stand for liberty taken on April 6—almost 700 years ago—in Arbroath, Scotland. A call for liberty which still echoes through our history and the history of many nations across the globe.

It has been my hope that this annual event will grow in prominence each year, similar to St. Patrick’s Day and Columbus Day, and the ceremonies and activities taking place today and over the next few days demonstrate that these goals are coming to fruition. I believe April 6 can also serve as a day to recognize the actions that have not achieved the principles of freedom which we hold dear. The example of the Scotsmen at Arbroath—their courage—serves as a beacon to countries still striving for liberty today.

SCHEDULE

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, the Senate will now consider the passage of S. Con. Res. 101, the budget resolution. By a previous order, there will be two back-to-back votes beginning at 10:30 a.m. The vote on the Byrd amendment will be the first, to be followed by a vote on the Roth amendment. Following the votes, the Durbin amendment regarding tax cuts will be the pending amendment.

For the information of all Senators, the so-called vote-arama—and I hope it will not rise to that level; maybe it will just be a few votes we have to take one after the other—is expected to begin at some point this evening. I do want to emphasize, though, unless we are successful, on both sides of the aisle—let me say, Senator Reid has been working very hard on the Democratic side of the aisle. They have a reasonably low number of amendments still pending. We hope to reduce the number on this side of the aisle, too. We should be able to determine by late this afternoon whether we can finish this afternoon whether we can finish tomorrow, or whatever it is going to take for half the amendments, Senators should not assume that this is something that would have been unthinkable a few years ago in Washington when we were drowning in red ink with deficit after deficit piling on to our national debt. It reached such a point of desperation that a proposal was made in the Congress to amend the Constitution of the United States and give to the Federal judiciary the power to rein in the spending of Congress.

It was an unprecedented transfer of power to the judiciary by the legislative branch of Government. Some people were so despondent and so desperate, they were prepared to back something that would have been unthinkable a few years ago.

Today in the course of debating the budget resolution, our focus is the use of the surplus, the revenues we will generate from our economy far and above what is necessary for the needs of Government and current programs. There is a difference of opinion about what to do with this surplus.

Mr. REID. The minority yields 20 minutes off the resolution to the Senator from Illinois.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois is recognized for 20 minutes, with the time coming off the resolution.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I thank Senator Reid and Senator Lautenberg for yielding me this time.

The amendment I have offered is a straightforward opportunity for Members of the Senate to go on record in reference to the proposed tax cut by George W. Bush, the nominal candidate for President on the Republican side.

The reason I am offering this amendment is I believe it offers a clear choice to the Members of the Senate and certainly to the people of this Nation. Every one of us understands we have been going through a period of unprecedented prosperity in America. In fact, I believe we have set records in terms of growth and economic growth without recession. This is not an accident. It is by design of an administration that has been determined to continue to bring Federal spending under control, to keep interest rates manageable, and to encourage growth in the economy. This point of the amendment is accomplished by the policies of the Federal Reserve Board under Chairman Alan Greenspan.

We are now at an unusual point in our history where we are considering the will of the American people, that is something that would have been unthinkable a few years ago. We have not been drowning in red ink with deficit after deficit piling on to our national debt. It reached such a point of desperation that a proposal was made in the Congress to amend the Constitution of the United States and give to the Federal judiciary the power to rein in the spending of Congress.

Today in the course of debating the budget resolution, our focus is the use of the surplus, the revenues we will generate from our economy far and above what is necessary for the needs of Government and current programs. There is a difference of opinion about what to do with this surplus.

On the Democratic side, we believe the first priority should be the reduction of our national debt. We collect each day in America $1 billion in taxes from individuals, businesses, and families, and that money is used for the sole purpose of paying interest on our national debt. That $1 billion does not educate a child; it does not build a road; it does not make America any safer; it pays interest on debt that is primarily held by foreign bond holders.

We believe on the Democratic side that our first priority should be to
bring down this debt and reduce these interest costs so we can say to our children: You are not going to inherit our mortgage, a mortgage which we incurred for our needs in our generation. We are going to give you a better chance to build your America in the vision for our future instead of being saddled with our old debt.

