amendment No. 3025. I will not formally call it up because some revisions to it are still being worked on in conjunction with my colleague from Louisiana, Senator LANDRIEU, and many other leaders in the Senate. But I will speak on this very important topic, and it has to do with meeting in a positive and responsible way our ongoing needs throughout all the coastal areas—not just Louisiana—for hurricane protection and other coastal needs.

Obviously, we have faced many challenges since Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. This is a responsible way to help meet those needs and to help future coastal needs of all coastal States and to do it in a way that we can afford and that we can build into the budget. Rather than having to come back here every 2 months, every 3 months for additional appropriations, wouldn't it be far better to have a stable revenue source that can help us meet these needs directly? The biggest part of that stable revenue source is royalty share, getting our fair share of what we produce off our coasts in terms of offshore oil and gas.

This amendment is a first vital step in that direction because it would look to excess revenue, not anything built into the budget right now, but excess revenue in three areas to use for those vital purposes, not just for Louisiana

but for coastal needs and coastal States in general.

What are these three areas I am talking about? The first would be offshore energy production, future revenues that aren't built into the budget now. The second would be the Federal share of ANWR energy production, should we pass that and say yes to that in the near future. Of course, ANWR is the Alaska National Wildlife Refuge. The third would be DTV revenue that comes in above the current projections for those spectrum auctions.

Again, this is a vital first step that can get us on this path to self-sufficiency, to taking care of these crucial needs without constantly having to come here and look for direct Federal appropriations. We continue to work to perfect this amendment No. 3025 so it can gain support.

AMENDMENT NO. 3078

I formally call up amendment No. 3078, which is a separate amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Louisiana [Mr. VITTER] proposes an amendment numbered 3078.

Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that further reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To establish a reserve fund to prevent catastrophic loss)

On page 43, between lines 22 and 23, insert the following:

SEC. 313. RESERVE FUND TO PREVENT CATASTROPHIC LOSS.

If—

(1) the Committee on Environment and Public Works of the Senate reports a bill or joint resolution, or if an amendment is offered thereto, or if a conference report is submitted thereon, that increases investment in measures designed to prevent catastrophic flood and hurricane damage in coastal areas such that—

(A) the measures, when completed, will likely decrease future expenditures from the Disaster Relief Fund;

(B) the increases do not exceed $10,000,000,000; and

(C) the measures are certified by the President as likely to prevent loss of life and property; and

(2) that Committee is within its allocation as provided under section 302(a) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 633(a));

the Chairperson of the Committee on Budget of the Senate may make the appropriate adjustments in the allocations and aggregates to the extent that such legislation would not increase the deficit for the fiscal year 2007 and for the period of fiscal years 2007 through 2011.

Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, very quickly, this is a separate amendment that would give us flexibility in the context of the budget to account for future levy and hurricane protection projects should the Environment and Public Works Committee pass out a bill that authorizes these important projects. It builds flexibility into the budget through a reserve fund without busting the budget, without doing any harm to the budget numbers and the overall caps. I look forward to my colleagues' support of this flexibility.

I yield the remainder of my time.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I thank the two Senators from Louisiana, especially Senator LANDRIEU, for working with her colleague Senator VITTER on this important amendment for their home State that has obviously been so badly damaged by Hurricane Katrina. I thank Senator LANDRIEU and Senator VITTER for working together in a bipartisan way to begin to rebuild additional resources as their State has been so hard hit.

I yield 5 minutes to the Senator from Louisiana.

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, I thank the Senator. He and the Senator from New Hampshire have done a fine job leading us through this budget. It is a tough instrument, of course, to negotiate.

Senator VITTER and I are pleased to come to the floor to speak about three particular amendments that will be offered later in the day. One that will be discussed in more detail is a small business amendment. He and I serve together on the Small Business Committee. It has become apparent to us there are many issues regarding the slowness in which the applications our small businesses are putting in but not getting their due checks based on the current law fast enough to get them reestablished. So we will be offering an amendment on a small business issue which I will be cosponsoring with him later.

These two issues we are speaking about this morning on levees are an authorization for an additional $10 billion through the committee Senator VITTER serves on to try to get the authorization levels up. Mr. President, as you know, because you just visited our great State, any number of levy projects throughout all of south Louisiana, from southwest to southeast, from the metropolitan area of New Orleans to the metropolitan area of Thibodaux, Houma, Lake Charles, and rural areas of Cameron and Vermilion Parish, all are short of the levy systems they need to protect themselves and are short of money to our coastal restoration efforts that serve as the first barrier against storms such as Rita and Katrina.

So the second amendment I hope our colleagues will consider is a $10 billion authorization increase in one of the committees Senator VITTER serves on, EPW. A critical third amendment we will discuss later when the details are worked out is a gulf coast recovery fund. That fund will take some additional revenues flowing into the Treasury from additional offshore oil and gas revenues, not specified to any particular place in the gulf, but of course the ANWR revenues and some others that may be coming in if this resolution passes, to support direct funding, coastal impact assistance to the Gulf Coast States: Texas, Mississippi, Alabama, and Louisiana. The Gulf Coast States that serve as America's only energy coast have been devastated by these two storms. Some smart investments now will save us billions of dollars down the road.

Of course, we say from Louisiana and the gulf coast, if it weren't for our Gulf Coast States, we wouldn't even be able to access the great mineral revenues off our shores, right off the southern shore of the United States. So I am pleased to join with my colleague and work through the better part of today on these three amendments.

Then at an additional time later on, with the leadership's go-ahead, we will also hopefully be discussing a defense amendment very important to the Barksdale Air Force Base in Shreveport.

I thank my colleagues for their generosity, and I yield back the remainder of my time.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I very much thank the Senator.

I see the Senator from Michigan is on the floor. Would the Senator from Michigan be prepared to present her amendment?

Ms. STABENOW. Yes.

Mr. CONRAD. I yield 3 minutes—is that sufficient time?

Ms. STABENOW. Yes.

Mr. CONRAD. I yield 3 minutes to the Senator from Michigan, and then next on our side will be Senator AKAKA, and then I think Senator COLLINS is in line, and then Senator LINCOLN.

Senator STABENOW.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is recognized.

Ms. STABENOW. Thank you, Senator CONRAD. Again, thank you for your leadership on the Budget Committee.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, will the Senator yield?

Ms. STABENOW. Yes.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, if it is agreeable to the chairman, I have a report I am supposed to do at the luncheon that is going on. If I could give the time at this point to people, would that be appropriate?

Mr. GREGG. I would suggest that we reach a unanimous consent agreement that on the list you identified, everybody be granted 5 minutes.

Mr. CONRAD. Could we do 4 minutes? Because we have a bit of a time constraint, could we do 4 minutes?

Ms. STABENOW. If I might ask, are we asking for 2 minutes per side?

Mr. CONRAD. No. It would be 4 minutes for each of the Senators.

Mr. GREGG. And that will come off your time when the Democratic Members make offers, and when we make offers, it will come off of our time.

Mr. CONRAD. Very well.

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

AMENDMENT NO. 3141

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I send an amendment to the desk and ask for its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Michigan [Ms. STABENOW] proposes an amendment numbered 3141.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To provide an assured stream of funding for veteran's health care that will take into account the annual changes in the veterans' population and inflation to be paid for by restoring the pre-2001 top rate for income over $1 million, closing corporate tax loopholes and delaying tax cuts for the wealthy)

On page 3, line 13, increase the amount by $6,900,000,000.

On page 3, line 15, increase the amount by $16,500,000,000.

On page 3, line 17, increase the amount by $22,200,000,000.

On page 3, line 19, increase the amount by $27,000,000,000.

On page 3, line 21, increase the amount by $31,600,000,000.

On page 4, line 1, increase the amount by $6,900,000,000.

On page 4, line 2, increase the amount by $16,500,000,000.

On page 4, line 3, increase the amount by $22,200,000,000.

On page 4, line 4, increase the amount by $27,000,000,000.

On page 4, line 6, increase the amount by $31,600,000,000.

On page 4, line 13, increase the amount by $6,900,000,000.

On page 4, line 15, increase the amount by $16,500,000,000.

On page 4, line 17, increase the amount by $22,200,000,000.

On page 4, line 19, increase the amount by $27,000,000,000.

On page 4, line 21, increase the amount by $31,600,000,000.

On page 5, line 4, increase the amount by $6,900,000,000.

On page 5, line 6, increase the amount by $16,500,000,000.

On page 5, line 8, increase the amount by $22,200,000,000.

On page 5, line 10, increase the amount by $27,000,000,000.

On page 5, line 12, increase the amount by $31,600,000,000.

On page 23, line 24, increase the amount by $6,900,000,000.

On page 23, line 25, increase the amount by $6,900,000,000.

On page 24, line 3, increase the amount by $16,500,000,000.

On page 24, line 4, increase the amount by $16,500,000,000.

On page 24, line 7, increase the amount by $22,200,000,000.

On page 24, line 8, increase the amount by $22,200,000,000.

On page 24, line 11, increase the amount by $27,000,000,000.

On page 24, line 12, increase the amount by $27,000,000,000.

On page 24, line 15, increase the amount by $31,600,000,000.

On page 24, line 16, increase the amount by $31,600,000,000.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I rise today to offer an amendment to make veterans health care funding assured and mandatory.

Real security means supporting our troops abroad and making sure they have the body armor and the equipment they need, but it also means supporting them when they come home. It means giving our current and our future veterans the health care they need and deserve.

The amendment I am offering today provides full funding for veterans medical care to ensure that the VA has the resources necessary to provide quality health care in a timely manner to our Nation's sick and disabled veterans.

The problem we face today is that resources for veterans health care are falling behind demand, and we know this because every year we are trying to address the shortfall.

In 1993, there were about 2.5 million veterans in the VA health care system. Today there are more than 7 million veterans enrolled in the system, over half of whom receive care on a regular basis.

Despite the 160-percent increase in patients over the last decade, the VA has received an average of only a 5-percent increase in appropriations during this administration. Some of my colleagues will say this amendment isn't necessary because there have been funding increases over the last several years. They also say we do not need to create another entitlement program. Over the last 2 years, we have seen a 500-percent increase in the number of veterans seeking care from the VA who have been serving in Iraq and serving in Afghanistan. But the administration's budget projects that the VA will treat 109,191 veterans next year, and this falls over 35,000 veterans short of the number of Iraq and Afghanistan veterans the VA currently treats. So we see a 500-percent increase in the number of veterans coming home after serving us bravely in Iraq and Afghanistan, and yet their budget assumes that there are 35,000 fewer—fewer than last year—fewer Iraq and Afghanistan veterans we are going to treat next year. These numbers do not make sense.

Last year's budget is also a case study on why we need to have assured funding for VA health care. In total, Congress provided an additional $3 billion for veterans health care because the administration grossly miscalculated the need for veterans health care.

We need to finally move this into a category where every year those veterans coming home who need health care will know that the dollars are there based on their eligibility, based on their service, based on their need—not based on a debate on the floor in the Congress about how much we are willing to spend to address their health care needs. This should not be a year-to-year debate and commitment; this should be an assured commitment that the dollars will be there. Just as they are for Medicare, for Medicaid, our veterans ought to know that every year, their funding for critical health care services will be assured.

Today's soldiers are tomorrow's veterans. America has made a promise to these brave men and women to provide them with the care they need—not based on a debate on how much we want to spend or calculations year to year on the numbers that folks think may or may not seek care. This ought to be about making sure that every one of our brave men and women coming home, whether it is from the current wars or whether it is our World War II vets or any other war or conflict in which our soldiers have been serving—when they need health care as veterans, we will fulfill our promises to make sure it is there for them.

I urge my colleagues to support this very important amendment, supported by all of the major veterans organizations in this country. It is time to get this done and get it done right.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Hawaii.

AMENDMENT NO. 3071

Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, I ask that the pending amendment be set aside, and I call up my amendment, No. 3071, and ask for its consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Hawaii [Mr. AKAKA], for himself, Mrs. CLINTON, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. BINGAMAN, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. KERRY, Mr. LIEBERMAN, Mr. DODD, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. SCHUMER, Ms. LANDRIEU, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. SALAZAR, Mrs. LINCOLN, Mr. DURBIN, and Mr. KOHL, proposes an amendment numbered 3071.

Mr. AKAKA. I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To increase funding for Title I grants and reduce debt by closing corporate tax loopholes)

On page 3, line 13, increase the amount by $180,000,000.

On page 3, line 15, increase the amount by $4,860,000,000.

On page 3, line 17, increase the amount by $840,000,000.

On page 3, line 19, increase the amount by $120,000,000.

On page 4, line 1, increase the amount by $180,000,000.

On page 4, line 2, increase the amount by $4,860,000,000.

On page 4, line 3, increase the amount by $840,000,000.

On page 4, line 4, increase the amount by $120,000,000.

On page 4, line 13, increase the amount by $3,000,000,000.

On page 5, line 4, increase the amount by $90,000,000.

On page 5, line 6, increase the amount by $2,430,000,000.

On page 5, line 8, increase the amount by $420,000,000.

On page 5, line 10, increase the amount by $60,000,000.

On page 5, line 19, increase the amount by $90,000,000.

On page 5, line 21, increase the amount by $2,430,000,000.

On page 5, line 23, increase the amount by $420,000,000.

On page 5, line 25, increase the amount by $60,000,000.
On page 6, line 8, decrease the amount by $90,000,000.
On page 6, line 10, decrease the amount by $2,520,000,000.
On page 6, line 12, decrease the amount by $2,940,000,000.
On page 6, line 14, decrease the amount by $3,000,000,000.
On page 6, line 16, decrease the amount by $3,000,000,000.
On page 6, line 22, decrease the amount by $90,000,000.
On page 6, line 24, decrease the amount by $2,520,000,000.
On page 7, line 2, decrease the amount by $2,940,000,000.
On page 7, line 4, decrease the amount by $3,000,000,000.
On page 7, line 6, decrease the amount by $3,000,000,000.
On page 18, line 24, increase the amount by $3,000,000,000.
On page 18, line 25, increase the amount by $90,000,000.
On page 19, line 4, increase the amount by $2,430,000,000.
On page 19, line 8, increase the amount by $420,000,000.
On page 19, line 12, increase the amount by $60,000,000.
On page 53, line 1, increase the amount by $3,000,000,000.
On page 53, line 2, increase the amount by $90,000,000.

Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, I thank the managers of this bill for accommodating this amendment. I am very grateful.

I rise with Senators CLINTON, KENNEDY, BINGAMAN, DODD, MENENDEZ, KERRY, LIEBERMAN, CANTWELL, SCHUMER, LANDRIEU, MIKULSKI, SALAZAR, LINCOLN, DURBIN, and KOHL to offer an amendment to the FY 2007 Budget Resolution to restore Title I funding within the No Child Left Behind Act. Certainly, NCLB has come under fire as schools across the country struggle to comply with its requirements, particularly for higher student test scores and teacher qualifications. My colleagues and I have gone on record several times about what we need to do to change the NCLB, to respond to the urgent concerns and needs in all of our communities, including those in my state of Hawaii.

However, today, we are not talking about deficiencies in the Act, but a shortfall in its funding, and about misplaced budget priorities. This budget resolution is similar to the President's budget in its stated priorities. It has debt-financed tax cuts that largely benefit the well-off and special interests. It presents a five year plan, which does not recognize the significant negative impact on revenues that tax cuts will have beyond the next five years. It proposes $14 billion in net mandatory spending cuts. It also omits war costs beyond 2007. We somewhat improved the measure by increasing veterans and defense funding, even if I do not fully agree with the budget gimmick that was used to offset these increases.

However, if we pass this budget as is, we fail our students and teachers once again by underfunding education. The President's FY 2007 budget proposed the largest cut to federal education funding in the Education Department's 26-year history, a $2.1 billion reduction. As approved by the Budget Committee, the budget resolution did not do much better, including the same total amount for discretionary spending, with no guarantee that education would be increased. We must not underfund an area that represents the future of this country. As we debate the need to remain competitive in the world, and worry about other countries overtaking us in producing scientists, engineers, and professionals in other areas important to our industries and national security, we cannot let education take the hit.

The Title I funding shortfall, the amount below authorized levels, is $12.3 billion for FY 2007. This increases the cumulative Title I shortfall since NCLB's enactment to $43.7 billion. Actual funding has barely increased since 2002, which continued to grow the gap between authorized and actual funding. The rightful amount in FY 2007 for Title I, as authorized, should be $25 billion. This budget resolution puts the amount at $12.7 billion.

Mr. President, we are being realistic with our amendment, given our current budgetary climate. We are asking for a modest, responsible increase of almost $3 billion, which is what the President's initial budget requests sought to do. Let me underscore that point—our amendment would do what the President said he wanted to do in previous years, which is to secure an additional $4 billion in funding—$1 billion annually—since FY 2004. Actual increases since then add up to just over $1 billion. In addition, the amendment is fully offset by closing abusive corporate tax loopholes.

If we don't pass our amendment, Mr. President, 3.7 million students will not be served by the Title I program. A total of 29 states stand to lose Title I funding, according to the Department of Education, including Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Idaho, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Jersey, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Texas, Utah, Virginia, Washington, and Wisconsin.

Another 7 states will be level-funded, including Alaska, Delaware, New Hampshire, North Dakota, South Dakota, Vermont, and Wyoming.

The remaining states that gain overall funding will still have many districts—maybe even a majority of those districts—lose funding. In addition, we must not forget history—even if states would gain this year, they likely lost in a previous year. My state of Hawaii is in this last category, for example, having received $47.5 million in FY 2005, and more than a million dollars less in FY 2006 including across-the-board cuts, at about $46.4 million.

To extend this last point further, many states will have cuts a second year in a row, and some would be cut for four or even five years in a row. Twenty-nine states will receive less Title I money than they did two years ago in FY 2005: Alaska, Arkansas, California, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Iowa, Kentucky, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Rhode Island, Texas, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin, and Wyoming.

Fifteen states will receive less Title I money than they did three years ago in FY 2004: California, Connecticut, Iowa, Kansas, Maine, Massachusetts, Montana, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Oregon, Wisconsin, and Wyoming.

Nine states will receive less Title I money than they did 4 years ago in FY 2003: Connecticut, Kansas, Maine, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, New Jersey, and North Dakota.

Three states will receive less Title I money than they did 5 years ago in FY 2002, which is less than they got before NCLB: Connecticut, Massachusetts, Minnesota.

The District of Columbia will receive less money than it did in FY 2004 or FY 2005.

The Northern Mariana Islands will receive less Title I money in FY 2007 than it had received in any of the years since the NCLB's enactment.

Let me remind my colleagues who we are hurting by failing to adequately fund Title I. This comprehensive education program focuses help on disadvantaged children—those from lower-income families. Title I helps these students meet state and local academic standards, with scientifically-proven instructional support, in basic subjects such as reading, language arts, and mathematics. Title I provides support through guidance, health, nutrition, and social services. It also provides resources for comprehensive school-wide planning, professional development, curriculum development, parental involvement, and acquisition of instructional materials and equipment. Now some may say that federal assistance does not help all schools, only Title I schools, but that is not true—the statewide accountability system required under Title I applies to all public schools. So this program, this central piece of the NCLB, works to meet urgent needs in all of public education.

Students, school faculty and staff, parents, and education administrators have been trying, mightily in some cases, to meet the challenges posed by NCLB and raise student academic achievement. We need to do this—to ensure that our citizens have the knowledge and skills they need to succeed when they leave school and enter the workforce or other pursuits. However, this is very difficult to do if they lack adequate funding.

I can give you concrete examples of how our schools are suffering that I

just heard of this week, when I met with a representative of Hawaii's PTSA, our affiliate of national PTA. Some students in Hawaii are having bread and water for lunch. Why? Because the schools don't have enough resources to ensure that parents know how to apply for reduced and free lunch. Parents who have raised funds to install air conditioners in hot classrooms, to allow students and teachers to concentrate on learning, cannot do so because the education system cannot afford the additional electricity costs. Students are not receiving extra help through tutoring in reading and math because funds are needed for other services that are deemed essential. Hawaii's schools are suffering because they need a greater infusion of resources, and we need to help them from the federal level, as we said we would when we approved the NCLB.

Our schools will continue working to serve our kids and achieving the biggest bang for the buck, which is what education has been forced to do all along. I know this to my core, because I know what it's like to be in the shoes of those in education. I spent nearly two decades in education. I taught in several of Hawaii's elementary, middle, and high schools. Public and private. In the classroom, in music rooms, and in labs. In administration—as a vice principal and a principal. As a representative of Hawaii's principals to a national organization. And as a statewide administrator for the Hawaii Department of Education for the Model Cities program. I know what it's like to stretch the education dollar. However, we must stop being behind the curve with education funding.

Education funding must be a given, not just a goal. Our Title I amendment goes partway toward making that happen, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

The American Federation of Teachers, National Education Association, Council of State School Officers, and other education organizations support this increase for Title I. I ask unanimous consent that letters of support from the AFT and NEA be printed in the RECORD.

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

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF TEACHERS,
Washington, DC, March 15, 2006.

Office of the Hon. DANIEL K. AKAKA,
Hart Senate Office Building,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR AKAKA: On behalf of the more than 1.3 million members of the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), I am writing in support of your Title I amendment to the fiscal year (FY) 2007 budget resolution.

Knowing that the goals of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) could only be achieved with accountability and dedicated resources, Congress set a funding authorization for the program each year.

In the three years following NCLB's passage, K–12 education programs received average annual increases of $5 billion. However, this steady growth has stalled, as witnessed in the past two appropriations bills (FY 2005 and FY 06). Currently, the gap between authorized and appropriated funds for Title I from FY 02 through FY 06 is $40.3 billion. In addition, the president's budget provides no increase this year for Title I. Given inflation, this would amount to a cut in many districts. It would have a devastating effect on schools that educate large numbers of poor and minority students.

It would also exacerbate a problem that has occurred over the past few years as a result of chronic underfunding. The U.S. Education Department projects that 29 states will lose Title I funding and seven states will be level-funded in FY 07 if the president's budget request is enacted. The remaining states, those that gain funding overall, will see many of their individual school districts—possibly most of them—lose funding. Also, any gains will not make up for funding shortfalls since NCLB's enactment.

Your amendment seeks a relatively modest increase to help us move a step closer toward fully funding Title I. President Bush has acknowledged the need to increase Title I funding by $1 billion in FY 2004 and FY 2005, although actual increases over the past four years have amounted to much less.

At a time when schools and teachers are working hard to meet the requirements of NCLB, this amendment will be a boost for students, teachers, and school districts nationwide. Ensuring that all children have highly qualified teachers and that struggling schools have the tools to improve can't be done on the cheap. Research indicates that recruiting highly qualified teachers for hard-to-staff schools requires improving the physical plant, providing up-to-date textbooks and other learning resources, implementing proven curricula, attracting and retaining exemplary administrative staff and providing professional development and financial resources for teachers.

The AFT applauds you and your colleagues for making education a top priority in this budget. Securing these resources for the upcoming school year is critical to our collective efforts to support and improve our nation's public schools.

Sincerely,

KRISTOR W. COWAN,
Director, Legislation Department.

NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION,
Washington, DC, March 16, 2006.

U.S. SENATE,
Washington, DC

DEAR SENATOR: On behalf of the National Education Association's (NEA) 2.8 million members, we would like to express our support for an amendment to be offered by Senator Akaka (D–HI) to the proposed fy07 budget resolution that would allow for an increase of $3 billion for Title I. This amendment would build on the important foundation offered by the just-passed Specter-Harkin amendment, which would replenish key education and health programs recently cut.

The Administration has called Title I the cornerstone of No Child Left Behind. The program provides invaluable funds to help close achievement gaps and maximize student learning. It funds supplemental programs to enable educationally disadvantaged students, particularly those attending schools in high-poverty areas, to meet challenging academic standards. It also pays the salaries of teachers and paraprofessionals, funds pre-K, after-school, and summer school programs, and provides for professional development for teachers and paraprofessionals.

Unfortunately, Title I continues to be significantly underfunded, denying too many eligible students the full services they need to succeed. The budget proposal before the Senate would shortchange Title I by $12.3 billion below the amount authorized in the No Child Left Behind Act. If enacted as proposed, the budget will reduce Title I funding for 29 states and will flat-fund seven additional states. As a result, the budget would deny essential Title I services to some 3.7 million children.

The Akaka amendment would allow for a relatively modest $3 billion increase for Title I, offset by closing abusive corporate tax loopholes. In so doing, it would allow for an important step in the right direction for this critical program.

Again, we urge your support for this important amendment.

Sincerely,

DIANE SHUST,
Director of Government Relations.

RANDALL MOODY,
Manager of Federal Policy and Politics.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second? There is not a sufficient second.

Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, I yield my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

AMENDMENT NO. 3066

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I call up amendment No. 3066, which is at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Maine [Ms. COLLINS], for herself and Mr. LIEBERMAN, Mr. DEWINE, Ms. SNOWE, Mr. KENNEDY, and Mr. MENENDEZ, proposes an amendment numbered 3066.

Ms. COLLINS. I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To ensure that first responder and state and local government grant programs key to our Nation's homeland security are funded at no less than FY 2006 levels and to provide increases for port security, first responder programs, rail/transit security, and National Response Plan Training, offset by discretionary spending reductions)

On page 16, line 21, increase the amount by $4,000,000.

On page 16, line 22, increase the amount by $3,000,000.

On page 17, line 1, increase the amount by $1,000,000.

On page 17, line 22, increase the amount by $488,000,000.

On page 17, line 23, increase the amount by $164,000,000.

On page 18, line 3, increase the amount by $227,000,000.

On page 18, line 7, increase the amount by $75,000,000.

On page 18, line 11, increase the amount by $22,000,000.

On page 24, line 24, increase the amount by $494,000,000.

On page 24, line 25, increase the amount by $171,000,000.

On page 25, line 4, increase the amount by $158,000,000.

On page 25, line 8, increase the amount by $146,000,000.

On page 25, line 12, increase the amount by $19,000,000.

On page 27, line 23, decrease the amount by $986,000,000.

On page 27, line 24, decrease the amount by $338,000,000.

On page 28, line 2, decrease the amount by $386,000,000.

On page 28, line 5, decrease the amount by $221,000,000.

On page 28, line 8, decrease the amount by $41,000,000.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the amendment, which is cosponsored by my colleague from Connecticut, Senator LIEBERMAN—we would like to add as additional cosponsors Senators DEWINE, SNOWE, KENNEDY, and MENENDEZ.

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

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, I rise today to speak on behalf of an amendment offered by Senator COLLINS and myself to the Fiscal Year 2007 budget resolution to strengthen our homeland security efforts—particularly the ability of first responders to prevent, prepare for, respond to, and recover from terrorist attacks or catastrophic natural disasters.

I have also filed an amendment that would increase the President's Government-wide homeland security budget by $8 billion—an amount still far below what the experts tell us we need to be as safe as we should be. I think the Nation would be best served by a healthier investment in homeland security, but I am happy to join with Senator COLLINS to offer this smaller $986 million proposal as a way to ensure support for first responders; rail, transit, port and cargo security, Coast Guard research and development, and assorted other programs.

September 11, 2001, changed our lives forever. We face new and dangerous threats from our enemies that we must be prepared to deal with. Furthermore, the Federal response to Hurricane Katrina proved beyond a shadow of a doubt that we are still a Nation unprepared for catastrophe. Yet, the Bush administration seems to have turned its back on the lessons of September 11, 2001, and of August 29, 2005, the day Hurricane Katrina made landfall. And this budget resolution, which largely reflects the President's budget proposal, does nothing to indicate otherwise.

We know our first responders lack the training, equipment, and frequently the manpower they need to do their jobs. Most don't even have the basic capability to communicate with one another across jurisdictional and service lines, and Hurricane Katrina demonstrated that sometimes during a major catastrophe they can't communicate at all.

Yet, the President's fiscal year 2007 budget proposal eliminates a number of first responder programs and cuts others, leaving those on the frontlines of the war against terror or on the frontlines of a hurricane, struggling to make due with less. Our amendment would add $860 million to restore and expand first responder programs.

We would restore $400 million for the Law Enforcement Terrorist Prevention Program, which the administration would totally eliminate; $251 million for the FIRE grants, which provide training and equipment to firefighters; $110 million to restore the SAFER Act, which helps recruit, hire and train local firefighters and which the administration would eliminate; $30 million for the Metropolitan Medical Response System which helps prepare local health officials for mass casualties; and $15 million for emergency preparedness grants. We would also add $67 million to the primary homeland security grants for States.

After first responders, port security would get the second highest amount of funding under our amendment—for a total of $427 million for port security. Perhaps one of the unintended consequences of the Dubai Ports World fracas was that it underscored the need for better port security. Ninety-five percent of all our trade flows through our ports, and a terrorist event at one could cause economic havoc. Security experts have also warned that WMD would most likely be smuggled into the country in a shipping container.

Our amendment would commit to strengthening port security by reallocating funding for the Targeted Infrastructure Protection Program to ensure a dedicated $300 million for port security grants. Another $2 million would be set aside to audit the grants to ensure the money is being used properly and efficiently.

Furthermore, we would provide $20 million for additional staff for the C–TPAT program—which permits expedited shipping for known companies that increase their shipping security. Currently, there are just 80 people responsible for overseeing 10,000 applications to the program. We would include $105 million for cutting-edge imaging inspection equipment for better cargo security and $4 million the administration cut from the Coast Guard's R&D program.

Because we know our rail and transit system is wide open, vulnerable, and appealing to terrorists, and because the President's budget eliminates rail and transit grants, we would dedicate $200 million specifically for rail and transit security grants, just as we did for port security grants. Fourteen million Americans ride mass transit each weekday, more than 16 times the number of daily trips taken by Americans on domestic airlines. Let's not fail to learn the lessons of attacks on the London, Madrid, Moscow, Tokyo, and Israeli rail and transit systems.

Our enemies are ruthless and choose their own battlefields in the communities where we live and work. Nature, too, can be ruthless and will strike in unpredictable ways year after year. We must have first responders who are trained and equipped not just to prepare for and respond to catastrophes but to work to prevent them, as well. We worked with a real sense of urgency after September 11, 2001, to secure our Nation. We must summon that same sense of urgency now to close the security gaps that remain. I wish there was a cheap way to do that. But there isn't. It takes money—more money than the administration's budget offers and more money than the majority's budget resolution we're debating this week offers. I urge my colleagues to support these modest proposals so that we can make additional headway toward our goal of being better able to prevent, prepare for, respond to, and recover from the terrorist attacks and natural disasters that are sure to come.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, the Collins-Lieberman amendment would provide $986 million to help prevent terrorist attacks and to enable us to respond more effectively if one does occur. It enjoys the support of a wide range of first responder groups, representing our police and our firefighters.

Our amendment has two components. First, it restores funding to the fiscal year 2006 levels for key grant programs that assist first responders, as well as State and local governments. These are such programs as the Law Enforcement Terrorism Prevention Program, the Metropolitan Medical Response System, emergency management performance grants, the FIRE Act, and SAFER programs.

As this chart prepared by the Congressional Research Service indicates, the aggregate difference between the fiscal year 2006 appropriated amount and the proposed budget request for this year is $395 million. Our amendment ensures that none of the programs listed on this chart would be funded at any less than the level that was appropriated for fiscal year 2006.

Last year, for example, Congress appropriated $550 million for the State Homeland Security Grant Program, a key source of assistance to State and local governments and first responders. This level, I point out, was only half of the fiscal year 2005 enacted level. Communities use these funds for first responder preparation activities such as emergency planning, risk assessments, mutual aid agreements, equipment, training, and exercises.

It is important to realize that the biggest single expenditure of these funds is the purchase of interoperable communications equipment. Therefore, a vote for our amendment is a vote to increase funding for interoperable communications equipment for first responders.

Under the Collins-Lieberman amendment, we would also provide an additional $150 million for the State Homeland Security Grant Program to create a better national response system that will operate more smoothly at the Federal, State, and local level. Our committee's investigation into the preparedness for and response to Hurricane Katrina clearly demonstrated inadequate response and deficiencies in our ability to respond effectively to the

catastrophic events. This is not the time to reduce the Federal Government's commitment to national preparedness.

The budget also shortchanges first responders in other programs, such as the FIRE Act and the SAFER grants. We would take care of that as well as the Law Enforcement Terrorism Prevention Program, one of the programs that focuses on preventing terrorist attacks.

Another important aspect of the Collins-Lieberman amendment deals with port security grants. Unfortunately, the administration's budget does not dedicate a separate funding stream for port security. Instead, it folds port security in with all other transportation and critical infrastructure, thus providing no assurance at all that any money will be provided to strengthen the security of our ports. The estimates are, from the ports administrators, that we need to have $400 million for port security grant funding. Because of budget constraints we don't go that far, but we do include dedicated funding, $300 million in port security grant funding. We have proposed an increase to move the funding level to meeting the identified needs and to help us improve the security of our ports.

There are so many needs, but we have worked very hard to keep the cost of our amendment down. It is fully offset. I hope our colleagues will support this proposal. It also provides funding for a number of other critical infrastructure needs, such as our Nation's rail and transit systems.

I urge my colleagues to support this amendment and send a message to our first responders that they are a top priority. The additional funding provided by the Collins-Lieberman amendment is an investment we simply must make to strengthen our ability to prevent, detect, and if necessary respond to attacks on our homeland.

I urge support for the amendment, and I yield the remainder of my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

Mrs. LINCOLN. Mr. President, I compliment our colleague from Maine for her conscientious efforts, as well as her fiscally responsible efforts. I ask unanimous consent to add my name to her list of cosponsors and again tell her how much we appreciate all of the many issues that have landed in her lap this year and what an incredible job she has done, working with Senator LIEBERMAN to address those. I ask unanimous consent to add my name as a cosponsor, please.

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

AMENDMENT NO. 3047

Mrs. LINCOLN. Mr. President, I call up amendment No. 3047.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Arkansas [Mrs. LINCOLN], for herself, Mr. DURBIN, and Mrs. CLINTON, proposes an amendment numbered 3047.

Mrs. LINCOLN. I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

The amendment is as follows:

To provide $7.8 billion over two years to fund refundable tax credits targeted to small businesses with up to 100 employees so that they may help purchase group health insurance for their low-wage workers, paid for by closing corporate tax loopholes)

On page 3, line 13, increase the amount by $4,500,000,000.

On page 3, line 15, increase the amount by $3,300,000,000.

On page 4, line 1, increase the amount by $4,500,000,000.

On page 4, line 2, increase the amount by $3,300,000,000.

On page 4, line 13, increase the amount by $4,500,000,000.

On page 4, line 15, increase the amount by $3,300,000,000.

On page 5, line 4, increase the amount by $4,500,000,000.

On page 5, line 6, increase the amount by $3,300,000,000.

On page 19, line 24, increase the amount by $4,500,000,000.

On page 19, line 25, increase the amount by $4,500,000,000.

On page 20, line 3, increase the amount by $3,300,000,000.

On page 20, line 4, increase the amount by $3,300,000,000.

Mrs. LINCOLN. Mr. President, I cannot imagine that the rest of my colleagues in this body are not hearing the same thing I hear, as I travel back each week to Arkansas, from my constituents. Always in the top three issues they bring up in the most passionate of ways happens to be how in the world are we in this Nation going to deal with the number of uninsured in this country, particularly in the small business arena?

Those Americans who are working hard, those trying to provide for their families, those keeping the framework and the foundation of our small communities together, those working in small businesses, how are we going to do a better job in this body in helping to provide health insurance for those who are uninsured and their families?

I rise today with my good friend Senator DURBIN to propose an amendment to the budget resolution to provide $7.8 billion over 2 years to fund refundable tax credits targeted to small businesses with up to 100 employees so they may help purchase group health insurance for their low-wage workers.

I ask unanimous consent to add Senators CLINTON, KOHL, and CANTWELL as cosponsors of my amendment, and to take this opportunity as well to note that our amendment is endorsed by the National Association of Business Owners and the Small Business Majority.

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

Mrs. LINCOLN. Mr. President, my amendment would dedicate funding to help small businesses that are struggling to provide health insurance to their employees, and would do so in a way that is fiscally responsible. My amendment is completely offset by closing corporate tax loopholes that have been agreed upon by the Finance Committee as well as by this entire body, the Senate. These are ways in which we can make fiscally responsible decisions in closing loopholes that exist and pay for something that is absolutely vital to working families.

Unfortunately, the budget resolution before us doesn't specify either an amount to promote expanding health insurance coverage for employees of small businesses or a way to pay for it, which leads me to believe—as do other Americans out there listening to this debate—that this is simply a priority for us.

We cannot continue to act as if this issue doesn't exist. The President has mentioned it year upon year in his State of the Union Addresses, and yet we are seeing increases by the millions of individuals who are finding themselves uninsured. There are nearly 46 million Americans currently without health insurance, including 456,000 Arkansans in my home State of Arkansas. Twenty percent of working-age adults are uninsured. These are people who are working and playing by the rules to provide for their families. This number is so alarming to me that addressing this problem should be a national priority.

Those who lack health insurance don't get access to timely and appropriate health care. They have less access to important screenings and state-of-the-art technology and prescription drugs. Working families need our help with this problem—and they need it now.

Senator DURBIN and I have a bill to help small businesses afford health insurance, and a refundable tax credit to employers as an integral part of our proposal. Our responsible tax credit is targeted to help those who need it the most.

Low-wage workers and small businesses are significantly more likely to be uninsured than high-wage workers, and firms with a high proportion of low-wage workers are much less likely to offer insurance. Our tax credits are targeted to the firms and employees who need the most incentives to purchase health insurance coverage. Our tax credit goes to the employer because small employers believe offering health insurance has a positive impact on recruitment, retention, employees' attitude, performance, and health status.

The budget resolution fails to address this huge problem in our country. The budget is a blueprint, and it should clearly represent America's working families' needs and priorities. It is supposed to reflect what our choices will be when it comes time to spending the tax dollars of this country. This amendment is about priorities.

We must make a priority this growing number of uninsured in our country. They are working families, playing by the rules, trying desperately to contribute to their great Nation. One of

the things we can do is provide the employers the incentive they need to provide the kind of health insurance working families can use and need.

The underlying proposal Senator DURBIN and I have offered presents working families' ability to have the similar kind of health insurance that I and all of the Federal employees here have access to. What greater opportunity to provide greater choice at a lower cost. This is the tool that can make that happen. Providing a tax incentive to small businesses to be able to purchase and assist their employees—their low-wage workers—with the ability to engage in the insurance market and provide the ability to mitigate against their health care and their health care costs is absolutely essential, not just for the quality of life of working Americans but also think of what it does for our economy.

We have a great opportunity in this budget to set priorities that are important to the working families of this country. I urge my colleagues, let us come together and do something for our small businesses and working families—and do something now.

I ask my colleagues to support our amendment and look forward to the opportunity we have to do something about the escalating costs of health care and what it means to working families in this Nation.

I request the yeas and nays on my amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

At the moment there is not a sufficient second.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, we will have no trouble getting a sufficient second.

Perhaps we could give a second to the yeas and nays asked for by the Senator from Arkansas at this time. There now appears to be a sufficient second.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is now a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I ask the Parliamentarian if he could give us a breakdown on the time remaining between now and 1:30.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority has 24 minutes 32 seconds, the minority has 15 minutes 6 seconds.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, we have calls out to two other offices of Members who indicated an interest in offering amendments in this time period.

As we have heard from the Parliamentarian, we only have 15 minutes left on our side. When we put in a quorum call, that time will be charged equally. I alert those Senators whose offices have been called that time is rapidly running through the hourglass. I hope very much those who have been called and who have asked for time will come. Time is rapidly evaporating.

I thank the Chair. I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be dispensed with.

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

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I yield 2 additional minutes to the Senator from Arkansas.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas is recognized.

AMENDMENT NO. 3106

Mrs. LINCOLN. Mr. President, I thank my colleague.

