help address the concerns of many re-
tirees regarding access, availability and scheduling of appointments, claims filing, processing and payment, and na-
tional enrollment.

This bill is an important first step toward achieving the goal we share, and I look forward to working closely with my colleagues on the Senate Armed Services Committee and in the Senate to enact it.

THE VERY BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, at the close of business yesterday, Tuesday, February 22, 2000, the Federal debt stood at $5,742,317,374,668.82 (Five trillion, seven hundred forty-two billion, three hundred seventy-four million, three hundred sixty-eight dollars and eighty-two cents).

One year ago, February 22, 1999, the Federal debt stood at $5,617,212,000,000 (Five trillion, six hundred seventeen billion, two hundred twelve million).

Five years ago, February 22, 1995, the Federal debt stood at $5,435,999,000,000 (Four trillion, four hundred ninety-nine billion, nine hundred ninety-nine million).

Ten years ago, February 22, 1990, the Federal debt stood at $3,992,794,000,000 (Three trillion, nine hundred ninety-two billion, seven hundred forty-two million).

Fifteen years ago, February 22, 1985, the Federal debt stood at $1,656,818,000,000 (One trillion, six hundred ninety-five billion, eight hundred eighteen million) which reflects a debt increase of more than $1 trillion—$4,046,499,374,668.82 (Four trillion, forty-six billion, four hundred ninety-nine billion, three hundred seventeen million, three hundred forty-two billion, six hundred sixty-eight dollars and eighty-two cents) during the past 15 years.

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Thomas, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The nominations received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following bills were read a sec-
ond time and placed on the calendar.


EC-7617. A communication from the Chair-
man of the U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board, transmitting, pursuant to law, a re-
port entitled "Competing for Federal Jobs: Job Search Experiences of New Hires"; to the Committee on Governmental Affairs.

EC-7618. A communication from the Sec-
cretary of Defense, transmitting, the report of a rule entitled; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-7619. A communication from the Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Read-
iness), transmitting, pursuant to law, the an-
ual report for fiscal year 1999 of the Na-
tional Guard Youth Challenge Program; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-7620. A communication from the Prin-
cipal Deputy Assistant Secretary, Depart-
ment of Defense transmitting, pursuant to law, the annual National Guard and Reserve Component Equipment Report for fiscal year 2001; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-7621. A communication from the Dep-
uty Chief, National Forest System, Depart-
ment of Agriculture transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of rivers added to the Na-
tional Wild and Scenic Rivers System by the Oregon Wild Rivers Act of 1988; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-7622. A communication from the Direc-
tor, Office of Surface Mining, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "West Virginia Regulatory Program (WVRB-77-FO)"; received February 18, 2000; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-7623. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel for Regulatory Law, De-
partment of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Control and Accountability of Nuclear Materials" (DOE M 471.2-3); received February 22, 2000; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-7624. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel for Regulatory Law, De-
partment of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Contractor Employee Protection Program" (RIN 1040-AAY7), received February 17, 2000; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-7625. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel for Regulatory Law, De-
partment of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Classi-

cified Information Systems Security Manual" (DOE O 474.1 and DOE M 474.1–1); received February 18, 2000; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-7626. A communication from the Direc-
tor, Office of Regulatory Management and Information, Office of Policy, Planning and Evaluation, Environmental Protection Agen-
cy, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Furilazole: Time-Limited Pesticide Tolerance" (FRL #6490-3), received February 17, 2000; to the Committee on Agri-
culture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-7627. A communication from the Direc-
tor, Office of Regulatory Management and Information, Office of Policy, Planning and Evaluation, Environmental Protection Agen-
cy, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Zinc Phosphide: Extendi-

tion/Amendment of Tolerance for Emergency Use and New Use" (FRL #6490-3), received February 17, 2000; to the Committee on Agri-
culture, Nutrition, and Forestry.