That is the highest priority on the Democratic side, and my colleagues will hear it expounded by the Democratic leader, Senator Lautenberg, when he offers his Democratic alternative to the budget.

The way we reduce this debt is by investing money in Social Security so that system will be available for seniors and the disabled for decades to come and also, of course, and by investing in Medicare. Medicare is a word which many people in this Chamber fear to use. They are afraid on the other side of the aisle to even make reference to Medicare and its future. But in a plus for Americans, Medicare is an important word in their everyday life. That Medicare system provides health insurance for the elderly and disabled of America. It has been, frankly, one of the most successful programs in our modern history. It represents a commitment by the Federal Government that no one, when they have reached a certain age, will go wanting when it comes to quality health care, and it has worked.

In no case, the institution of Medicare, our seniors have lived longer; they have had a better life; they are more independent; they are healthier; they are stronger, and Medicare has a lot to do with it. We on the Democratic side believe that part of the surplus generated in this economy should be dedicated to Medicare’s future to make sure this health insurance is around for many years to come. We also believe we should target tax cuts. We think we can take an appropriate amount of this surplus and convert it into tax cuts which families really need. I will give two specific examples. We on the Democratic side believe that we should have a targeted tax cut so families can deduct college education expenses. How many families do we know that have sent a son or daughter off to college and then worried about how much debt that child incurred in the course of their higher education?

By providing the deductibility of college education expenses as a targeted tax cut on the Democratic side, we will provide some relief to these families, up to, say, $2,800, for example, each year which will defray the cost of college education expenses. I hope it will be more in the future, but that depends, of course, on the economy and how it is moving and whether the surpluses continue.

Secondly, the largest growing group of our children are those over the age of 85. People who have parents and grandparents who are now reaching their 85. People who have parents and grandparents of Americans are those over the age of 21. Seniors continue. How it is moving and whether the surplus, of course, on the economy and how it is moving and whether the surpluses continue.

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In order to fund this plan, they will either have to reach deep into the Social Security trust fund or, as an alternative, will have to make cuts in spending.

Cuts in spending may sound harmless today, but when we put them on the spot and ask, "Where will you cut," they refuse to point to it. Many of us believe that investments in education, in our infrastructure, and in our Nation's defense are too important to be left to chance and uncertainty.

Looking again at the Bush tax cut—the original figure of $483 billion that he proposed, plus an additional $60 billion in interest—it shows you the disparity between the non-Social Security surplus and the Bush tax cut. This is the tax cut I am asking my colleagues in the Senate to vote on yes or no today. I will be voting no. I will be voting against a tax cut which threatens the Social Security trust fund. I hope my colleagues will stand up and be counted as to whether they believe the Bush tax cut is good policy for the future of America.

Let's take a closer look at what this tax cut means to American families. Most families who I represent could certainly use a tax cut. I think, in many instances, it would be helpful to them to meet their expenses and to provide for their future.

Take a close look at the Bush tax cut and the winners and the losers. Families making over $301,000 a year, under the George Bush tax cut, would see an annual tax break of over $50,000. Think of it: a family making $300,000 a year, plus a $50,000 tax break under the George Bush tax cut. Sixty percent of working families in America, with incomes below $39,300, would see an annual tax break, under the Bush tax cut, of $2272.

My colleagues in the Senate will have their choice. Do they want to support the Bush tax cut, which threatens Social Security by raiding the Social Security trust fund, and provides virtually nothing to 60 percent of America's working families, at the same time providing a generous $50,000-plus tax cut for those making over $300,000 a year?

Many on the Republican side have already appeared with George W. Bush, put their arms around him and endorsed him. If they endorse his tax cut, they have a chance to vote for it today. Twice in the Senate Budget Committee, I have made my case from this dais. They refused to face a vote, up or down, on the Bush tax cut. Today they will have another clear choice, a choice as to whether or not they believe America is moving in the right direction. I should point out that the Democratic alternative of reducing debt, investing in Social Security and Medicare, with targeted tax cuts for families, with investments in education—or whether they will take what I consider to be a risky and dangerous course and follow the suggestion of the Presidential candidate of the Republican Party, George W. Bush.