I come to the floor today to offer an amendment on behalf of rural America. If there is anything that has been consistent in this administration's budget, it has been that there has been more asked from rural America in terms of the burden of cuts that have happened and a disproportionate share of the labor-intensive ideas of how we are going to deal with incredible spending.

I offer this amendment on behalf of rural America. I thank Senators SALAZAR, PRYOR, HARKIN, and KOHL for joining me in this effort.

I am pleased to ask unanimous consent to add Senators DURBIN and SCHUMER as cosponsors.

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

Mrs. LINCOLN. Mr. President, our amendment would restore approximately $2 billion in discretionary cuts proposed for programs administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture in fiscal year 2007. To pay for these investments in rural America, our amendment would raise the discretionary cap by $2 billion and offset these expenditures by closing corporate tax loopholes which have passed the Senate on numerous occasions.

The proposed discretionary cuts for USDA impact a variety of conservation, rural development, nutrition, and forestry programs that are vitally important to our communities across this great Nation.

Mr. President, you and all other Members of this Senate have rural areas in your States and know the difficult times they are going through. They do not have the tax base. They may not have the corporate citizens in those areas that help them build this economy. These programs are vital to them in terms of developing the kind of economy they want and can have. They are not asking to be a major metropolitan area. They are simply asking to be the best they can possibly be.

The discretionary spending would decline $208 million in fiscal year 2007 in conservation. Rural development would see a decline of $421 million less than in fiscal year 2007, and research would see a 14.6 percent reduction from the fiscal year 2006 appropriations.

I ask all of my colleagues, whether you represent a major metropolitan area or rural America, you know the fabric of this country depends on all of us. Please do not ask for a disproportionate share of rural America, and do not devastate the incredible advances they have already been able to make. Let us help them grow with the rest of America in their great effort.

I urge my colleagues to support me in the WIC Program, the nutrition program, the conservation program, and all of the others that rural America depends on.

AMENDMENT NO. 3136, AS MODIFIED

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President I call up an amendment at the desk. It is a substitute on the energy amendment I offered earlier. I ask unanimous consent to modify my previous amendment.

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

The amendment is so modified.

The amendment (No. 3136), as modified, is as follows:

(Purpose: To provide a reserve fund for bold energy legislation that is deficit neutral)

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

"SEC. . DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND FOR ENERGY LEGISLATION.

The Chairman of the Senate Committee on the Budget may revise the allocations, aggregates, and other appropriate levels and limits in this resolution for a bill or joint resolution, or an amendment thereto or conference report thereon, that would reduce our nation's dependence on foreign sources of energy, expand production and use of alternative fuels and alternative fuel vehicles, promote renewable energy development, improve electricity transmission, encourage responsible development of domestic oil and natural gas resources, and reward conservation and efficiency, by the amounts provided in such legislation for that purpose, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit in fiscal year 2007 or over the total of the period of fiscal years 2007 through 2011, and provided that the committee or committees of jurisdiction are within their 302(a) allocations.

Mr. CONRAD. I thank the Chair.

I ask the Parliamentarian to give us an update on the time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority has 22 minutes 30 seconds, the minority has 9 minutes 5 seconds.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

AMENDMENT NO. 3106

Mrs. LINCOLN. Mr. President, I call up my amendment numbered 3106 which I described to my colleagues.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Arkansas [Mrs. LINCOLN], for herself, Mr. SALAZAR, Mr. PRYOR, Mr. HARKIN, and Mr. KOHL, proposes an amendment numbered 3106.

Mrs. LINCOLN. I ask unanimous consent the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To restore the discretionary budget for the Department of Agriculture with an offset achieved by closing corporate tax loopholes)

On page 3, line 13, increase the amount by $1,177,000,000.
On page 3, line 15, increase the amount by $439,000,000.
On page 3, line 17, increase the amount by $221,000,000.
On page 3, line 19, increase the amount by $107,000,000.
On page 3, line 21, increase the amount by $57,000,000.
On page 4, line 1, increase the amount by $1,177,000,000.
On page 4, line 2, increase the amount by $439,000,000.
On page 4, line 3, increase the amount by $221,000,000.
On page 4, line 4, increase the amount by $107,000,000.
On page 4, line 6, increase the amount by $57,000,000.
On page 4, line 13, increase the amount by $2,029,000,000.
On page 5, line 4, increase the amount by $1,177,000,000.
On page 5, line 6, increase the amount by $439,000,000.
On page 5, line 8, increase the amount by $221,000,000.
On page 5, line 10, increase the amount by $107,000,000.
On page 5, line 12, increase the amount by $57,000,000.
On page 13, line 21, increase the amount by $916,000,000.
On page 13, line 22, increase the amount by $540,000,000.
On page 14, line 1, increase the amount by $220,000,000.
On page 14, line 5, increase the amount by $101,000,000.
On page 14, line 9, increase the amount by $37,000,000.
On page 14, line 13, increase the amount by $18,000,000.
On page 14, line 21, increase the amount by $384,000,000.
On page 14, line 22, increase the amount by $295,000,000.
On page 15, line 1, increase the amount by $67,000,000.
On page 15, line 5, increase the amount by $17,000,000.
On page 15, line 9, increase the amount by $3,000,000.
On page 15, line 21, increase the amount by $95,000,000.
On page 15, line 22, increase the amount by $71,000,000.
On page 16, line 1, increase the amount by $22,000,000.
On page 17, line 22, increase the amount by $296,000,000.
On page 17, line 23, increase the amount by $12,000,000.
On page 18, line 3, increase the amount by $79,000,000.
On page 18, line 7, increase the amount by $96,000,000.
On page 18, line 11, increase the amount by $63,000,000.
On page 18, line 15, increase the amount by $35,000,000.
On page 19, line 24, increase the amount by $104,000,000.
On page 19, line 25, increase the amount by $93,000,000.
On page 20, line 4, increase the amount by $11,000,000.
On page 21, line 24, increase the amount by $234,000,000.
On page 21, line 25, increase the amount by $166,000,000.
On page 22, line 4, increase the amount by $40,000,000.
On page 22, line 8, increase the amount by $8,000,000.
On page 22, line 12, increase the amount by $4,000,000.
On page 22, line 16, increase the amount by $3,000,000.
On page 53, line 1, increase the amount by $2,029,000,000.
On page 53, line 2, increase the amount by $1,177,000,000.

Mrs. LINCOLN. I appreciate my colleagues' attention on this and encourage their support in supporting rural America.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. VITTER). The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

AMENDMENTS NOS. 3078, 3041, 3134, 3045, 3123, AND 3136, AS MODIFIED

Mr. GREGG. I ask unanimous consent the following amendments be agreed to en bloc: Amendment 3078, Senator VITTER and Senator LANDRIEU; amendment 3041, Senator BAUCUS; amendment 3134, Senators SNOWE, VITTER and KERRY; amendment 3045, Senator LAUTENBERG; amendment 3123, Senator COLEMAN; amendment 3136, as modified, Senator CONRAD.

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

The amendment (No. 3078) was agreed to.

The amendments were agreed to, as follows:

AMENDMENT NO. 3041

(Purpose: To provide funding for an Internet Crimes Against Children task force in Montana)

On page 24, line 24, increase the amount by ''$250,000''.
On page 24, line 25, increase the amount by ''$250,000''.
On page 27, line 23, decrease the amount by ''$250,000''.
On page 27, line 24, decrease the amount by ''$250,000''.

AMENDMENT NO. 3134

(Purpose: To prevent an increase in interest rates paid by disaster victims, and to increase funding for the SBA's Microloans, Small Business Development Centers, HUBZones, and other small business development programs, and to offset the cost through a reduction in funds under function 920)

On page 15, line 21, increase the amount by $130,000,000.
On page 15, line 22, increase the amount by $92,000,000.
On page 16, line 1, increase the amount by $30,000,000.
On page 16, line 5, increase the amount by $7,000,000.
On page 16, line 9, increase the amount by $1,000,000.
On page 27, line 23, decrease the amount by $130,000,000.
On page 27, line 24, decrease the amount by $92,000,000.
On page 28, line 2, decrease the amount by $30,000,000.
On page 28, line 5, decrease the amount by $7,000,000.
On page 28, line 8, decrease the amount by $1,000,000.

AMENDMENT NO. 3045

(Purpose: To Add $8 million to Function 300 (Environment and Natural Resources) for Highlands Land Acquisition. Fully offset with Function 920)

On page 13, line 21, increase the amount by $8,000,000.
On page 13, line 22, increase the amount by $2,000,000.
On page 14, line 1, increase the amount by $2,000,000.
On page 14, line 5, increase the amount by $2,000,000.
On page 14, line 9, increase the amount by $1,000,000.
On page 14, line 13, increase the amount by $1,000,000.
On page 27, line 23, decrease the amount by $8,000,000.
On page 27, line 24, decrease the amount by $2,000,000.
On page 28, line 2, decrease the amount by $2,000,000.
On page 28, line 5, decrease the amount by $2,000,000.
On page 28, line 8, decrease the amount by $1,000,000.
On page 28, line 11, decrease the amount by $1,000,000.

AMENDMENT NO. 3123

(Purpose: To increase funding to fully fund the Clean Coal Power Initiative)

On page 12, line 21, increase the amount by $200,000,000.
On page 12, line 22, increase the amount by $200,000,000.
On page 27, line 23, decrease the amount by $200,000,000.
On page 27, line 24, increase the amount by $200,000,000.

The amendment (No. 3136), as modified, was agreed to.

Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, I am deeply disappointed that this budget resolution assumes deep cuts and unprecedented fees for the Small Business Administration, the SBA. The administration's request of $624 million is insufficient to meet the needs of small businesses in this country that need access to capital, counseling, and Federal contracts. By the SBA's own calculation, the request is $18 million less than what was available to the Agency last year when congressional initiatives and disaster supplementals are excluded. If this budget is adopted, the Agency will have been cut more than 37 percent since 2001. In context, that means it will have suffered the largest cuts of all 24 Federal agencies.

To address this shortfall, I introduced S.A. 3072 to increase SBA's fiscal year 2007 budget of $624 million by $151 million, for a total of $775 million. The amendment would have paid for this increased spending by closing abusive corporate tax loopholes and would, among other things, have prevented the administration from increasing the cost of disaster loans, from imposing a new fee on SBA's largest loan and venture capital programs, from eliminating the SBA's microloan programs, and from weakening business assistance to women, minorities, veterans, Native Americans, and those trying to cut through redtape to contract with the Federal Government.

This budget resolution comes after 5 years of drastic budget cuts which have

eroded SBA's core programs and left the Agency with one of the worst morale problems in the Federal Government. SBA's largest lending program, the 7(a) program, is now more expensive than ever for small business borrowers and lenders, and the administration is proposing to add new ''administrative fees'' for larger 7(a) loans, 504 loans, and SBIC or venture capital deals. These fees are the first time the SBA has attempted to pass along administrative costs to lenders and small business borrowers, but the administration is pushing for them because they will generate $7 million in savings. We are told that some 7(a) borrowers will pay $625 more per loan, some 504 borrowers will pay $1,625 per loan, and the majority of companies that get an SBIC investment will pay $45,000 more. This is in addition to the excessive fees these small business borrowers already pay to cover the loan subsidy cost. This would set a bad precedent. To prevent the administration from imposing a new fee on small business borrowers, my amendment provided $7 million to the SBA's budget for next year to offset this proposal.

Deep budget cuts for SBA have also meant less transparency and accountability when it comes to the oversight of small business contracting. After pressure from our Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, the SBA hired additional procurement center representatives, PCRs—the Government officials responsible for monitoring the bundling of large contracts and for helping small businesses cut through redtape to compete for Federal contracts—now bringing the number of PCRs nationwide up to 58. But many of these are not full-time PCRs. To avoid further reports of contracting abuses, large businesses receiving small business contracts, and Federal agencies missing their small business goals, my amendment provided $10 million for 100 additional PCRs to ensure robust contracting oversight throughout the Nation.

For the fifth year in a row, this budget continues on the path of providing unrealistic funding by cutting critical programs, such as the Small Business Development Centers or SBDCs, Women's Business Centers and SCORE, forcing SBA's counseling partners to spend fewer hours with clients because the Federal matching grant isn't keeping pace with inflation or demand. Despite the budget's failure to account for inflation costs, these programs continue to play an integral role in helping entrepreneurs from underrepresented communities. These cuts, when combined with 5 years of budget cuts for the SBA as a whole, would leave the SBA ill-prepared to meet the demands of the growing entrepreneurial sector. I strongly oppose flat funding these resources for small businesses and so proposed an additional $23 million in my amendment to bring Small Business Development Centers from the outdated $87.1 funding level to $110 million, proposed $4.95 million to bring SCORE funding to $7 million, and $4.7 million to bring the Women's Business Centers to a level of $16.5 million.

All of this pales in comparison to the mismanagement of the response to recovery of the gulf coast region. The SBA's disaster loan program, essential to the recovery of business owners, homeowners, and renters after a disaster, almost ran out of money twice in February. Instead of getting their fiscal house in order like every American family must do, the President now proposes to raise the cost of disaster loans and no longer guarantee our most vulnerable borrowers fixed interest rates. Although they could still have up to 30 years to pay off a loan, if they don't pay it off in 5 years, the interest rate will go up. Instead of telling us how this will help disaster victims, we are told this will save the SBA an estimated $41 million. We should not be saving money on the backs of disaster victims. Instead, we should help them to rebuild their homes and businesses. To prevent raising disaster loan interest rates, my amendment provided $41 million to the SBA's budget for next year.

The $151 million in my amendment would have provided real money to our appropriators and to small business programs in desperate need of funding. Unfortunately, this amendment did not garner bipartisan support. While I am disappointed with this outcome, I am pleased that we were able to work out a bipartisan compromise with Senator SNOWE, the chair of the Small Business Committee. Our compromise, S.A. 3134, would increase the SBA fiscal year 2007 budget by $130 million, and although it would not add any additional funds to the budget resolution, it is a bipartisan effort to address many of the issues that my amendment 3072 attempted to address. There is bipartisan support for the 7(j) technical assistance program and the HUBZONE Program, which Senator BOND from Missouri worked hard to put in place and I joined with him in cosponsoring it when he was chairman for SBDCs and SCORE and Women's Business Centers; for the Microloan Program and microloan technical assistance, both of which the President has tried to eliminate for several years now. We all support U.S. Export Assistance Centers and Veterans Business Development, Small Business Innovation Research, and Small Business Technology Transfer Program. While I would have liked to have seen higher funding levels for the PRIME and New Markets Venture Capital Program, I am glad that our amendment reflects continued funding for these vital programs. We made a strong bipartisan statement that minority lending numbers must be increased, with about $1 million more toward Native-American outreach. And we agreed to reject the proposals to raise the cost of disaster loans and to impose a new fee on the lending and venture capital programs. Overall, amendment 3134 is sending an important signal to all that there is broad bipartisan support to increase funding for these vital small business programs.

Mr. President, I thank my colleagues, Senators LANDRIEU, LIEBERMAN, LEVIN, NELSON of Florida, VITTER, and COLEMAN for joining us to cosponsor this amendment, the entire Senate for agreeing to the amendment, and Senators CONRAD and GREGG for their help in putting together a more realistic budget for small businesses.

Mr. GREGG. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, could we get an update on the time situation?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Certainly. The minority has 2 minutes remaining.

Mr. CONRAD. Two minutes?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Correct. The majority has 16 minutes remaining.

Mr. CONRAD. I ask the chairman, could I get 2 additional minutes to give to Senator KERRY?

Mr. GREGG. Sure.

Mr. CONRAD. The chairman, once again, is gracious to provide another 2 minutes. I ask unanimous consent for 2 minutes from his time to our time and I give 4 minutes to the Senator from Massachusetts.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts is recognized.

Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, I am grateful to both of the managers and appreciate the courtesy.

AMENDMENT NO. 3143

Mr. President, I have an amendment which I send to the desk and ask for its appropriate consideration in the line of votes, as we decide on that later.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the amendment.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Massachusetts [Mr. KERRY] proposes an amendment numbered 3143.

Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To eliminate increased fees and copayments for retired military healthcare)

On page 3, line 13, increase the amount by $592,000,000.

On page 3, line 15, increase the amount by $1,619,000,000.

On page 3, line 17, increase the amount by $2,188,000,000.

On page 3, line 19, increase the amount by $2,685,000,000.

On page 3, line 21, increase the amount by $3,271,000,000.

On page 4, line 1, increase the amount by $592,000,000.
On page 4, line 2, increase the amount by $1,619,000,000.
On page 4, line 3, increase the amount by $2,188,000,000.
On page 4, line 4, increase the amount by $2,685,000,000.
On page 4, line 6, increase the amount by $3,271,000,000.
On page 4, line 13, increase the amount by $735,000,000.
On page 4, line 15, increase the amount by $1,862,000,000.
On page 4, line 17, increase the amount by $2,322,000,000.
On page 4, line 19, increase the amount by $2,816,000,000.
On page 4, line 21, increase the amount by $3,424,000,000.
On page 5, line 4, increase the amount by $592,000,000.
On page 5, line 6, increase the amount by $1,619,000,000.
On page 5, line 8, increase the amount by $2,188,000,000.
On page 5, line 10, increase the amount by $2,685,000,000.
On page 5, line 12, increase the amount by $3,271,000,000.
On page 9, line 20, increase the amount by $735,000,000.
On page 9, line 21, increase the amount by $592,000,000.
On page 9, line 24, increase the amount by $1,862,000,000.
On page 9, line 25, increase the amount by $1,619,000,000.
On page 10, line 3, increase the amount by $2,322,000,000.
On page 10, line 4, increase the amount by $2,188,000,000.
On page 10, line 7, increase the amount by $2,816,000,000.
On page 10, line 8, increase the amount by $2,685,000,000.
On page 10, line 11, increase the amount by $3,424,000,000.
On page 10, line 12, increase the amount by $3,271,000,000.

Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, the President's budget proposal includes a concept to increase TRICARE—this is the DOD, Department of Defense, health care program—fees and copayments for military retirees under the age of 65 and for their dependents.

All of us recognize there is this spiraling cost to health care. I understand that. And it affects everything we are doing in the country. The Department of Defense is, needless to say, no different. It has those increases. But the answer is not found in tripling the fees for retired officers, doubling them for senior enlisted retirees, and demanding more from every military retiree under the age of 65 who uses the health care system, when you look at the other costs that are already going up for all of those folks.

Most importantly, there are a series of better ways that have been recommended to bring down the cost of health care for those retirees. So you do not have to go immediately to fees and copayments in order to solve the problem of the increase in costs.

In successive budget requests, the Bush administration has asked for increased fees and copayments for veterans health care, which is increasingly shifting the burden of that care from some veterans on to others, and it is driving some veterans out of the system altogether, which is, obviously, not fair.

My amendment will restore the funding for TRICARE so that military retirees are not saddled with these increased costs and fees. We pay for it by closing a number of tax loopholes. I think by doing so, we keep faith with people who have served our country for 20 years or more.

They did not ask to change the terms of their commitment to the military when things got tough, and I do not think we should be ignoring and changing our commitment to them now.

Mr. President, I yield back such time as may remain.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, we are 10 minutes away from the big show, which may go on for a long time. It may be a big, long show. In any event, I want to alert Members we are going to go to 10-minute votes. We are going to be holding the 10-minute votes as strictly as possible. The first vote will, obviously, not be 10 minutes. And we are going to start voting at 1:30. We have pending so many amendments that we could be here well into the evening. Cooperation is needed if people do not want to be here well into tomorrow morning.

With that, Mr. President, I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I yield 5 minutes to the Senator from Nebraska.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nebraska is recognized.

Mr. HAGEL. Mr. President, thank you. And I thank the distinguished chairman of the Budget Committee.

AMENDMENT NO. 3127

Mr. President, I call up amendment No. 3127 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Nebraska [Mr. HAGEL] proposes an amendment numbered 3127.

Mr. HAGEL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To establish a reserve fund for a Comprehensive Entitlement Reform Commission)

At the end of title III, insert the following:

SEC. _____. RESERVE FUND FOR A COMPREHENSIVE ENTITLEMENT REFORM COMMISSION.

If—

(1) the Committee on Finance of the Senate reports a bill or joint resolution, or if an amendment is offered thereto or if a conference report is submitted thereon, that establishes a Comprehensive Entitlement Reform Commission for the purpose of conducting a comprehensive review of the Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid programs and making recommendations to sustain the solvency and stability of these programs for future generations; and

(2) that committee is within its allocation as provided under section 302(a) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974;

the chairman of the Committee on the Budget may make the appropriate adjustments in allocations and aggregates to the extent that such legislation would not increase the deficit for fiscal year 2007 and the period of fiscal years 2007 through 2011.

Mr. HAGEL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Senators Isakson and Chambliss be added as cosponsors.

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

Mr. HAGEL. Mr. President, last October, I introduced legislation, S. 1889, to create a bipartisan entitlement reform commission. Senator ISAKSON cosponsored my legislation, and Representative JOHN TANNER joined me in introducing this legislation in the House of Representatives.

In January, the President called on Congress to create such a commission in his State of the Union Address. The amendment I am offering today responds to the President's request.

My amendment establishes a reserve fund that would allow Congress to pass legislation later this year forming a bipartisan entitlement reform commission. This bipartisan commission would review America's three major entitlement programs—Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid—and make comprehensive recommendations on how to stabilize and keep solvent these programs for future generations.

The entitlement course that we are currently on is unsustainable. Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid have been vital components for millions of Americans as they have found a happier retirement. However, over the next 75 years, these three programs represent a $42 trillion unfunded mandate for the American taxpayer.

The Social Security trust fund faces a $4 trillion unfunded commitment and will pay out more money than it takes in beginning around 2017. The fund will be exhausted by 2041. The Medicare Part A trust fund—hospital insurance—faces an almost $9 trillion unfunded commitment and will be exhausted by 2020.

Where is the money to pay for these commitments going to come from? We must deal with these challenges today while we still have time and constructive options. To leave future generations burdened with paying for huge

entitlement commitments when they will be competing in a far more competitive world than exists today would be dangerously irresponsible.

This is not a Republican or a Democratic problem. This affects us all. Most significantly, it affects the most vulnerable in our society. Creating this commission will start us down the road to dealing with this problem and will protect the next generation from facing Draconian choices in their future.

Mr. President, I urge my colleagues to vote for this amendment today.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

Mr. HAGEL. Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota is recognized.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I assume I have no time remaining.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. That is correct. The remainder of the time is controlled by the Senator from New Hampshire.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, may I ask the Senator from New Hampshire for 2 minutes so I might offer an amendment.

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I yield the Senator from North Dakota 2 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota is recognized.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I thank the chairman again for his courtesy.

AMENDMENT NO. 3148

Mr. President, I want to say to the Senator from Nebraska that while on this side we agree that we have long-term challenges, very deep long-term challenges, with the fiscal health of the country, we believe the amendment the Senator from Nebraska has offered is too narrow in scope.

Mr. President, for that reason, I send an amendment to the desk to be considered at the same time as the amendment offered by the Senator from Nebraska. Basically, the difference is this: We think everything ought to be on the table. We think everything ought to be on the table, not just entitlements but domestic discretionary spending, the revenue side of the equation, that all ought to be considered.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Will the Senator briefly allow the clerk to formally report.

Mr. CONRAD. I will be happy to.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from North Dakota [Mr. CONRAD] proposes an amendment numbered 3148.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To create a deficit-neutral reserve fund for addressing the long term fiscal challenges facing our nation, by creating a bipartisan commission or process to consider all parts of the budget, with everything on the table for discussion)

SEC. ____. RESERVE FUND FOR ADDRESSING THE LONG-TERM FISCAL CHALLENGES FACING THE NATION.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations, aggregates, and other appropriate levels and limits in this resolution for a bill or joint resolution, or an amendment thereto or a conference report thereon, that would provide for the bipartisan leadership of the House and Senate to work with the President to establish a commission (or other mutually agreeable process) to address the long-term fiscal challenges facing the nation, provided that such commission or process—

(1) Addresses these long-term fiscal challenges in a manner in which both political parties are represented equally, and

(2) Considers all parts of the budget by putting everything on the table for discussion

provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit for fiscal year 2007 and the period of fiscal years 2007 to 2011.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator may continue.

Mr. CONRAD. I thank the Chair.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have a letter printed in the RECORD from AARP in opposition to the Hagel amendment, indicating they agree that the Hagel amendment is too narrow in scope, and that we ought to have a broader look at all of the problems facing our fiscal future, not just focus on one part.

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

AARP,
March 16, 2006.

Hon. KENT CONRAD,
Ranking Minority Member, Budget Committee, Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR CONRAD: The Senate will shortly consider an amendment regarding a narrowly focused commission to address the long-term challenges facing Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid. AARP agrees that we must confront the challenges and opportunities posed by the aging of the baby boom generation, but a commission focused primarily on the fiscal impact of our critical health and income security programs overlooks the important role they play in the lives of millions of Americans of all ages.

Commissions have been most effective in laying out policy options when they have been balanced, established without preconditions, given a mandate to address the underlying causes of problems, and provided all sides with an opportunity to be heard. A commission to address our long-term fiscal challenges has merit provided it examines the full scope of our budgetary policy, including the revenue needed to ensure the health and income security of all Americans.

Most important to AARP and its 36 million members, the commission must recognize that ultimately the solutions must be about people. A commission's recommendations should put us on a path to secure the future ability of Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid to continue to provide a foundation for the health and retirement security of all generations as well as guide the way to sound long-term budget policies.

The current amendment offered by Senator Hagel does not meet all of these criteria. Therefore, AARP cannot support this amendment.

Sincerely,

DAVID P. SLOANE,
Senior Managing Director, Government Relations & Advocacy.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, just for the edification of our colleagues because it is going to get a little confusing around here with all the amendments we have, we are going to begin the amendment voting process with the amendment of Senator LIEBERMAN on homeland security. That will be followed by Senator CLINTON's amendment, followed by Senator SPECTER's amendment on education, followed by the amendment of Senator REED of Rhode Island on LIHEAP, followed by Senator LAUTENBERG's amendment on TSA fees, followed by Senator SARBANES's amendment on function 300, followed by Senator DORGAN's amendment on tribal issues, followed by Senator CORNYN's amendment on reconciliation, followed by Senator STABENOW's amendment on veterans, followed by Senator AKAKA's amendment on title I, followed by Senator COLLINS's amendment on homeland security, followed by Senator LINCOLN's amendment on small business—oh, we are stopping at Senator COLLINS's amendment, and then we are going to order the next group of amendments.

So that is the basic concept.

Mr. CONRAD. Might we put in a quorum call? We have a little bit of a glitch.

Mr. GREGG. Yes.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I wish to amend the prior list of how we will proceed with votes. We will begin with Senator REED and his LIHEAP amendment. We will follow that with Senator CLINTON on health care, followed by Senator SPECTER, and then we will go to Senator LIEBERMAN. Then the list will continue as outlined in the prior discussion.

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

Mr. GREGG. I ask unanimous consent that for the amendments which are pending, there be 2 minutes equally divided prior to each vote.

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

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I further ask unanimous consent that no second degrees be in order, with the exception of the Clinton amendment which might be subject to a second degree or further side by side.

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

The Senator from Rhode Island is recognized for 1 minute.

AMENDMENT NO. 3074

Mr. REED. Mr. President, this amendment would raise the allocation for LIHEAP to the statutorily authorized $5.1 billion. It recognizes the fact that energy prices have been going up and that we are likely not to see a mild winter again next year; that we can expect right now to need more resources. Just a few weeks ago, we were on the floor of the Senate trying to raise the emergency funding for LIHEAP because of the intersection of cold temperatures and the increased cost of fuel. If we do pass this amendment, it will increase the allocation of resources not just to the cold States but to the warm States. This will provide significant resources for those States such as Alabama, Louisiana, and Nevada that need the assistance in the summertime for air-conditioning.

I urge my colleagues to pass my amendment. We know it is going to be a problem next year. The funds in the President's budget are insufficient. We have to stand up and make sure we take care of the vulnerable people.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, we made a very strong commitment to LIHEAP a few weeks ago. We passed an additional billion dollars on the Senate floor. In other vehicles, we have passed even more money for LIHEAP. This amendment does not fund LIHEAP because nothing in this bill is binding on the Appropriations Committee. What it does do, however, is raise the cap by $1 billion and raise taxes by $1 billion. It will be up to the Appropriations Committee to decide whether they are going to fund LIHEAP at this year's level or next year's level or last year's level. The history is pretty strong. LIHEAP gets well funded around here and you can pretty much presume that the Appropriations Committee will do that. But they will do it within the cap, and that is the way it should be. Therefore, I hope Members will reject this amendment because it is basically a tax-and-spend amendment.

I ask unanimous consent that the yeas and nays be deemed to have been ordered on all amendments that are proceeding here.

Mr. CONRAD. No objection.

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

Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second. The yeas and nays are ordered.

Mr. GREGG. I ask unanimous consent that seconds be deemed to have been approved for all the yeas and nays for the balance of the amendments.

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

The question is on agreeing to amendment No. 3074.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

The result was announced—yeas 51, nays 49, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 57 Leg.]

YEAS—51

Akaka	Dorgan	Menendez
Baucus	Durbin	Mikulski
Bayh	Feingold	Murray
Biden	Feinstein	Nelson (FL)
Bingaman	Harkin	Nelson (NE)
Boxer	Inouye	Obama
Byrd	Jeffords	Pryor
Cantwell	Johnson	Reed
Carper	Kennedy	Reid
Chafee	Kerry	Rockefeller
Clinton	Kohl	Salazar
Coleman	Landrieu	Sarbanes
Collins	Lautenberg	Schumer
Conrad	Leahy	Snowe
Dayton	Levin	Specter
DeWine	Lieberman	Stabenow
Dodd	Lincoln	Wyden

NAYS—49

Alexander	Domenici	McConnell
Allard	Ensign	Murkowski
Allen	Enzi	Roberts
Bennett	Frist	Santorum
Bond	Graham	Sessions
Brownback	Grassley	Shelby
Bunning	Gregg	Smith
Burns	Hagel	Stevens
Burr	Hatch	Sununu
Chambliss	Hutchison	Talent
Coburn	Inhofe	Thomas
Cochran	Isakson	Thune
Cornyn	Kyl	Vitter
Craig	Lott	Voinovich
Crapo	Lugar	Warner
DeMint	Martinez	
Dole	McCain	

The amendment (No. 3074) was agreed to.

Mr. GREGG. I move to reconsider the vote.

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

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

AMENDMENT NO. 3115 WITHDRAWN

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I hope this sets a good example for the 40-odd amendments we have left. I ask unanimous consent that the Reid-Clinton amendment be withdrawn, and the Ensign amendment—it has not been filed yet, I believe—will not be offered.

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

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, we will now go to the Specter amendment. Senator SPECTER and those in opposition had not expected this amendment to come up so quickly. I hate to slow the voting down.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, if we could ask our colleagues, we know the list that has been put in, and if colleagues who have amendments about to be considered will be closely attentive to what is happening here so we don't have dead time, that would be very helpful to the process.

After this amendment, next is the Lieberman amendment. So we alert Senator LIEBERMAN and his staff. Then we will have the Lautenberg amendment. If those Senators can be ready to go.

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I see the cosponsor of the amendment is on the Senate floor. Would he like to take the time allocated to him?

Mr. HARKIN. We have 30 seconds?

Mr. GREGG. The Senator has a minute. Proponents of the amendment have a minute.

AMENDMENT NO. 3048

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will now be 1 minute on each side on the Specter-Harkin amendment No. 3048, on which the yeas and nays have been ordered.

Who seeks recognition? The Senator from Pennsylvania.

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, Senator HARKIN and I have submitted this amendment, joined by 27 cosponsors, which would add $7 billion to the fund for education, health, and workers' safety. This account has been decimated since fiscal year 2005 with a loss of some $15.7 billion when we consider the cuts and the failure to have an inflationary increase.

Health and education are the two major capital assets of the country. We have gone beyond the fat, beyond the muscle, beyond the bone, and into the marrow. This funding will help us a little, not really enough. We ask our colleagues to support it.

I yield to Senator HARKIN.

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I thank my colleague for his great leadership in the areas of health and education, especially medical research. This amendment only takes us back to 2005. That is all it does. It sets the level back to where it was in 2005. It is a very modest proposal.

I hope we can have a strong vote on this amendment to get the money we need for Pell grants, for NIH, for the Centers for Disease Control—all the programs that are so necessary to our country.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I rise in support of this amendment to provide an additional $7 billion for critical health, education, training and low-income programs. This budget has all the wrong priorities. Instead of easing the burden on middle-class families and helping to curb the costs of education and health care, President Bush and the Republicans want to cut funding for these programs by more than $4 billion and spend billions on tax breaks for multimillionaires. This amendment would restore cuts to some of the most vital programs in our country programs like No Child Left Behind, Pell

grants, NIH, and nursing education. It is my job as a U.S. Senator to look out for the day-to-day needs of Marylanders and the long-term needs of the Nation, and this amendment takes us closer to both of these goals.

Our middle-class families are stressed and stretched. Families in my State of Maryland are worried—they are worried about their jobs, they are terrified of losing their health care, and they don't know how they are going to afford to send their kids to college. Families are looking for help and President Bush doesn't offer them much hope. His budget would freeze the maximum Pell grant at $4,050 for the fourth year in a row. Twenty years ago, Pell grants covered 80 percent of average costs at 4-year public colleges. Now, they cover only 40 percent. If Pell grants remain the same for another year, many students will be forced to take out more student loans and some won't be able to go to school at all. Our students are graduating with so much debt, it is like their first mortgage. The average undergraduate student debt from college loans is almost $19,000. College is part of the American dream; it shouldn't be part of the American financial nightmare.

We need to do more to help middle-class families afford college. We need to immediately increase the maximum Pell Grant to $4,500 and double it over the next 6 years. We need to make sure student loans are affordable. And we need a bigger tuition tax credit for the families stuck in the middle who aren't eligible for Pell grants but still can't afford college.

America needs a public school system that works. I support the goals of No Child Left Behind: a good teacher in every classroom, making sure every student is proficient in math and reading, and fighting against the soft bigotry of low expectations. But to do that, schools need help from the Federal Government. Schools need resources for smaller classes, teacher training, and meeting special needs—like bilingual education or special education. Yet the Republican budget doesn't give schools the funds to do the job. It falls $15.4 billion short of what we promised for No Child Left Behind. It shortchanges schools and shortchanges our children. That is wrong.

I have heard from teachers and parents from all over Maryland. They are worried about how they are going to meet all the requirements in No Child Left Behind. They all tell me that they are worried about whether their school will make the grade—especially in this time of budget cuts and budget crunches.

No Child Left Behind placed the burden on schools to improve. I know the teachers and school officials are doing their best to turn struggling schools around. But they can't do it alone. They need encouragement, support, and resources. That is why this amendment is so important. We must make sure no child is left out of the budget.

NIH is a jewel in the Nation's crown. As the Senator from Maryland, I am proud that NIH is in my home State. The investments we are making in biomedical research today have the potential to pay priceless returns for people across this country. That is why I strongly supported the bipartisan doubling of the NIH budget over 5 years to $27 billion. This goal was met in 2003, but our work is not done. We must continue to invest in biomedical research and support continued increases of the NIH budget, so that the research that scientists are doing will continue to help people live longer, healthier lives.

The Republican budget level funds the NIH at $28.3 billion, which is $62 million less than in fiscal year 2005. As a result, the total number of NIH-funded research project grants would drop by 642, or 2 percent, below last year's level. The budget would cut funding for 18 of the 19 institutes. Funding for the National Cancer Institute would drop by $40 million, and funding for the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute would drop by $21 million. Over the years, the American people have invested in NIH. It is paying off in improved prevention, diagnosis, and treatments for diseases. We must continue to invest in biomedical research.

Today, our Nation faces a shortage of nearly 500,000 nurses. As our population continues to grow and age, the need for nurses will continue to increase. The Department of Labor reported in the Winter 2005–2006 Occupational Outlook Quarterly that America's demand for new and replacement RN's will grow by 29 percent between 2004 and 2014, to 1.2 million, in order to accommodate growing patient needs and to replace retiring nurses. Yet the Republican budget funds nursing workforce development programs at last year's level of $150 million. Congress must do more to address this crisis.

I am proud to cosponsor this amendment and I urge my colleagues to vote for it. These additional funds are crucial for so many important programs that change lives and save lives. I will keep fighting so that these programs get the funds they need and to ensure that Americans have health care at any age, public schools we can depend on, and access to higher education.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired.

Who yields time in opposition?

Mr. GREGG. I yield back the time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time has been yielded back. The question is on agreeing to amendment No. 3048. The yeas and nays have been ordered. The clerk will call the roll.

This will be a 10-minute vote.

The bill clerk called the roll.

The result was announced—yeas 73, nays 27, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 58 Leg.]

YEAS—73

Akaka	Bayh	Bingaman
Alexander	Bennett	Boxer
Baucus	Biden	Burns
Byrd	Hatch	Obama
Cantwell	Hutchison	Pryor
Carper	Inouye	Reed
Chafee	Jeffords	Reid
Clinton	Johnson	Roberts
Cochran	Kennedy	Rockefeller
Coleman	Kerry	Salazar
Collins	Kohl	Santorum
Conrad	Landrieu	Sarbanes
Dayton	Lautenberg	Schumer
DeWine	Leahy	Smith
Dodd	Levin	Snowe
Dole	Lieberman	Specter
Domenici	Lincoln	Stabenow
Dorgan	Lott	Stevens
Durbin	Lugar	Talent
Feingold	Menendez	Thune
Feinstein	Mikulski	Voinovich
Frist	Murkowski	Warner
Grassley	Murray	Wyden
Hagel	Nelson (FL)	
Harkin	Nelson (NE)	

NAYS—27

Allard	Craig	Kyl
Allen	Crapo	Martinez
Bond	DeMint	McCain
Brownback	Ensign	McConnell
Bunning	Enzi	Sessions
Burr	Graham	Shelby
Chambliss	Gregg	Sununu
Coburn	Inhofe	Thomas
Cornyn	Isakson	Vitter

The amendment (No. 3048) was agreed to.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I spoke to the distinguished majority leader just a few minutes ago, and we have lots and lots of amendments. We hope we would stick to 10 minutes. On my side, if Senators aren't here in 10 minutes, I hope it would be a fair, equal punishment that if people aren't here in 10 minutes, the vote should be closed. Everyone knows what the rules are. People have things to do. It is not fair to the Senators. People come straggling in after 16, 17, 18 minutes, and it is not fair. So I would hope that we have 10-minute votes. We have lots of votes to do.

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I also wish to agree with the Democratic leader and express a request. We are going to have a long day here. We have a lot of votes lined up, and we have a lot of votes to follow that as well. So let's follow the managers' lead, and we are going to leave it to their discretion. Right now, we have instructed them to cut off those votes. With that, no complaints. People have to stick close to the floor.

AMENDMENT NO. 3034

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SUNUNU). Under the previous order, the next amendment is the Lieberman amendment No. 3034 on which the yeas and nays have been ordered and for which there will be 2 minutes evenly divided for debate.

The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, could I just alert colleagues, we have now done a vote count. We have over 60 votes pending. We can only do three votes an hour. That would take us 20 hours. I urge colleagues—there are other vehicles coming. We have had a lot of votes already on this budget resolution. We have a lot more votes scheduled. I would urge colleagues to come to us and remove some of their amendments from consideration.

I thank the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On amendment No. 3034, the Senator from Connecticut is recognized for 1 minute.

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Senator DURBIN be added as a cosponsor of this amendment.

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

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, I have said that the budget before us, when it comes to our homeland security, is shortsighted and short-funded. But I wish to go beyond that, so working with my staff we reached out to experts in the various areas that constitute our homeland security in a time of terrorism. This is the result: a comprehensive proposal that would add $8 billion to our homeland security. It is, in fact, what is necessary to protect the American people at a time of terrorism and from natural disasters like Katrina. The money will go to first responders, port security, rail transit security, FEMA, bioterrorism, chemical security, and aviation security, and the Coast Guard.

For real homeland security, I urge my colleagues to support this amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired.

Who yields time in opposition? The Senator from New Hampshire.

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, we have increased the funding for national defense by $30 billion in this bill in the core budget. We have increased it by $40 billion in the ancillary budget which funds alongside the core budget, putting it up to $90 billion. We have increased border and port security funding by $4 billion, and we already have in the pipeline something like $5 billion of unspent money for first responders and something like $3.5 billion for interoperability. This amendment is not needed, and it is a tax-and-spend amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time having been yielded back, the question is on agreeing to amendment No. 3034.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. The following Senators were necessarily absent: the Senator from Virginia (Mr. ALLEN), the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. CHAFEE), and the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. LOTT).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Montana (Mr. BAUCUS) is necessarily absent.

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

The result was announced—yeas 43, nays 53, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 59 Leg.]

YEAS—43

Akaka	Carper	Feingold
Bayh	Clinton	Feinstein
Biden	Conrad	Harkin
Bingaman	Dayton	Inouye
Boxer	Dodd	Jeffords
Byrd	Dorgan	Johnson
Cantwell	Durbin	Kennedy
Kerry	Menendez	Rockefeller
Kohl	Mikulski	Salazar
Landrieu	Murray	Sarbanes
Lautenberg	Nelson (FL)	Schumer
Leahy	Obama	Stabenow
Levin	Pryor	Wyden
Lieberman	Reed	
Lincoln	Reid	

NAYS—53

Alexander	Dole	Murkowski
Allard	Domenici	Nelson (NE)
Bennett	Ensign	Roberts
Bond	Enzi	Santorum
Brownback	Frist	Sessions
Bunning	Graham	Shelby
Burns	Grassley	Smith
Burr	Gregg	Snowe
Chambliss	Hagel	Specter
Coburn	Hatch	Stevens
Cochran	Hutchison	Sununu
Coleman	Inhofe	Talent
Collins	Isakson	Thomas
Cornyn	Kyl	Thune
Craig	Lugar	Vitter
Crapo	Martinez	Voinovich
DeMint	McCain	Warner
DeWine	McConnell	

NOT VOTING—4

Allen	Chafee
Baucus	Lott

The amendment (No. 3034) was rejected.

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I move to reconsider the vote and I move to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 3137

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the next amendment is the Lautenberg amendment on which the yeas and nays have been ordered. There will be 2 minutes evenly divided. The Senator from New Jersey is recognized for 1 minute.

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Mr. President, my amendment is now being considered. The vote is simple: If you vote yes, you support my amendment to strike this unfair tax increase from the budget. However, if you vote no on this, you are saying to the average family that they should pay more taxes. So the vote is yes. We want to strike this unfair tax increase from the budget.

The average family of four traveling round-trip on nonstop flights will pay $40 in security taxes under the President's budget proposal. The traveling public is already overtaxed. They pay nearly 20 percent in total Federal taxes on every airline ticket.

To make matters worse, this tax increase will hit families the hardest—families and loved ones traveling to be together, whether during holidays or emergencies.

The proper vote for the families of America is a yes vote. I urge my colleagues to support my amendment and eliminate the Bush airline passenger tax increase.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The time of the Senator has expired. Who seeks time in opposition?

Mr. GREGG. We are willing to accept this amendment. I ask unanimous consent the yeas and nays be vitiated and the amendment be agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, the yeas and nays are vitiated and the amendment is agreed to.

The amendment (No. 3137) was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 3103

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the next amendment is No. 3103, the Sarbanes amendment, on which the yeas and nays have been ordered and on which there will be 2 minutes evenly divided.

The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. SARBANES. Mr. President, this amendment raises the function 300 back to baseline. I have a letter here. I ask unanimous consent to have it printed in the RECORD. It is from a number of the leading environmental organizations.

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

MARCH 16, 2006.

DEAR SENATOR: On behalf of our millions of members and supporters, we write to urge you to vote for the amendment to the budget resolution proposed by Senator Sarbanes. It will provide $31.1 billion for environmental protection and restoration in function 300 of the Fiscal Year 2007 budget. This amendment will restore funding in function 300 to the baseline level taken from Fiscal Year 2006 and stop the proposed back slide in environmental protection. The environment is not only important for public health, but it is also a critical asset to the nation providing recreational, cultural, economic, and ecological capital to our society.

The cuts proposed in the Senate budget resolution would undermine the progress that has been made on protecting our natural resources. Funding for drinking water and clean water infrastructure has been cut to dangerous levels; clean up of toxic sites around the country will continue to slow down; species and land preservation for future generations will struggle forward; the condition of our national parks would continue to deteriorate; our ocean resources would linger on the brink of collapse; and farmers and ranchers seeking assistance to improve environmental quality will be turned away.

Unfortunately, the federal government in the past several years has not provided the support that these resources need to protect local communities and the natural ecosystems. In addition, past budget resolutions have proposed Arctic drilling—an old, tired idea that would further devastate the environment—as a way to pay for other important programs. Though on paper there have been increases in funding for the environment, inflation has outstripped those increases leading to cut backs in critical environmental programs. Adjusted for inflation the cuts have amounted to almost $2 billion in the past two years. We ask that you stop this trend and reinvigorate the federal government's role as a leader in investing in our country by providing at least $31.1 billion for environmental protection and restoration in the Fiscal Year 2007 budget.

Sincerely,

Cindy Shogan, Executive Director, Alaska Wilderness League; S. Elizabeth Birnbaum, Vice President for Government Affairs, American Rivers; Mary Beth Beetham, Director of Legislative Affairs, Defenders of Wildlife; Marty Hayden, Vice President for Policy and Legislation, Earthjustice; Brock Evans, President, Endangered Species Coalition; Sara Zdeb, Legislative Director, Friends of the Earth; Betsy Loyless, Vice President for Policy, National Audubon Society; Karen Steuer,

Vice President, National Environmental Trust; Blake Selzer, Legislative Director, National Parks Conservation Association; Heather Taylor, Deputy Legislative Director, Natural Resources Defense Council; Michele Boyd, Legislative Director, Public Citizen; Anna Aurilio, Legislative Director, U.S. PIRG; Linda Lance, Vice President Public Policy, The Wilderness Society.

Mr. SARBANES. I will quote one paragraph:

The cuts proposed in the Senate budget resolution would undermine the progress that has been made on protecting our natural resources. Funding for drinking water and clean water infrastructure has been cut to dangerous levels; clean up of toxic sites around the country will continue to slow down; species and land preservation for future generations will struggle forward; the condition of our national parks would continue to deteriorate; our ocean resources would linger on the brink of collapse; and farmers and ranchers seeking assistance to improve environmental quality will be turned away.

Don't let these things happen. Support this amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields time in opposition?

The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, let me say to my friend Senator SARBANES, there is no stronger supporter of our State revolving funds than I am, as chairman of the Environment and Public Works Committee. But I wish to say this is a $2.9 billion tax increase. There are ways of doing it by eliminating some unnecessary programs.

Regarding the portion also affecting the Corps of Engineers, I understand they are underfunded at this time and we are working right now in our committee to see what we can do to come up with some money by striking some of the less important, less necessary programs.

I urge my colleagues to vote against the Sarbanes amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time having been yielded, the question is on agreeing to the amendment. The yeas and nays have been ordered. Under the previous order, this will be again a 10-minute vote.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. The following Senator was necessarily absent: the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAIG).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Louisiana (Ms. LANDRIEU) and the Senator from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) are necessarily absent.

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

The result was announced—yeas 48, nays 49, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 60 Leg.]

YEAS—48

Akaka	Byrd	Conrad
Baucus	Cantwell	Dayton
Bayh	Carper	DeWine
Biden	Chafee	Dodd
Bingaman	Clinton	Dorgan
Boxer	Collins	Durbin
Feingold	Leahy	Reed
Feinstein	Lieberman	Reid
Harkin	Lincoln	Rockefeller
Inouye	Menendez	Salazar
Jeffords	Mikulski	Sarbanes
Johnson	Murray	Schumer
Kennedy	Nelson (FL)	Snowe
Kerry	Nelson (NE)	Stabenow
Kohl	Obama	Warner
Lautenberg	Pryor	Wyden

NAYS—49

Alexander	Domenici	McConnell
Allard	Ensign	Murkowski
Allen	Enzi	Roberts
Bennett	Frist	Santorum
Bond	Graham	Sessions
Brownback	Grassley	Shelby
Bunning	Gregg	Smith
Burns	Hagel	Specter
Burr	Hatch	Stevens
Chambliss	Hutchison	Sununu
Coburn	Inhofe	Talent
Cochran	Isakson	Thomas
Coleman	Kyl	Thune
Cornyn	Lott	Vitter
Crapo	Lugar	Voinovich
DeMint	Martinez	
Dole	McCain	

NOT VOTING—3

Craig	Landrieu	Levin

The amendment (No. 3103) was rejected.

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I move to reconsider the vote, and I move to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 3102

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the next amendment is the Dorgan amendment No. 3102. The yeas and nays have been ordered. There will be 2 minutes equally divided.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, can I alert colleagues again? We have colleagues who are missing votes. They are missing votes because of the time deadline. We have had Democrats missing votes and we have had Republicans missing votes. We don't want you to miss votes. We want you to make votes but at the same time we have to stay on schedule.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields time?

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I will be very brief.

This is an amendment which I offered last year. It adds $1 billion to the account dealing with American Indians.

All of us in this Chamber know there are neighbors among us in this country who live in Third World communities. We have a bona fide Federal crisis in health care, education, and housing on Indian reservations. We have a trust responsibility for the health care of American Indians.

Did you know we also have a responsibility for Federal prisoners' health care? We spend twice as much per person for the health care of Federal prisoners as we do to meet our trust responsibility for the health care of American Indians.

We all know we underfund these accounts. This adds $1 billion to a multitude of Indian accounts dealing with health care, housing, and education. It is funded by closing some tax loopholes.

I hope this Senate will decide this is the right set of priorities.

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, this amendment doesn't guarantee that any money goes to the tribal authorities. All it does is raise the cap by $1 billion—increases taxes by $1 billion. It is entirely up to the Appropriations Committee how they spend money. We have no control over that. The practical effect of this amendment is simply tax and spend.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the amendment. Under the previous order, the yeas and nays have been ordered. Under the previous order, this will be a 10-minute vote.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. DAYTON) and the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. INOUYE) are necessarily absent.

The result was announced—yeas 42, nays 56, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 61 Leg.]

YEAS—42

Akaka	Feinstein	Mikulski
Baucus	Harkin	Murray
Bayh	Jeffords	Nelson (FL)
Biden	Johnson	Nelson (NE)
Bingaman	Kennedy	Obama
Boxer	Kerry	Pryor
Byrd	Kohl	Reed
Cantwell	Landrieu	Reid
Clinton	Lautenberg	Rockefeller
Conrad	Leahy	Salazar
Dodd	Levin	Sarbanes
Dorgan	Lieberman	Schumer
Durbin	Lincoln	Stabenow
Feingold	Menendez	Wyden

NAYS—56

Alexander	DeMint	McCain
Allard	DeWine	McConnell
Allen	Dole	Murkowski
Bennett	Domenici	Roberts
Bond	Ensign	Santorum
Brownback	Enzi	Sessions
Bunning	Frist	Shelby
Burns	Graham	Smith
Burr	Grassley	Snowe
Carper	Gregg	Specter
Chafee	Hagel	Stevens
Chambliss	Hatch	Sununu
Coburn	Hutchison	Talent
Cochran	Inhofe	Thomas
Coleman	Isakson	Thune
Collins	Kyl	Vitter
Cornyn	Lott	Voinovich
Craig	Lugar	Warner
Crapo	Martinez	

NOT VOTING—2

Dayton	Inouye

The amendment (No. 3102) was rejected.

Mr. GREGG. I move to reconsider the vote.

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

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 3100

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is now 2 minutes equally divided prior to voting on the Cornyn amendment.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, my amendment directs the Senate Committee on Finance to find $10 billion in additional savings out of the Medicare Program and builds on the work done in the Deficit Reduction Act where we

reduced the rate of growth for mandatory spending by nearly $100 billion over the next decade.

As all Members know, there is increasing pressure on discretionary spending on important priorities because of the growth of Medicare, Social Security, and Medicaid. Medicare and Medicaid alone grew by 22 percent over the last 5 years. This will allow the Committee on Finance to take the stabilization fund, for example, that is used to supplement payments to preferred provider organizations which participate in the Medicare Program, which is available to be recouped to help pay down some of the debt in the amount of $10 billion, as well as other sources of revenue that they can gain out of the Medicare Program.

I ask my colleagues to vote ''aye.''

Mr. CONRAD. I yield the time to the ranking member on the Finance Committee, Senator BAUCUS.

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, colleagues, this is déjà vu all over again. This is the reconciliation cut bill of $11 billion which barely passed the House all over again. It is added on, on top of that again. That was a net $11 billion cut for Medicare and Medicaid in the jurisdiction of the Committee on Finance, and this is $11 billion yet on top of that. That will come out of you know whose hides. You know how unpopular that will be back home.

This is not the way to cut entitlement spending or put a limit on it. The better way is an all-encompassing way when everyone is in it together, not directed to the Committee on Finance jurisdiction which will cut more out of Medicaid, cut more spending out of Medicare.

I strongly urge my colleagues, just remember, this is déjà vu all over again. It is a repeat of what happened last year. That was extremely unpopular.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the amendment.

The yeas and nays have been ordered.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant journal clerk called the roll.

The result was announced—yeas 43, nays 57, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 62 Leg.]

YEAS—43

Alexander	DeMint	McCain
Allard	Dole	McConnell
Allen	Domenici	Nelson (NE)
Bennett	Ensign	Roberts
Bond	Enzi	Santorum
Brownback	Frist	Sessions
Bunning	Graham	Shelby
Burns	Grassley	Sununu
Burr	Gregg	Talent
Chambliss	Hagel	Thune
Coburn	Hatch	Vitter
Cochran	Inhofe	Voinovich
Cornyn	Isakson	Warner
Craig	Kyl	
Crapo	Lott	

NAYS—57

Akaka	Bingaman	Carper
Baucus	Boxer	Chafee
Bayh	Byrd	Clinton
Biden	Cantwell	Coleman
Collins	Kerry	Obama
Conrad	Kohl	Pryor
Dayton	Landrieu	Reed
DeWine	Lautenberg	Reid
Dodd	Leahy	Rockefeller
Dorgan	Levin	Salazar
Durbin	Lieberman	Sarbanes
Feingold	Lincoln	Schumer
Feinstein	Lugar	Smith
Harkin	Martinez	Snowe
Hutchison	Menendez	Specter
Inouye	Mikulski	Stabenow
Jeffords	Murkowski	Stevens
Johnson	Murray	Thomas
Kennedy	Nelson (FL)	Wyden

The amendment (No. 3100) was rejected.

Mr. GREGG. I move to reconsider the vote and move to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

CHANGE OF VOTE

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, on vote No. 62, I am recorded as ''yea.'' I intended to vote ''nay.'' I ask unanimous consent to change my vote. It will not change the outcome of the vote.

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

(The foregoing tally has been changed to reflect the above order.)

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

AMENDMENT NO. 3112 WITHDRAWN

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, with the approval of Senator LANDRIEU, I ask unanimous consent that her amendment No. 3112 be withdrawn.

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

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, for the edification of our colleagues, when we complete the Collins amendment, the next five amendments after that—we have pending the Stabenow, Akaka, and Collins amendments—and the next five amendments after that will be the Lincoln amendment No. 3047; Grassley, an unnumbered amendment; Inhofe, No. 3093, I believe; Lincoln, No. 3106; Kerry, No. 3143.

We are now on to Senator STABENOW.

AMENDMENT NO. 3141

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is 2 minutes equally divided on the amendment.

Who yields time?

The Senator from Michigan.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, my amendment is about guaranteeing that every veteran in America has the health care they were promised and they deserve. Over the last 2 years, we have seen a 500-percent increase in the number of veterans seeking care from the VA who served in Iraq and Afghanistan alone. But this budget falls over 35,000 veterans short of the number of Iraq and Afghanistan veterans whom the VA currently treats. And remarkably, the President's budget projects fewer vets will seek mental health care, which is absolutely incorrect. If you believe, as I do, the men and women who have fought for our country should not have to fight every day, every year, for the health care they need, I urge you to vote yes on this amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Idaho.

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, I will be brief, but it is important I have the attention of my colleagues.

Yesterday, with the Burns amendment, we increased veterans funding over last year by 14 percent, so we have already increased veterans spending by 14 percent. The Senator from Michigan wishes now to increase it by 36 percent. That is 104 billion new dollars over a 5-year period. And it is taxed for. At least she has the courtesy of offering something that is paid for.

But even the Veterans Administration, with the Burns amendment, by their best guesstimation—and I use the word ''guesstimation''—would suggest that veterans' care next year will grow by less than 2 percent. There is absolutely no justification for increasing veterans health care budgets by a grand total of 36 percent in 1 year.

This Senate has been progressively generous to America's veterans, as we should be. It is now one of the most rapidly growing health care budgets in our country, with the Burns amendment, not the Stabenow amendment. Please vote no on the Stabenow amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired.

The question is on agreeing to the amendment. The yeas and nays have been ordered. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

The result was announced—yeas 46, nays 54, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 63 Leg.]

YEAS—46

Akaka	Feinstein	Murray
Baucus	Harkin	Nelson (FL)
Bayh	Inouye	Obama
Biden	Jeffords	Pryor
Bingaman	Johnson	Reed
Boxer	Kennedy	Reid
Byrd	Kerry	Rockefeller
Cantwell	Kohl	Salazar
Carper	Landrieu	Sarbanes
Clinton	Lautenberg	Schumer
Conrad	Leahy	Snowe
Dayton	Levin	Specter
Dodd	Lieberman	Stabenow
Dorgan	Lincoln	Wyden
Durbin	Menendez	
Feingold	Mikulski	

NAYS—54

Alexander	DeMint	Martinez
Allard	DeWine	McCain
Allen	Dole	McConnell
Bennett	Domenici	Murkowski
Bond	Ensign	Nelson (NE)
Brownback	Enzi	Roberts
Bunning	Frist	Santorum
Burns	Graham	Sessions
Burr	Grassley	Shelby
Chafee	Gregg	Smith
Chambliss	Hagel	Stevens
Coburn	Hatch	Sununu
Cochran	Hutchison	Talent
Coleman	Inhofe	Thomas
Collins	Isakson	Thune
Cornyn	Kyl	Vitter
Craig	Lott	Voinovich
Crapo	Lugar	Warner

The amendment (No. 3141) was rejected.

Mr. GREGG. I move to reconsider the vote.

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

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

CHANGE OF VOTE

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to change my vote on amendment No. 3141, which we just voted on prior to this, offered by Senator STABENOW. I voted ''nay.'' I wish to change it to ''yea.'' It doesn't change the outcome of the vote.

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

(The foregoing tally has been changed to reflect the above order.)

AMENDMENT NO. 3071

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There will now be 2 minutes equally divided prior to a vote on the Akaka amendment.

Who yields time?

Mr. CONRAD. I yield time to the Senator.

Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Senators Boxer and Johnson be added as cosponsors of my amendment.

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

Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, this amendment restores $3 billion to title I in No Child Left Behind educational programs. The amendment was offered because this budget resolution underfunds title I by more than $12 billion. You should know that a $3 billion increase would bring title I up to what the President requested since fiscal year 2004. Without this increase, 29 States could lose title I funding, and another 7 States would be level funded.

Vote aye on the amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields time? The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, this amendment increases funding by $3 billion and will be offset by closing tax loopholes, which means raising taxes, which would require a separate effort, anyway. The resolution we have before us already provides $12.7 billion in 2007 for grants to local education agencies, the largest component of No Child Left Behind. That represents a 45-percent increase from 2001.

The Federal investment in education will have grown by $12.2 billion, or 29 percent, since fiscal year 2001. In addition, the resolution provides an additional $1.5 billion for funding for function 500, which includes No Child Left Behind, and those funds can be used for that. Education is and should be one of our highest priorities, but this amendment is paid for by increasing taxes and busts the discretionary spending cap. I ask that you vote no.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the amendment. The yeas and nays have been ordered.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant journal clerk called the roll.

The result was announced—yeas 49, nays 51, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 64 Leg.]

YEAS—49

Akaka	Durbin	Mikulski
Baucus	Feingold	Murray
Bayh	Feinstein	Nelson (FL)
Biden	Harkin	Nelson (NE)
Bingaman	Inouye	Obama
Boxer	Jeffords	Pryor
Byrd	Johnson	Reed
Cantwell	Kennedy	Reid
Carper	Kerry	Rockefeller
Chafee	Kohl	Salazar
Clinton	Landrieu	Sarbanes
Collins	Lautenberg	Schumer
Conrad	Leahy	Snowe
Dayton	Levin	Stabenow
DeWine	Lieberman	Wyden
Dodd	Lincoln	
Dorgan	Menendez	

NAYS—51

Alexander	Dole	McCain
Allard	Domenici	McConnell
Allen	Ensign	Murkowski
Bennett	Enzi	Roberts
Bond	Frist	Santorum
Brownback	Graham	Sessions
Bunning	Grassley	Shelby
Burns	Gregg	Smith
Burr	Hagel	Specter
Chambliss	Hatch	Stevens
Coburn	Hutchison	Sununu
Cochran	Inhofe	Talent
Coleman	Isakson	Thomas
Cornyn	Kyl	Thune
Craig	Lott	Vitter
Crapo	Lugar	Voinovich
DeMint	Martinez	Warner

The amendment (No. 3071) was rejected.

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

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

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, we are waiting for Senator CONRAD. For the moment, we will have to skip over Senator COLLINS. I understand we are hopefully going to have an understanding relative to the next two amendments, which will be the Grassley and Lincoln amendments.

That brings us to Senator INHOFE. We will come back to Senators COLLINS, GRASSLEY, and LINCOLN after this Inhofe vote.

AMENDMENT NO. 3093

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CHAFEE). The clerk will report the Inhofe amendment.

The bill clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Oklahoma [Mr. INHOFE] proposes an amendment numbered 3093.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

The amendment is as follows:

At the appropriate place insert the following:

SEC. . TO CONTROL DISCRETIONARY SPENDING

''Beginning with fiscal year 2007 and thereafter, all non-defense, non-trust-fund, discretionary spending shall not exceed the previous fiscal year's levels, for purposes of the congressional budget process (Section 302 et al of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974), without a 2/3 vote of Members duly chosen and sworn.''

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, how much time is divided on this amendment? I didn't get that.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is 1 minute for each side.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, this is kind of a litmus test amendment. We have had it up a couple times before. We do intend to pick up votes each time. It is an amendment to get into some of the big spending we do around here. With the exception of trust votes and national defense, it says that any vote on appropriations that exceeds the previous year has to have a two-thirds majority.

This amendment is endorsed by a number of groups, including the American Conservative Union, Christian Coalition, and other groups. It will be a scored vote. It is a very significant vote. I think it is really the only meaningful vote to do something about curbing spending that we will have the entire day.

I reserve the remainder of my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields time?

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, this is truly a sweeping amendment. I hope colleagues are listening. This amendment seeks to lock in the current level of discretionary spending, not just for this year but permanently. I hope colleagues are listening. This seeks to lock in the current level of spending for homeland security, for veterans health, for NIH, not just for 1 year but permanently because it would take 67 votes to increase it.

I hope my colleagues will reject this amendment. This is an amendment which goes against every democratic impulse of this body.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that on the five amendments we have put in order, the yeas and nays be deemed to have been granted, along with the seconds of those yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to that being in order? Without objection, it is so ordered.

Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to amendment No. 3093. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. The following Senators were necessarily absent: the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. DOMENICI), the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. LOTT), and the Senator from Arkansas (Ms. MURKOWSKI).

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

The result was announced—yeas 35, nays 62, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 65 Leg.]

YEAS—35

Allard	Chambliss	Dole
Allen	Coburn	Ensign
Brownback	Cornyn	Enzi
Bunning	Craig	Frist
Burns	Crapo	Graham
Burr	DeMint	Grassley

Gregg	Kyl	Sessions
Hagel	Martinez	Sununu
Hatch	McCain	Thomas
Hutchison	McConnell	Thune
Inhofe	Nelson (NE)	Vitter
Isakson	Santorum	

NAYS—62

Akaka	Dorgan	Nelson (FL)
Alexander	Durbin	Obama
Baucus	Feingold	Pryor
Bayh	Feinstein	Reed
Bennett	Harkin	Reid
Biden	Inouye	Roberts
Bingaman	Jeffords	Rockefeller
Bond	Johnson	Salazar
Boxer	Kennedy	Sarbanes
Byrd	Kerry	Schumer
Cantwell	Kohl	Shelby
Carper	Landrieu	Smith
Chafee	Lautenberg	Snowe
Clinton	Leahy	Specter
Cochran	Levin	Stabenow
Coleman	Lieberman	Stevens
Collins	Lincoln	Talent
Conrad	Lugar	Voinovich
Dayton	Menendez	Warner
DeWine	Mikulski	Wyden
Dodd	Murray	

NOT VOTING—3

Domenici	Lott	Murkowski

The amendment (No. 3093) was rejected.

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

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I move to lay that motion on the table.

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

The Senator from Louisiana is recognized.

AMENDMENT NO. 3064

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the yeas and nays be vitiated on the Collins amendment No. 3064, and I ask unanimous consent that it be agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. Without objection, the amendment is agreed to.

The amendment (No. 3064) was agreed to.

AMENDMENTS NOS. 3148, 3127, AND 3047 WITHDRAWN

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I am prepared to withdraw my amendment No. 3148 and Senator HAGEL is also prepared to have his amendment No. 3127 withdrawn. We are also prepared to withdraw Lincoln amendment No. 3047. We have managed to work out an understanding on all of these matters, so I ask unanimous consent to have those amendments withdrawn.

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

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, it is also our understanding that Senator GRASSLEY would not offer his amendment that was the matching amendment to the Lincoln amendment that has now been withdrawn.

Mr. GREGG. Under the previous agreement, Mr. President, we are now going to turn to the Lincoln amendment No. 3106, followed by the Kerry amendment No. 4103, followed by the DeMint amendment No. 3087.

AMENDMENT NO. 3106

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is now 2 minutes of debate equally divided.

Mrs. LINCOLN. Mr. President, in this administration's budget, time and time again rural America has been asked to give disproportionately, whether it is to deficit reduction, the war in Iraq, or anything else. Quite frankly, I think it is important for us to look seriously at the priorities of this budget but, more importantly, to look at rural America and what it means to the fabric of this country.

There are cuts in this budget to supplemental nutrition programs for women, infants, and children. USDA's rural housing program is cut by $259 million, resource conservation and development council, world business enterprise grant, telemedicine, State and private forestry programs, cooperative agriculture and food safety research units—all of these issues are critical to rural America. They don't have the corporate tax base or corporate citizenry out there that is going to support them.

If we want the way of life in this country to be maintained with both the fabric of this country being built by our urban areas and our rural areas, it is essential that we support the people and the working families in those areas.

I ask my colleagues to look at conservation, WIC, all of these programs and how important they are in your State.

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. President, I regrettably rise in opposition to this amendment. The Senator from Arkansas and I normally agree on every issue involving agriculture. Philosophically, I am with her. But the problem is it raises the cap a little over $2 billion. It is simply not paid for. The things she is seeking to add money for such as research, nutrition, various rural development programs, all are great programs, but the time to handle that is in the appropriations process, not in the budget process. This means we would either have to raise taxes or increase the deficit, and now is not the time to have that debate. I think it should be in the appropriations process. I urge a ''no'' vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time has expired. The question is on agreeing to amendment No. 3106.

The yeas and nays have been ordered.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

The result was announced—yeas 48, nays 52, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 66 Leg.]

YEAS—48

Akaka	Durbin	Menendez
Baucus	Feingold	Mikulski
Bayh	Feinstein	Murray
Biden	Harkin	Nelson (FL)
Bingaman	Inouye	Nelson (NE)
Boxer	Jeffords	Obama
Burns	Johnson	Pryor
Byrd	Kennedy	Reed
Cantwell	Kerry	Reid
Carper	Kohl	Rockefeller
Clinton	Landrieu	Salazar
Collins	Lautenberg	Sarbanes
Conrad	Leahy	Schumer
Dayton	Levin	Snowe
Dodd	Lieberman	Stabenow
Dorgan	Lincoln	Wyden

NAYS—52

Alexander	Dole	McConnell
Allard	Domenici	Murkowski
Allen	Ensign	Roberts
Bennett	Enzi	Santorum
Bond	Frist	Sessions
Brownback	Graham	Shelby
Bunning	Grassley	Smith
Burr	Gregg	Specter
Chafee	Hagel	Stevens
Chambliss	Hatch	Sununu
Coburn	Hutchison	Talent
Cochran	Inhofe	Thomas
Coleman	Isakson	Thune
Cornyn	Kyl	Vitter
Craig	Lott	Voinovich
Crapo	Lugar	Warner
DeMint	Martinez	
DeWine	McCain	

The amendment (No. 3106) was rejected.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

AMENDMENT NO. 3143, AS MODIFIED

Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent my modification be accepted at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, the amendment is so modified.

The amendment, as modified, is as follows:

(Purpose: To prevent the imposition of excessive TRICARE fees and co-pays on military retirees)

On page 3, line 13, increase the amount by $592,000,000.

On page 3, line 15, increase the amount by $1,619,000,000.

On page 3, line 17, increase the amount by $2,188,000,000.

On page 3, line 19, increase the amount by $2,685,000,000.

On page 3, line 21, increase the amount by $3,271,000,000.

On page 4, line 1, increase the amount by $592,000,000.

On page 4, line 2, increase the amount by $1,619,000,000.

On page 4, line 3, increase the amount by $2,188,000,000.

On page 4, line 4, increase the amount by $2,685,000,000.

On page 4, line 6, increase the amount by $3,271,000,000.

On page 4, line 13, increase the amount by $ 735,000,000.

On page 4, line 15, increase the amount by $1,862,000,000.

On page 4, line 17, increase the amount by $2,322,000,000.

On page 4, line 19, increase the amount by $2,816,000,000.

On page 4, line 21, increase the amount by $3,424,000,000.

On page 5, line 4, increase the amount by $592,000,000.

On page 5, line 6, increase the amount by $1,619,000,000.

On page 5, line 8, increase the amount by $2,188,000,000.

On page 5, line 10, increase the amount by $2,685,000,000.

On page 5, line 12, increase the amount by $3,271,000,000.

On page 9, line 20, increase the amount by $735,000,000.

On page 9, line 21, increase the amount by $592,000,000.

On page 9, line 24, increase the amount by $1,862,000,000.

On page 9, line 25, increase the amount by $1,619,000,000.

On page 10, line 3, increase the amount by $2,322,000,000.

On page 10, line 4, increase the amount by $2,188,000,000.

On page 10, line 7, increase the amount by $2,816,000,000.

On page 10, line 8, increase the amount by $2,685,000,000.

On page 10, line 11, increase the amount by $3,424,000,000.

On page 10, line 12, increase the amount by $3,271,000,000.

On page 53, line 1, increase the amount by $735,000,000.

On page 53, line 2, increase the amount by $592,000,000.

On page 53, line 4, increase the amount by $1,862,000,000.

On page 53, line 7, increase the amount by $2,322,000,000.

Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, the Bush budget triples the fees for officers who are retired under the age of 65 who put in their 20 years of service, and doubles the fees and copays for senior enlisted folks, again, after their 20 years of service to the country.

There are several other ways to cover the costs of increased health care under TRICARE. We could stimulate the use of lower cost mail-order pharmacies. We could negotiate with drug manufacturers who secure discounts under TRICARE, which we don't do. You don't have to take it out of the hide of the retirees themselves.

We pay for this. It is paid for by closing a number of tax loopholes and it is fully paid for so we do not have to raise copays on retirees who put in 20 years of service in uniform.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Massachusetts for highlighting an issue that is important to the Armed Services Committee, the authorizing committee. A lot of work is already going on to deal with this problem. The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, Peter Pace, said rising health care costs are the No. 1 issue when he spoke to our committee.

This amendment would cost $10.4 billion over 5 years and result in an increase in taxes by that amount. The authorizing committee does need to focus on it and is focusing on this issue.

I ask the amendment be defeated.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the amendment, as modified. The yeas and nays have been ordered. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. The following Senator was necessarily absent: the Senator from Montana (Mr. BURNS).

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

The result was announced—yeas 46, nays 53, as follows:

The result was announced—yeas 46, nays 53, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 67 Leg.]

YEAS—46

Akaka	Byrd	DeWine
Baucus	Cantwell	Dodd
Bayh	Chafee	Dorgan
Biden	Clinton	Durbin
Bingaman	Conrad	Feingold
Boxer	Dayton	Feinstein
Harkin	Levin	Reed
Inouye	Lieberman	Reid
Jeffords	Lincoln	Rockefeller
Johnson	Menendez	Salazar
Kennedy	Mikulski	Sarbanes
Kerry	Murray	Schumer
Kohl	Nelson (FL)	Stabenow
Landrieu	Nelson (NE)	Wyden
Lautenberg	Obama	
Leahy	Pryor	

NAYS—53

Alexander	Dole	McConnell
Allard	Domenici	Murkowski
Allen	Ensign	Roberts
Bennett	Enzi	Santorum
Bond	Frist	Sessions
Brownback	Graham	Shelby
Bunning	Grassley	Smith
Burr	Gregg	Snowe
Carper	Hagel	Specter
Chambliss	Hatch	Stevens
Coburn	Hutchison	Sununu
Cochran	Inhofe	Talent
Coleman	Isakson	Thomas
Collins	Kyl	Thune
Cornyn	Lott	Vitter
Craig	Lugar	Voinovich
Crapo	Martinez	Warner
DeMint	McCain	

NOT VOTING—1

Burns

The amendment (No. 3143), as modified, was rejected.

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I move to reconsider the vote, and I move to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, we have made significant progress in reducing the number of amendments. This is the good news—really dramatic progress. The bad news is, with the amendments that are still pending we will be here until 2 o'clock in the morning.

It is in the hands of Members of this body. If everybody sticks to their guns and insists on their amendments, we are going to be here until 2 o'clock in the morning.

I ask colleagues to please show some forbearance. We have other vehicles that are coming—the appropriations bills—and other opportunities to make Members' views known.

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I appreciate the especially hard work of the Senator from North Dakota in reducing the number of amendments. I just wish we had been a little more successful because we will be here until 2 o'clock in the morning at the rate we are going.

AMENDMENTS NOS. 3144, 3085, 3140, 3139, 3053, 3079, 3083, 3033; 3052, AS MODIFIED, 3154, AND 3059, EN BLOC

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, in an effort to try to move things along, I ask unanimous consent that the following amendments be considered and agreed to en bloc, and the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table:

Senator OBAMA's amendment No. 3144; Senator ENSIGN, amendment No. 3085; Senator LEVIN, amendment No. 3140; Senator LANDRIEU, amendment No. 3139; Senator LINCOLN, amendment No. 3053; Senator DEWINE, amendment No. 3079; Senator DEWINE, amendment No. 3083; Senator DEWINE, amendment No. 3033; Senator SANTORUM, amendment No. 3052, as modified; Senator LEAHY, amendment No. 3154; and Senator BAUCUS, amendment No. 3059.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, we don't have on our list the amendment of the Senator from Pennsylvania.

I am told that is OK. That has been cleared on both sides.

Mr. COBURN. I object.

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I renew my unanimous consent request reflecting all those amendments which have been read except for amendment No. 3052 of Mr. SANTORUM.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Objection, the amendments are agreed to.

The amendments were agreed to as follows:

AMENDMENT NO. 3144

(Purpose: To provide a $40 million increase in FY 2007 for the Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program and to improve job services for hard-to-place veterans)

On page 23, line 24, increase the amount by $40,000,000.

On page 23, line 25, increase the amount by $5,000,000.

On page 24, line 4, increase the amount by $25,000,000.

On page 24, line 8, increase the amount by $6,000,000.

On page 24, line 12, increase the amount by $3,000,000.

On page 24, line 16, increase the amount by $1,000,000.

On page 27, line 23, decrease the amount by $40,000,000.

On page 27, line 24, decrease the amount by $5,000,000.

On page 28, line 2, decrease the amount by $25,000,000.

On page 28, line 5, decrease the amount by $6,000,000.

On page 28, line 8, decrease the amount by $3,000,000.

On page 28, line 11, decrease the amount by $1,000,000.

AMENDMENT NO. 3085

(Purpose: To provide funding to hire an additional 500 Border Patrol Agents; fully funding the promise Congress made to the American people to hire 2,000 new agents in FY2007 as authorized by the National Intelligence Reform Act of 2004 and as recommended by the 9/11 Commission)

On page 24, line 24, increase the amount by $153,000,000.

On page 24, line 25, increase the amount by $122,400,000.

On page 25, line 4, increase the amount by $15,300,000.

On page 25, line 8, increase the amount by $15,300,000.

On page 10, line 20, decrease the amount by $153,000,000.

On page 10, line 21, decrease the amount by $122,400,000.

On page 10, line 25, decrease the amount by $15,300,000.

On page 11, line 4, decrease the amount by $15,300,000.

AMENDMENT NO. 3140

(Purpose: To provide funds to establish additional Northern Border Air Wings, offset through reductions in Function 920)

On page 24, line 24, increase the amount by $6,000,000.

On page 24, line 25, increase the amount by $4,000,000.

On page 25, line 4, increase the amount by $2,000,000.

On page 27, line 23, decrease the amount by $6,000,000.

On page 27, line 24, decrease the amount by $4,000,000.

On page 28, line 2, decrease the amount by $2,000,000.

AMENDMENT NO. 3139

(Purpose: To provide funding for maintaining a robust long range bomber force including 94 B–52 aircraft)

On page 9, line 20, increase the amount by $77,000,000.

On page 9, line 21, increase the amount by $43,000,000.

On page 9, line 24, increase the amount by $239,000,000.

On page 9, line 25, increase the amount by $188,000,000.

On page 10, line 3, increase the amount by $270,000,000.

On page 10, line 4, increase the amount by $238,000,000.

On page 10, line 7, increase the amount by $217,000,000.

On page 10, line 8, increase the amount by $240,000,000.

On page 10, line 11, increase the amount by $263,000,000.

On page 10, line 12, increase the amount by $246,000,000.

On page 10, line 20, decrease the amount by $77,000,000.

On page 10, line 21, decrease the amount by $43,000,000.

On page 10, line 24, decrease the amount by $239,000,000.

On page 10, line 25, decrease the amount by $188,000,000.

On page 11, line 3, decrease the amount by $270,000,000.

On page 11, line 4, decrease the amount by $238,000,000.

On page 11, line 7, decrease the amount by $217,000,000.

On page 11, line 8, decrease the amount by $240,000,000.

On page 11, line 11, decrease the amount by $263,000,000.

On page 11, line 12, decrease the amount by $246,000,000.

AMENDMENT NO. 3053

(Purpose: To provide for restoring funding for the portion of the COPS program devoted to countering methamphetamine, offset by a reduction to Function 920 (Allowances)

On page 24, line 24, increase the amount by $23,000,000.

On page 24, line 25, increase the amount by $3,000,000.

On page 25, line 3, increase the amount by $23,000,000.

On page 25, line 4, increase the amount by $9,000,000.

On page 25, line 7, increase the amount by $23,000,000.

On page 25, line 8, increase the amount by $15,000,000.

On page 25, line 11, increase the amount by $23,000,000.

On page 25, line 12, increase the amount by $20,000,000.

On page 25, line 15, increase the amount by $23,000,000.