This morning's Roll Call newspaper spelled out that the George Bush tax plan makes it virtually impossible for him to meet the needs of America's future—to fund the prescription drug benefit, to fund additional medical research, and to assist Americans understand to be an important part of our future.

George W. Bush has made his choice. He has decided this tax cut is more important than those other things. It is time for the Senate to make its choice. It is time for the Senate to stand up and be counted.

I hope, unlike in the Senate Budget Committee, my colleagues in the Senate will be followed by a vote against this tax cut—will stand up and be counted. If they believe, as I do, that America is moving in the right direction and that taking this risky strategy could imperil our future, I hope they will join me in voting no on this tax cut.

I yield back the remainder of my time.

Mr. DOMENICI. President, parliamentary inquiry: Are we scheduled to vote at 10:30?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate is scheduled to have a 10-minute debate at 10:30 a.m., which will be followed by a vote. Mr. DOMENICI. Is there a vote following that, also?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Following that vote, there will be a 2-minute debate on the Roth amendment, which will be followed by a vote. Mr. DOMENICI. I hope all Senators heard that. Let me repeat it. We will have a 10-minute debate starting at 10:30 on the Byrd amendment, to be followed by an up-or-down vote. When that vote is completed, there will be 2 minutes to debate the next amendment.

What did the Chair say the second amendment is?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Roth amendment.

Mr. DOMENICI. The Roth amendment on ANWR. After 2 minutes of debate, there will be a vote or in relation to that. So Senators ought to know that is going to occur.

I say to the Senator, I am at some point going to use some time. I could take 5 minutes now—or 10—and discuss it.

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

Mr. DOMENICI. First, Mr. President, let me see if I understand the amendment in the name of Senator BATANEN, which he claims to be Governor Bush's tax proposal.

On page 4, line 4, what I note is that there is a reduction in revenues in the resolution by $4.8 billion. I wonder if the Senator would correct that that is correct. I am reading it off the Senator's amendment.

Mr. DURBIN. I do not have a copy. I sent my copy to the desk. I will have a copy in.

Mr. DOMENICI. All right. On page 4, line 4, revenues in the resolution are reduced by $4.8 billion. Is that correct?

Mr. DURBIN. On page 4 of this amendment? I am sorry. I say to the Senator, I do not see that reference.

Mr. DOMENICI. On the bottom of the first page of the amendment, it says: "On page 4, line 4, decrease the amount by $4,800,000,000." Is that correct?

Mr. DURBIN. That is correct. Mr. DOMENICI. Could you tell me what year that is?

Mr. DURBIN. It begins in the year 2002.

Mr. DOMENICI. 2001?

Mr. DURBIN. 2002. I am sorry, it is 2001. I stand corrected.

Mr. DOMENICI. Does the Senator know there is no tax cut in 2001 in the Bush proposal?

Mr. DURBIN. Governor Bush has offered two proposals. The first proposal is the one that we have followed in offering this amendment. He has come back to offer a second proposal starting with 2002. We stuck with his original proposal, which is the period of time which this budget resolution we are considering on the floor addresses.

Mr. DOMENICI. My next question was going to be, did you know that Governor Bush's tax plan covered 2002 through 2006? You have it starting in 2001 with almost $5 billion, but you have given an explanation for that. There are two plans out there, and you chose one over the other.

Mr. DURBIN. That is correct. I chose the first one he offered. I believe the one that mirrors this budget resolution in terms of the period of time that we are addressing.

Mr. DOMENICI. Is it fair to assume that a candidate for President is not bound by the economic assumptions that we make in the Senate or that the CBO makes or OMB makes?

Mr. DURBIN. I conclude that a Presidential candidate can assume anything he or she wants to assume. In fairness, if somebody is going to make the cornerstone of their campaign a tax cut, it should make sense and should hold up when anyone analyzes it. With the figures I brought to the floor today, I suggest that Bush's proposed tax cut would invade the Social Security surplus by virtually any estimation.