On page 25, line 16, increase the amount by $23,000,000.

On page 27, line 23, decrease the amount by $23,000,000.

On page 27, line 24, decrease the amount by $3,000,000.

On page 28, line 1, decrease the amount by $23,000,000.

On page 28, line 2, decrease the amount by $9,000,000.

On page 28, line 4, decrease the amount by $23,000,000.

On page 28, line 5, decrease the amount by $15,000,000.

On page 28, line 7, decrease the amount by $23,000,000.

On page 28, line 8, decrease the amount by $20,000,000.

On page 28, line 10, decrease the amount by $23,000,000.

On page 28, line 11, decrease the amount by $23,000,000.

AMENDMENT NO. 3079

(Purpose: To increase funding for Child Survival and Maternal Health Programs)

On page 10, line 20, increase the amount by $77,000,000.

On page 10, line 21, increase the amount by $77,000,000.

On page 27, line 23, decrease the amount by $77,000,000.

On page 27, line 24, decrease the amount by $77,000,000.

AMENDMENT NO. 3083

(Purpose: To increase funding for the Children's Hospitals Graduate Medical Education Program under the Public Health Service Act for fiscal year 2007)

On page 19, line 24, increase the amount by $198,000,000.

On page 19, line 25, increase the amount by $198,000,000.

On page 27, line 23, decrease the amount by $198,000,000.

On page 27, line 24, decrease the amount by $198,000,000.

AMENDMENT NO. 3033

(Purpose: To increase funding for NASA aeronautics programs by $179,000,000 in fiscal year 2007, with an offset)

On page 11, line 21, increase the amount by $179,000,000.

On page 11, line 22, increase the amount by $179,000,000.

On page 27, line 23, decrease the amount by $179,000,000.

On page 27, line 24, decrease the amount by $179,000,000.

AMENDMENT NO. 3154

(Purpose: To fund grants for bullet proof vests for local law enforcement agencies at the full authorized level)

On page 24, line 24, increase the amount by $41,000,000.

On page 24, line 25, increase the amount by $5,000,000.

On page 25, line 4, increase the amount by $11,000,000.

On page 25, line 8, increase the amount by $10,000,000.

On page 25, line 12, increase the amount by $8,000,000.

On page 25, line 16, increase the amount by $6,000,000.

On page 27, line 23, decrease the amount by $41,000,000.

On page 27, line 24, decrease the amount by $5,000,000.

On page 28, line 2, decrease the amount by $11,000,000.

On page 28, line 5, decrease the amount by $10,000,000.

On page 28, line 8, decrease the amount by $8,000,000.

On page 28, line 11, decrease the amount by $6,000,000.

AMENDMENT NO. 3059

(Purpose: To improve America's economic competitiveness)

At the end of section 309, insert the following:

(d) FINANCE.—If—

(1) the Committee on Finance of the Senate reports a bill or joint resolution, or if an amendment is offered thereto, or if a conference report is submitted thereon, that—

(A) improves America's trade competitiveness or enforcement; or

(B) fosters health care information technology or pay-for-performance; and

(2) that committee is within its allocation as provided under section 302(a) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974; the chairman of the Committee on the Budget may make the appropriate adjustments in allocations and aggregates to the extent that such legislation would not increase the deficit for fiscal year 2007 and for the period of fiscal years 2007 through 2011.

AMENDMENTS NOS 3155 AND 3156

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the following two amendments which have not been filed be considered and agreed to en bloc, and the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table:

Senator SALAZAR on PILT, and Senator STABENOW on borders.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection? Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendments were agreed to, as follows:

AMENDMENT NO. 3155

(Purpose: To fully fund the Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) program. Adds $152 million to Function 800 (General Government) for PILT)

On page 25, line 24, increase the amount by $152,000,000.

On page 25, line 25, increase the amount by $152,000,000.

On page 27, line 23, decrease the amount by $152,000,000.

On page 27, line 24, decrease the amount by $152,000,000.

AMENDMENT NO. 3156

(Purpose: To protect the American People from terrorist attacks and threats to public health by collecting a fee for inspection exclusively of international trash shipments at the U.S. border generating $45 million in receipts. The fee will help defray the cost of increasing the number and quality of inspections of these potentially dangerous shipments at the border. The fee for inspection service will be implemented to be fully compliant with the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade and other applicable trade agreements)

On page 24, line 24, decrease the amount by $45,000,000.

On page 24, line 25, decrease the amount by $45,000,000.

On page 25, line 3, decrease the amount by $45,000,000.

On page 25, line 4, decrease the amount by $45,000,000.

On page 25, line 7, decrease the amount by $45,000,000.

On page 25, line 8, decrease the amount by $45,000,000.

On page 25, line 11, decrease the amount by $45,000,000.

On page 25, line 12, decrease the amount by $45,000,000.

On page 25, line 15, decrease the amount by $45,000,000.

On page 25, line 16, decrease the amount by $45,000,000.

On page 27, line 23, increase the amount by $45,000,000.

On page 27, line 24, increase the amount by $45,000,000.

On page 28, line 1, increase the amount by $45,000,000.

On page 28, line 2, increase the amount by $45,000,000.

On page 28, line 4, increase the amount by $45,000,000.

On page 28, line 5, increase the amount by $45,000,000.

On page 28, line 7, increase the amount by $45,000,000.

On page 28, line 8, increase the amount by $45,000,000.

On page 28, line 10, increase the amount by $45,000,000.

On page 28, line 11, increase the amount by $45,000,000.

AMENDMENT NO. 3087, AS MODIFIED

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I now believe that we are on the amendment by Senator DEMINT.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Carolina.

AMENDMENT NO. 3087, AS MODIFIED

Mr. DEMINT. Mr. President, I have a modified amendment that I would like to send to the desk

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from South Carolina [Mr. DEMINT] proposes an amendment numbered 3087, as modified.

Mr. DEMINT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

The amendment is as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ___. RESERVE FUND FOR SOCIAL SECURITY REFORM.

If the Committee on Finance of the Senate reports a bill or joint resolution, or an amendment is offered thereto, or a conference report is submitted thereon, that provides changes to the Federal Old Age, Survivors, and Disability Insurance Benefits Program established under title II of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 401 et seq.), by—

(1) requiring that the Federal Old Age and Survivors Trust Fund and the Federal Disability Insurance Trust Fund are used to finance expenditures to provide retirement and disability income of future beneficiaries of such program;

(2) ensuring that there is no change to current law scheduled benefits for individuals born before January 1, 1950;

(3) providing the option to voluntarily obtain legally binding ownership of at least some portion of each participant's benefits; and

(4) ensuring that the funds made available to finance such legislation do not exceed the amounts of the Chief Actuary of the Social Security Administration's intermediate actuarial estimates of the Federal Old Age and Survivors Trust Fund and the Federal Disability Insurance Trust Fund, as published in the most recent report of the Board of Trustees of such Trust Funds,

the chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may make the appropriate adjustments in allocations and aggregates to the extent that such legislation would not increase the deficit for fiscal year 2007 and for the period of fiscal years 2007 through 2011.

Mr. DEMINT. Mr. President, the amendment I have sent to the desk adds a reserve fund to the budget resolution for Social Security that would allow Congress to begin saving Social Security surpluses for future Social Security recipients.

If the Finance Committee does not report back, then nothing happens. The amendment does nothing to change Social Security—no privatization, no stock market investment, and it does not add to the deficit.

The amendment only creates a budget mechanism to allow Congress to consider ways to begin saving the Social Security surplus.

I suspect most Members of this body, Republican and Democrat, are on record on the Senate floor or in a campaign saying that it is wrong to spend the Social Security surplus on other Government programs.

While we don't yet agree on how to fix Social Security, every Member and I believe every American knows that it is wrong to continue to spend Social Security taxes on other Government programs.

This amendment would open the door to consider ways to stop spending Social Security money.

I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I yield the time on this side to the Senator from Montana.

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President my colleagues are not being fooled. This is privatization of Social Security. Turn to page 29, paragraph 3. It so provides.

We have already gone down the road on privatization of Social Security.

The so-called surplus that the Senator referred to is just to privatize Social Security.

The American public said no to privatizing Social Security. The President has realized that it is a bad idea. The Congress should realize it. It is a bad idea. The AARP sure knows it is a bad idea. I have a letter from the AARP. Let me read from it. They say:

AARP strongly opposes this attempt to resurrect a proposal that the American public has soundly rejected.

This is privatization of Social Security, pure and simple. The Senate should reject it as the American people have rejected it.

I ask unanimous consent that the letter be printed in the RECORD.

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

AARP

Washington, DC, March 16, 2006.

Hon. HARRY REID,
Minority Leader, Capitol Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR REID: The Senate will vote on an amendment to S. Con. Res. 83 offered by Senator DeMint to use annual Social Security surpluses to create private accounts. AARP strongly opposes this attempt to resurrect a proposal that the American public has soundly rejected.

AARP believes this proposal has serious consequences for our nation's overall fiscal health and Social Security's long-term outlook. Ostensibly designed to "stop the raid on the surplus", the proposal would still result in the Treasury Department receiving the money to spend on its needs, but the federal deficit and debt would increase by over $700 billion over the next ten years. Our nation cannot afford this unnecessary increase in its already large federal debt, and we should not ask future generations to pay for the added cost.

Social Security faces a long-term financial shortfall that we should address in a timely manner, but private accounts do nothing to address long-term solvency. AARP believes it is time to put aside polarizing ideas that do not work and get serious about securing Social Security so future generations can count on these important benefits.

Sincerely,

DAVID P. SLOANE,
Senior Managing Director, Government Relations & Advocacy.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the amendment. The yeas and nays have been ordered, and the clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. The following Senator was necessarily absent: the Senator from Ohio (Mr. VOINOVICH).

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

The result was announced—yeas 46, nays 53, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 68 Leg.]

YEAS—46

Alexander	DeWine	McCain
Allard	Dole	McConnell
Allen	Ensign	Murkowski
Bennett	Enzi	Roberts
Bond	Frist	Santorum
Brownback	Graham	Sessions
Bunning	Grassley	Shelby
Burr	Gregg	Specter
Chambliss	Hagel	Stevens
Coburn	Hatch	Sununu
Cochran	Hutchison	Thomas
Coleman	Inhofe	Thune
Cornyn	Isakson	Vitter
Craig	Kyl	Warner
Crapo	Lott	
DeMint	Martinez	

NAYS—53

Akaka	Durbin	Mikulski
Baucus	Feingold	Murray
Bayh	Feinstein	Nelson (FL)
Biden	Harkin	Nelson (NE)
Bingaman	Inouye	Obama
Boxer	Jeffords	Pryor
Burns	Johnson	Reed
Byrd	Kennedy	Reid
Cantwell	Kerry	Rockefeller
Carper	Kohl	Salazar
Chafee	Landrieu	Sarbanes
Clinton	Lautenberg	Schumer
Collins	Leahy	Smith
Conrad	Levin	Snowe
Dayton	Lieberman	Stabenow
Dodd	Lincoln	Talent
Domenici	Lugar	Wyden
Dorgan	Menendez	

NOT VOTING—1

Voinovich

The amendment (No. 3087), as modified, was rejected.

Mr. GREGG. I move to reconsider the vote, and I move to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

Mr. GREGG. I understand the Senator from Nebraska will offer an amendment.

AMENDMENT NO. 3116 WITHDRAWN

Mr. NELSON of Nebraska. Mr. President, many of our colleagues would be surprised to learn, as I was, that some agencies are skimming off the top a portion of some of the congressional appropriations and keeping money in that agency without authorization.

This amendment is simple. It says if it has been determined that a constituency warrants a direct appropriation,

one that has gone through the scrutinizing process and is supported by the House, Senate, and signed into law, that constituency should receive the full amount. Bureaucrats at the agencies, who are not the fourth branch of Government, should not be unilaterally determining that some sort of surcharge should be charged against these projects. It amounts to a tax on our constituents, and it usurps the authority of Congress by circumventing the legislative process and giving nameless, faceless bureaucrats the authority to alter legislation after it has been signed into law.

We have every right to expect that what we appropriate will be 100 percent provided when we determine that is the way it is, unless we determine otherwise. And in the situation where our constituents determine that the full amount of the earmark is not needed and turns back some of the funding to the government—this amendment says that instead of going to bureaucrats in the agencies to spend as they wish—it should instead go towards deficit reduction.

I am withdrawing my amendment at this time for the sake of time. But we will all see this amendment again because I will bring it back.

Mr. GREGG. We turn to the Senator from Minnesota.

AMENDMENT NO. 3097

Mr. DAYTON. Mr. President, I call up amendment numbered 3097 and I ask for its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Minnesota [Mr. DAYTON], for himself, Mr. DODD, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. MENENDEZ, and Mrs. CLINTON, proposes an amendment numbered 3097.

Mr. DAYTON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To provide mandatory funding to fully fund the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Part B grants to states; paid for by closing corporate tax loopholes)

On page 3, line 13, increase the amount by $230,000,000.

On page 3, line 15, increase the amount by $7,591,000,000.

On page 3, line 17, increase the amount by $3,450,000,000.

On page 3, line 19, increase the amount by $230,000,000.

On page 4, line 1, increase the amount by $230,000,000.

On page 4, line 2, increase the amount by $7,591,000,000.

On page 4, line 3, increase the amount by $3,450,000,000.

On page 4, line 4, increase the amount by $230,000,000.

On page 4, line 13, increase the amount by $11,501,000,000.

On page 5, line 4, increase the amount by $230,000,000.

On page 5, line 6, increase the amount by $7,591,000,000.

On page 5, line 8, increase the amount by $3,450,000,000.

On page 5, line 10, increase the amount by $230,000,000.

On page 18, line 24, increase the amount by $11,501,000,000.

On page 18, line 25, increase the amount by $230,000,000.

On page 19, line 4, increase the amount by $7,591,000,000.

On page 19, line 8, increase the amount by $3,450,000,000.

On page 19, line 12, increase the amount by $230,000,000.

Mr. DAYTON. I ask unanimous consent Senators MENENDEZ and CLINTON be added as cosponsors of this amendment.

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

Mr. DAYTON. Mr. President, this amendment is a unique concept. It says the Senate will fulfill a 29-year-old commitment to fund 40 percent of the costs of special education. I appreciate the amendment of the Senator from Rhode Island, Mr. CHAFEE, which was adopted by the Senate to bring us to 20 percent, which is half of that goal. That is an improvement.

But if we were to say the Defense Department was half funded, or national security or homeland security were half funded, we would find a reason to immediately increase that funding. So I respectfully submit that closing tax loopholes for corporations that are not paying taxes now and providing that money for special education for our students across this country is a worthy goal.

I urge adoption of the amendment. I will accept a voice vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. DEMINT). The Senator from New Hampshire.

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I yield back time in opposition and ask that we proceed to the vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the amendment.

The amendment (No. 3097) was rejected.

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that if the yeas and nays were ordered on that amendment they would be vitiated.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The yeas and nays were not ordered.

Mr. GREGG. Good.

Mr. President, we will now turn to the Boxer amendment, No. 3105; followed by the Bingaman amendment, No. 3121; followed by the Nelson amendment, No. 3001; followed by the Feinstein amendment, No. 3067; followed by the Stabenow amendment, No. 3118; followed by the Santorum amendment, No. 3052; followed by the Domenici amendment, No. 3128. And we reserve the right to offer an amendment after the Nelson amendment but before the Feinstein amendment relative to the same topic as the Nelson amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

AMENDMENT NO. 3105

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I call up amendment No. 3105 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from California [Mrs. BOXER] proposes an amendment numbered 3105.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To increase funding for the 21st Century Community Learning Center program; paid for by rolling back tax cuts for those with incomes over $1 million)

On page 3, line 13, increase the amount by $15,000,000.

On page 3, line 15, increase the amount by $435,000,000.

On page 3, line 17, increase the amount by $225,000,000.

On page 3, line 19, increase the amount by $75,000,000.

On page 4, line 1, increase the amount by $15,000,000.

On page 4, line 2, increase the amount by $435,000,000.

On page 4, line 3, increase the amount by $225,000,000.

On page 4, line 4, increase the amount by $75,000,000.

On page 4, line 13, increase the amount by $750,000,000.

On page 5, line 4, increase the amount by $15,000,000.

On page 5, line 6, increase the amount by $ 435,000,000.

On page 5, line 8, increase the amount by $225,000,000.

On page 5, line 10, increase the amount by $75,000,000.

On page 18, line 24, increase the amount by $750,000,000.

On page 18, line 25, increase the amount by $15,000,000.

On page 19, line 4, increase the amount by $435,000,000.

On page 19, line 8, increase the amount by $225,000,000.

On page 19, line 12, increase the amount by $75,000,000.

On page 53, line 1, increase the amount by $750,000,000.

On page 53, line 2, increase the amount by $15,000,000.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I call this amendment the ''Gucci afterschool amendment'' because we are asking millionaires to give up one Gucci jacket or $2,000 out of their $114,000 tax cut they are going to get in 2007 so we can offer 716,000 additional children an afterschool program.

This amendment begins to fulfill the promise this President and this Congress made to our children. It will mean a big difference in every Senator's children's lives. In other words, I am looking at Senators all across this country. Every one of their States will see an increase of eligible children: in Alaska, 3,000 more children; in Florida, 33,000 more; in Indiana, 9,000 more; in Maine, 3,000 more—and it goes on—in New Hampshire, 3,000 more; in Ohio, 20,000 more; in Pennsylvania, 27,000 more; in Texas, 68,000 more.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired.

Mrs. BOXER. So I think the people earning $1 million can give up a Gucci jacket to send more children to afterschool. I urge an ''aye'' vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, first, we have already approved an extra $7 billion for these accounts here this

evening. In addition, in the budget we brought forward, we added $1.5 billion for these accounts.

This amendment is very much in the tradition of tax and spend. As the Senator from California openly admits, she wants to raise taxes significantly to pay for this new spending. But we have already committed significant dollars into these accounts, and I do not think it is necessary. So I hope we vote this amendment down.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The question is on agreeing to the amendment.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

The result was announced—yeas 43, nays 57, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 69 Leg.]

YEAS—43

Akaka	Harkin	Murray
Bayh	Inouye	Nelson (FL)
Biden	Jeffords	Obama
Bingaman	Johnson	Pryor
Boxer	Kennedy	Reed
Byrd	Kerry	Reid
Cantwell	Kohl	Rockefeller
Clinton	Landrieu	Salazar
Conrad	Lautenberg	Sarbanes
Dayton	Leahy	Schumer
Dodd	Levin	Snowe
Dorgan	Lieberman	Stabenow
Durbin	Lincoln	Wyden
Feingold	Menendez	
Feinstein	Mikulski	

NAYS—57

Alexander	Crapo	Martinez
Allard	DeMint	McCain
Allen	DeWine	McConnell
Baucus	Dole	Murkowski
Bennett	Domenici	Nelson (NE)
Bond	Ensign	Roberts
Brownback	Enzi	Santorum
Bunning	Frist	Sessions
Burns	Graham	Shelby
Burr	Grassley	Smith
Carper	Gregg	Specter
Chafee	Hagel	Stevens
Chambliss	Hatch	Sununu
Coburn	Hutchison	Talent
Cochran	Inhofe	Thomas
Coleman	Isakson	Thune
Collins	Kyl	Vitter
Cornyn	Lott	Voinovich
Craig	Lugar	Warner

The amendment (No. 3105) was rejected.

Mr. GREGG. I move to reconsider the vote and to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 3121

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Mexico.

Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, this amendment is one Senator SMITH and I are offering to delete section 406 from the budget resolution. Section 406 does for direct spending legislation exactly what the Senate determined not to do with discretionary spending about an hour and a half ago on the Inhofe amendment. It says that for any bill that contains direct spending, a 60-vote point of order can be raised against it. That includes the Defense bill, the farm bill, a tremendous number of bills that we try to pass through the Senate every year. I urge my colleagues to support this amendment and delete that section from the budget resolution.

I yield the rest of my time to Senator SMITH.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. SMITH. Mr. President, with reluctance I rise in opposition to this particular provision, but my reluctance vanishes when I consider the programs this would automatically affect—not just Social Security, Medicaid, and Medicare but the farm program, county payments, Indian water rights, all the things that are dealt with under entitlements. I think we need to deal with those eventually as Republicans and Democrats and as Americans. We should not do it on the basis of this particular formula.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Has the Senator from New Mexico offered the amendment?

Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, I do offer the amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from New Mexico [Mr. BINGAMAN], for himself and Mr. SMITH, proposes an amendment numbered 3121.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To strike the direct spending limitation)

Strike section 406.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, the characterization of this amendment has been totally inaccurate. In fact, I haven't heard as inaccurate a characterization of an amendment today, and we have heard a lot of talk today. This amendment doesn't do what was just represented. What this amendment does is, it says that for any 2-year period the trustees of the Medicare trust fund tell us that over 45 percent of the cost of Medicare or another entitlement—but it would probably be Medicare—is coming out of the general fund. Remember, Medicare is supposed to be an insurance fund; this is part A. Then at that point, there is an opportunity to raise a point of order against new entitlement spending. It specifically excludes Social Security.

The fact is, this is a point of order which will probably not come into play for many years, but it is an attempt to address what is a looming problem, which is that Medicare is taking more and more assets out of the general fund rather than being paid through the insurance process. It is good budget discipline.

Mr. CONRAD. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The question is on agreeing to amendment No. 3121. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant journal clerk called the roll.

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

[Rollcall Vote No. 70 Leg.]

YEAS—50

Akaka	Durbin	Mikulski
Baucus	Feingold	Murray
Bayh	Feinstein	Nelson (FL)
Biden	Harkin	Obama
Bingaman	Inouye	Pryor
Boxer	Jeffords	Reed
Byrd	Johnson	Reid
Cantwell	Kennedy	Rockefeller
Carper	Kerry	Salazar
Chafee	Kohl	Sarbanes
Clinton	Landrieu	Schumer
Collins	Lautenberg	Smith
Conrad	Leahy	Snowe
Dayton	Levin	Specter
DeWine	Lieberman	Stabenow
Dodd	Lincoln	Wyden
Dorgan	Menendez	

NAYS—50

Alexander	Dole	McCain
Allard	Domenici	McConnell
Allen	Ensign	Murkowski
Bennett	Enzi	Nelson (NE)
Bond	Frist	Roberts
Brownback	Graham	Santorum
Bunning	Grassley	Sessions
Burns	Gregg	Shelby
Burr	Hagel	Stevens
Chambliss	Hatch	Sununu
Coburn	Hutchison	Talent
Cochran	Inhofe	Thomas
Coleman	Isakson	Thune
Cornyn	Kyl	Vitter
Craig	Lott	Voinovich
Crapo	Lugar	Warner
DeMint	Martinez	

The amendment (No. 3121) was rejected.

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

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

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida is recognized.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. It is my understanding that by unanimous consent my amendment is next in order.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is correct.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Do I need to call up amendment No. 3001?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator does.

AMENDMENT NO. 3001

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, I call up amendment No. 3001.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Florida [Mr. NELSON] proposes an amendment numbered 3001.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that further reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To provide funds ensuring Survivor Benefit Plan annuities are not reduced by the amount of dependency and indemnity compensation that military families receive, and to provide funds for ''paid-up'' SBP, offset by closing abusive corporate tax loopholes)

On page 3, line 13, increase the amount by $975,000,000.

On page 3, line 15, increase the amount by $1,037,000,000.
On page 3, line 17, increase the amount by $792,000,000.
On page 3, line 19, increase the amount by $826,000,000.
On page 3, line 21, increase the amount by $861,000,000.
On page 4, line 1, increase the amount by $975,000,000.
On page 4, line 2, increase the amount by $1,037,000,000.
On page 4, line 3, increase the amount by $792,000,000.
On page 4, line 4, increase the amount by $826,000,000.
On page 4, line 6, increase the amount by $861,000,000.
On page 4, line 13, increase the amount by $975,000,000.
On page 4, line 15, increase the amount by $1,037,000,000.
On page 4, line 17, increase the amount by $792,000,000.
On page 4, line 19, increase the amount by $826,000,000.
On page 4, line 21, increase the amount by $861,000,000.
On page 5, line 4, increase the amount by $975,000,000.
On page 5, line 6, increase the amount by $1,037,000,000.
On page 5, line 8, increase the amount by $792,000,000.
On page 5, line 10, increase the amount by $826,000,000.
On page 5, line 12, increase the amount by $861,000,000.
On page 9, line 20, increase the amount by $975,000,000.
On page 9, line 21, increase the amount by $975,000,000.
On page 9, line 24, increase the amount by $1,037,000,000.
On page 9, line 25, increase the amount by $1,037,000,000.
On page 10, line 3, increase the amount by $792,000,000.
On page 10, line 4, increase the amount by $792,000,000.
On page 10, line 7, increase the amount by $826,000,000.
On page 10, line 8, increase the amount by $826,000,000.
On page 10, line 11, increase the amount by $861,000,000.
On page 10, line 12, increase the amount by $861,000,000.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, am I allocated 1 minute?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is correct.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, this is the widows or orphans amendment. You have already voted on this, 92 to 6, last fall. It is eliminating the offset between two different programs taking care of widows and orphans. It is a cost of war, just as providing equipment and ammunition. It is a cost of war to take care of our widows or orphans.

On the one hand, the service member pays for taking care of the survivors in the survivors benefit plan. On the other hand, the Veterans Department takes care of the dependents indemnity compensation. But those two are offset in current law. This eliminates the offset. I urge you to support the widows and the orphans.

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, would the Senator agree to a voice vote?

Mr. NELSON of Florida. The Senator will agree to a voice vote as long as it passes favorably. I expect the Senator is being advised that since the Senate is on record with a 92-to-6 vote, there will be a voice vote.

Mr. GREGG. Why don't we do a voice vote.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. That is acceptable to me.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the amendment of the Senator from Florida.

The amendment (No. 3001) was agreed to.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, I move to reconsider the vote.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan is recognized.

AMENDMENT NO. 3164

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I send an amendment to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Michigan [Ms. STABENOW] proposes an amendment numbered 3164.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that further reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To establish a reserve fund to allow for deficit-neutral legislation that would provide seniors with a prescription drug benefit option that is affordable, user-friendly, and administered directly by the Secretary of Health and Human Services)

At the end of title III, insert the following:

SEC. _____. RESERVE FUND TO ALLOW FOR DEFICIT-NEUTRAL LEGISLATION THAT WOULD PROVIDE SENIORS WITH A PRESCRIPTION DRUG BENEFIT OPTION THAT IS AFFORDABLE, USER-FRIENDLY, AND ADMINISTERED DIRECTLY BY THE SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations, aggregates, and other appropriate levels and limits in this resolution for a bill or joint resolution, or an amendment thereto or conference report thereon, that would—

(1) provide all Medicare beneficiaries with a Medicare-administered prescription drug plan option, while preserving the private prescription drug plan options;

(2) ensure that Medicare beneficiaries pay the lowest possible prescription drug prices by directing the Secretary of Health and Human Services to negotiate with pharmaceutical manufacturers with respect to the purchase price of covered part D drugs on behalf of beneficiaries enrolled in the Medicare-administered prescription drug plan;

(3) improve the part D standard prescription drug benefit; and

(4) guarantee that Medicare beneficiaries receive the FDA-approved drugs they need by preventing prescription drug plans and MA-PD plans from ending coverage of drugs, or imposing restrictions or limitations on coverage of drugs, that were covered when the beneficiary enrolled in the plan until the beneficiary has the opportunity to switch plans, with an exception to such guarantee for brand name drugs for which there is a generic drug approved under section 505(j) of the Food and Drug Cosmetic Act that is placed on the market during the period in which the guarantee applies;

by the amount provided in such measure for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit for the period of fiscal years 2007 through 2011.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, this amendment would create a deficit-neutral reserve fund to provide seniors with the one prescription drug choice that they want, which they don't currently have, and that is an affordable prescription drug benefit administered directly through Medicare.

As you know, the current system has a lot of headaches right now. There are a lot of private plans—over 70 in Michigan—and there has been mass confusion. A lot of folks are actually paying more for drugs under this Part D program than they were before.

My amendment would give our seniors a new option, a Medicare-guaranteed option. Seniors today can get their Part A and Part B benefits either through a private plan or a traditional Medicare benefit plan. But they don't have that choice for their medicine. This would give them that choice. It would also direct the Secretary of HHS to negotiate drug prices on behalf of seniors choosing to get their medicines through Medicare.

This amendment simply gives seniors and disabled persons the real choice they want, which is a Medicare prescription drug benefit, where you go to Medicare and you can sign up and you know the copay and the premium. You go to the pharmacy and get your medicine. I ask for your support.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, it is beyond my understanding when the argument is made that this program is too confusing because there are too many plans, and then you add yet another plan. That is what this amendment does. They say there is too much confusion and there are too many plans, and they want to add another plan.

This amendment is going to destroy the competitive incentives and replace them with a Government-controlled regime. It puts the Government into the full-time business of setting drug prices and determining what drugs are covered. Strong competition has led to lower costs. The average premium is $25. That is 20 percent less than we expected.

This amendment would result in higher premiums. This amendment would also have a drug safety issue with it. This amendment would force plans to keep unsafe drugs in the formulary because what is on at the first of the year has to stay on through the whole year. So if Vioxx was on in January 2004 and was found unsafe in September 2004, it would still have to be on the formulary for another 3 months.

This is a Government-run plan. It increases costs and has price controls and unsafe drugs. This is just not a good amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CHAFEE). The Senator's time has expired. The question is on agreeing to amendment No. 3164.

Ms. STABENOW. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. The following Senator was necessarily absent: the Senator from Utah (Mr. BENNETT).

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

The result was announced—yeas 39, nays 60, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 71 Leg.]

YEAS—39

Akaka	Feingold	Mikulski
Bayh	Feinstein	Murray
Biden	Harkin	Nelson (FL)
Bingaman	Inouye	Obama
Boxer	Johnson	Pryor
Byrd	Kennedy	Reed
Cantwell	Kerry	Reid
Clinton	Kohl	Rockefeller
Conrad	Lautenberg	Salazar
Dayton	Leahy	Sarbanes
Dodd	Levin	Schumer
Dorgan	Lieberman	Stabenow
Durbin	Lincoln	Wyden

NAYS—60

Alexander	DeWine	McCain
Allard	Dole	McConnell
Allen	Domenici	Menendez
Baucus	Ensign	Murkowski
Bond	Enzi	Nelson (NE)
Brownback	Frist	Roberts
Bunning	Graham	Santorum
Burns	Grassley	Sessions
Burr	Gregg	Shelby
Carper	Hagel	Smith
Chafee	Hatch	Snowe
Chambliss	Hutchison	Specter
Coburn	Inhofe	Stevens
Cochran	Isakson	Sununu
Coleman	Jeffords	Talent
Collins	Kyl	Thomas
Cornyn	Landrieu	Thune
Craig	Lott	Vitter
Crapo	Lugar	Voinovich
DeMint	Martinez	Warner

NOT VOTING—1

Bennett

The amendment (No. 3164) was rejected.

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

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I move to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, at this point we are going to go to Senator AKAKA.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, if we could ask colleagues' indulgence for a few more minutes here, we are very close. We have made enormous progress in the last 20 minutes, 30 minutes. We are very close. If we could have colleagues' indulgence for a few more minutes, we could rapidly come to conclusion.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Hawaii is recognized.

AMENDMENT NO. 3044

Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, I call up amendment No. 3044 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Hawaii [Mr. AKAKA], for himself and Mr. INOUYE, proposes an amendment numbered 3044.

Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

The amendment is as follows:

On page 3, line 13, increase the amount by $70,000,000.

On page 3, line 15, increase the amount by $80,000,000.

On page 3, line 17, increase the amount by $70,000,000.

On page 3, line 19, increase the amount by $50,000,000.

On page 3, line 21, increase the amount by $40,000,000.

On page 4, line 1, increase the amount by $70,000,000.

On page 4, line 2, increase the amount by $80,000,000.

On page 4, line 3, increase the amount by $70,000,000.

On page 4, line 4, increase the amount by $50,000,000.

On page 4, line 6, increase the amount by. $40,000,000.

On page 4, line 13, increase the amount by $70,000,000.

On page 4, line 15, increase the amount by $80,000,000.

On page 4, line 17, increase the amount by $70,000,000.

On page 4, line 19, increase the amount by $50,000,000.

On page 4, line 21, increase the amount by $40,000,000.

On page 5, line 4, increase the amount by $70,000,000.

On page 5, line 6, increase the amount by $80,000,000.

On page 5, line 8, increase the amount by $70,000,000.

On page 5, line 10, increase the amount by $50,000,000.

On page 5, line 12, increase the amount by $40,000,000.

On page 23, line 24, increase the amount by $70,000,000.

On page 23, line 25, increase the amount by $70,000,000.

On page 24, line 3, increase the amount by $80,000,000.

On page 24, line 4, increase the amount by $80,000,000.

On page 24, line 7, increase the amount by $70,000,000.

On page 24, line 8, increase the amount by $70,000,000.

On page 24, line 11, increase the amount by $50,000,000.

On page 24, line 12, increase the amount by $50,000,000.

On page 24, line 15, increase the amount by $40,000,000.

On page 24, line 16, increase the amount by $40,000,000.

Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, my amendment would provide nonservice-connected pensions to Filipino veterans of World War II. In 1941, President Roosevelt issued an Executive order which called into the order of the Armed Forces of the United States all organized military forces of the Commonwealth of the Philippines. These veterans fought alongside American troops and were commanded by General MacArthur. There was no question when they were fighting that they would be treated the same as American troops. Congress betrayed these veterans by enacting the Rescission Act which deemed the service of soldiers of the Commonwealth Army of the Philippines not to be service in the United States military. This was after they already served with the U.S. military. These veterans have been waiting for 60 years to have their benefits reinstated. It is time that the United States fulfill its responsibility to these veterans.

I yield back my time.

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I believe we can go to a voice vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to amendment No. 3044.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to amendment No. 3044.

The amendment (No. 3044) was rejected.

AMENDMENT NO. 3052

Mr. SANTORUM. Mr. President, I call up amendment No. 3052 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Pennsylvania [Mr. SANTORUM], for himself, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. DAYTON, Ms. STABENOW, Mrs. CLINTON, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. SARBANES and Mr. KERRY, proposes an amendment numbered 3052.

Mr. SANTORUM. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To continue providing 33 percent of the Global Fund's revenue and to contribute an additional $566,000,000 to the Global Fund for fiscal year 2007 to support grant renewals and new proposals to support international HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria programs)

On page 10, line 20, increase the amount by $566,000,000.

On page 10, line 21, increase the amount by $566,000,000.

On page 27, line 23, decrease the amount by $566,000,000.

On page 27, line 24, decrease the amount by $566,000,000.

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ___. UNITED STATES RESPONSE TO GLOBAL HIV/AIDS, TUBERCULOSIS, AND MALARIA.

Congress makes the following findings:

(1) The HIV/AIDS pandemic has reached staggering proportions. Over 40,000,000 people are living with HIV/AIDS worldwide, and 5,000,000 more people become infected each year. HIV/AIDS is estimated to kill 3,000,000 men, women, and children each year.

(2) The United States was the first, and remains the largest, contributor to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (referred to in this section as the ''Global Fund'').

(3) The Presidential Administration of George W. Bush (referred to in this section as the ''Administration'') has supported legislative language that links United States contributions to the Global Fund to the contributions of other donors, permitting the United States to provide 33 percent of all donations, which would match contributions on a 1-to-2 basis.

(4) As of the date of the approval of this Resolution, Congress has provided ⅓ of all donations to the Global Fund since its inception.

(5) The Global Fund currently estimates that during fiscal year 2007, it will renew $1,600,000,000 worth of effective programs that are already operating on the ground, and the Administration and Global Fund Board have said that renewals of existing grants should receive priority funding.

(6) The Global Fund estimates that during fiscal year 2007, it could award $1,000,000,000 in funding to proposals submitted for Round 6.

(7) For fiscal year 2007, the President has requested $300,000,000 for the United States contribution to the Global Fund.

(8) The Global Fund is an important component of the United States efforts to combat AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria, and supports approximately 350 projects in 130 countries.

(9) Through a mid-year review process, Congress and the Administration will assess contributions to date and anticipated contributions to the Global Fund, and ensure that United States contributions, at year end, are at the appropriate 1-to-2 ratio.

(10) Congress and the Administration will monitor contributions to the Global Fund to ensure that United States contributions do not exceed ⅓ of the Global Fund's revenues.

(11) The United States will need to contribute $566,000,000 more than the President's fiscal year 2007 request for the Global Fund to—

(A) fund ⅓ of renewals during fiscal year 2007;

(B) support at least 1 new round of proposals in fiscal year 2007; and

(C) maintain the 1-to-2 funding ratio.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, Senator SANTORUM and I come to the floor today to offer our amendment to increase funding for global AIDS by $566 million, raising the U.S. contribution to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB, and Malaria for fiscal year 2007 to $866 million. This amendment would raise the U.S. contribution to the fight against global AIDS to $4.8 billion in total for bilateral and multilateral programs combined.

This money is desperately needed.

This year we mark the 25 anniversary of the discovery of AIDS.

A generation has been born and come of age since then.

Twenty-five years ago, the Centers for Disease Control published what turned out to be one of the first descriptions of acquired immune deficiency syndrome in a short article in a weekly report. That article described five cases of pneumonia. It stated that these five cases ''suggest the possibility of a cellular-immune dysfunction.''

AIDS did not yet have a name, but it had an identity.

In the quarter century since those first cases were diagnosed, roughly 70 million people have been infected with HIV.

More than 22 million have died.

More than 12 million children in Africa alone have been orphaned.

Last year, 3 million people died, and 5 million people were newly infected.

Every 60 seconds, there are five more deaths from AIDS and nine more infections.

Over the next decade, an estimated 50 million more people will contract HIV.

Those numbers are devastating.

But the trajectory of destruction that AIDS has followed over the last quarter century can be changed. It is changing. In the last decade, new research and new international efforts have begun to alter that deadly equation.

Antiretrovirals mean that an HIV/AIDS diagnosis is no longer a death sentence, if one can get access to the drugs. Successful programs in Africa and elsewhere have convinced doubters that you can administer ARVs under extremely difficult circumstances. Effective prevention strategies in countries such as Uganda offer hope that the epidemic's relentless spread can be slowed.

But millions who are infected receive no treatment, and tens of millions more remain at risk.

The United States is a world leader in the battle against global AIDS. And the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB, and Malaria is one of the most effective and widest reaching weapons in our arsenal.

The amendment that Senator SANTORUM and I are offering today seeks to ensure that we maintain that leadership and maintain the extraordinary leveraging potential of our contribution.

For every dollar that the United States has provided to the Global Fund, the rest of the world has contributed two more.

The U.S. Leadership Against HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria Act of 2003 linked U.S. contributions to the fund to those of other contributors.

We believe that the United States must live up to the commitment we have made to reach our one-third match. We also believe that it is very much in our interests to do so.

As Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice has stated, ''HIV/AIDS is not only a human tragedy of enormous magnitude; it is also a threat to the stability of entire countries and to entire regions of the world.''

I strongly support fully funding the President's request for bilateral HIV/AIDS programs. These programs are vitally important.

The Global Fund is a complement to our other HIV/AIDS programs, not a competitor with them. The Global Fund offers unique leveraging opportunities. It also expands our reach, well beyond PEPFAR focus countries, thus giving our assistance breadth and depth. The Global Fund reaches 130 countries around the world. It provides one-quarter of all donor HIV/AIDS spending, two-thirds of all donor TB spending, and half of all donor spending on malaria.

As of December 2005, the Global Fund was providing voluntary counseling and testing to 3.9 million people. The Global Fund is currently supporting community outreach efforts to 7 million people. It is providing antiretrovirals—ARVs—for 384,000 people.

The fund has also provided 7.7 million bed nets to prevent malaria and treated 1 million cases of TB through directly observed therapy. Malaria and TB kill 3 million people a year. There are proven, cost-effective solutions to prevent and treat these diseases, and the Global Fund helps provide them.

The President's request included $300 million for the Global Fund. But this level of funding falls far short.

It falls short of our previous contributions, it falls short of our commitment, and it falls far short of the actual need.

First, $300 million is less than what the United States has contributed to the Global Fund last year, and the year before that. Last year, the United States provided $550 million. To cut that level almost in half would have a devastating effect.

As the AIDS crisis grows ever greater, our funding should be increasing, not decreasing.

Second, funding at that level will either fall well short of the one-to-two match from the international community or, even worse, will encourage other donors to lowball their own contributions.

Just as our generosity has been matched by the rest of the world, the reverse may also be true.

Third, the President's request falls far short of what is needed.

This year, the fund estimates that it will need $1.6 billion just to renew current grants. That would require a $533 million contribution from the United States. This figure is based on the assumption that about one in six grants will not be renewed, as part of the fund's screening mechanism. The programs that will be renewed are already on the ground, providing care and treatment. Three hundred million dollars will not come close to funding renewals of proven, lifesaving programs.

That is where we must begin, with $533 million for renewals.

However, the need for expanded prevention, care, and treatment of these terrible diseases does not stay stable: it grows.

Our potential to help also increases, through proven interventions and demonstrated best practices and through the elimination of programs that do not meet standards of effectiveness or honesty.

The Global Fund must not remain static in the face of an expanding epidemic: it must grow to meet it.

Therefore, Senator SANTORUM and I believe that the United States must

also make a one third contribution to a new round of grants, at $333 million.

That would mean a total contribution of $866 million for the Global Fund from the United States.

On average, every $100 million contribution to the Global Fund will generate the following results: The Fund can provide 630,000 bed nets to fight malaria; it can deliver 150,000 treatments for malaria; it can provide 80,000 highly-effective DOTS treatments for TB; it can supply 370,000 people with HIV tests; and it can provide 11,000 people with lifesaving AIDS treatment.

Lives hang in the balance. We must not shortchange this vital program, which dramatically extends the reach of U.S. foreign assistance.

Our amendment offsets the $566 million increase in global AIDS funds with the 920 function, administrative allowances. This offset asks appropriators to find $566 million in savings across all budget functions.

We do not believe that this money should come at the expense of other international humanitarian programs.

Out of a discretionary budget of $873 billion, I don't think $566 million is too much to ask in the global fight against these diseases.

Senator SANTORUM and I will be working together through the appropriations process to make sure we find these savings.

We believe it is important to set the U.S. mark now for the Global Fund at $866 million.

This sends a clear signal to other donors that they need to step up their contributions to match this U.S. level.

I know there are many budgetary pressures, but this is literally a matter of life and death.

Twenty-five years ago, doctors first began to diagnose AIDS cases, but they could do almost nothing to save people. Then they began using AZT, which could slow the disease and, 10 years ago, ARVs, which could give people their lives back.

Sadly, for the first 10, even 20 years of this pandemic, the response of the international community to the tragedy unfolding before them was dreadfully slow.

Jan Eliasson, President of the U.N. General Assembly, has rightly declared that our slow response marks a scar ''on the conscience of our generation.''

Eliasson continues, ''We cannot turn back the clock. We must ensure that, when historians look at the way the world responded to HIV and AIDS, they see that 2006 was the year when the international community finally stepped up to the mark the year when . . . the world began to 'keep the promise.' ''

In 25 years we have made enormous strides, and yet the disease has moved faster.

I urge you to join me in supporting this amendment to ensure that the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB, and Malaria can both renew ongoing, proven programs and expand its lifesaving efforts.

Mr. SANTORUM. Mr. President, this amendment adds $566 million for the Global AIDS Fund. This is a fund that historically the United States has participated at one-third funding level. It is an encouragement and incentive for the rest of the world to contribute to end the scourge of HIV/AIDS, particularly on the continent of Africa. To be able to meet that requirement for this funding year required an additional $566 million above the President's request of $300 million. That will fund 85 percent of the renewals that are coming due this year, in addition to round six of new funding for this initiative by the Global Fund.

This is a commitment that the United States has made. We have been a leader on this. We need to continue to lead in an area that does cry out for humanitarian support and compassion by the people of the United States.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields time in opposition?

Mr. SANTORUM. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that all time be yielded back.

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

The question is on agreeing to amendment No. 3052.

The amendment (No. 3052) was agreed to.

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

Mrs. CLINTON. I move to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

AMENDMENTS NOS. 3111, 3110, 3057, 3067, 3147, 3089, EN BLOC

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, we have a series of amendments we wish to agree to at this time. I ask unanimous consent that the following amendments be considered and agreed to en bloc, and that the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table: Dodd amendment No. 3111, Hutchison amendment No. 3110, Kohl amendment No. 3057, Feinstein amendment No. 3067, Clinton amendment No. 3147, Salazar amendment No. 3089.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. CONRAD. No objection on this side.

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

The amendments were agreed to, as follows:

AMENDMENT NO. 3111

(Purpose: To establish a reserve fund for the FIRE and SAFER programs)

At the end of title III, insert the following:

SEC. ___. RESERVE FUND FOR THE FIRE AND SAFER PROGRAMS.

If a bill or joint resolution is offered, or an amendment is offered thereto, or a conference report is submitted thereon, that provides firefighters and fire departments with critical resources under the Assistance to Firefighters Grant and the Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response Firefighters Grant, the Chairman of the Committee on Budget shall adjust the revenue aggregates and other appropriate aggregates, levels, and limits in their resolution to reflect such legislation to the extent that such legislation would not increase the deficit for fiscal year 2007 and for the period of fiscal years 2007 through 2011.

AMENDMENT NO. 3110

(Purpose: To provide a reserve fund to ensure that physicians will receive an appropriate reimbursement rate under Medicare instead of a scheduled cut which would threaten the adequate provision of care for seniors and disabled citizens)

''SEC. . Reserve Fund for Physician Payment Increase under Medicare. If—

(1) the Committee on Finance Reports a bill, or if an amendment is offered thereto, or if a conference report is submitted thereon, that has the effect of increasing the reimbursement rate for physician services under Section 1848(d) of the Social Security Act; and

(2) that committee is within its allocation as provided under section 102(a) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974; the chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may make the appropriate adjustments in allocations and aggregates to the extent that such legislation would not increase the deficit for fiscal year 2007 and for the period of fiscal years 2007 through 2011.

AMENDMENT NO. 3057

(Purpose: To restore $380 million to juvenile justice programs funded by the Department of Justice, offset by a reduction to Function 920 (Allowances))

On page 24, line 24, increase the amount by $380,000,000.

On page 24, line 25, increase the amount by $46,000,000.

On page 25, line 4, increase the amount by $106,000,000.

On page 25, line 8, increase the amount by $95,000,000.

On page 25, line 12, increase the amount by $76,000,000.

On page 25, line 16, increase the amount by $57,000,000.

On page 27, line 23, decrease the amount by $380,000,000.

On page 27, line 24, decrease the amount by $46,000,000.

On page 28, line 2, decrease the amount by $106,000,000.

On page 28, line 5, decrease the amount by $95,000,000.

On page 28, line 8, decrease the amount by $76,000,000.

On page 28, line 11, decrease the amount by $57,000,000.

AMENDMENT NO. 3067

(Purpose: To provide $390,000,000 in fiscal year 2007 for cancer funding in the National Institutes of Health, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the Health Resources and Services Administration paid for by closing corporate tax loopholes)

On page 3, line 13, increase the amount by $111,000,000.

On page 3, line 15, increase the amount by $199,000,000.

On page 3, line 17, increase the amount by $55,000,000.

On page 3, line 19, increase the amount by $12,000,000.

On page 3, line 21, increase the amount by $3,000,000.

On page 4, line 1, increase the amount by $111,000,000.

On page 4, line 2, increase the amount by $199,000,000.

On page 4, line 3, increase the amount by $55,000,000.

On page 4, line 4, increase the amount by $12,000,000.

On page 4, line 6, increase the amount by $3,000,000.

On page 4, line 13, increase the amount by $390,000,000.

On page 5, line 4, increase the amount by $111,000,000.

On age 5, line 6, increase the amount by $199,000,000.

On page 5, line 8, increase the amount by $55,000,000.

On page 5, line 10, increase the amount by $12,000,000.

On age 5, line 12, increase the amount by $3,000,000.

On page 19, line 24, increase the amount by $390,000,000.

On page 19, line 25, increase the amount by $111,000,000.

On page 20, line 4, increase the amount by $199,000,000.

On page 20, line 8, increase the amount by $55,000,000.

On page 20, line 12, increase the amount by $12,000,000.

On page 20, line 16, increase the amount by $3,000,000.

On page 53, line 1, increase the amount by $390,000,000.

On page 53, line 2, increase the amount by $111,000,000.

AMENDMENT NO. 3147

(Purpose: To restore funding for the Alzheimer's Association 24/7 Contact Center (under Training, Research and Discretationary Programs), Alzheimer's Disease Demonstration Grants, Preventive Health Services, Home-Delivered Nutrition Services, Congregate Nutrition Services, the Nutrition Services Incentive Program, the National Family Caregiver Support Program, and the Long Term Care Ombudsmen Program in the Administration on Aging, fully offset through closing corporate tax loopholes)

On page 3, line 13, increase the amount by $26,000,000.

On page 3, line 15, increase the amount by 13,000,000.

On page 3, line 17, increase the amount by $1,000,000.

On page 4, line 1, increase the amount by $26,000,000.

On page 4, line 2, increase the amount by $13,000,000.

On page 4, line 3, increase the amount by $1,000,000.

On page 4, line 13, increase the amount by $41,000,000.

On page 5, line 4, increase the amount by $26,000,000.

On page 5, line 6, increase the amount by $13,000,000.

On page 5, line 8, increase the amount by $1,000,000.

On page 18, line 24, increase the amount by $41,000,000.

On page 18, line 25, increase the amount by $26,000,000.

On page 19, line 4, increase the amount by $13,000,000.

On page 19, line 8, increase the amount by $1,000,000.

On page 53, line 1, increase the amount by $41,000,000.

On page 53, line 2, increase the amount by $26,000,000.

AMENDMENT NO. 3089

(Purpose: Restore $100 million to the Land and Water Conservation Fund Stateside Grant Program. Paid for by closing corporate tax loopholes)

On page 3, line 13, increase the amount by $25,000,000.

On page 3, line 15, increase the amount by $30,000,000.

On page 3, line 17, increase the amount by $30,000,000.

On page 3, line 19, increase the amount by $10,000,000.

On page 3, line 21, increase the amount by $5,000,000.

On page 4, line 1, increase the amount by $25,000,000.

On page 4, line 2, increase the amount by $30,000,000.

On page 4, line 3, increase the amount by $30,000,000.

On page 4, line 4, increase the amount by $10,000,000.

On page 4, line 6, increase the amount by $5,000,000.

On page 4, line 13, increase the amount by $100,000,000.

On page 5, line 4, increase the amount by $25,000,000.

On page 5, line 6, increase the amount by $30,000,000.

On page 5, line 8, increase the amount by $30,000,000.

On page 5, line 10, increase the amount by $10,000,000.

On page 5, line 12, increase the amount by $5,000,000.

On page 13, line 21, increase the amount by $100,000,000.

On page 13, line 22, increase the amount by $25,000,000.

On page 14, line 1, increase the amount by $30,000,000.

On page 14, line 5, increase the amount by $30,000,000.

On page 14, line 9, increase the amount by $10,000,000.

On page 14, line 13, increase the amount by $5,000,000.

On page 53, line 1, increase the amount by $100,000,000.

On page 53, line 2, increase the amount by $25,000,000.

AMENDMENT NO. 3111

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I rise to discuss S.A. 3111 to the fiscal year 2007 budget resolution which I sponsored with my colleague, Senator DEWINE. This amendment, which helps our Nation's firefighters perform their critical duties more safely, was adopted by unanimous consent. I thank the Chairman of the Budget Committee, Senator GREGG, and the committee's ranking member, Senator CONRAD, both for their work on the budget resolution and for their consideration of this important issue.

I would imagine that this amendment, which creates a special reserve fund to pay for the assistance to firefighters grants, is not the way that everyone would choose first to provide critical resources to the FIRE Act and SAFER Act grants. However, this amendment does demonstrate the commitment of the Senate to increase conditionally funding for our firefighters in a manner consistent with the need to be fiscally responsible.

Clearly, the need for these grants is irrefutable. Across our country, fire departments are in desperate need of obtaining updated equipment and more expensive firefighter training—two activities that are crucial to ensuring that firefighters can carry out their expanded responsibilities safely and effectively in this post-9/11 world.

In fiscal year 2002, there were over 19,000 FIRE grant applications seeking almost $2 billion in support for eligible activities. In fiscal year 2005, there were over 27,000 FIRE grant applications seeking over $4 billion for such activities. The manmade and natural hazards that firefighters are expected to face today have strapped the ability of municipalities and States to provide for their needs. Therefore, it is imperative that the Federal Government expand its commitment to support our firefighters.

I think that very few people who are not firefighters stop and think about how much we ask of our firefighters in today's world. They still perform their traditional duties of extinguishing fires, delivering emergency medical services, and ensuring that fire codes are inspected. However, many firefighters have also taken on new homeland security responsibilities that include responding to and handling hazardous biological and radiological agents.

According to a national needs assessment study of the U.S. Fire Service published in December 2002, most fire departments lack the necessary resources and training to properly handle terrorist attacks and large-scale emergencies.

More specifically, the study found that, first, using local personnel, only 11 percent of fire departments can handle a rescue with emergency medical services at a structural collapse of a building with 50 occupants. Nearly half of all fire departments consider such an incident beyond their scope. Second, using local personnel, only 13 percent of fire departments say that they can handle a hazardous material incident involving chemical and/or biological agents with 10 injuries. Only 21 percent have a written agreement to direct the use of nonlocal resources to handle the situation. Third, an estimated 40 percent of fire department personnel involved in hazardous material response lack formal training in those duties. And finally, the study found an estimated 60 to 75 percent of fire departments do not have enough fire stations to achieve widely used response-time guidelines. Many fire departments are often stretched so thin that they cannot respond to fires with sufficient personnel to initiate an interior attack on a structural fire safely.

Moreover, the need for additional firefighters—both paid and volunteer—on our Nation's streets is great. According to National Fire Protection Association standards, a minimum of four firefighters is required to initiate an interior attack on a house fire. The study goes on to conclude that 73 percent of fire departments serving populations between 10,000 and 25,000 lack such personnel, 82 percent of departments serving populations between 25,000 and 50,000, 76 percent of departments serving populations between 50,000 and 100,000, 56 percent of departments serving populations between 100,000 and 250,000, 41 percent of departments serving populations between 250,000 and 500,000 people, 40 percent of departments serving populations between 500,000 and 1 million people, and

zero percent of departments serving populations at least 1 million people.

Over the past 5 years, FIRE and SAFER grants have been highly successful in enabling fire departments to acquire the resources they demand and hire the people they need. Over $3 billion in assistance as been provided to well over 20,000 fire departments in all 50 States thus far. Yet the job of ensuring that all communities receive the assistance they need and deserve is far from done.

America's firefighters are always the first ones in and the last ones out. They risk their own lives to save the lives of others. They stare danger in the face every single day because they know they have a duty to fulfill. We must recognize their contribution to our domestic safety to see to it that they have the necessary equipment and personnel they demand in order to perform their critical duties safely.

I look forward to working with Senator DEWINE and my colleagues during the appropriations season to help ensure that the maximum amount of aid is delivered to all of our firefighters.

Mr. KOHL. Mr. President, I have offered an amendment to the budget resolution with Senator BIDEN to significantly restore funding for juvenile justice programs. Our amendment will increase funding for these programs funded by the Department of Justice by adding $380 million to the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention—OJJDP—budget. The amendment accomplishes this by raising the functional total for the justice allocation by $380 million offset in function 920—which gives the Appropriations Committee the flexibility to design the exact offsets.

Let me briefly illustrate why we must put money back into these programs. Following the administration's lead, the Senate Budget Committee allocated $176 million to the OJJDP budget, which is about $167 million less than what we appropriated last year and $380 million less than the fiscal year 2002 appropriation. I am particularly disturbed that the Senate budget resolution assumes complete elimination of the Juvenile Accountability Block Grant Program—JABG—which received a little less than $50 million last year. JABG provides funding for intervention programs that address the urgent needs of juveniles who have had run-ins with the law. Positive intervention and treatment at this early stage of delinquency can prevent further violent behavior and steer a young person in the right direction before it's too late.

That said, the Budget Committee seems to feel that the JABG program is ineffective. An example from my homestate of Wisconsin proves otherwise. Using Federal dollars from the JABG program, the Southern Oaks Girls School, a juvenile detention center outside of Racine, WI, built a new mental health wing to provide much-needed counseling services for the girl inmates. The administrator of this school cites a 56-percent drop in violent behavior since the new mental services have been offered. This is just one example of JABG's many successes—a record that supports keeping JABG alive and well-funded.

The same is true of title V Local Delinquency Prevention Program, the only Federal program solely dedicated to juvenile crime prevention. Title V programs include preschool and parent training programs, youth mentoring, afterschool activities, tutoring, truancy reduction, substance abuse prevention and gang prevention outreach. Nonetheless, the Senate budget assumes a 50-percent cut to title—V penny pinching now that will cost us dearly in the future. According to many experts in the field, every dollar spent on prevention saves $3 or $4 in costs attributable to juvenile crime. And who can put a dollar value on the hundreds, even thousands of young lives turned from crime and into productive work and community life by the juvenile crime prevention programs supported by title V?

The downward spiral of juvenile justice funding is a disturbing budget trend with ugly real world implications. Juvenile crime is an ongoing challenge and it is not a problem that is going to solve itself. Boosting funding for successful juvenile justice programs is the first step in addressing this challenge. Just a few short years ago in fiscal year 2002, juvenile justice programs received $556 million. Of that amount, more than $94 million went to the title V program and nearly $250 million was dedicated to JABG. We need to restore these initiatives to those robust levels and our amendment will do just that by adding $380 million to the OJJDP budget for juvenile justice programs.

We have a choice in this Congress of where we want to invest our money. We can choose to address the roots of crime and invest in our children by preventing a life of criminal behavior. We can choose to intervene in a positive manner to work with those teens that have fallen through the cracks and have had a few scrapes with the law—we can turn many of those kids around. I urge my colleagues to make the right choice this year and support our amendment which will increase funding for juvenile justice programs. We can and must do better.

AMENDMENTS NOS. 3167, 3168, AND 3169 EN BLOC

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the following amendments which have not been filed be considered en bloc, and that the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table: Senator BROWNBACK on a commission on accountability and review of Federal agencies, Senator BAUCUS on high intensity drug trafficking, and Senator GRAHAM relative to the Port of Charleston.

Mr. CONRAD. No objection.

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

The amendments were agreed to, as follows:

AMENDMENT NO. 3167

(Purpose: To establish a reserve fund for a Commission for Accountability and Review of Federal Agencies)

At the end of title III, insert the following:

SEC. ____. RESERVE FUND A COMMISSION FOR ACCOUNTABILITY AND REVIEW OF FEDERAL AGENCIES.

If—

(1) the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee of the Senate reports a bill or joint resolution, or an amendment is offered thereto or a conferecne report is submitted thereon, that creates a Commission for the review of the performances of Federal agencies, with the purpose of recommending legislation to realign or eliminate programs or agenices that are wasteful, duplicative, inefficient, outdated, irrelevant, or failed; and

(2) the committee is within its allocation as provided under section 302(a) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974;

the chairman of the Committee on Budget may make the appropriate adjustments in allocations and aggregates to the extent that such legislation would not increase the deficit for fiscal year 2007 and for the period of fiscal years 2007 through 2011.

AMENDMENT NO. 3168

(Purpose: To expand funding for the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) Program, offset through reductions in Function 920. To ensure that HIDTA funding remains in ONDCP)

On page 24, line 24, increase the amount by $19,000,000.

On page 24, line 25, increase the amount by $5,000,000.

On page 25, line 4, increase the amount by $11,000,000.

On page 25, line 8, increase the amount by $2,000,000.

On page 25, line 12, increase the amount by $1,000,000.

On page 27, line 23, decrease the amount by $19,000,000.

On page 27, line 24, decrease the amount by $5,000,000.

On page 28, line 2, decrease the amount by $11,000,000.

On page 28, line 5, decrease the amount by $2,000,000.

On page 28, line 8, decrease the amount by $1,000,000.

AMENDMENT NO. 3169

(Purpose: To restore funding for a pilot project in the Port of Charleston that coordinates over 50 State and local law enforcement agencies to prevent and detect acts of terrorism and criminal activity)

On page 24, line 24, increase the amount by $27,000,000.

On page 24, line 25, increase the amount by $21,600,000.

On page 25, line 4, increase the amount by $2,700,000.

On page 25, line 8, increase the amount by $2,700,000.

On page 27, line 23, decrease the amount by $27,000,000.

On page 27, line 24, decrease the amount by $21,600,000.

On page 28, line 2, decrease the amount by $2,700,000.

On page 28, line 5, decrease the amount by $2,700,000.

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, at this point we are ready to go to the Vitter amendment. Is the Senator from North Dakota ready?

Mr. CONRAD. No, we are not. We have people looking at that amendment. Could we go to Senator DOMENICI's amendment?

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant Journal clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I know Senator VITTER wants to be heard on his amendment and Senator DOMENICI wants to be heard on his amendment. There was a prior order that said Senator DOMENICI would occur after Senator SANTORUM—not an order but sort of a collegial understanding—so we will go to Senator DOMENICI, then Senator VITTER.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Mexico.

AMENDMENT NO. 3128

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, last year the Senate by an overwhelming majority—74 Senators voted to support the Energy Policy Act. A number of programs, projects, and activities within that act were not contained in the President's budget.

What this does, it supports an energy reserve fund paid for by ANWR receipts. In other words, ANWR is in the bill, and we allocate part of the receipts in a reserve fund to the Secretary of Energy to pay for various projects that were already voted on by the Congress that we thought were good projects. Therefore, this would fund $150 million a year for 5 years from the ANWR receipts.

I think we should do it. I urge the Senate to adopt this. It is a good way to use the funds, an appropriate way, and I believe it would add to the validity of our Energy Policy Act and make those things happen more quickly.

I yield the floor.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I rise in opposition to the amendment by the Senator from New Mexico. This is a debate we have been through over and over again. There are some who believe that drilling for oil in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is the answer to America's energy challenge. This amendment says the proceeds from that drilling will fund all the other energy policies in our Nation.

This makes no sense whatsoever. There is no possible way that in the next fiscal year, even if we approved the drilling in ANWR, there will be proceeds that can be contributed to the Energy Policy Act funding.

Yesterday, this body had a chance to vote for real money to fund the Energy Policy Act when Senator BINGAMAN offered the amendment, and it was defeated by opposition from the other side of the aisle.

I rise in opposition to this amendment. This is no way to fund energy policy, and ANWR is not the answer to our energy prayers.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the amendment.

The assistant journal clerk read as follows:

The Senator from New Mexico [Mr. DOMENICI] proposes an amendment numbered 3128.

Mr. DOMENICI. I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To provide funding for implementing the Energy Policy Act of 2005 from ANWR)

On page 4, line 17, increase the amount by $151,593,000.

On page 4, line 19, increase the amount by $156,269,000.

On page 4, line 21, increase the amount by $162,937,000.

On page 5, line 8, increase the amount by $69,093,000.

On page 5, line 10, increase the amount by $133,769,000.

On page 5, line 12, increase the amount by $155,437,000.

On page 5, line 23, decrease the amount by $69,093,000.

On page 5, line 25, decrease the amount by $133,769,000.

On page 6, line 2, decrease the amount by $155,437,000.

On page 6, line 12, increase the amount by $69,093,000.

On page 6, line 14, increase the amount by $202,862,000.

On page 6, line 16, increase the amount by $358,299,000.

On page 7, line 2, increase the amount by $69,093,000.

On page 7, line 4, increase the amount by $202,862,000.

On page 7, line 6, increase the amount by $358,299,000.

On page 13, line 4, increase the amount by $150,000,000.

On page 13, line 5, increase the amount by $67,500,000.

On page 13, line 8, increase the amount by $150,000,000.

On page 13, line 9, increase the amount by $127,500,000.

On page 13, line 12, increase the amount by $150,000,000.

On page 13, line 13, increase the amount by $142,500,000.

On page 41, strike lines 8 through 11 and insert the following:

''ate may make the adjustments described in subsections (b) and (c).

(b) ADJUSTMENT FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF ENERGY POLICY ACT OF 2005.—If the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate reports a bill or joint resolution, or if an amendment is offered thereto or a conference report is submitted thereon that makes available a portion of the receipts resulting from enactment of the legislation described in subsection (a) for programs to implement the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (Public Law 109–58), the chairman of the Committee on the Budget may revise committee allocations for that committee and other appropriate budgetary aggregates and allocations of new budget authority and outlays by the amount provided by that measure for that purpose, but the adjustment may not exceed $150,000,000 in new budget authority in each of fiscal years 2009 through 2011.

(c) ADJUSTMENT FOR THE LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND PROGRAMS AND ADDITIONAL LAND CONSERVATION PROGRAMS.—If the Committee on Appro-* * *

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time has expired.

Mr. CONRAD. 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 amendment.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

The result was announced—yeas 51, nays 49, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 72 Leg.]

YEAS—51

Akaka	Dole	Martinez
Alexander	Domenici	McCain
Allard	Enzi	McConnell
Allen	Frist	Murkowski
Bennett	Graham	Roberts
Bond	Grassley	Santorum
Brownback	Gregg	Sessions
Bunning	Hagel	Shelby
Burns	Hatch	Specter
Burr	Hutchison	Stevens
Chambliss	Inhofe	Sununu
Coburn	Inouye	Talent
Cochran	Isakson	Thomas
Cornyn	Kyl	Thune
Craig	Landrieu	Vitter
Crapo	Lott	Voinovich
DeMint	Lugar	Warner

NAYS—49

Baucus	Durbin	Murray
Bayh	Ensign	Nelson (FL)
Biden	Feingold	Nelson (NE)
Bingaman	Feinstein	Obama
Boxer	Harkin	Pryor
Byrd	Jeffords	Reed
Cantwell	Johnson	Reid
Carper	Kennedy	Rockefeller
Chafee	Kerry	Salazar
Clinton	Kohl	Sarbanes
Coleman	Lautenberg	Schumer
Collins	Leahy	Smith
Conrad	Levin	Snowe
Dayton	Lieberman	Stabenow
DeWine	Lincoln	Wyden
Dodd	Menendez	
Dorgan	Mikulski	

The amendment (No. 3128) was agreed to.

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I move to reconsider the vote, and I move to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I yield to the Senator from Louisiana.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

AMENDMENT NO. 3165

Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, I send an amendment to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The senior assistant journal clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Louisiana [Mr. VITTER] proposes an amendment numbered 3165.

Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: to create a Reserve Fund for Gulf Coast, Protection, Reconstruction and Recovery Fund)

On page 43, after line 22, add the following: If—

(1) the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate or the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate, or both Committees, reports a bill or joint resolution, or if an amendment is offered thereto, or if a conference report is submitted thereon, that creates a Gulf Coast

Protection, Reconstruction and Recovery Fund to provide assistance to coastal states for coastal conservation, mitigation and resource protection activities, or other purposes, based on the allocation formula provided in Section 31 of the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act that is funded $10 billion from the following sources or any combination of funds thereof—

(A) Receipts deposited into the Digital Television Transition and Public Safety Fund that exceed estimates of the Congressional Budget Office for the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005 at the time of enactment;

(B) Receipts (including bonus bids, rents, royalties, and payments associated with royalties in kind) from the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, if the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate reports a bill, and such measure is enacted, to establish oil exploration and production in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge;

(C) Receipts equal to the amount of receipts received by the United States government attributable to offshore energy production (including bonus bids, rents, royalties, and payments associated with royalties in kind) for each year that exceed estimates of the Congressional Budget Office as of March 16, 2006; and

(2) that committee is within its allocation as provided under section 302(a) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974;

the chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may make the appropriate adjustments in allocations and aggregates to the extent that such legislation would not increase the deficit for fiscal year 2007 and for the period of fiscal years 2007 through 2011.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant journal clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the amendment.

The amendment (No. 3165) was agreed to.

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

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

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that after the passage of the budget—I like that—the Senate proceed to executive session and proceed to two consecutive votes on the confirmation of the following judicial nominations on the Executive Calendar: Calendar No. 547, Jack Zouhary to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Ohio; and Calendar No. 548, Stephen G. Larson to be United States District Judge for the Central District of California; further, that prior to the first vote the two Senators from Ohio be given 1 minute each, and prior to the second vote the Senators from California be given 1 minute each; that following these votes the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action and the Senate then resume legislative session.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, is time also reserved before each vote for the chairman of the Judiciary Committee and ranking member?

Mr. GREGG. There was not. But I will be happy to ask for that.

Mr. LEAHY. One minute each prior; and I wonder if the distinguished Senator from New Hampshire would be willing to amend his unanimous consent to make it in order to ask for the yeas and nays at this point on both votes.

Mr. GREGG. I have no objection.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered en bloc.

AMENDMENTS NOS. 3031, 3089, 3170, AND 3171, EN BLOC

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the following amendments be considered en bloc and that the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table: A Levin amendment relative to ATP; a Salazar amendment relative to the LWCF. I further ask unanimous consent that the following amendments which have not been filed be considered and agreed to en bloc, and the motions to reconsider be laid on the table: A Conrad-Gregg amendment on tax cap; and a Gregg-Conrad amendment for Senator BYRD on mine safety.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection? Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendments were agreed to, as follows:

AMENDMENT NO. 3031

(Purpose: Provide funding for the Advanced Technology Program to help ensure America's competitive advantage and fully offset with reductions in function 920)

On page 15, line 21, increase the amount by $140,000,000.

On page 15, line 22, increase the amount by $21,000,000.

On page 16, line 1, increase the amount by $98,000,000.

On page 16, line 5, increase the amount by $21,000,000.

On page 27, line 23, decrease the amount by $140,000,000.

On page 27, line 24, decrease the amount by $21,000,000.

On page 28, line 2, decrease the amount by 98,000,000.

On page 28, line 5, decrease the amount by $21,000,000.

AMENDMENT NO. 3089

(Purpose: Restore $100 million to the Land and Water Conservation Fund Stateside Grant Program. Paid for by closing corporate tax loopholes)

On page 3, line 13, increase the amount by $25,000,000.

On page 3, line 15, increase the amount by $30,000,000.

On page 3, line 17, increase the amount by $30,000,000.

On page 3, line 19, increase the amount by $10,000,000.

On page 3, line 21, increase the amount by $5,000,000.

On page 4, line 1, increase the amount by $25,000,000.

On page 4, line 2, increase the amount by $30,000,000.

On page 4, line 3, increase the amount by $30,000,000.

On page 4, line 4, increase the amount by $10,000,000.

On page 4, line 6, increase the amount by $5,000,000.

On page 4, line 13, increase the amount by $100,000,000.

On page 5, line 4, increase the amount by $25,000,000.

On page 5, line 6, increase the amount by $30,000,000.

On page 5, line 8, increase the amount by $30,000,000.

On page 5, line 10, increase the amount by $10,000,000.

On page 5, line 12, increase the amount by $5,000,000.

On page 13, line 21, increase the amount by $100,000,000.

On page 13, line 22, increase the amount by $25,000,000.

On page 14, line 1, increase the amount by $30,000,000.

On page 14, line 5, increase the amount by $30,000,000.

On page 14, line 9, increase the amount by $10,000,000.

On page 14, line 13, increase the amount by $5,000,000.

On page 53, line 1, increase the amount by $100,000,000.

On page 53, line 2, increase the amount by $25,000,000.

AMENDMENT NO. 3170

(Purpose: To provide an additional $500 million to enhance the ability of the Internal Revenue Service to collect taxes owed but not paid voluntarily)

On page 4, line 13, increase the amount by $363,000,000.

On page 5, line 4, increase the amount by $340,000,000.

On page 5, line 6, increase the amount by $14,000,000.

On page 5, line 8, increase the amount by $9,000,000.

On page 5, line 19, decrease the amount by $340,000,000.

On page 5, line 21, decrease the amount by $14,000,000.

On page 5, line 23, decrease the amount by $9,000,000.

On page 6, line 8, increase the amount by $340,000,000.

On page 6, line 10, increase the amount by $354,000,000.

On page 6, line 12, increase the amount by $363,000,000.

On page 6, line 14, increase the amount by $363,000,000.

On page 6, line 16, increase the amount by $363,000,000.

On page 6, line 22, increase the amount by $340,000,000.

On page 6, line 24, increase the amount by $354,000,000.

On page 7, line 2, increase the amount by $363,000,000.
On page 7, line 4, increase the amount by $363,000,000.
On page 7, line 6, increase the amount by $363,000,000.
On page 25, line 24, increase the amount by $363,000,000.
On page 25, line 25, increase the amount by $340,000,000.
On page 26, line 4, increase the amount by $14,000,000.
On page 26, line 8, increase the amount by $9,000,000.
On page 53, line 1, increase the amount by $137,000,000.
On page 53, line 2, increase the amount by $128,000,000.
On page 55, line 13, strike $274,000,000 and insert $500,000,000.

AMENDMENT NO. 3171

(Purpose: To provide $184 million over five years for the Mine Safety and Health Administration to hire additional mine safety inspectors)

On page 4, line 13, increase the amount by $37,000,000.
On page 4, line 15, increase the amount by $38,000,000.
On page 4, line 17, increase the amount by $41,000,000.
On page 4, line 19, increase the amount by $43,000,000.
On page 4, line 21, increase the amount by $46,000,000.
On page 5, line 4, increase the amount by $33,000,000.
On page 5, line 6, increase the amount by $37,000,000.
On page 5, line 8, increase the amount by $40,000,000.
On page 5, line 10, increase the amount by $42,000,000.
On page 5, line 12, increase the amount by $45,000,000.
On page 5, line 19, decrease the amount by $33,000,000.
On page 5, line 21, decrease the amount by $37,000,000.
On page 5, line 23, decrease the amount by $40,000,000.
On page 5, line 25, decrease the amount by $42,000,000.
On page 6, line 2, decrease the amount by $45,000,000.
On page 6, line 8, increase the amount by $33,000,000.
On page 6, line 10, increase the amount by $70,000,000.
On page 6, line 12, increase the amount by $110,000,000.
On page 6, line 14, increase the amount by $152,000,000.
On page 6, line 16, increase the amount by $197,000,000.
On page 6, line 22, increase the amount by $33,000,000.
On page 6, line 24, increase the amount by $70,000,000.
On page 7, line 2, increase the amount by $110,000,000.
On page 7, line 4, increase the amount by $152,000,000.
On page 7, line 6, increase the amount by $197,000,000.
On page 19, line 24, increase the amount by $36,000,000.
On page 19, line 25, increase the amount by $32,000,000.
On page 20, line 3, increase the amount by $36,000,000.
On page 20, line 4, increase the amount by $35,000,000.
On page 20, line 7, increase the amount by $37,000,000.
On page 20, line 8, increase the amount by $36,000,000.
On page 20, line 11, increase the amount by $37,000,000.
On page 20, line 12, increase the amount by $36,000,000.
On page 20, line 15, increase the amount by $38,000,000.
On page 20, line 16, increase the amount by $37,000,000.
On page 26, line 24, increase the amount by $1,000,000.
On page 26, line 25, increase the amount by $1,000,000.
On page 27, line 3, increase the amount by $2,000,000.
On page 27, line 4, increase the amount by $2,000,000.
On page 27, line 7, increase the amount by $4,000,000.
On page 27, line 8, increase the amount by $4,000,000.
On page 27, line 11, increase the amount by $6,000,000.
On page 27, line 12, increase the amount by $6,000,000.
On page 27, line 15, increase the amount by $8,000,000.
On page 27, line 16, increase the amount by $8,000,000.
On page 53, line 1, increase the amount by $36,000,000.
On page 53, line 2, increase the amount by $32,000,000.
On page 53, line 4, increase the amount by $36,000,000.
On page 53, line 7, increase the amount by $37,000,000.

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be dispensed with.

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

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, we are very close to being able to move toward final passage, but we still have a number of amendments to dispose of. If we can just have the patience of the body for a few more minutes, we can dispose of these final amendments and move toward final passage.

First of all, I think it is important to thank colleagues—dozens of colleagues—who have given their amendments in the last hour—we appreciate it very much—and others who were able to work with us to get their amendments agreed to as the chairman has just reviewed.

The next amendment is Senator ENSIGN. We ask colleagues to give the Senator from Nevada their attention.

AMENDMENT NO. 3166

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nevada.

Mr. ENSIGN. Mr. President, I send an amendment to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Nevada [Mr. ENSIGN] proposes an amendment numbered 3166.

Mr. ENSIGN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To deny funds in FY2007 for the United Nations Human Rights Council, which the United States just voted against because countries found complicit in sustained human rights abuses are eligible for Council membership. Savings redirected to border security)

On page 10, line 20, decrease the amount by $4,000,000.
On page 10, line 21, decrease the amount by $4,000,000.
On page 24, line 24, increase the amount by $4,000,000.
On page 24, line 25, increase the amount by $4,000,000.

Mr. ENSIGN. Mr. President, just very briefly, this amendment has to do with funding for the United Nations Human Rights Council which I believe is worse than the discredited United Nations Commission on Human Rights.

Members will not be selected primarily on the basis of their commitment to human rights, even countries under Security Council sanctions for human rights violations or terrorism.

The United States has been a member of the United States Commission on Human Rights since 1947, with one exception. That will no longer be the case. Due to a rotating membership, the United States will be ineligible for the Human Rights Council membership every 6 years. So our country, which has been at the forefront of promoting human rights, would periodically lose its seat but still be required to cover 22 percent of the United Nations Human Rights Council cost.

I am proud of the United States and how we have stood firm and opposed creation of this fatally flawed council. We need to make sure we are not funding this council, and that is exactly what our amendment does. It takes away the funding from the Human Rights Council and puts it toward border security.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, this amendment reduces the international account by $4 million. That is what it does. We have no assurance that it will actually take money from the Human Rights Council, although that is the intention of the Senator. The fact is, it reduces the international account by $4 million and increases the 750 account by a like amount.

I yield the remainder of my time to the Senator from Maryland.

Mr. SARBANES. Mr. President, I urge my colleagues to vote against this amendment. The United States did not get all the changes it wanted made with respect to the Human Rights Council, but very significant changes were made. And under Secretary Burns, they have indicated that the administration intends to work with those changes to try to improve that situation. We have a real problem with respect to that Human Rights Council. But changes are being made. They are being made in the right direction.

I very much oppose this amendment. I hope my colleagues will vote against it.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time has expired. The question is on agreeing to the amendment.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second, and the clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

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

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

[Rollcall Vote No. 73 Leg.]

YEAS—50

Alexander	DeWine	McConnell
Allard	Dole	Murkowski
Allen	Domenici	Nelson (FL)
Bennett	Ensign	Nelson (NE)
Bond	Enzi	Roberts
Brownback	Frist	Santorum
Bunning	Graham	Sessions
Burns	Grassley	Shelby
Burr	Gregg	Smith
Chambliss	Hatch	Stevens
Coburn	Hutchison	Sununu
Coleman	Inhofe	Talent
Collins	Isakson	Thomas
Cornyn	Kyl	Thune
Craig	Lott	Vitter
Crapo	Martinez	Warner
DeMint	McCain	

NAYS—50

Akaka	Feingold	Menendez
Baucus	Feinstein	Mikulski
Bayh	Hagel	Murray
Biden	Harkin	Obama
Bingaman	Inouye	Pryor
Boxer	Jeffords	Reed
Byrd	Johnson	Reid
Cantwell	Kennedy	Rockefeller
Carper	Kerry	Salazar
Chafee	Kohl	Sarbanes
Clinton	Landrieu	Schumer
Cochran	Lautenberg	Snowe
Conrad	Leahy	Specter
Dayton	Levin	Stabenow
Dodd	Lieberman	Voinovich
Dorgan	Lincoln	Wyden
Durbin	Lugar	

The amendment (No. 3166) was rejected.