Mr. DOMENICI. Let me make a point to the Senator, and I thank the Senator for yielding. Presidential candidate George W. Bush had three of the best economists in America working on this tax proposal. Interestingly enough, they made economic assumptions different from the Congressional Budget Office, or the OMB, for the next 5 years.

Interestingly enough, the assumptions of the Congressional Budget Office and the OMB have been wrong, and most of the time they have been wrong by underestimating the performance of the economy. They have underestimated the growth in the economy, underestimated the revenue stream, and underestimated the growth that came later on and had to make adjustments to it. He is entitled to use his economic assumptions, which I have read and are very
realistic. And that makes a very big difference if one has slight economic assumptions of a positive nature higher than one would assume in our budget.

Mr. DURBIN. Will the Senator yield for a question?

Mr. DOMENICI. Yes.

Mr. DURBIN. Which assumptions did the Senator use in drawing up the budget resolution he proposes today?

Mr. DOMENICI. I am bound by the rules of the Senate to use the CBO. The President uses OMB. Frequently, we are different. As a matter of fact, over the last 3 years, we have gone to the President’s numbers, and we have gone back to CBO’s numbers because we are trying to find out which is more apt to be right. So there is nothing precise about this. One is entitled—just as President Clinton did when he ran for office—to use his own economic experts as he puts his plan together.

Mr. DURBIN. Is the Senator saying, then, that President candidate George W. Bush is using assumptions that come from neither the CBO or OMB, but much more optimistic ones to justify his massive tax cut?

Mr. DOMENICI. Absolutely, except they are not markedly different, but they are different. There is only one Bush plan, as far as the Senator from New Mexico knows. It is December 1, 1999. I have a copy of it in front of me. What has been offered in the Senate is not the Bush plan. Nonetheless, I don’t want to argue that exclusively. I can let everybody know that it isn’t the Bush plan.

I think what is more important is that soon-to-be-President Bush is entitled to put a budget and a tax plan together, and he is entitled to use his best economic advisers. Let me suggest something. I honestly believe that if George W. Bush were the President instead of Bill Clinton being the President, there would be a couple of big changes this year that would make it a lot easier to achieve the Bush tax plan.

First of all, we would not have a President recommending that domestic spending grow at 14 percent a year. That is what we are fighting with here—not with a President who is trying to have small Government so he could give some relief to the taxpayers. We are arguing with a President who isn’t elected yet, who would set forth the Bush plan. That is ultimately the way the budget balances itself.

Mr. DURBIN. Yes.

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Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, 2 years ago Congress enacted landmark transportation legislation, the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century. In that legislation we restored the trust to the highway trust fund and we set forth highway funding levels that State and local governments could expect to receive over the 6-year life of TEA-21.

There are efforts now to reduce the gas tax revenues going into the highway trust fund, thereby endangering the promises we have made regarding funding levels for the Nation’s highways and bridges.

This amendment puts the Senate on record in opposition to any efforts to repeal or to reduce gas tax revenues, either temporarily or permanently. In adopting this amendment, the Senate will confirm the position that it took in enacting TEA-21, that all gas tax revenues should go to the States for critical transportation infrastructure needs and that we meant it when we said we were restoring the “trust” to the highway trust fund.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, again I commend the distinguished Senator from West Virginia for his leadership on this issue—not only this particular measure before the Senate, but it goes all the way back to when I was privileged to be mingling to the floor the ISTEA, TEA-21 legislation. Then, in the course of that deliberation, we took the 4.3 cents out of the general revenue and put it in the highway trust fund for the express purpose to improve our Nation’s highways.

I commend the leadership.

I also express my gratitude to all themyrific organizations, from the National Governors’ Association, the League of Cities and Communities, and hundreds of others that have worked so hard to keep the Congress well informed about the needs of our infrastructure, of transportation.

I wish to add one word, and that is “stability.” This Nation must have stability in the funding in the make this program successful.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time has expired.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a second sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The question is on agreeing to amendment No. 2943. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant bill clerk called the roll.

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

The result was announced—yeas 65, nays 35, as follows:
a mountainous state that is sorely in need of improved highways, I applaud his efforts at ensuring that our highways can be built more expeditiously but in an environmentally friendly manner.