Mr. SARBANES. I move to reconsider the vote.

Mrs. MURRAY. I move to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

AMENDMENTS NOS. 3152 AND 3172, EN BLOC

Mr. GREGG. I ask unanimous consent the following amendments be considered, agreed to en bloc, and the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table: One amendment by Senators LOTT, TALENT, REED, LIEBERMAN, DURBIN, BAUCUS, and WARNER, an amendment dealing with the military, dealing with defense accounts, and an amendment by Senator SCHUMER dealing with courthouses.

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

The amendments were agreed to, as follows:

(Purpose: To provide additional new budget authority and outlay authority for fiscal year 2007 for National Defense (050) in the amount of $3,700,000,000, the amount requested for defense for fiscal year 2007 in the budget of the President for fiscal year 2006, in order to fund principal unfunded priorities of the military departments and fund an authorized end strength of active duty members of the Army of 512,400, and an authorized end strength of active duty members of the Marine Corps of 179,000, for fiscal year 2007)

On page 48, line 5, decrease the amount by $3,700,000,000.

On page 53, line 1, increase the amount by $3,700,000,000.

On page 53, line 2, increase the amount by $3,700,000,000.

(Purpose: To add $308 million to function 800 for GSA fully offset by function 920)

On page 25, line 24, increase the amount by $308,000,000.

On page 25, line 25, increase the amount by $9,000,000.

On page 26, line 4, increase the amount by $31,000,000.

On page 26, line 8, increase the amount by $65,000,000.

On page 26, line 12, increase the amount by $95,000,000.

On page 26, line 16, increase the amount by $77,000,000.

On page 27, line 23, decrease the amount by $308,000,000.

On page 27, line 24, decrease the amount by $9,000,000.

On page 28, line 2, decrease the amount by $31,000,000.

On page 28, line 5, decrease the amount by $65,000,000.

On page 28, line 8, decrease the amount by $95,000,000.

On page 28, line 11, decrease the amount by $77,000,000.

MENTAL HEALTH PARITY ASSUMPTION

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I want to begin by complimenting my friend from New Hampshire and the chairman of the Senate Budget Committee on a job well done. He has taken a difficult situation and produced the budget resolution before us today. Congratulations.

I would like to raise the issue of mental health parity as the Senate debates the fiscal year 2007 Senate budget resolution.

It is my understanding the resolution before us assumes the revenue impact of enacting a mental health parity law at a cost of $1.5 billion over 5 years. I want to make sure that it is indeed the case that the overall revenue number is such that it assumes Congress will pass a mental health parity bill.

Mr. GREGG. I understand the interest of the distinguished senior Senator from New Mexico regarding mental health parity legislation and I would concur with my colleague's assessment. S. Con. Res. 83 does assume the revenue impact of enacting a mental health parity bill.

Mr. DOMENICI. I thank the distinguished chairman for his consideration and explanation of this important matter.

BORDER PATROL CHALLENGES

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, as the chairman may know, I recently took a trip with Senator COLEMAN to the U.S.-Mexican border to look at the challenges facing our Border Patrol agents as they work to secure the border against illegal immigration. One of our stops was at Fort Huachuca, AZ, where we saw, in operation, the lone UAV Predator B that the Customs and Border Patrol has in service. I was tremendously impressed with this technology and saw its usefulness in assisting our CBP agents in locating and interdicting illegal immigrants as they crossed the border. In fact, Mr. Chairman, while at Fort Huachuca, CBP caught 13 illegal immigrants using the Predator B right before our eyes.

In our discussions with the CBP officials at Fort Huachuca, we learned that with a squadron of UAVs the CBP could provide 24-hour-a-day, 7-day-a-week, coverage on the Mexican border. These MQ-9 UAVs would have satellite command, control, and communications which would allow them to be operated anywhere in the world from anywhere in the world, as well as an updated sensor suite to assist in finding illegals coming across the border. It is my belief that this body should make a significant investment in unmanned aerial vehicles.

We also learned that there is an issue surrounding critical spares for the lone UAV in operation. I understand the CBP is scheduled to receive a second Predator B this year; however, we need to fund the critical spares CBP needs to keep these UAVs up and flying.

Through conversations that I and my staff have had with FAA, I understand they are working out the issues surrounding the flying of UAVs within U.S. airspace. I would like to take this opportunity to encourage the FAA to continue to work with other Government agencies as well as the private sector to mitigate the problems surrounding the use of UAVs in U.S. airspace.

Mr. Chairman, the chairman has been a leader in this body on so many issues but in particular on homeland security issues. I look forward to working with you in this effort and on this issue.

Mr. GREGG. I thank my good friend and colleague from Georgia for highlighting this issue. Protecting U.S. borders is a basic Federal function; it is national security. I also believe these unmanned aerial vehicles can enhance our capabilities, as they have for our military as demonstrated in Afghanistan and Iraq. I am in the position of being both the chairman of the Budget Committee and manager of this budget resolution, and also the chairman of the Appropriations Subcommittee that oversees the Department of Homeland Security both our counterterrorism and border security programs.

The distinguished Senator from Georgia is known as a real leader in this area, and we appreciate his counsel. I might note that this budget resolution proposes increases of some $4 billion for border security focused on improving infrastructure and giving our men and women on the front lines

the tools to do the job. We will have to see how much of these funds survive the Appropriations Committee's 302(b) allocation process and the administration's transmittals of emergency spending. But I can assure the Senator we will take a hard look at the UAV program as a component of a border security infrastructure program.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, today, I would like to take a few minutes to speak about the tax gap. Before I get started, I first want to thank my colleagues, the chairman and ranking member of the Budget Committee, for their interest in the tax gap. As chairman of the Finance Committee, I too have a great interest in this topic. It is my intention to close the tax gap, and I look forward to working with Senator GREGG and Senator CONRAD to achieve this important goal.

The tax gap, as we all know, is the difference between the amount of tax owed by taxpayers from legal activities and the amount voluntarily paid on time. Today, specifically, I want to clarify the facts and the fiction regarding the possible solutions to this $350 billion problem.

Under my chairmanship, the Finance Committee has held at least eight hearings to address the tax gap:

No. 1, Oversight of the Internal Revenue Service, ''Taxpayer Beware: Schemes, Scams, and Cons,'' April 5, 2001; No. 2, Tax Code Complexity: New Hope for Fresh Solutions, April 26, 2001; No. 3, Taxpayer Alert: Choosing a Paid Preparer and the Pitfalls of Charitable Car Donation, April 1, 2003; No. 4, Tax Shelters: Who's Buying, Who's Selling, and What's the Government Doing About It?, October 21, 2003; No. 5, Bridging the Tax Gap, July 21, 2004; No. 6, Charities and Charitable Giving: Proposals for Reform, April 5, 2005; No. 7, The $350 Billion Question: How to Solve the Tax Gap, April 14, 2005; and No. 8, Social Security: Achieving Sustainable Solvency, May 25, 2005.

During these hearings, we learned a lot about the tax gap, including several good ideas for closing it. We heard from the Joint Committee on Taxation. We heard from the Treasury Department, including IRS and TIGTA. We heard from the Comptroller General and GAO. We heard from the Justice Department. We heard from the Taxpayer Advocate. We heard from CBO. We heard from the States. We heard from the private sector, both nonprofit and for-profit. And, of course, we heard from the American taxpayer.

From the testimony of all these hearings, and the expertise of all these witnesses, we identified several truths about the tax gap:

No. 1, the tax gap is a huge problem for the tax system; No. 2, it is easy to discuss in the abstract; No. 3, there is no easy solution to the problem; No. 4, there is no one silver bullet; the tax gap can only be solved through many small steps; No. 5, enforcement is important, but any real solution to this problem will require legislative changes, the most important being Tax Code simplification; No. 6, closing the tax gap should not place an undue burden on honest taxpayers; and No. 7, taking concrete steps to close the tax gap will require a lot of political will and bipartisan cooperation.

In the spirit of bipartisan cooperation, I look forward to working with Senator CONRAD and others to solve the tax gap problem. Before we can reach a bipartisan solution, however, we first need to get on the same page regarding the facts and fiction of this issue.

A common misperception by some of my friends on the other side of the aisle is that the only thing we need to do to close the tax gap is give the IRS more money for enforcement. This myth asserts that if the IRS gets more funding for enforcement, both the $350 billion tax gap and the budget deficit will magically disappear. This myth is even being used as an offset for new spending.

The Finance Committee's tax gap hearings have emphasized the importance of IRS enforcement. In fact, this budget will provide the IRS additional resources to get the job done. However, our best estimates suggest that enforcement alone could account for only 10 percent of the tax gap, not 100 percent as purported by Senator CONRAD. But even this possible 10 percent is misleading, because it doesn't accurately reflect the reality of expanded enforcement. To achieve these kinds of returns from enforcement alone would, I fear, require us to backtrack to a time when there was serious concern about the IRS overreaching and stepping on the rights of taxpayers. We must always keep a balance between taxpayer rights and enforcement.

So yes, while I support additional enforcement, we need to keep our feet on the ground and our rhetoric in check as to how much can be achieved through enforcement and the level of enforcement that can be supported.

We must also remember that it is vital that enforcement resources be targeted properly. We need to be smart in our use of enforcement. Too often the IRS has ''no-change'' audits. That is, they have spent a lot of time going through the shoebox of receipts belonging to some person and found out there were no problems. This is a waste of IRS resources and takes up the time of honest taxpayers. I been pleased to work with Senator BAUCUS to encourage the IRS to do the research and review that will allow them to focus their attention on the bad actors and get more bang for the buck on audits and enforcement.

Let me note, too, from my work on the Commission on Restructuring the IRS that the Commission found that taxpayer service and clarity of law are vital in encouraging compliance. So many folks want to abide by their obligations as a citizen, but they can't because the law is too confusing, and they can't get the right answer. Service and simplification must be part of any effort to deal with the tax gap. I will return to simplification later in my comments.

So if enforcement can't solve the $350 billion problem, what are our other options? Well, a little over a year ago, the Joint Committee on Taxation, at the Finance Committee's request, issued a report.

This is the report right here. It is titled ''Options to Improve Tax Compliance and Reform Tax Expenditures,'' otherwise known as the ''White Book.''

This report provided about $190 billion over 5 years with some very controversial items. Let me give you some examples:

Repeal the mortgage interest deduction for home equity loans. Subject State and local workers to the Medicare tax. Apply the payroll tax to most fringe benefits. Allow the offshore activities of U.S. companies to be exempt from U.S. tax.

These are clearly controversial proposals, and I am sure there are not many in the Senate who would line up to endorse them today.

Some other ideas came out of the Finance Committee's examination of the payroll tax gap last spring. The Joint Committee on Taxation and the Treasury Department testified on the leakage in the payroll tax system. To fix this leak, we heard some of the following ideas:

Modify the determination of amounts subject to employment tax for partners and S Corporation shareholders. Provide consistent FICA treatment of salary reduction amounts. Remove the employment tax cap.

Again, many of these and other comprehensive payroll tax proposals, all which would have improved Social Security solvency, were too controversial to stand on their own.

With the lack of bipartisan cooperation on Social Security, we did not have an environment to consider these important, but controversial proposals. Perhaps, if there had been bipartisan cooperation on addressing the Social Security problem, we could have made headway on the payroll tax gap.

In addition, no discussion of methods to close the tax gap can be complete without identifying the single most important one, which is Tax Code simplification. Our tax code is just too complex. Complex laws lead to inadvertent errors as well as opportunities for intentional noncompliance. Complexity in the Tax Code also contributes heavily to taxpayer confusion and real or perceived unfairness in the tax system. And studies have shown that if taxpayers feel they are being treated unfairly by the tax system, they are less likely to be compliant. Any real effort to close the tax gap cannot be taken seriously unless Tax Code simplification is part of the proposal.

Finally, I also want to alert my colleagues to the fact that we have measures in the tax relief reconciliation bill that aim at some aspects of the tax gap. In particular, some of these are

dealing with problems we are seeing in tax-exempt entities—charitable donations and abuses of tax-exempt organizations. We have reforms of two types of charitable entities—donor advised funds and supporting organizations. Too often, people have been making donations to these organizations but retaining control and seeing an inappropriate benefit going to themselves and their family, rather than to the community and those in need.

Let my colleagues understand, the issues of donor advised funds and supporting organizations are not minor as it relates to the tax gap. The IRS recently released its ''dirty dozen'' tax scams for 2006, and throughout the thousands of pages of Tax Code and regulations, abuse of donor advised funds and supporting organizations was targeted as one of the top dozen problems.

Two years ago, the Commissioner of the IRS, in a letter to me, highlighted the abuse of donor advised funds and supporting organizations as the No. 1 problem IRS was seeing in tax-exempt entities.

I think the public would view the Finance Committee as neglecting its work if it didn't seek to shut down such abuses. The Finance Committee didn't turn a blind eye; we worked on addressing these problems and drafting reforms. These reforms of donor advised funds and supporting organizations have been drafted on a bipartisan basis and with significant comment and input from the charity sector, particularly the Nonprofit Panel. I am pleased that these measures are now in tax reconciliation and conference. I think it is important that we take steps in addressing these problems here and now.

But my point is that here is something—problems of donor advised funds and supporting organizations—labeled as one of the most dirty abuses in the entire Code, and yet I still have a few colleagues who come to me with this complaint, this change, this concern about what we are doing to stop the abuses. If the road is so full of potholes on dealing with these areas of clear abuse and relatively small dollars, I think we need to recognize the real problems ahead in dealing with the big issues in the tax gap. Unfortunately, all too often I find that the tax gap is an issue in which everyone shouts for solving in the abstract, while many of those same voices are stilled when it comes to the particulars.

In closing, I want to re-emphasize the importance of this debate. Today, I have just scratched the surface on this topic. I praise the Treasury and IRS for taking some initial steps. I applaud the chairman and ranking member of the Budget Committee for their interest in closing the tax gap, and I welcome input from other Senators as well. I will eagerly entertain any specific ideas to close the tax gap as long as they go beyond ''more money for IRS enforcement,'' and as long as they do not place an undue burden on honest taxpayers. The solution to this problem needs to be bipartisan, and it needs to be legislative. Let's sit down at the table, separate the facts from the fiction, and work together to solve this tax gap problem.

But, the bottom line for the discussion today is that the minority's point that closing the tax gap can be done just through enforcement just doesn't have merit. And, the $35 billion—and that is stretching it—that may be gotten through enforcement doesn't come close to paying for the over $100 billion in new spending that the Democrat leadership is pushing.

Mr. President, virtually all Democratic Members have had a common theme in their purported offsets for their amendments to this resolution—they would close tax loopholes to pay for whatever popular spending program is proposed. Closing corporate tax loopholes is the common refrain to pay for spending. Several Members have referred to the raisers in Senator CONRAD's substitute amendment to the tax relief reconciliation bill—and they keep trying to spend that same money over and over again.

Of the raisers in Senator CONRAD's substitute amendment, $30 billion of those are included in the Senate tax relief reconciliation bill that is now in conference between the House and Senate. Many of the proponents of these amendments that have been offered on the other side of the aisle, using tax loophole closers, were among the small minority of Members who opposed the tax relief reconciliation bill that contained offsets.

This brings me then to the amendments that have been proposed. The sponsors say they have offset the costs of the amendments by closing tax loopholes. Senator CONRAD's amendment contains the known universe of revenue raisers supported by those on the other side. If we assume that the raisers in Senator CONRAD's amendment would have raised approximately $89 billion over 10 years that is still a far cry from the cumulative demands of the amendments that have already been offered from the other side. The amendments that have been offered that propose to use those tax loophole closers as offsets total $319 in new spending. That total is as of 3:30 p.m. this afternoon. We don't have a tally for all of the additional amendments that have been proposed since then. That new spending, by the way occurs over the budget period—5 years. That means we will have to find $319 more in revenue raisers just to cover those new spending items.

Now, if you use a loophole closer that is already called for in the tax relief package that is in conference, we will also need to find another $30 billion in raisers to cover the tax reconciliation bill unless my colleagues on the other side of the aisle have decided that they are no longer interested in the tuition deduction and the low income savers credit and the work opportunity tax credit and the deduction for teacher expenses and small business expensing and, oh yes, AMT relief for nearly 20 million Americans. The Finance Committee staff hopes to use the full $30 billion that is already in conference in the Senate tax relief reconciliation bill for those important tax relief provisions.

So, if we leave the $30 billion in raisers that are in tax reconciliation out of it, we will have $59 billion in net new revenue raisers available that are supported by those on the other side. Keep in mind, I'm giving the other side a break here because I'm using 10 year numbers for the offsets. The 5 year numbers are probably less than half of the net $59 billion they could claim they are raising. If you subtract the $59 billion from the $319 billion in new spending proposed, it means the other side's amendments were short by $260 billion. That's $260 billion, Mr. President.

Now, that $260 billion needs to come from some place. It wipes out all the tax relief in the package. That means no extension of the child tax credit, marginal rate relief, marriage penalty relief, retirement security relief, or education tax relief when those provisions expire in 2011.

It also means no extension of the Alternative Minimum Tax relief ''patch'' and other extenders like the research and development tax credit.

You can't have it both ways, Mr. President.

Either the other side, if they had prevailed, would have added $260 billion in deficit spending or they would've gutted the tax relief they claim to support.

Budgets are about choices. In this case, the choices are clear. If the Democratic leadership were in control of the Senate, we would have no tax relief left in this budget or we would have added $269 billion in deficit spending. That deficit spending would be $269 billion higher than the deficits in the budget that the other side criticizes. Neither choice would be the right choice for the American people.

I yield the floor.

Mr. CRAIG. The President's budget proposal fiscal year 2007 includes a plan to change, through issuance of a new administrative ruling, the way Bonneville Power Administration, BPA, retires its debt to the Federal Treasury. The plan would require BPA to use excess revenues to retire long-term debt more quickly. Because the change would be made through the rulemaking process, congressional approval would not be needed for the rule to go into effect. Analysts believe the proposed rule would result in 10-percent rate increase that BPA would be forced to pass on to ratepayers.

This rate proposal is not acceptable. The Northwest is a region that is growing very rapidly, and our economy is built on hydropower. That means each year is different, depending on what

kind of water year we have had. This proposal would limit BPA's flexibility to deal with the bad water years by taking advantage of the good ones.

According to a February 8, 2006, analysis by the Northwest Power and Conservation Council, the Office of Management and Budget, OMB, proposal will result in a retail rate increase of at least 6.6 percent, raising power rates $145 million a year, costing retail customers an additional $26.13 a year, decreasing personal income in the Northwest by $109 million, and resulting in the loss of 1,120 jobs. The Pacific Northwest economy is only beginning to rebound from the recent recession, and increasing energy costs will only serve to slow that recovery. Surely, it is preferable to foster longer-term economic growth in the region rather than focus on a short-term revenue stream for the U.S. Treasury.

Some assert that this proposal is good business practice because it prepays BPA's Federal debt. I disagree because the full story is not being told. While it is not unusual to prepay debt, it is certainly unusual for the Government to require this. In fact, this proposal is one-sided. It takes excess revenues away from BPA during good water years but does not assist BPA in bad water years.

BPA has been prepaying debt for more than 20 years, even when our Northwest States had the second and third highest unemployment in the country. Power rates were not raised to do this. So why is the Government requiring prepayment of debt and an increase in power rates when the Northwest has been successful in prepaying debt without impacting rates? This does not make sense unless there is another reason for the proposal.

According to the Department of Energy, DOE, the main purposes of the proposal are to allow more financial flexibility for BPA and to help build more transmission infrastructure. We agree with these goals but think the individuals in the region can better decide how to accomplish them.

Unfortunately, it seems this proposal would result in the establishment of BPA as a revenue raiser for the Treasury—a questionable precedent and one BPA will not always be able to achieve. This proposal must be stopped.

Senators CRAPO, WYDEN, and MURRAY have successfully inserted section 312 into S. Con. Res. 83, which relates to requiring BPA to use excess revenues to prepay long-term debt. I commend my colleagues for their effort and support their provision, but this is just the first step in making sure that this proposal does not go forward. Our work is far from over.

I will continue to work with my colleagues to put this issue to rest.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, the Levin-DeWine amendment would provide $140 million to the Advanced Technology Program to support cost-shared industry-led research and development of cutting-edge high-risk technology with broad commercial potential and societal benefits. The amendment is fully offset with reductions in function 920.

The Senate has voted twice recently in support of this program. Last year the Senate voted to adopt a Levin-DeWine budget amendment to provide for the Advanced Technology Program, ATP. The Senate defeated an amendment that would have eliminated the ATP Program during consideration of the fiscal year 2006 Commerce-Justice-Science appropriations bill.

We have lost nearly 2.8 million manufacturing jobs since January 2001. We should be doing all we can to promote programs that help create jobs and strengthen the technological innovation of American companies and produce the systems that are defending our national security. This budget resolution includes $28 billion for agriculture but includes very little for manufacturing.

In fiscal year 2006 the Senate funded ATP at $140 million, but because the House zeroed out the program, ATP ended up with only $80 million in conference. The Senate needs to again provide $140 million for ATP to help ensure this program has at least last year's level of funding.

The ATP is a very modest program which, according to the Department of Commerce, has had a result eight times more in technologies developed than the amount of money we have put into the program. This is an eight-time return on investment in advanced technologies which is achieved when the Department of Commerce partners with industry through the ATP. I urge adoption of the amendment.

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, as a statement of priorities and a vision of where we want our nation to be in the years to come, this budget fails the test of responsible leadership. Instead of correcting the mistakes of the past few years, this budget repeats and compounds those mistakes. It adds to record levels of national debt. It favors the fortunate few over everyone else who is working hard and playing by the rules. It does far too little for the most vulnerable and needy Americans—our children, our seniors, our veterans. Unlike China, India, and other countries, it invests only a minute fraction of our resources in research and development. We've seen where this agenda has led us—it represents a stunning failure to address any of the major challenges of our era, like globalization, security, stagnant incomes, and rising income inequality.

America has always been blessed with great natural resources. But in spite of these physical resources, our greatest strength has always been our human ones—the American spirit of ingenuity, creativity, and old fashioned hard work. Regrettably, the budget before this body fails to make the necessary investments to build and maintain the strength of our human capital, America's greatest asset. This may not be intentional; I presume that President Bush and my colleagues across the aisle believe just as strongly in boosting our nation's economic competitiveness. But regardless of their intentions, the fact is that mismanagement, misplaced priorities, and misguided faith in outdated economic ideologies continue to set us back.

On Friday of last week, an article appeared on an international news wire that is rather stunning in its implications for the budget resolution now pending before the Senate. The headline of this article, Mr. President, reads, ''China to Boost Science, Tech Spending by Nearly 20 Percent.'' The story continues:

> ''China will increase its spending on science and technology by nearly 20 percent this year in a move to remain competitive in the face of international challenges, the government said . . . The State Council, or cabinet, last month said 2.5 percent of China's gross domestic product (GDP) would be allocated to spending on research and development over the next 15 years, up from 1.23 percent in 2002.''

''The government,'' the article goes on to say, ''will not only allocate more money but also encourage all segments of society, including companies, to put emphasis on research and development through measures including tax incentives.''

Finally, it quotes the Minister of Science and Technology as telling the National People's Congress, ''Without progress on science and technology, it would be very hard to reach our target of becoming a well-off society.''

On one level, we as Americans should welcome the decision by virtually any country to invest more in science and technology. In fact, if more nations were to make a similar decision, the world as a whole would greatly benefit by peaceful advances in commerce and in finding solutions to some of the planet's most intractable problems.

But this news from China should also serve as a reminder to Americans, as we consider our budget priorities for the upcoming year and our vision for the future, of the commitment it takes to remain a leader in the global economy. Even with the passage of the amendment to increase Labor, Health, and Human Services funds offered by Senators SPECTOR and HARKIN, of which I was a cosponsor, this budget regrettably falls short.

The average American family over the last few years has been working harder and harder just to tread water. A household earning the median income made $1,600 less in 2004 than they did 4 years earlier. Meanwhile, during the same period, the average family's health insurance premiums have risen by $3,600, or 57 percent. Their energy costs continue to rise—even though many parts of the country had warmer than usual weather this winter, families can still expect to pay more than $250 extra this year to heat their homes. If they have a child attending a public 4-year college, that bill has gone up by 57 percent since 2000, as well.

My colleagues on the other side of the aisle claim that this budget sets us

on a path to fiscal responsibility. But as the Senator from North Dakota, the ranking member of the Budget Committee, has pointed out time and again before this body, that is anything but the case. Instead of saving for the retirement of the baby boomers—which is already beginning—we're borrowing like there's no tomorrow.

In 2000, we had a budget surplus of $128 billion; in 2006, largely as a consequence of the fiscal recklessness of this administration and the majority party in the Congress, the Federal Government is expected to run a deficit of $371 billion. Under this administration, the president and his allies will have added $3 trillion to our national debt by the end of this fiscal year. That would put America's public debt at more than $8.6 trillion, or around $28,000 for every man, woman, and child in America. Further, under the current administration, the share of that debt held by foreign creditors has more than doubled.

And it's not just the Federal Government that's borrowing, but the economy as a whole. Our personal savings rate in January was negative 0.7 percent, the 10th consecutive month for which it was effectively zero or below. Our current account deficit continues to set new records; it was an unprecedented $805 billion in 2005.

This dramatic run-up in the debt has real costs for America's families—both today and for future generations. It puts upward pressure on interest rates for things like student loans, home mortgages, and automobile loans. It raises the cost of capital for business investment. Rising interest rates, caused by America's growing indebtedness, represent a de facto tax increase on American families and businesses.

This administration's fiscal recklessness has also hurt our ability to address our nation's most important priorities, like education and health care, that strengthen our economic competitiveness and allow more Americans to share in greater prosperity. This budget provides a clear illustration of this failure, with the drastic cuts it would make in these areas.

The budget proposed by the Bush administration and my colleagues across the aisle would make the largest cut in our Nation's commitment to education in the 26-year history of the Education Department. These cuts will adversely affect students at all levels of learning. Investment and competitiveness begin with our children. As I have said many times before, education may be expensive, but ignorance costs more.

As I noted earlier, college tuition and fees have increased 57 percent for a public 4-year college. They have risen 32 percent for a private 4-year college since 2000. Yet instead of helping middle class families meet these skyrocketing college costs, this budget proposes to once again freeze the maximum Pell grant award at $4,050. In 1975, a Pell grant covered 80 percent of the cost of a public, 4-year college education; today, it covers only 40 percent. Surely we can do better than this for America's families. A college education should be a gateway to a better life for anyone willing to work for it, not just a privilege for those who can afford it.

This budget also continues to underfund K–12 education. The president and my colleagues on the other side of the aisle tout their commitment to education in the No Child Left Behind law. But this law is underfunded by $15.4 billion this year. The budget also cuts Head Start, afterschool programs, and child care, all of which prepare our children to learn better and help parents keep their kids in school and off the streets.

While countries like China are increasing their investments in science and technology, this budget would make a commitment in these areas that is little more than cosmetic. President Bush has talked a great deal about his so-called ''American Competitiveness Initiative,'' but under the budget he sent to the Congress, he would actually cut overall R&D funding in real terms for the first time since 1996. As a share of the economy, total Federal R&D funding would fall below 1 percent for the first time since fiscal year 2003.

One of the casualties would be biomedical and cancer research through the National Institutes of Health. Just two months ago, President Bush signed into law the first cut to NIH funding since 1970. Now, he has proposed further cutting funding for 18 of the 19 institutes in Fiscal 2007, including the ones conducting research on two of America's leading causes of death: cancer and heart disease.

The administration's proposals are reflected in the budget before this body today, which carries the same low level of overall discretionary spending. So while countries like China are setting goals like boosting R&D funding to 2.5 percent of Gross Domestic Product by 2020, we have nothing but a catchy slogan and cuts in the kinds of investments we need to stay strong.

This budget increases costs for entrepreneurs and small businesses. President Bush likes to say that his high-income tax breaks have benefited small business owners, but in reality, the distribution of benefits to small business owners has followed the same pattern as it has for everyone else—those with the highest incomes have received the most, and everyone else has been stuck with the bill. Among Americans with small business income, more than half of the benefits of the 2001 and 2003 tax breaks have been spent on those making more than $200,000 a year, or less than 8 percent of all small business owners, according to the nonpartisan Urban-Brookings Tax Policy Center. So while few small businesses have gained anything meaningful from the tax breaks, the administration this year is proposing to increase their cost of capital by charging a new fee for Small Business Administration loans. This would be a direct tax increase on one of our most important engines of growth. For an administration that claims to value small business, the record fails to live up to the rhetoric.

This budget fails the test of economic leadership not only by cutting investments in American competitiveness, but by abandoning our most basic American values. As Americans, we proudly look out for the least fortunate among us. Unfortunately, this budget fails to do this. It asks struggling parents to work more hours, but cuts the child care that helps them do it. It cuts funding for children's hospitals, like Hartford's Connecticut Children's Medical Center in my home state. Children's hospitals like CCMC train 30 percent of the Nation's pediatricians and more than 50 percent of the nation's pediatric specialists. This budget cuts food aid for senior citizens, pregnant women, and children. It cuts housing assistance and freezes funding that helps homeless veterans find work.

By adopting this budget, the president and his allies in the Congress would continue to walk away from one of America's bedrock principles: that everyone in our nation should have an equal opportunity to live a free and meaningful life.

While some of the amendments considered by this body appear on the surface to rectify some of the cuts this budget would make to vital priorities, they in reality fail to live up to their billing. The amendment offered by Senator MCCONNELL, for example, claimed to support port security, which should be one of our nation's highest priorities. It would have done so, however, through a budgetary gimmick that would result in an across-the-board cut to other areas, including, ironically, homeland security and national defense. It also would have provided no new funds beyond the already specified discretionary spending cap. Instead, it would have offered nothing more than non-binding instructions to the Appropriations Committee about how to allocate the funds under its jurisdiction. For this reason, I supported the port security amendment offered by Senator MENENDEZ instead of the McConnell amendment. The Menendez amendment would have provided the funds we need for this critical priority without making other cuts, and done so in a fiscally responsible manner by shutting down tax shelters and closing corporate tax loopholes, measures that have already passed this body on a bipartisan basis but which have not become law.

In the last few years, the American economy has weathered the storm of terrorist attacks, a downturn in the business cycle, natural disasters, and war. This is a testament to the strength and resiliency of the American people. But I wonder how much more our Nation can take of mismanaged economic policies and wrong priorities; of underinvestment in people, ideas, and innovation; and of an

agenda that increases the burden on the most vulnerable members of our society rather than lightening it, before we do irreparable harm.

If we want to continue to increase living standards and expand the capabilities of our society so that all may benefit, we must continue to invest in people, ideas, and innovation. We need a budget that will make our Nation stronger and more vibrant. We need more than just cosmetic solutions to the major challenges of our era. Above all, we need our government's priorities to reflect the values of the American people, like opportunity and responsibility, and the American vision of shared prosperity, expanding freedoms, and a just society. Regrettably, the budget offered by the President and by my colleagues across the aisle fails to accomplish these goals and fails to make the changes necessary to put our Nation back on the right course.

Mr. President, I have filed an amendment that will restore crucial investments to support our children and families in the fiscal year 2007 budget. I am joined on the amendment by Senators KENNEDY, CLINTON, HARKIN, MIKULSKI, MURRAY, DURBIN, LIEBERMAN, CANTWELL, KERRY, SALAZAR, BAUCUS, SCHUMER, LAUTENBERG, KOHL, and LINCOLN. It is important that we shift priorities and resources toward young children and families, to create an environment for healthy development and to help parents give their children the best possible start in life. Children represent one-quarter of our population but 100 percent of our future. We must nurture their growth and education as they provide the human capital that will determine our Nation's success in the global economy.

Today our families are working harder to pay for basic needs such as housing, fuel, health care, and childcare. At the same time, real income has decreased over the past 4 years. As a result, many hard-working families are finding it more difficult to make ends meet.

If our Nation is going to compete with the rest of the world, we must prepare our children for this challenge. It is essential that we cultivate the potential of each and every child. How can we know who may be a Nobel laureate, who may take us further into space, or who may be our future President, if we do not give them all an equal chance to thrive?

We all agree that we should not burden our children and grand children with great debt. Nor should our Nation abandon their need for health care, education, and other necessities.

As I said earlier, the amendment focuses on crucial assistance to children and families. The amendment is very simple. It takes several initiatives which have bipartisan support and restores the investments to a level that the Congress has already agreed to—in previous authorization or spending measures.

This amendment would increase resources by $3.3 billion in the fiscal year 2007 budget resolution for five programs: the childcare and development block grant by $540 million; Head Start by $520 million; 21st Century Community Learning Centers by $1.5 billion; Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act programs by $105 million; and the community services block grant by $650 million. In addition, it reduces the Federal deficit by $3.3 billion and pays for itself by closing corporate tax loopholes that were passed by the Senate in the tax reconciliation bill in February.

This amendment attempts to renew investments that have failed to keep pace with our Nation's needs. This proposal will restore the community services block grant to $650 million, the level Congress appropriated in fiscal year 2002; the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act initiatives to $200 million for the level authorized for fiscal year 2004; and restore funding to the level of $7.2 billion for Head Start to keep pace with inflation and recent across-the-board cuts.

In addition, the amendment brings the investment in afterschool up to $2.5 million, the level authorized for 21st century community learning centers in the No Child Left Behind Act. The childcare and development block grant investment will reach a level of $2.66 billion from its previous level-funding of $2.06 billion, if the amendment passes.

We must invest in our children and improve their lives. Each day, 12 million children ages 0 to 4 spend much of their day in out-of-home child care while their parents work. In a majority of cases, having both parents work is a necessity, not a choice.

Currently, about one in seven children who are eligible for childcare and development block grant—CCDBG—subsidies are receiving assistance. With childcare costing between $4,000 and $10,000 a year, many families simply can not afford to pay for the care they need. Average child care fees for a year exceed 10 percent of the median household income in most States. Not only is childcare an essential support for hard-working families, it is an important early education opportunity for children.

With respect to Head Start, only 50 percent of eligible children are enrolled in Head Start classes. Costs are rising for transportation, heating, and cooling, health insurance, and supplies. Some centers have cut back hours and days of service to children and let teachers go. Our children deserve a high-quality opportunity to learn and thrive through Head Start, and we should give more children that chance.

As they struggle to reach their own potential and achieve financial stability, working families require support. Community services block grant initiatives serve 15 million individuals, 6 million families and 3.7 million children. Forty-four percent of those receiving funds are gainfully employed, but they may still have trouble affording the cost of heating their home, putting food on the table, or sending their children to a quality childcare program. While each Federal dollar spent leverages more than $5 in State, local and private funding, the Federal investment is still essential to helping hard-working people get ahead.

At the very least, we must keep children from harm. Each year, nearly 3 million cases of child abuse and neglect are reported, and nearly 1 million of these cases are substantiated. States lack the resources necessary to investigate suspected cases, to protect children, and to prevent abuse and neglect from occurring. The Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act—CAPTA—helps communities maintain and expand efforts to improve children's lives. The amendment seeks to increase this important investment.

All of our children and families deserve a fair start. We know that investments in children pay dividends later in life. But it takes financial commitment and an understanding that we cannot waste a day of a child's life, leaving that child to play catchup later.

Families are asking for our help. I ask my colleagues to join me in heeding their call and supporting this amendment.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, every year the Senate considers a budget resolution that sets forth the blueprint for the Government's spending and revenues. Unfortunately, the budget we are considering this year continues the administration's policies that have led to the deepest deficits and debt in American history. It also reflects the wrong priorities by cutting important programs like education and Medicare to fund large tax cuts which mostly benefit the richest among us.

The result of these irresponsible fiscal policies is that we are passing on a huge burden to our children and grandchildren and threatening our economic security. Our Nation is currently $8.2 trillion in debt—that's over $27,000 per person—and this astounding number is only getting worse. Earlier today the Senate voted to raise the Federal debt limit for the fourth time in 5 years, meaning we've increased our debt by $3 trillion since 2002. A sensible budget resolution would try to curb this unsustainable trend; unfortunately, this budget moves in the wrong direction. Under this budget, the national debt would grow to $11.8 trillion in the next 5 years.

Continued deficits will mean rising long-term interest rates and slower economic growth. Continued deficits will make it more expensive to buy a house, pay for college, or pay off credit card debt. Alan Greenspan recently warned that, if left unchecked, deficits ''would cause the economy to stagnate or worse.'' Continued deficits will also mean the continued use of the Social Security Trust Fund to cover the funding shortfalls.

Instead of changing course, however, this budget proposes to make the administration's tax cuts permanent.

Over 10 years, the cost of making tax cuts permanent would be approximately $2.8 trillion, or $3.3 trillion when the added interest payments on the debt are included. Although the cost of the President's tax breaks are as large as the entire budgets of the Departments of Agriculture, Labor, Education, Veterans Affairs, Transportation, Justice, Interior, Energy, State, HUD, and EPA combined, his budget cuts critical programs which are a small percentage of the deficit problems his tax breaks create.

On a positive note, I was able to get an amendment included in this budget to provide $140 million to the Advanced Technology Program to support cost-shared industry-led research and development of cutting-edge high risk technology with broad commercial potential and societal benefits. America has lost nearly 2.8 million manufacturing jobs since January 2001. We should be doing all we can to promote programs that help create jobs and strengthen the technological innovation of American companies and produce the systems that are defending our national security.

I am also pleased that the Senate agreed to my amendment to add $6 million to the budget for the establishment of new Northern Border Air Wing sites. Northern Border Air Wings have been operational in New York and Washington since 2004 and I look forward to the opening of additional sites in Michigan, North Dakota, and Montana in the coming years. These sites will help improve critical air and marine interdiction capabilities along our Northern Border.

I am also pleased that the budget includes an important amendment that Senator STABENOW and I offered that will improve inspections of trash trucks entering the U.S. from Canada. These trucks pose a threat to our security and the environment, and this amendment is a critical step towards reducing these risks.

I am also pleased that the Senate adopted an amendment to the budget resolution to fund the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program, LIHEAP, at its full authorized level of $5.1 billion. This amendment would increase the LIHEAP funding for 2007 by $3.318 billion and offset the increased spending by closing corporate tax loopholes. The Senate has voted on five previous occasions to support full funding for the LIHEAP program, and I hope that this time the conferees on the budget resolution will retain this amendment. Full funding for LIHEAP will ensure that States are able to serve more people in need of assistance during both the cold winter months.

While there are certainly some positive inclusions in this budget package, it is entirely too fiscally irresponsible and short-changes too many important programs for me to vote to support it.

Mr. KOHL. Mr. President, I have serious reservations about this budget and will vote against it.

At their best, budgets ought to embody discipline, vision, and accuracy. Not so for this budget. While it claims fiscal discipline, that claim is belied in the budget's bloated bottom line. While it claims strategic vision, that vision is a blurred blend of wasted dollars, missed opportunities, and neglected priorities. While it claims financial accuracy, that accuracy is of the quality found in an Enron balance sheet.

The tax portion of the budget resolution is remarkable, not for what it contains, but for what it omits. It fails to account for the expiration of alternative minimum tax relief at the end of 2006. The AMT currently captures approximately 4 million, mostly middle-class, families and individuals in its high tax trap—a trap meant to catch only high-income taxpayers who take advantage of complicated loopholes to avoid paying their fair share. That number would swell to more than 34 million people in 2011 under this budget.

Instead of AMT reform, this budget contains $228 million to accommodate tax cuts that were included in the House and Senate passed reconciliation bills currently in conference. I voted against the Senate tax reconciliation bill because I could not support unnecessary tax cut extensions at a time of burgeoning deficits. The deficits are still burgeoning, and I still oppose those unneeded and unjustified tax breaks for our highest income taxpayers.

The budget's generosity to high-income taxpayers is offset by its miserly treatment of our Nation's educational system. The budget proposes the largest cut to federal education funding in the 26-year history of the Education Department. Students, educators, parents, and administrators all lose out. Under this budget, funding for No Child Left Behind and special education will still fall far short of their authorized levels. The same holds for Career and Technical Education, Safe and Drug Free Schools, and TRIO programs. I commend Senators SPECTER and HARKIN for their successful amendment to restore some of these deeps cuts, and hope their provision will survive conference with the House.

As ranking member of the Senate Special Committee on Aging, I am also troubled that some of the most painful cuts in this budget would fall on important programs at the Administration on Aging. The meager funding levels in this budget would put Meals on Wheels and Family Caregiver Support Services on the chopping block. That means that, while Wisconsin's senior population continues to grow from 705,000 senior citizens in 2000 to 730,000 seniors this year, and is projected to grow to 1.2 million seniors by 2025, this budget will not keep pace with needed services in Wisconsin or any other State.

Funding for geriatric health professions is also likely to suffer. Title VII funding for geriatrics training is the only Federal program that specifically develops academic geriatricians at a time when more are needed. In prior years, Congress has demonstrated its strong support for the program through continued and increased appropriations over the past five years, including $31.5 million in fiscal year 2005. I was disappointed that the fiscal year 2006 Labor, HHS bill eliminated this program, and I am even more concerned that the budget before us makes it difficult, if not impossible to restore it in fiscal year 2007. Delegates to the recent White House Conference on Aging ranked increased training in geriatrics among their top ten resolutions at the once in a decade meeting in December of 2005. Clearly, this budget does not adequately prepare for our aging population.

Nowhere is that more clear than in the budget resolution's treatment—or lack thereof—of the Medicare prescription drug benefit. During consideration of this budget, many of us worked to improve that benefit. The launch of the drug benefit has been confusing and complicated for too many seniors and people with disabilities. Medicare beneficiaries who do not choose a plan by the May 15 deadline and enroll at a later date will face a substantial and permanent penalty. I cosponsored an amendment to extend the enrollment period through all of 2006 to give people additional time to make the best plan choice for them. This amendment would have also allowed a one-time change in plan enrollment at any point in 2006.

Enrolling in drug plans has been challenging and confusing for too many beneficiaries, and it makes sense to give them a chance to correct an initial mistake made during this difficult first year of implementation. Unfortunately, our amendment failed by one vote and the Senate instead gave Medicare managers discretionary authority to decide to extend the enrollment deadline for the drug benefit. While I voted for that amendment because I believe it is important to send a strong signal, I am concerned by recent comments made by the President and Medicare officials. Those comments clearly show their resistance to giving seniors more time to make a careful decision about what drug plan they will be locked into for the remainder of the year.

In addition, under current law, prescription drug plans can change the drugs they cover as many times as they want—while seniors are prohibited from changing drug plans except during the annual open enrollment period. This means that after seniors complete their research and choose the drug plan they believe is the best plan for their needs, they have no guarantee that their drugs will continue to be covered all year. That is why I cosponsored an amendment that would prohibit Medicare prescription drug plans from removing a drug from their approved list until the beginning of each plan year. This would ensure that seniors will not lose coverage of the drugs

they take without being allowed to also change their plan.

Finally, one of the most troublesome features of the new law is that it prohibits the Government from utilizing the tremendous purchasing power of the Medicare program to reduce prices. I cosponsored an amendment to repeal this provision and allow the Federal Government to negotiate directly with drug companies for lower drug prices for seniors. I am pleased the amendment passed and I hope this provision will remain in the final resolution.

The budget was also improved by an amendment, of which I was an original sponsor, on the Manufacturing Extension Partnership program, MEP. The amendment, which was unanimously accepted, would fund the MEP at $106 million for fiscal year 2007. I am a longtime supporter of the MEP program and believe manufacturing is crucial to the U.S. economy. By offering resources, including organized workshops and consulting projects, to manufacturers, MEP allows them to streamline operations, integrate new technologies, shorten production times, and lower costs. At a time when we want to increase economic activity and strengthen the manufacturing base of our nation, the MEP is a fiscally sound investment.

I am similarly pleased that this budget was amended to include adequate funding for the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program. I voted to include $5.1 billion in order to fund this valuable program at its fully authorized level. Just a few months ago the Congress passed an energy bill, which I supported, which funded LIHEAP at $5.1 billion. This was a sorely needed update to a program where the funding has been frozen at an inadequate amount for years. There was bipartisan support for the Energy Bill, and I am pleased the Congress met the commitment we made in that bill.

But even those improvements—important as they are to me—fail to make up for one of the central and most disturbing inadequacies of this budget. This budget simply fails to provide adequate resources to take care of our returning troops. Once again the President's budget requires the Veterans Administration to charge veterans an enrollment fee and increases the co-payments for veterans receiving medical care through the VA system. These charges add insult to injury when veterans are also being forced to wait for months before they are able to see a doctor at the local VA hospital. Senator AKAKA's amendment tried to remedy this situation by adding an additional $1.5 billion to the budget, but his responsible approach was rejected.

We face unprecedented challenges in our Nation today. War and terrorism demand our resources and attention. An aging population struggles to find the money to educate the next generation while battling sky high health care costs. Our powerful economy fights to create high quality jobs in a world market of constant technological innovation and fierce international competition.

We need a budget that that sees and meets these challenges clearly—vision. We need a budget that faces the difficult realities of our world today with honest proposals and precise numbers—accuracy. And we need a budget that does what we should and must and no more—discipline. We have a budget that does none of that, and so I will vote ''no.''

AMENDMENT NO. 3116

Mr. NELSON of Nebraska. Mr. President, some of my colleagues may be surprised to learn—like I was—that some agencies are skimming off the top a portion of some of the congressional appropriations and keeping that money in that agency.

My amendment is simple. It says: If it has been determined that a constituency warrants a direct appropriation—one that has gone through the scrutinizing process and is supported by the House, Senate and then signed into law—then that constituency should receive the full amount.

Bureaucrats at the agencies should not be unilaterally determining that some sort of ''surcharge'' should be assessed to these projects. It amounts to a tax on our constituents. And it usurps the authority of Congress by circumventing the legislative process and giving nameless faceless bureaucrats the authority to alter legislation after it is signed into law.

And in the case where our constituents determine that the full amount of the earmark is not needed and turns back some of the funding to the government—this amendment says that instead of going to bureaucrats in the agencies to spend as they wish—it should instead go towards deficit reduction.

I offer this amendment because long before some started discussing concerns about the appropriations process, I identified—with the assistance of the Congressional Research Service—and have made an effort to investigate this practice of skimming from Congressional appropriations. Let's just say our efforts thus far have been less than successful: almost half of the agencies that have been contacted for information have not bothered to respond.

Each year, I invite Nebraskans—including community officials and nonprofit groups—to propose investments that help ensure some of their tax dollars are returned to the state. I am often approached by Nebraskans seeking help with a project that has been identified as a priority by local officials or others in the community. I support these direct investments only after they have been proposed by Nebraskans and been subjected to reviews to ensure they are both necessary and responsible.

In the absence of a full accounting of how the agencies handle this practice, I am working with the information that has thus far been shared with me. I plan to continue my efforts to seek out information on this practice by the agencies. I can assure this body that as the budget process moves forward this year, I will continue in my efforts to crack down on this practice by agencies to skim some off some of these funds.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I oppose this budget. This administration has chosen to continue down an unsustainable economic path. They have put forth an irresponsible budget that does not take constructive steps toward righting our Nation's fiscal course. I strongly urge my Senate colleagues not to follow suit.

Our Nation is going in the wrong direction. The signals grow more evident each day.

Deficits are at record levels. The debt is reaching astronomic heights. And we have fewer resources available for important domestic programs.

Under President Clinton, we had 4 years of budget surplus. And, when he left office, we had a projected 10-year surplus of $5.6 trillion.

But the economic policies of the past 5 years have produced a catastrophic turnaround. Record budget surpluses have given way to record deficits—projected at $1.6 trillion over the next decade. And the debt is projected to exceed $11 trillion.

This budget resolution assumes that the deficit will decline from $359 billion in FY 2007 to $177 billion in FY 2011. Unfortunately, these numbers don't tell the whole story.

This is a 5-year budget. This clouds the full impact of the administration's policies. The debt and deficit are set to explode in the out years—the end of the 10-year window. And, this does not even include the costs of ongoing military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan beyond 2007 and reforming the alternative minimum tax beyond 2006.

When all costs are included, this budget proposal will contribute $1.14 trillion to the Federal budget deficit over the next 5 years.

In this year alone, our national debt is slated to increase by $654 billion. This is a far cry from the President's goals for deficit reduction, and deeply troubling to those who value fiscal responsibility.

As a result, we are now again confronted with raising the nation's debt limit. The increase—from $8.2 trillion to roughly $9 trillion—will be the fourth major hike in the last 5 years.

In 2000, our national debt was at $5.8 trillion. Today, this figure stands at $8.27 trillion. And, at this rate, with all costs included, debt will more than double to $12 trillion in 2011.

Additionally, more and more of our debt is being held in foreign hands. We now owe Japan $685 billion and China over $250 billion. It took 42 Presidents 224 years to run up $1 trillion of foreign held debt. In only 5 years, President Bush has more than doubled that amount.

Contrast this with the last 3 years of the Clinton administration, where we

paid off more than $200 billion in debt to foreign countries.

These staggering figures represent a great burden for future generations who will have to pay the bill. They also keep interest rates high, limit economic growth, and slow job creation.

This President has the worst record of private sector job growth since Herbert Hoover. And the jobs that are created are largely minimum wage and temporary work. Americans are working harder, for less money. Average household income for working families decreased by $1,669 between 2000 and 2005, when adjusted for inflation.

By almost every indicator, American families are facing tough times: Housing affordability, a big problem in California, is at a 14-year low; Health care costs are up 50 percent since 2000; Gas prices are up 60 percent; College costs at public universities are up 57 percent; 45 million people are going without health care, including 6.6 million in California; and 37 million Americans are living in poverty, a number that has increased each year under this administration, U.S. Census Bureau.

You'd think that this budget would attempt to provide relief for most Americans. Instead middle-class families are asked to do more with less.

At the same time, the President is proposing to make tax breaks permanent for the wealthiest Americans—at a cost of $1.3 trillion over the next decade. And, when you combine the cost of the tax cuts with costs of war in Iraq—currently totaling $370 billion—the inevitable result is that critical domestic programs are squeezed.

The budget before the Senate today reflects these constraints by: Cutting food stamps, by $272 million; Cutting food assistance for seniors and children, by $111 million; Reducing the effectiveness of our police officers in cutting COPS by more than $407 million, 15,000 officers nationwide; Cutting $244 million from firefighter grants; Failing to reimburse state and local governments for the Federal responsibilities in paying for the incarceration of illegal immigrants; Cutting funding for 18 of the 19 National Institutes of Health, including those conducting research on cancer and heart disease; And, No Child Left Behind, the President's signature education program, would be underfunded this year by more than $15 billion and $55.78 billion since it was enacted.

These are vital priorities that must be funded.

Because of record federal deficits and debt, money that could have been available for education, healthcare, defense, infrastructure, job development, and homeland security, must now go to interest payments.

In 2006, interest costs alone on the national debt will total nearly $400 billion. And, this figure will grow to nearly $600 billion over the next 5 years. Total non-defense discretionary spending—$416 billion in this budget—is only modestly larger than this interest payment.

This could have been prevented.

The Congressional Budget Office estimated that last year, economic problems caused only about 8 percent of the deficit. The rest resulted from policy choices by Congress and this administration—largely tax cuts for the wealthiest among us.

The time has come to chart a different course, and make the tough choices that the President and this resolution avoid.

We must adopt a balanced approach to both taxes and spending and return to a program of fiscal sanity.

When I first came to the Senate, over a decade ago, a small, bipartisan group decided to get our fiscal house in order. Democrats worked to bring spending under control. And Republicans pledged not to push for additional tax cuts.

I have no problem holding the line on spending, but believe that it must be done in the context of a more responsible approach to tax policy.

We must consider rolling back the tax cut for the wealthiest Americans, to bring the income tax rate from its current 35 percent back to 38.6 percent.

This will affect those earning more than $312,000 per year—less than one percent of taxpayers—but will save nearly $130 billion over the next decade.

Finally, we need to work together to begin addressing some of the deeper structural problems with Social Security and Medicare—before these programs fall into crisis.

These are not easy answers. But, we must change the direction in which this nation is moving. We cannot afford to continue down this path of fiscal irresponsibility. Americans work hard to balance their checkbooks and live within their budgets. They deserve a Government willing to do the same.

Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, I cannot support this budget resolution. It closely mirrors the President's budget which projects the largest deficit in history for 2006 $423 billion. We are on an unsustainable path. We cannot continue year after year to pass budget resolutions that increase the deficit, rather than put us on a course of fiscal responsibility.

Not only should we be concerned about growing deficits, we should be concerned about the debt. Under this budget, the deficit will increase to $371 billion for 2006, and the debt will increase by $654 billion a year. The Senate has just passed a $781 billion increase in the debt ceiling, the fourth largest debt limit increase in our Nation's history. This is the fourth time that the Bush administration has requested an increase in the debt. These increases now total $3 trillion.

The service on the debt alone for this year is $220 billion. This money could be put to better use. With the approaching retirement of the baby boomers, we should not be increasing the debt.

The budget being debated today is not based in reality. It leaves out the full 10 year numbers. Without these numbers, the budget hides the full cost of making the 2001 and 2003 tax cuts permanent. The budget does not include funding for the ongoing war costs beyond 2007. Relief from the individual alternative minimum tax, AMT, is only addressed for 2006. It does not include the President's Social Security privatization proposal.

This budget is incomplete. If the missing items were added back, the debt would increase every year by more than $600 billion. The deficit and debt will continue to explode because the budget will continue a course of spending more than the amount of revenue raised.

It is not right to vote on budget that is incomplete. In his budget, the President only chose to address the AMT for 1 year—2006—and chose not to address it for the current budget year. The administration's budget deliberately leaves out a more permanent solution for the AMT for two reasons: first, the AMT would add additional costs to the budget; and second, the AMT masks the true costs of the 2001 and 2003 tax cuts.

This budget resolution follows the administration's lead. It chooses to only address the AMT for 2006 and to extend tax provisions that do not expire until the end of 2010. The budget does not address the 23 million families that will be impacted by the AMT in 2007, but the budget makes sure that the tax cuts that are skewed to those making more than $1 million are extended through 2011.

This budget continues the repeated pattern of choosing tax cuts for the wealthy rather than investing in our future. The tax cuts going to those who on average earn over $1 million a year cost $41 billion for a single year. In contrast, the President's budget cuts education by $2.2 billion—the biggest cut ever for education. This budget shortchanges veterans. There are reductions in law enforcement, firefighter grants, and essential air services. These are just a few of the many examples how the budget's priorities are misguided.

The budget does not adequately address healthcare. Access to quality, affordable health care continues to be a challenge for most Americans and the Bush budget only exacerbates the problems. And what about the uninsured? There is nothing in this budget to help them. Sure, there are some recycled, stale proposals the administration has been trying to advance for 5 years now but nothing really new. Nothing that will help any families gain access to coverage that is quality, affordable, comprehensive care. It's high time we have a real debate and discussion in the Congress on real reforms necessary to address the health needs of our nation.

The budget resolution assumes the deep cuts and unprecedented fees for the Small Business Administration, SBA. The administration's request of

$624 million is insufficient to meet the needs of small businesses in this country that need access to capital, counseling and Federal contracts. By the SBA's own calculation, the request is $18 million less than what was available to the Agency last year when congressional initiatives and disaster supplemental appropriations are excluded.

I proposed an amendment to increase the funding shortfall by $151 million and it was offset by closing abusive corporate tax loopholes. Unfortunately, this amendment did not garner bipartisan support. However, we were able to reach a bipartisan agreement that would increase SBA funding by $130 million.

This budget is another example of how the Republican controlled Congress continues to misuse the reconciliation process. The reconciliation process was designed to make it easier to pass difficult legislation that would provide fiscal discipline. It is now being used to ram through tax cuts and pet priorities that do not have the support of 60 Senators.

I am vigorously opposed to the inclusion in the budget of assumed revenues and a reconciliation instruction for the Energy and Natural Resources Committee linked to opening the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to oil and gas leasing and development. I object to the inclusion of drilling in the refuge for two primary reasons. First, it is irresponsible to base our budget on the highly speculative projection of lease revenues from the Coastal Plain. Second, I oppose using the reconciliation process to open the Arctic Refuge to drilling because it would limit consideration of this highly controversial issue.

The reconciliation process is being used to address only one Senate committee's jurisdiction, and is clearly intended to authorize oil and gas leasing in the Arctic Refuge. This underscores that the real objective of the process is not deficit reduction, but rather to circumvent normal Senate process and procedure with respect to this controversial subject.

On the whole this budget reflects no new ideas and recycles bad policies. This budget fails to address reality, and I therefore cannot support it.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, today, I filed an amendment that would increase funding for basic research at the National Institutes of Health, and restore cuts made under the President's budget to critical R&D programs. It would have been fully offset by closing tax loopholes. But I faced opposition from my Republican colleagues and it was not accepted.

This budget and the President's American Competitiveness Initiative make no new serious commitments to invest in R&D. The President would have you believe that he is increasing our investment in R&D when it barely keeps pace with projected inflation. To fund the increases at the National Science Foundation and other increases, every other R&D agency will see real cuts for the next 5 years. It just creates winners and losers.

In fact, this budget keeps our R&D investment stagnant—it has already flat-lined at 1.1 percent of our GDP.

If America is going to compete and win in the global economy, we must innovate and support basic research in all areas. We want the new inventions and new technologies and new cures to be made in the U.S.A. And that means supporting the basic research that is the foundation of new discoveries that will create the good jobs of the future.

But this budget cuts funding for basic research. The National Academy of Sciences, the Council on Competitiveness, and Nobel prize winners like American physicist Steven Chu say that is wrong for America's future.

When Dr. Chu testified before the Senate last year, he said ''There are growing signs that all is not well . . . We call for an increased federal investment in long-term, basic research.''

The Internet, the laser, MRIs, and the mapping of the human genome all came about from basic research at DOD, NIH, and other Federal agencies. Think of the millions of jobs that these innovations have created.

I intend to continue my efforts in the Senate to ensure that American innovation will continue. It is critical to our growth and our future competitiveness.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I rise today to discuss my amendment to the fiscal year 2007 budget resolution, which would have provided immediately for a $4,500 Pell grant for needy students. My amendment would have redirected the savings generated by the HELP Committee as part of reconciliation back to student aid, as originally intended and passed by the committee and the full Senate.

Last year, through Chairman ENZI's leadership, the HELP Committee drafted a bipartisan Higher Education Act reauthorization and reconciliation instructions. The committee was instructed to find savings of $13.7 billion—$7 billion of which was to be generated from education programs. The committee developed reconciliation instructions that included savings of over $20 billion. As a member of the HELP Committee, I can say that we purposely generated additional savings with the intent that a portion of the savings would be returned to students in the form of grant aid.

Accordingly, the committee created two programs for Pell-eligible students. We allocated $2.25 billion for SMART grants to target aid to students who study math, science or a critical foreign language. We also allocated $6 billion to the Provisional Grant Assistance Program, or ProGAP. These increases in the Pell grant program are critical, given that tuition has increased rapidly.

This year alone, tuition rose by 7.1 percent at public colleges and 5.9 percent at private universities. Yet students and families have seen no growth in the Pell grant program in the past 4 years; the maximum Pell award has been stagnant at $4,050 since fiscal year 2003. ProGAP would have immediately provided current Pell recipients with a $4,500 maximum grant.

However, when the Deficit Reduction Act returned to the Senate from conference with the House, ProGAP had been eliminated and was replaced by Academic Competitiveness grants. The majority will claim to have increased grant aid for needy students through Academic Competitiveness and SMART grants.

However, the Congressional Budget Office has estimated that less than 10 percent of Pell-eligible students will be able to take advantage of the Academic Competitiveness and SMART grants in 2006. The percent of eligible students rises slowly, from 10.3 percent in 2007 to a paltry 13.5 percent in 2010. Given the existence of both Academic Competitiveness and SMART grants in the conference bill, adopting my amendment would have allowed us to help both needy Pell students and target math and science programs.

The intention of the committee was for the savings generated from changes to the student loan programs go towards deficit reduction and student aid. Not only did the final bill significantly reduce the aid going to students, the savings are clearly going for tax cuts that will not help the families we sought to help in the bill we passed in the Senate. In fact, even with the savings generated through the Deficit Reduction Act, the tax cuts cost more than the savings we generated. The newest tax cuts yet again result in an increase to the deficit.

Currently only one-third of the U.S. workforce has a postsecondary education, but it is estimated that 60 percent of new jobs in the 21st century will require a college education. Workers who have attended college on average have higher incomes and lower rates of unemployment than those who don't. And those with a college education also are more likely to have jobs with benefits like health care, retirement and pensions plans.

My amendment would have restored our original intent of the Senate by redirecting the savings generated by the HELP Committee into the pockets of needy students, not the pockets of the wealthy benefiting from the tax cuts.

Mr. President, I withdrew my amendment after we had a huge victory for education—the overwhelming passage of the Specter-Harkin amendment which would provide $7 billion in increased funding to health and education programs. As an appropriator, I know first hand how critical that funding will be for education programs in fiscal year 2007. But we must all fight to retain that funding when the budget resolution is conferenced with the House. We should not accept a final budget resolution that does not contain the funding provided through the Specter-Harkin amendment.

While I withdrew my amendment today, I will continue to fight for increasing Pell grants and student aid. We can do better than level funding for our nation's needy college students.

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. President, as many of you know, I am co-chair of the Senate Rural Health Caucus and have worked on rural hospital and provider equity issues for a long time. Of course, the Senate does not always agree on every issue especially when it comes to health care. Over the years, however, the Rural Health Caucus has proved to be a bipartisan forum for Members on both sides of the aisle to come together and work on real solutions to help rural Americans have access to the same affordable, quality health care services as folks living in urban areas.

There are now over 80 members of the Rural Health Caucus, and together we remain committed to making sure the unique health care needs of rural and frontier areas are met. We all shared the success of passing landmark rural Medicare equity provisions in the Medicare Modernization Act of 2003. This legislation included the most comprehensive attempt to put rural providers on a level playing field with their urban counterparts. Clearly, this was a significant victory, but there is much more still to do.

As most of you know, the President's fiscal year 2007 budget eliminated or severely reduced several effective and efficient rural health programs. Now, I have long believed that we need to hold Federal agencies and programs accountable for the taxpayer dollars they spend. I also believe the Federal Government cannot be all things to all people. Congress must take the necessary, and often difficult, steps to ensure we put this country on a solid path toward reducing the deficit. Of course, we all have different ideas on how to achieve that goal. I agree with Chairman GREGG that we can start by slowing—and in some cases—eliminating wasteful spending. The budget before us focuses, primarily, on cutting spending and encouraging growth. If programs are not meeting their intended purpose, or are not performing well, then it is fair to look at eliminating the program. Many of the programs Congress funds are duplicative in nature. We have a responsibility to identify reasonable ways to root out waste, streamline program creating and spending, and manage our limited resources so that we can serve folks better.

While it is important to identify and eliminate wasteful and inefficient programs, I also believe that we must support government policies that work. Rural health care programs operate on a shoestring budget. Current spending for all rural health discretionary programs is relatively small, but it plays a critical role in solidifying the fragile health care infrastructure common in rural communities. There are several important rural health programs such as: rural hospital flexibility grants, rural outreach program, trauma care, small hospital improvement program, health professions training, and rural access to emergency devices which all play a key role in delivering services to our medically underserved rural areas. The importance of these programs should not be undervalued. They meet our unique rural health needs by improving emergency medical service networks, developing chronic disease management programs, implementing quality improvement initiatives, and helping small rural hospitals unable to keep their doors open convert to Critical Access Hospital, CAH, status.

In Wyoming, rural health programs have made a real difference in the quality, access, and affordability of care available in our frontier communities. That is why I am extremely pleased to see the budget before us today assumes a $235 million increase for the Health Resources and Services Administration, HRSA, over the President's request. Chairman GREGG's mark clearly states this $235 million increase is primarily intended to support rural health programs. I want to take this opportunity to thank Chairman GREGG for his hard work and support of this important issue. These increases will go a long way toward helping rural hospitals and providers deliver essential health care services to many remote and medically underserved areas.

I also want to especially thank my colleague from North Dakota, Senator CONRAD, for consistently partnering with me to ensure fair and equitable rural health treatment in the budget process.

I now look forward to working with all members of the Senate Rural Health Caucus as we fight to ensure adequate funding for rural health programs during the fiscal year 2007 appropriations process.

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, I rise today with my colleague, the distinguished Senator from Oregon, to speak out against the administration's proposal to fund the Secure Rural Schools Program with a fire sale of our public land. It is vital to rural Montana and rural America that we reauthorize and fully fund the Secure Rural Schools Program, but we should not do it by putting a ''for sale'' sign on our prime hunting and fishing lands.

The administration's padlock proposal to sell public lands to reauthorize the Secure Rural Schools Program sells rural America short. Montana and Oregon like many other States are outdoors States. We hunt. We fish. We take our kids hiking and camping. Our public lands are part of our recreational heritage as Americans. We should be increasing access for hunters and anglers, not putting more padlocks on more gates.

The administration's land grab proposal is bad for sportsmen, an it is bad for our schools. Back in 2000, I was proud to be a cosponsor of Senator WYDEN and Senator CRAIG's secure rural schools bill. The Secure Rural Schools Act has given counties more money, more certainty, and more flexibility. I would call that a pretty good solution. We should not be abandoning 6 years of success. It is vital to our rural communities that we reauthorize the Secure Rural Schools Act, and I will fight tooth and nail with Senator WYDEN to protect our public lands, reauthorize the Secure Rural Schools Act, and stop the administration's misguided land grab.

Mr. WYDEN, Mr. President, I am in full agreement with my friend and colleague from Montana. The idea to sell public lands to fund the secure rural schools reauthorization is a fundamentally flawed one. It pushes the debate over public lands and forestry back into the political briar patch despite the power of the legislation to bring traditional enemies together all across rural America in over 40 States and over 700 counties. It is because of the good work by my friend from Montana that this faulty idea is not assumed as part of this budget we debate today.

As Senator BAUCUS and I continue our exhaustive search in the next weeks for offsets to pay for the reauthorization of the county payments legislation, he and I will continue our work to defeat the ill-conceived and divisive idea of selling off public lands to pay for the continuation of such a collaborative and locally successful program. From his position as the ranking member of the Senate Finance Committee, on which I am privileged to serve with him, I feel sure that he will come up with the winning solution to offset the costs of reauthorizing this vital national program.

Mr. ENSIGN. Mr. President, last year when the Senate was considering the national intelligence reform bill, we adopted several recommendations of the 9/11 Commission.

One of those recommendations was to hire an additional 2,000 new Custom and border protection agents each year for the next 5 years. This body agreed with the recommendation. We agreed that our national security depended on such an investment, and we enacted that recommendation into law.

We are now considering a budget resolution that will determine whether Congress will keep the promise we made to the American people to protect our Nation's borders. There are many provisions in this budget that demonstrate a commitment to border security. I thank and congratulate Chairman Gregg for those provisions. But the budget that was reported out of committee includes funding for only 1,500 new agents in the coming year.

My amendment would provide $153 million to ensure that we hire 2,000 new agents next year. This amendment is fully offset. Let's face it—the threat of illegal border crossing by people who wish to kill us is very real. In order to prevent another terrorist attack on American soil, we must improve every aspect of our Nation's security. Our security is truly only as strong as our weakest link.

For too long, the lack of funding for border agents has been a weak link. By funding additional agents, we protect both our southern and our often neglected northern border. This will make it harder for terrorists to enter the United States and attack us.

There have been several news reports recently that I want to bring to my colleagues' attention.

Last year, intelligence officials confirmed that the terrorist, Zarqawi, plans to infiltrate America through our borders. He plans to attack targets such as movie theaters, restaurants, and schools. My amendment commits the resources to make sure that this does not happen.

Just last summer, in Detroit, a Lebanese national named Mahmoud Youssef Kourani, who was in the United States illegally, pled guilty in Federal court to conspiring to raise money for a recognized terrorist group. He was in the United States raising money to fund terrorists. That is outrageous. But what is equally outrageous is how he came into the United States in the first place.

Kourani took advantage of our porous border. Kourani paid a Mexican consular official in Beirut $3,000 for a visa to enter Mexico. Once in Mexico, he snuck across the U.S.-Mexican border in 2001 and settled in Michigan.

According to Federal prosecutors, Kourani and another member of his family are heavily involved with the same group that killed 214 marines in Beirut in 1983 and which is also responsible for bombing two U.S. Embassies.

While in the United States, Kourani also helped harbor other illegal immigrants. Thankfully, he was prosecuted before he could inflict any direct harm on any American.

Given how easy it is for people like Kourani to enter the United States, I believe that my amendment is imperative to our national security.

My amendment does not require any additional spending. It is completely offset. This amendment is paid for.

Homeland Security spending must be based on priorities. The fact that terrorists would use our borders to gain access to the United States to attack us is a real threat. So we must provide funds for Customs and border protection.

Four and a half years ago it only took 19 to change the course of this country. We must do everything that we can to prevent another terrorist attack on American soil.

The world has changed dramatically since 9/11 when the terrorists used our open and trusting society against us. We can not allow a repeat of that tragedy.

This amendment will help those who guard our frontiers by providing the necessary, and I stress necessary, tools to ensure the safety of our citizens.

I urge my colleagues to adopt my amendment.

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, as we continue to debate the budget resolution, I wanted to raise an important issue with my colleagues. The budget for fiscal year 2007 that was proposed by the administration would discontinue all activities of the National Children's Study or NCS.

This important study which was authorized as part of the Children's Health Act of 2000, provides for the development and implementation of the largest longitudinal study of children ever conducted in the United States. The goal of the study is to improve the health and well-being of children. The information from this study will be used to determine and affect the major causes of childhood illness such as premature birth, asthma, obesity, preventable injury, autism, developmental delay, mental illness, and learning disorders.

These disorders, among many other high-frequency diseases that afflict children, result from the interaction of multiple biologic, genetic, chemical, social and behavioral factors that combine to determine health. Researchers will analyze how these elements interact with each other and what helpful and/or harmful effects they might have on children's health. By studying children through their different phases of growth and development, researchers will be better able to understand the role of these factors on health and disease.

The National Children's Study will follow a representative sample of America's children in order to identify causes and develop treatments of specific diseases, and develop population-based intervention strategies to prevent illness and ameliorate the impacts of poverty and substandard environments on children's growth, development, and mental health. This will include approximately 100,000 children from over 100 locations throughout the United States.

Since 2000, over 50 million has been spent planning the study. Over 2,500 scientists and community members from across the country have developed a study plan that defines research question, hypotheses, and critical exposure and outcome measures beginning before pregnancy and continuing throughout the life cycle of children. In 2005, the Study designated seven Vanguard pilot centers throughout the United States, including sites in California, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, Utah, and Wisconsin to begin the study with over 100 additional sites planned across the Nation.

It is unfortunate that funding for the study was zeroed out the President's budget and would be extremely shortsighted to put off this study. While there are upfront costs to conduct a study of this size, they are dwarfed by the cost of treating the diseases and conditions it can be expected to address. The National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, NICHD estimates that the major chronic diseases the study will address directly cost American $269 billion per year. If the study were to result in only a 1 percent reduction in those costs, the expense of the entire 20-plus year study could be recouped in a single year.

The environment in which our children grow up has changed significantly over the past 50 years, resulting in increases in rates of diseases such as asthma, obesity, and learning and other developmental disabilities. In order to overcome these challenges, we need to invest in the National Children's Study, in addition to other research efforts to improve our understanding of how to prevent disease and improve the environments in which our children live.

As a parent of three children, and now a grandparent of three, I know how important it is to provide a healthy environment for our youth. I hope the future will be brighter for future generations, and one way we can make that happen is by finding the answers to many health questions that plague us today. The National Children's Study will be one of the richest information resources available to children's health and development and will form the basis of child health guidance, interventions, and policy for generations to come.

It is my hope that this body will do all it can to restore the cuts to the NCS and keep this critical work moving forward, and I will work with my colleagues through the Appropriations Committee to make that happen.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, my amendment No. 3154 to the budget resolution would restore much-needed funding to the Bulletproof Vest Partnership Program. The administration's budget slashes this program by $20 million, which amounts to a 63-percent cut to a program that helps save the lives of law enforcement officers nationwide by providing State and local law enforcement agencies with the resources to help buy body armor for their officers.

My amendment supports the allocation of $41 million in funding for bulletproof vest partnership grants to fully fund it at the authorized level of $50 million in fiscal year 2007. The increase in funds is offset by discretionary spending reductions.

Our former colleague Senator Campbell and I authored the Bulletproof Vest Grant Partnership Act of 1998 in response to the tragic Carl Drega shootout in 1997 on the Vermont-New Hampshire border, in which two State troopers who lacked bulletproof vests were killed. The federal officers who responded to the scenes of the shooting spree were equipped with life-saving body armor, but the State and local law enforcement officers lacked protective vests because of the cost.

We have successfully reauthorized this program three more times: in the Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant Act of 2000, in the State Justice Institute Reauthorization Act of 2004, and

most recently as part of the Violence Against Women and Department of Justice Reauthorization Act of 2005. It is now authorized at $50 million per year through fiscal year 2009.

Year after year, the Bulletproof Vest Partnership Program saves the lives and spares injuries of law enforcement officers nationwide by providing more help to State and local law enforcement agencies to purchase body armor. Since its inception in 1999, this highly successful DOJ program has provided law enforcement officers in 16,000 jurisdictions nationwide with nearly 350,000 new bulletproof vests. In Vermont, more than 150 municipalities have used this partnership help to purchase 1,400 vests. Without the assistance this program offers, I daresay there would be close to that number of police officers without vests in Vermont today.

Compounding the ongoing funding needs to help purchase vests, concerns from the law enforcement community over the effectiveness of body armor surfaced nearly 2 years ago when a Pennsylvania police officer was shot and critically wounded through his relatively new Zylon-based body armor vest. In August 2005, the Justice Department announced that test results indicated that used Zylon-based vests may not provide the intended level of ballistic resistance. Unfortunately, an estimated 200,000 of these faulty vests have been purchased—many with vest partnership funds—and now need to be replaced.

We know that body armor saves lives, but the cost has put these vests out of the reach of many of the officers who need them. This program makes it more affordable for police departments of all sizes. Few things mean more to me than when I meet Vermont police officers and they tell me that the protective vests they wear were made possible because of this program. This is the least we should do for the officers on the front lines who put themselves in danger for us every day.

I want to make sure that every police officer who needs a bulletproof vest gets one. If the Senate approves this amendment to fully fund this program at $50 million, then we will be on our way to helping ease the burden faced by officers and their families and to further our mission to provide every police officer who needs a safe vest with the means to purchase one.

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, as a member of the Budget Committee, I am deeply disappointed that the budget we are considering and the one proposed by the President last month will make finding adequate funding for so many of our Nation's domestic priorities exceedingly hard to achieve.

Budgets are about priorities—hard-working South Dakota families know that because they have to make priorities in their family budget every day. Unfortunately, the President and the Republican leadership in Congress fail to make investments in key programs that assist average, hard-working Americans.

Federal education mandates are woefully underfunded. Yet the President's budget proposed the largest cut to Federal education funding in the Department of Education's 26-year history. Further, for the second year in a row, the administration proposed a 5-percent across-the-board cut to crop and dairy payments for producers. As well, the President's budget included $16.9 billion in cuts to Medicaid and about $35 billion in cuts to Medicare over 5 years. While I am pleased the Senate budget resolution does not contain all of the President's budget cuts, we cannot continue to try to balance the budget on the backs of students, farmers and ranchers, and seniors.

While the administration is advocating cuts to important domestic programs, it is estimated that the cost of the Bush tax cuts for those making over $1 million annually will be more than $41 billion in fiscal year 2007 alone.

Despite what the leadership likes to say about their budget, this is not a fiscally responsible budget. I think it is time we put our Nation's finances back in order. This budget assumes that the deficit for fiscal year 2007 will be $359 billion, and decline to $177 billion in fiscal year 2011. However, these assumptions omit items like the cost of extending expiring tax cuts, fixing the alternative minimum tax, AMT, the ongoing war costs, and the spending of the Social Security and other trust funds. When these costs are included, the Nation's debt will increase by more than $600 billion every year over the next 5 years.

To put this in perspective, consider how much U.S. debt is held by foreigners. It took 224 years and 42 Presidents—all of our Presidents from Washington to Clinton—to have $1 trillion in debt held outside our country. In just 5 years, that foreign debt level has more than doubled.

I believe one of the best ways we can restore fiscal responsibility is to reinstate the pay-as-you-go rules that were in effect from 1991 to 2000. The pay-go rule simply means that if you want additional mandatory spending or tax cuts, you have to pay for them by offsets or obtain a supermajority vote to pass them. Unfortunately, the Senate failed to adopt a pay-go rule to the budget resolution yesterday on a tie vote of 50–50.

Instead, we are being asked to support a budget that I don't think reflects the values and priorities of a majority of South Dakota families, and does not restore fiscal responsibility. I will continue working in a bipartisan manner to make improvements in the fiscal year 2007 budget and restoring our Nation's fiscal strength.

Mr. SALAZAR. Mr. President, as we debate the Senate budget resolution for fiscal year 2007 and the bill before us now to raise the debt ceiling, I want to talk for a moment about the broader issue of fiscal responsibility and honesty.

We are about to significantly raise the limit on our national debt for the fourth time in the past 5 years, this time to nearly $9 trillion. With deficits as far as the eye can see, we are on an unsustainable budgetary path that threatens not only to severely restrict our Government's ability to provide critical services but to cause irreparable damage both to our economy and our influence in the world community.

Alan Greenspan articulated our situation clearly in his last months as Chairman of the Federal Reserve Board. Mr. Greenspan said, ''our budget position will substantially worsen in the coming years unless major deficit-reducing actions are taken . . . crafting a budget strategy that meets the nation's longer-run needs will become more difficult the more we delay.''

Even more troubling, our deficits are worse than they seem. While the Congressional Budget Office has estimated the size of this year's deficit at $371 billion, that figure does not account for the tens of billions of dollars of emergency supplemental spending that we can all anticipate to address needs in Iraq and Afghanistan. It also does not include the $180 billion we are raiding from the Social Security trust fund, nor does it take into account the interest we will need to pay on the additional debt. As Senator CONRAD has pointed out, we anticipate the national debt will increase by $654 billion this year.

Six years ago, we were running a budget surplus. While the national debt was $5 trillion, for the first time in almost 20 years, we found ourselves in a position where we could start to pay off some of that debt. We knew we would soon face the demographic pressures associated with the retirement of the baby boom generation, but we had the resources at our disposal to begin preparing for those pressures.

Now, just 6 years later, the circumstances that gave us a reason to be optimistic have all but dissolved in a sea of irresponsible fiscal policies, dishonest accounting, and partisan opportunism.

To be sure, not everything that brought us to this point was within our control. The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, shook our economy, gave rise to new and unexpected costs, and rightly caused us to shift our national focus to the threat of international terrorism—sometimes, unavoidably, to the detriment of our ability to sufficiently focus on our looming fiscal challenges.

Having said that, much of what led to our current crisis was within our control. The fairness of the multiple tax cuts that Congress passed in the last 5 years was certainly within our control.

Whether or not those tax cuts were paid for was certainly within our control.

And whether or not we are honest about including the costs of the ongoing military efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan, the need to provide continuing relief for middle-class families from the alternative minimum tax, and the inevitable costs associated with any proposal to address the problems faced by our entitlement programs is certainly within our control.

We must be more responsible and more realistic.

First, we must begin working today to prepare for the retirement of the baby boomers. While the situation is not as dire as some would have us believe, the Social Security system cannot support itself in its current form forever. We need to make tough decisions in order to restore that program to a path of solvency.

In addition, with health care costs skyrocketing, we need to take a hard look at Medicare and Medicaid in order to ensure they can continue to provide high-quality care for the elderly and the poor. Again, the problems associated with these programs will only grow with the retirement of the baby boom generation, and we need to act now to avert a full-fledged fiscal disaster.

Second, we must be more realistic about aligning our tax policies with our spending policies. American families understand the simple fact that you cannot spend more than you take in. Yet this fact seems to escape this administration and the current congressional leadership. Year after year, we see massive spending reductions in vital programs followed up by even bigger tax cuts.

Contrary to what some seem to believe, the tax cuts of the past 5 years are not going to pay for themselves. While I support many of those tax cuts— particularly those that benefit middle-class families—it is undeniable that they have resulted in lower revenue for the Federal Government and will continue to do so in the long run. This is especially in light of the fact that they were not paid for and will therefore add to the national debt and increase the associated interest costs.

Third, we cannot afford to be dishonest about costs we know we will face. The President's budget contained no funding for the military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan beyond next year. Yet the Congressional Budget Office has said we should expect to pay $312 billion in war-related costs for the period between 2007 and 2016.

Furthermore, we know we will need to provide relief from the alternative minimum tax for middle-class families. The Senate recently passed legislation that would contain a 1-year fix of the AMT at the price tag of $30 billion. The cost of providing AMT relief for the next decade is estimated at $1 trillion. Yet neither the President's budget request nor the proposal before the Senate includes the cost of providing any AMT relief beyond this year.

And this is to say nothing of how costly it would be to make permanent the President's 2001 tax cuts, which is something we all know he will try to do. A recent estimate by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities indicated that the cost of extending the President's tax cuts through 2016 would be nearly $2 trillion.

This debate is as much about honesty as it is about crunching numbers. How can we expect to be adequately prepared for the looming influx of Americans into the Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid programs if we are not honest about costs we know we will have to deal with—and not just over the long term but this year?

Yet another troubling symptom of our current misguided policies is the growing percentage of our debt that is being purchased by foreign investors. As Senator CONRAD has repeatedly pointed out in recent weeks, the level of debt purchased by foreign investors under President Bush is more than twice the amount purchased by foreign investors under the previous 42 Presidents combined. Foreign investors—whether it be the central banks of foreign countries or private investors—now own nearly half of all publicly issued U.S. debt.

I was astounded by the following statistics. According to the Economic Policy Institute, if foreign lenders keep buying U.S. debt at their current rate, the Federal Government will owe $3.8 trillion to foreign lenders by 2011, an amount equivalent to 23 percent of expected gross domestic product for that year. We will owe those lenders $181 billion in interest alone.

To provide some context, that amount is 2½ times the size of the entire fiscal year 2007 budget for the Department of Veterans' Affairs.

I realize that we cannot fix all of these problems this week, or even this year. But we can start to bring some sense to our Nation's fiscal priorities by going on record in support of our most critical programs and by embracing fiscal responsibility.

It is why I have consistently cosponsored classic pay-go proposals, which aim to ensure that both spending increases and tax cuts are fully paid for.

There is much more that is wrong with the Government's fiscal practices and priorities than what I have discussed today. Among other things, I do not believe that our budget goes far enough in supporting rural America; I do not believe it does enough to provide resources to State and local law enforcement; and I do not believe it does enough to promote community development.

More than anything, however, the debate on the Senate floor this week is about our broader priorities as a nation. It is about whether we value candor and responsibility over partisan opportunism. If we do not act soon to reverse our direction, we will have made our decision, and it will have been the wrong one.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, the Humphrey Hawkins Act of 1978 specifies that time should be set aside in the consideration of the budget resolution for debate on economic goals and policies. As the ranking member of the Joint Economic Committee, I rise today to talk about how the budget submitted by President Bush and the version of that budget which we are debating this week in the Senate embody the wrong goals and policies to address the challenges facing the American economy.

If you listen to the President and my colleagues on the other side of the aisle, you would get the impression that the economy is in good shape and that their policies have been successful. But if you listen to the American people you know that there is considerable anxiety about the economy and considerable disapproval about how the other side has managed economic policy.

The American people are right. All is not well with the Bush economy and the President's economic policies. President Bush likes to cite statistics on how fast the economy is growing and how much productivity—the output a worker produces in an hour—has increased. What he doesn't mention is that on his watch the economy went through the most protracted jobs slump in decades; that there is still considerable evidence of lagging labor force participation and hidden unemployment; and that the benefits of productivity growth have been showing up in the bottom lines of companies rather than in the paychecks of workers.

The President doesn't mention that disparities in wages and incomes are growing wider. Those who are already well-to-do are continuing to do very well. But the typical American family is struggling to make ends meet in the face of rising costs for energy, health care, and a college education for their children.

The administration and its supporters will not take responsibility for the failure of their policies. They say that their tax cuts are working and that all the American economy needs is more tax cuts. But the Bush tax cuts have not created an economy that works for ordinary Americans and they have mortgaged our future. Responsible analysts have shown that the President's tax cuts for the rich were poorly designed for generating jobs and putting people back to work in the wake of the 2001 recession. They had very low ''bang-for-the-buck'' in terms of job stimulus in the short run, but they were so massive that they created a legacy of large budget deficits and mounting debt that will be a drag on the economy in the long run.

President Bush has squandered the hard-won fiscal discipline achieved in the 1990s. He inherited a 10-year budget surplus of $5.6 trillion and turned it into a stream of deficits.

This year's budget gives the illusion that we will be making substantial progress in reducing the deficit over the next few years. But that is not

what responsible analysts say. They point out that a realistic budget assessment shows continuing structural deficits over the next several years and a potential explosion of the deficit once the costs of the baby-boom generation's retirement kick in fully.

With a $5.6 trillion 10-year budget surplus now a deficit of at least $2.7 trillion, this administration has turned us into a nation of debtors, relying on the rest of the world to finance our budget deficits and the rest of our excessive spending. Yesterday we learned that the current account deficit—the broadest measure of our international payments imbalance—was $805 billion last year, an amount equal to 6.4 percent of GDP. That is a record both in dollar terms and as a share of GDP.

The ballooning international trade and budget deficits dramatize the misplaced fiscal priorities of the President and the Republican Congress. The administration's large Federal budget deficits and mounting Federal debt are putting enormous pressure on the trade deficit and the dollar. We are mortgaging our future to foreign investors and foreign governments instead of getting our fiscal house in order and boosting our own national saving.

And we are not investing in people here at home the way we should be. A new analysis of the President's budget by the Democratic staff of the Joint Economic Committee shows that the President's policies would add to the deficit and reduce investments that aid moderate- and lower-income families in order to pay part of the cost of tax cuts going disproportionately to those with very high incomes.

The JEC Democratic staff analysis shows that the burden of cuts in those programs that provide benefits to individuals would be borne disproportionately by families in the bottom 40 percent of the income distribution. The share of spending cuts borne by those families would be disproportionate to their share of aggregate family income and to the share of any benefits they could expect to receive from the President's proposed tax cuts.

Families in the bottom 20 percent of the income distribution would absorb 32 percent of the cuts in payments for individuals, even though their share of aggregate family income is only 3 percent. Families in the next lowest fifth of the income distribution, with 8 percent of aggregate family income, would bear 23 percent of the budget cuts in payments for individuals.

Disparities in the impact of the President's budget proposals on families in different parts of the income distribution are even more pronounced when the tax cuts are taken into account. Families in the bottom 40 percent of the income distribution would receive only 6 percent of the benefits from tax cuts while bearing over half the burden of the spending cuts. In contrast, families in the top 20 percent of the income distribution would receive over 70 percent of the benefits of the tax cuts while bearing only 14 percent of the burden of the spending cuts.

The net impact of those cuts would leave families at the bottom of the income distribution shouldering nearly all of the pain while families at the top of the income distribution would reap nearly all of the net benefits.

A budget resolution that echoes the President's budget neither meets the pressing needs of the American people nor addresses the long-term challenges that lie ahead. Clearly, we're in for another year of policies that do little to help the average family or bring down the deficit.

A long-term budget and economic disaster looms if we don't restore fiscal discipline. The President's large and growing Federal budget deficits leave us increasingly hampered in our ability to deal with the host of challenges we face. We need policies that address the problems facing the country's most disadvantaged citizens and help ordinary working families deal with job and retirement insecurity and the rising costs of energy, health care, and education for their children.

We can and should do better.

Mr. OBAMA. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the budget resolution.

A budget is about choices. It is about tradeoffs. It is about weighing competing priorities and conflicting objectives and figuring out what matters most for Americans.

Unfortunately, the budget we have before us makes the wrong choices. Instead of tackling Federal deficits and rising debt, this budget worsens them. Instead of strengthening our schools so America can be competitive in a global economy, this budget weakens them. Instead of taking bold action against poverty as the President promised after Katrina, this budget cuts important services that Americans depend on.

Budgets matter because the tradeoffs we make matter, and this budget makes the wrong tradeoffs. It extends tax breaks aimed at millionaires while doing nothing to expand opportunity for working Americans. It claims to be fiscally responsible while ignoring billions of dollars of Government spending for ongoing military operations overseas.

At a time when we have maxed out our borrowing, this budget has us borrowing more. At a time when we have already cut certain programs beyond the level of efficiency, this budget cuts them some more. At a time when we have already lavished tax breaks on the wealthiest people and corporations, this budget lavishes even more.

As I talk to families in Illinois—farmers and small businesspeople, teachers and veterans, salespeople and service workers, doctors and senior citizens, people prospering and those struggling at the margins—I see people dealing with real issues and real problems. I see people concerned about our national security and our domestic security. I see people worried about what they see and what they don't see happening here in Washington.

Unfortunately, this budget that we are debating today gives Americans little reason to have confidence in their Government. This budget gives them little reason to think that their elected leaders are paying attention.

Many of my Democratic colleagues and I have been offering amendments over the last few days. Together we are troubled by this budget and doing our best to ensure that it reflects at least some of America's cherished values. A few of my Republican colleagues have also joined us in trying to improve this bill.

I was disappointed on Tuesday by the failure of the Senate to pass the Pay-go amendment to restore discipline to our budgeting process. That vote was bipartisan and very close, and I hold out hope that this body will soon restore budget rules that work to reduce deficits and restrain debt. But there are still opportunities to make this resolution more responsive to the needs and concerns of the people in Illinois.

For example, I appreciate the willingness of Senator GREGG and Senator CONRAD, as the managers of this bill, to accept an important amendment of mine that addresses the problem of homeless veterans.

Each and every night, more than 200,000 of our Nation's veterans are homeless. More than 400,000 will experience homelessness over the course of a year. In my hometown of Chicago, as many as 38,000 veterans spend a night homeless over the course of a year.

It is one the great tragedies of this Nation that brave men and women who risked their lives for us have no place to turn to and no place to call home.

There is no single cause for homelessness among veterans. Homeless vets are men and women, single and married. They have served in every conflict since World War II. Many suffer from posttraumatic stress disorder or were physically and mentally battered in combat. A large number left the military without job skills that could be easily transferred to the private sector. Regardless of the cause, we know that there are ways to combat this crisis.

My amendment devotes a small amount to begin addressing this problem by building on existing proven programs. For nearly 20 years, the Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program has helped get veterans off the streets with intensive services that are unavailable elsewhere and really get to the heart of the causes of homelessness.

HVRP grant recipients provide clothing and food to help stabilize veterans, they provide mental health and substance abuse counseling, and they provide employment services and housing assistance to allow them to reenter society. Some HVRP programs even employ formerly homeless veterans to serve as counselors and role models to other veterans. HVRP offers specialized

support for veterans who are turned away from other programs. In short, HVRP is a cost-effective and proven way to help veterans who have no place else to turn.

The budget currently flatlines spending for the HVRP at $22 million, which is only 44 percent of the authorized level. At this amount, we will only be able to serve 16,250 veterans next year.

My amendment increases HVRP to its full authorized amount, an increase of $28 million. This will help us reach approximately 36,820 homeless veterans. This is still less than 10 percent of the total need, but it is an important start. My amendment will also devote an additional $12 million to the Department of Labor to improve jobs services for hard-to-place veterans. This is a modest increase of 6 percent over last year.

Every day, we walk past men and women on street corners with handwritten signs like ''Homeless Veteran—Need Food.'' Sometimes we give a dollar, sometimes we just keep walking. These are soldiers who fought in World War II, Vietnam, and Iraq.

We cannot allow the proud shoulders that have carried the weight of liberty to be broken by the terrible burden of homelessness and hopelessness. We owe our veterans more than an emergency shelter cot or a cardboard box beneath an overpass. We owe them a chance to enjoy the dignity and respect they earned fighting for our freedom.

These men and women served us without fail when we needed them, and now we must do the same for them.

I thank Senators GREGG and CONRAD for accepting this amendment.

Mr. President, I hope we can continue to improve this budget. But, until we have a fiscally responsible budget that makes the right choices for America, I owe it to the people of Illinois to reject it.

I hope it won't be too long before this body can get serious about solving the real problems we face as a country and preparing for the new challenges and opportunities we will face in the years ahead.

VOTE EXPLANATION

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, I regret that I was unable to vote in support of Senator LIEBERMAN's amendment 3034 to the fiscal year 2007 congressional budget resolution. It is critically important to protect the American people from terrorist attacks. This amendment would have done so by providing $8 billion in additional funds for homeland security. These funds would have come from restoring cuts to vital first responder programs in the Departments of Homeland Security and Justice. It also would have provided an additional $1.2 billion for first responders, $1.7 billion for the Coast Guard and port security, $150 million for chemical security, $1 billion for rail and transit security, $456 million for FEMA, $1 billion for health preparedness programs, and $752 million for aviation security.

At the time of this vote I was meeting with a group of Montana's high school students from Project Close-Up. This program introduces young people to Washington, DC and to the U.S. Government. I believe it is very important to give these students the unique opportunity to meet with their State's Senators in person—it is a tradition I have maintained for years. It is unfortunate that this vote to support homeland security occurred at the same time as the visit. For this reason, I must make it clear that I firmly believe in properly funding homeland security. I was one of the first Senators to visit New Orleans and the gulf coast after Hurricane Katrina and I recognize that FEMA needs more funding to improve their mission and ability to properly respond to disasters.

Most importantly, our first responders in Montana are the backbone of emergency services in our State. We are a rural State, and our police and fire departments and hospitals call upon them to react across many miles to keep Montana's citizens safe. I have always voted in favor of these efforts in the past and I pledge to do so in the future.

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, Senator CONRAD and I are fortunate to have an outstanding staff serving the members of the Senate Budget Committee. These professionals work long hours and take great pride in the work of the committee and the institution of the U.S. Senate.

I would like to take just a few minutes today to single out two of these talented individuals who work on the majority side or Republican committee staff.

David Fisher serves as our health policy director on the committee. As Willie Sutton said, ''You rob banks because that's where the money is,'' and with respect to the Federal budget, the money is in health care. Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security are three programs that David handles for our team, and these three programs are on a glidepath to consume over 20 percent of this Nation's gross domestic product in about 30 years. If we do not find a way to control the growth of spending for these programs, there simply will not be resources available for all other priorities, from national defense to homeland security to science and research.

David came over to the Budget Committee from the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee in 2005. David holds a master's in public policy degree from Georgetown University. He has held a number of key positions in both the Senate and the House of Representatives having served as both a chief of staff and legislative director.

David is one of those rare individuals who can drill into specific programmatic detail and simultaneously understand the broader policy and political context in which programs operate. He is a perfectionist. David has a complete top-to-bottom understanding of medical and health care programs and has staffed me with distinction with such issues as bioterrorism, medical liability reform, and FDA drug approval. Most recently, he has been working tirelessly on Avian flu preparedness.

David Fisher has earned a reputation around town, here in Congress, and down at the White House as an expert on health issues. Few people who have worked with David have not been impressed with intellect and dedication. I am proud to have him on my team.

For many people, the budget resolution is just a compilation of accounts and dollar levels. But the budget is much more. The budget is a framework, a blueprint for the Federal Government and fiscal policy. Maybe good public policy states that policy drives budgets, but it is no secret that in Washington budgets often drive policy. The budget and our resolution have a real impact on the financial markets and economy.

When I took over the committee, a number of people advised me to make sure that we employed a talented economist. We are fortunate in Dan Brandt to have just that.

Dan Brandt serves as our Committee chief economist, and he also serves as analyst for a number of budget functions, such as what we call function 370 or commerce and housing credit. Dan is our expert who keeps on top of what the economy is doing, what is happening at the Federal Reserve, at the Securities and Exchange Commission, at the stock exchanges, and international finance. Dan is our ''go to guy'' for understanding the latest GDP and employment statistics, inflation, and other economic data. He is our expert on tax policy and works closely with the Finance Committee in ensuring that we are advocating progrowth tax policies. He works closely with the Banking Committee on a number of issues affecting financial institutions and the lending industry.

Dan's academic background is in business administration and economics at the Johns Hopkins University, the American University, and the Frei Universitat in Berlin, Germany. Prior to joining the committee, Dan worked in the House of Representatives, at Solomon Smith Barney, and at the International Trade Administration in the U.S. Department of Commerce. During 2004, Dan Brandt worked on President George W. Bush's reelection campaign where he handled tax and economic issues.

Dan is a workhorse for the committee. Few people could serve as a guide through the intricacies of economic forecasts and the budget rules—Dan can do both. The technical accuracy and effectiveness of his work products is a matter of personal pride. I have learned that he is a professional staff member in every sense of the word. I will conclude by just saying that Dan Brandt is a real credit to the Senate, and we are fortunate to have him here on our Budget Committee and as part of my team.

Mr. President, we are now able to go to final passage. Before we go to final passage, I wish to begin by thanking Senator CONRAD and his extraordinary staff.

AMENDMENT NO. 3081 WITHDRAWN

Before I do that, I ask unanimous consent to withdraw the pending amendment No. 3081 at the desk.

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

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, we are now able to go to final passage. Before we go to final passage, I wish to begin by thanking Senator CONRAD and his extraordinary staff, led by Mary Naylor. They have been incredibly cooperative. They are always extraordinarily professional. There is no question but we would not have been able to complete this—in what may not seem timely to most folks because we have been here all day but is—quite honestly we could have been here into tomorrow or Saturday without the extraordinary cooperation of the Senator from North Dakota and his team. I thank him for his professionalism and their team.

I also thank my Committee on the Budget staff. They have worked tirelessly and continuously on this budget for the last 6 weeks. They literally have gotten very little sleep, especially, of course, Scott Gudes, my budget leader, and Denzel McGuire, his top assistant. They did a great job of organizing, especially today, the amendments.

Jeff Turcotte, Dave Myers, and Sam Donoghue of our communications team, who has tried to compete with the chart machine on the other side of the aisle, they have come close. They have done a great job. Jim Hearn and Cheri Reidy, David Pappone and Gail Millar, are the specialists who make this place work. The cornerstone of the great team, John Mashburn, and Vas Chrisopoulos, my AA who keeps everything humming along and does an incredible job on my personal staff, and I thank the leadership staff. There are an awful lot of good people working for the leadership around here. They should be acknowledged for their tremendous work.

Let me thank the clerks and all the Senate staff. They have worked all day with virtually no break, along with the Reporters of Debates. I thank everyone for an extraordinary amount of commitment to making this place work correctly.

This budget is now on the verge of being passed. It is the first step in the process. As I have said before, it is the responsibility of governance to pass a budget. That is our responsibility as Senators. This is a responsible budget. It is not everything I wanted, obviously, but it is a step in the right direction. It is a step on the road, and it is a positive step on the road.

Rather than prolong the discussion, because we have had a lot of discussion on it, I will now yield the floor to the Senator from North Dakota.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, first, I want to indicate that we may have one matter to conclude before we end.

AMENDMENT NO. 3023, AS MODIFIED

Mr. President, I send to the desk amendment No. 3023, as modified, and ask unanimous consent that it be agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment (No. 3023), as modified, was agreed to, as follows:

(Purpose: To strengthen homeland security by adding $10 million to National Defense for an interoperable and survivable mobile wireless communications network enabling clear, reliable communications among DoD and first responders for the military homeland defense command)

On page 9, line 20, increase the amount by $10,000,000.

On page 9, line 21, increase the amount by $10,000,000.

On page 27, line 23, decrease the amount by $10,000,000.

On page 27, line 24, decrease the amount by $10,000,000.

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, we are prepared to go to final passage. We cannot do that without first thanking people. This has been a marathon, and people—many people—have worked around the clock to get us to this position.

Let me thank a colleague because we would not be finishing at 7:15 without the extraordinary work of Senator PATTY MURRAY.

Thank you, PATTY.

She convinced literally dozens of our colleagues to drop amendments tonight; otherwise, we would have been here until 2 o'clock in the morning. So special thanks to her.

And thanks to my staff director, Mary Naylor; and John Righter, my deputy staff director; Lisa Konwinski, my counsel; and, most of all, my chart master, Kobye Noel.

And thanks to the staff of Senator GREGG: Scott Gudes and Denzel McGuire, outstanding professionals.

Of course, my personal thanks to the chairman of the committee, who has been so decent to deal with, and so honorable to deal with.

On our side, Mr. Chairman, we thank you for your courtesies.

With that, let me conclude on the budget itself.

Mr. GREGG. No.

Mr. CONRAD. Oh, yes.

Borrow and spend—that is what this budget represents.

Mr. President and colleagues, as shown on this chart, this is what is going to happen to the debt under this budget. It is up, up, and away. A vote for this budget is a vote for more debt, higher interest rates, a weaker economy, the export of American jobs, the selling off of America, piece by piece.

Colleagues, we could do a whole lot better than this. I urge my colleagues to vote no.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I have been asked to remind Senators that there will be two more votes, after the final vote on the budget, on judges.

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 the adoption of the concurrent resolution.

The clerk will please call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

The result was announced—yeas 51, nays 49, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 74 Leg.]

YEAS—51

Alexander	Domenici	McConnell
Allard	Enzi	Murkowski
Allen	Frist	Roberts
Bennett	Graham	Santorum
Bond	Grassley	Sessions
Brownback	Gregg	Shelby
Bunning	Hagel	Smith
Burns	Hatch	Snowe
Burr	Hutchison	Specter
Chambliss	Inhofe	Stevens
Coburn	Isakson	Sununu
Cochran	Kyl	Talent
Cornyn	Landrieu	Thomas
Craig	Lott	Thune
Crapo	Lugar	Vitter
DeMint	Martinez	Voinovich
Dole	McCain	Warner

NAYS—49

Akaka	Dorgan	Menendez
Baucus	Durbin	Mikulski
Bayh	Ensign	Murray
Biden	Feingold	Nelson (FL)
Bingaman	Feinstein	Nelson (NE)
Boxer	Harkin	Obama
Byrd	Inouye	Pryor
Cantwell	Jeffords	Reed
Carper	Johnson	Reid
Chafee	Kennedy	Rockefeller
Clinton	Kerry	Salazar
Coleman	Kohl	Sarbanes
Collins	Lautenberg	Schumer
Conrad	Leahy	Stabenow
Dayton	Levin	Wyden
DeWine	Lieberman	
Dodd	Lincoln	

The concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 83), as amended, was agreed to.

(The resolution will be printed in a future edition of the RECORD.)

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I move to reconsider the vote and to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I would be remiss if I did not make at least a short statement on the budget we just passed. I agree with those who believe that government is simply out of control. We just passed a budget that promises a budget deficit in the vicinity of $400 billion, a truly staggering amount of money. Our Federal Government is borrowing in excess of a billion dollars a day to fund the awesome amount of obligations that we have authorized. While I would have preferred

a vastly smaller budget today, I know it is simply not politically feasible to do so at this time. I pledge to work toward creating an environment where we can achieve responsible spending and fiscal sanity while meeting our obligations. The budget we have just passed does represent a step, albeit a small one, toward fiscal responsibility. Getting our entitlement spending under control, reining in earmarks and other wasteful discretionary spending, and maintaining the conditions necessary for strong, stable economic growth are all necessary to achieve a balanced budget, and it will take the concerted efforts of each and every one of us to achieve this in the future.

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, today, the Senate allowed its budget process to be hijacked by those seeking to move a policy issue that has been rightly rejected so many times. I opposed the manipulation of process in the Budget Committee and I opposed final passage this evening. Using the reconciliation process to advance a single controversial policy—a policy that should be considered through the appropriate legislative channels—is shameless.

We debated drilling in the Arctic last spring. We debated it again last fall, and at that time, a number of House Republicans shot the idea down. Then, in December, we wasted more time on the issue. This year, nine members of the Budget Committee reached out ahead of time to Chairman GREGG and Ranking Member CONRAD asking that the budget process not be used to revisit drilling in the Arctic Refuge, and yet, it was. I ask unanimous consent that a copy of the letter be printed in the RECORD.

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

U.S. SENATE,
Washington, DC, March 6, 2006.

Hon. JUDD GREGG,
Chairman, Budget Committee,
Washington, DC.
Hon. KENT CONRAD,
Ranking Member, Budget Committee
Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN GREGG AND RANKING MEMBER CONRAD: As members of the Budget Committee, we write to express our opposition to the inclusion of any language or mechanism in the fiscal year 2007 budget resolution that assumes revenues from drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge or allows for the insertion of any provision that opens the Coastal Plain of the Refuge to oil and gas drilling and exploration. We also strongly oppose the inclusion of any Arctic Refuge reconciliation instructions for the Energy Committee in the budget resolution.

It is irresponsible to base the country's budget on highly speculative and dubious projections of lease revenues for the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. The reality is that leasing portions of the Arctic Refuge would likely not bring in the assumed levels of revenue to the federal treasury, and yet, the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) assumes $6 billion in revenue from leasing of the Arctic Refuge, and the President's fiscal year 2007 budget proposal presupposes $7 billion in revenue from a 2008 Refuge lease sale. Previous drilling proposals called for leasing between 400,000 and 600,000 acres of the Arctic Refuge. The Administration proposal would therefore require that industry bid at least $11,667 per leased acre. The facts of oil and gas leasing on Alaska's North Slope and elsewhere in the country show that such a proposal is far out of touch with reality:

Since 1991, 38 leases on the North Slope and in near-shore waters have brought in an average of only $64.38 per leased acre. The Administration's projection is 181 times this historic average.

Last year, the oil industry bid $161.55 per acre for areas offshore of the Arctic Refuge—an amount that is nearly an order of magnitude lower than the Administration's projections.

The CBO acknowledged in December 2005 that higher oil prices do not necessarily result in higher lease bids when it wrote that other factors, such as operating and capital costs and the attractiveness of competing projects elsewhere, influence bid amounts.

The North Slope leasing history demonstrates CBO's point. In the last five years, when North Slope crude averaged $33.60 a barrel, the average price per acre was $48.15. In the five years prior to that, when North Slope crude averaged $19.60, the average price per acre was $93.58. Additionally, preliminary analysis of two lease sales held on March 1, 2006 reveals an average per acre price of less than $40 on a day when North Slope crude was selling for $59.11.

This kind of budget charade will simply not help reduce our huge and growing federal deficit.

As we all know, the President acknowledged our addiction to oil during his State of the Union address. As with any addiction, recognition of the problem is the first step toward change. Thus, now more than ever, instead of looking to drill to the past in areas such as the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, we should truly dedicate ourselves to a cleaner energy future. The American people expect Congress and the Administration to stop wasting their time on dead-end drilling schemes and to instead chart an energy vision reflective of the 21st century.

Again, we encourage you to reject any requests that are intended to misuse the budget process to open the Refuge to oil and gas drilling and exploration and we thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Russ Feingold, Patty Murray, Tim Johnson, Bill Nelson, Robert Menendez, Paul S. Sarbanes, Ron Wyden, Robert C. Byrd, Debbie Stabenow.

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, I oppose drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, but if we are going to debate this policy, we should do so openly—not through a backdoor budget maneuver. My colleagues who want to open the Arctic Refuge to drilling should go through the regular legislative process that the rest of us use to advance policy initiatives. After all, what message do you send when you manipulate a process simply because the normal procedure does not give you the outcome you want? That is not a message this body should endorse.

Proponents will say that using the budget process is the only way they can get an up-or-down vote. My response is simple. I know how hard it is to be very close to having the votes to pass legislation, but not quite being there. Senator MCCAIN and I worked very hard on our campaign finance reform legislation to get the votes needed to move forward—it took years—but we stuck with it until we could get the legislation passed. We fought hard but we fought fair. We did not—and we would not have—tried to advance our legislation by manipulating the budget process. This single reconciliation instruction opening up the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is simply out of bounds.

My concerns, however, go beyond the obvious abuse of process. The bottom line is that the revenue assumptions are highly speculative and in no way reflect reality. For a second, let's ignore the fact that last year a Bush adviser was quoted as saying that ''even if you gave the oil companies the refuge for free, they wouldn't want to drill there'' and let's look at the numbers.

The Congressional Budget Office assumes $6 billion in revenues while the President's budget puts the number at $7 billion. Based on past proposals, 400,000 to 600,000 acres in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge would be on the leasing block. Therefore, to achieve the administration's estimate, companies would have to pay between $17,500 and $11,667 per acre to make it to the $7 billion level. To get to CBO's estimate, they would have to pay between $15,000 and $10,000 per acre to get to a total of $6 billion. Now let's consider these numbers a bit more closely to see how they line up with reality:

Since 1991, 40 lease sales on the North Slope and in near-shore waters have brought in an average of only $60.47 per leased acre in real 2006 dollars. CBO's projections are 165 times greater than the inflation-adjusted average during the last 16 years.

Think that higher gas prices will mean higher lease bids? Think again. In December of 2005, CBO said that higher gas prices at the pump don't directly translate into higher lease bids by oil companies, and cited other factors—such as operating and capital costs and the attractiveness of competing projects elsewhere—that influence bid amounts.

Additionally, the reconciliation instruction assumes $3 billion in Federal revenues, based on a 50/50 split between the State of Alaska and the U.S. Treasury. Given public statements by members of the Alaska delegation, as recently as last December, this 50/50 split is, at best, speculative.

Some may argue that oil company activities in the Arctic Refuge could be done in an environmentally safe manner. I would point out to them that earlier this month the largest crude oil spill in the history of oil and gas operations was discovered on Alaska's North Slope. To quote an employee of the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation, ''Hopefully, the tundra will recover. It's never going to be perfect.'' I don't think anyone wants to contemplate the possibility of such an accident occurring within the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

During his State of the Union Address, the President acknowledged our

addiction to oil. I hoped that this would mean we could move forward to discuss real energy solutions, solutions that protect our national security, our citizens, and our environment, as I continue to believe that we can do all three. In fact, there are bipartisan bills out there to move our transportation sector to renewable sources of energy and sadly we spend our time talking about this issue, an issue that divides us. When are we going to move past this divisive debate to discuss real energy solutions for the 21st century?

If we do not stand against misuse of the legislative process, then every member of this esteemed body is at risk. Today, I cast a vote against abuse and in favor of the integrity of the Senate.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF JACK ZOUHARY TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF OHIO

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will go into executive session and proceed to consider the nomination of Jack Zouhary to be U.S. District Judge for the Northern District of Ohio, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Jack Zouhary, of Ohio, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Ohio.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields time? The Senator from Vermont.

JUDICIAL NOMINATIONS

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, today the Senate considers two more lifetime appointments to U.S. courts. These confirmations will bring the total number of judicial appointments since January 2001 to 234, including the confirmations of two Supreme Court Justices and 43 circuit court judges. Of course, 100 judges were confirmed during the 17 months when there was a Democratic majority in the Senate. In the other 45 months, 134 judges have been confirmed. Ironically, under Democratic leadership, the Senate was almost twice as productive as under Republican leadership.

It is most regrettable that this President has not fulfilled his promise to the American people to be a uniter. Nor has he fulfilled his pledge to complete his work in advance of vacancies and to make nominations promptly. Judicial vacancies have grown to more than 50 and the White House has failed to send nominees for more than half of those. Some of those vacancies have been sitting empty for more than a year. Over and over the White House has missed the deadline the President established for himself, and today, more than half of the judicial vacancies, 27, are without nominations. One-third of those vacancies are already more than 180 days old, and one-third of the judicial emergency vacancies are without nominees.

If the White House would eliminate its partisan, political, and ideological litmus tests from the judicial nominations process and its emphasis on rewarding cronies and focus only on qualifications and consensus, the job of selecting nominees and our job of considering them for confirmation would be much easier.

Jack Zouhary, the nominee from Ohio, has the support of his Republican home State Senators, and Stephen G. Larson, the nominee from California, has the support of his Democratic home State Senators. They are the kind of qualified consensus nominees who are confirmed relatively easily.

Recently we have seen the President withdraw a circuit nomination after information became public about that nominee's rulings in a number of cases in which he appears to have had a conflict of interest. Those conflicts were pointed out not by the administration's screening process or by the ABA but by online journalists.

At a minimum that case and other recent revelations reinforce a point about this White House's poor vetting process for important nominations. A number of nominations by this President have had to be withdrawn. Among the more well known are Bernard Kerik to head Homeland Security, Harriet Miers to the Supreme Court, and Claude Allen to be a Fourth Circuit judge. It was, as I recall, reporting in a national magazine that doomed the Kerik nomination. It was opposition within the President's own party that doomed the Miers nomination. Democratic Senators resisted the nomination of Allen, a Virginian, because the President was seeking to appoint someone from another State to a Maryland seat on the Fourth Circuit. When we are considering lifetime appointments of judicial officers who are entrusted with protecting the rights of Americans, it is important to be thorough. Unfortunately, all too often this White House seems more interested in rewarding cronies.

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Mr. DEWINE. Mr. President, I rise today to speak in strong support of the nomination of Judge Jack Zouhary, whom the President has nominated to be United States District Court Judge for the Northern District of Ohio. Judge Zouhary currently is serving on the Lucas County Common Pleas Court. His service there has been outstanding and is an excellent indication of the type of judge he will be on the Federal bench.

I'd like to share with my Senate colleagues just a few of the numerous admirable qualities that make Judge Zouhary such an outstanding nominee. Both as a professional and as a person, he is exactly the sort of individual we want to be serving on the Federal bench.

Judge Zouhary grew up in Toledo. He is a first-generation American, whose parents immigrated from Lebanon to the United States and instilled in their son a respect for the values of education, religion, and community service. After graduating as the valedictorian of his high school, he attended Dartmouth College, where he received his undergraduate degree before returning to his hometown to earn his law degree from the University of Toledo College of Law. Judge Zouhary then embarked on what would become a long and accomplished legal career—a career with 30 years of legal experience that has given him the background and understanding of our legal system to successfully take on the role of a Federal judge.

He began his legal career with the law firm of Robison, Curphey & O'Connell, where he worked as an associate and then as a partner. During his 23 years there, he had a varied practice, representing individuals and businesses on a range of legal issues, with an emphasis on civil trial practice and corporate matters. In 2000, Judge Zouhary became the Senior Vice President and General Counsel for S.E. Johnson Companies, Inc., a large highway contractor and asphalt producer.

In 2004, Judge Zouhary accepted a position as ''Of Counsel'' with the law firm of Fuller & Henry. He remained with Fuller & Henry until 2005, when Ohio Governor Bob Taft appointed him to the Lucas County Common Pleas Court. In Ohio, the Common Pleas Court is the highest state trial bench and hears all major civil and criminal cases.

During his time as an attorney in private practice, Judge Zouhary distinguished himself as an excellent litigator and was honored by being selected as a member of the prestigious American College of Trial Lawyers. Membership in the American College of Trial Lawyers is by invitation only and is limited to the best of the trial bar.

Judge Zouhary has long been committed to the ideals of civility and professionalism in the legal field. Friends and colleagues often describe him as ''a gentleman.'' I agree with that assessment. He is well regarded for his honesty, his integrity, and his intelligence, and those who have known and worked with him through the years speak warmly of his even-temper and cordial demeanor.

Not surprisingly, given his interest in preserving a less combative approach to the law, Judge Zouhary frequently has presented lectures focusing on legal ethics and civility in the practice of law for Continuing Legal Education Seminars. His commitment to serving the community as a professional also is exemplified by his membership in the Toledo Rotary Club, as well as his participation in a broad array of other charitable activities, ranging from pro bono work for a local church to service at a community soup kitchen.

Although he has been a Common Pleas judge for only a relatively short time, Judge Zouhary already has distinguished himself on the bench. He has worked diligently to clear a very large backlog of cases from his crowded docket and has made a good deal of headway in that effort. Most important, attorneys who have appeared before him—criminal and civil, prosecution and defense—speak in glowing terms of his talent, fairness, and excellent judicial temperament.

With Judge Zouhary's impressive record as a legal professional and community leader, it should come as no surprise that the American Bar Association was unanimous in giving him its highest rating of ''well-qualified.'' Judge Zouhary is in every way an outstanding nominee, who will serve the people of Ohio and of this country well.

I strongly support the nomination of Judge Jack Zouhary as a Federal District Court Judge for the Northern District of Ohio.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the yeas and nays be vitiated on the nomination of Judge Stephen Larson so that it can be done by voice vote. I see the distinguished leaders on the Senate floor. I don't think there is any objection.

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

Mr. LEAHY. That is my St. Patrick's Day gift to the body.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time is yielded back.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Jack Zouhary, of Ohio, to be U.S. District Judge for the Northern District of Ohio? The yeas and nays have been ordered, and the clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. The following Senators were necessarily absent: the Senator from Oklahoma, (Mr. COBURN), the Senator from Mississippi, (Mr. COCHRAN), the Senator from Nevada, (Mr. ENSIGN), and the Senator from Oklahoma, (Mr. INHOFE).

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

The result was announced—yeas 96, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 75 Ex.]

YEAS—96

Akaka	Domenici	McConnell
Alexander	Dorgan	Menendez
Allard	Durbin	Mikulski
Allen	Enzi	Murkowski
Baucus	Feingold	Murray
Bayh	Feinstein	Nelson (FL)
Bennett	Frist	Nelson (NE)
Biden	Graham	Obama
Bingaman	Grassley	Pryor
Bond	Gregg	Reed
Boxer	Hagel	Reid
Brownback	Harkin	Roberts
Bunning	Hatch	Rockefeller
Burns	Hutchison	Salazar
Burr	Inouye	Santorum
Byrd	Isakson	Sarbanes
Cantwell	Jeffords	Schumer
Carper	Johnson	Sessions
Chafee	Kennedy	Shelby
Chambliss	Kerry	Smith
Clinton	Kohl	Snowe
Coleman	Kyl	Specter
Collins	Landrieu	Stabenow
Conrad	Lautenberg	Stevens
Cornyn	Leahy	Sununu
Craig	Levin	Talent
Crapo	Lieberman	Thomas
Dayton	Lincoln	Thune
DeMint	Lott	Vitter
DeWine	Lugar	Voinovich
Dodd	Martinez	Warner
Dole	McCain	Wyden

NOT VOTING—4

Coburn	Ensign
Cochran	Inhofe

The nomination was confirmed.

NOTICE

Incomplete record of Senate proceedings.

Today's Senate proceedings will be continued in Book II.