Mr. President, our victory this morning was the result of the leadership of these fine Senators as well as the efforts of our other cosponsors—Senators Robb, Bingaman, Reid, Lincoln, and others. It was a victory for every American that drives on our nation's highways. It was a victory for the integrity of the Highway Trust Fund. It was a defeat for any proposal to de-link our federal highway spending from the level of gas tax revenues.

AMENDMENT NO. 2955

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There are now 2 minutes, equally divided between the Senator from Delaware and the Senator from Alaska.

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, I rise today to join the distinguished Senator from Delaware in voicing my strenuous objections to opening the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to oil exploration, and in urging our colleagues not to sacrifice this natural wonder at the altar of short-term economic expediency.

I recognize that ANWR is once again a tempting target at this moment of record high oil and gasoline prices and low consumer patience. Proponents of drilling, as they have many times before, hold out the promise of a quick fix to this recent price spike and a long-term solution to our dependence on foreign oil. They go so far as to portray the refuge as a kind of energy security blanket that will protect us from the whims of foreign producers.

But appealing as that sounds, the truth remains that ANWR is not the answer to our current oil woes. Opening this pristine place of wilderness to drilling will not bring down gas prices tomorrow, let alone in the immediate future. And it will not yield anywhere near the amount of crude needed to successfully wean us from our addiction to OPEC in years to come. What it will do, we know from plenty of analysis and experience, is immeasurable and irreversible damage to one of the last pure preserves of its kind in the world and one of G-d’s most awesome creations. That is the real price at issue here, and it is far too high for any promise to remove a fraction, or perhaps an ounce, of the oil from the market. That is the reason I implore my colleagues to once again stand as firm as the tundra and uphold the ban on drilling in the Arctic Refuge.

Mr. GRAMS. Mr. President, I want to take just a few minutes to address the assumption in the budget of oil leasing revenues from activities within the Section 1002 area of Alaska.

First, however, I think it’s important to understand just a few of the facts surrounding the current status of the Clinton energy policy. In 1997, the Carter Administration and Congress responded to the energy crisis by creating the Department of Energy and...
charging it with increasing U.S. energy security and reducing our reliance on foreign oil. In the early 1970's, our Nation relied upon foreign oil to meet roughly 35 percent of our needs. Today, after investing billions of dollars into the Department of Energy, our Nation is not reliant upon foreign oil to meet almost 60 percent of our needs. That reliance will increase to 65 percent by 2020.

Those numbers are real, they're tangible, and we've been able to see it happening. The Clinton Administration has had seven years to respond to our growing reliance on foreign oil and to increase our domestic energy security. So you might ask, what have they done to improve the situation? I regret to say they've done very little. Since 1992, U.S. oil production has decreased by 17 percent while at the same time our energy consumption has increased by 14 percent. In 1990, U.S. jobs in oil and gas exploration and production were 806,000 today those jobs have been reduced to roughly 290,000, a 27 percent decline. And in 1990, the U.S. was home to 657 working oil rigs. Today, there are only 153 working oil rigs scattered across the Nation a 77 percent decrease.

Likewise, since coming to office, President Clinton has known that the U.S. Department of Energy was obligated by contract to pick up and remove spent nuclear fuel from civilian nuclear reactors across the country. In my home state of Minnesota, the Department's failure to remove nuclear fuel could force the shutdown of two nuclear reactors and the loss of 20 percent of Minnesota's generation capacity. Again, not only has this Administration failed to respond, I believe they've made the situation even worse by rejecting legislation that has passed both Houses of Congress with overwhelming, bipartisan majorities. Those bills would have not only moved waste from states, thereby fulfilling the Department's obligation, they would have helped ensure the continued use of emissions-free nuclear power well into the future.

As if that weren't enough, the Clinton Administration has taken a very hostile approach to coal-fired generation, they've termed hydropower a non-renewable resource and are now working to breach dams in the Northwest, and the last areas of land left to exploration for natural gas reserves.

When confronted with the truth about high oil costs and increasing reliance on foreign oil, the only thing this Administration can say is that they support renewable energy sources. Well, I too, am a strong supporter of renewable energy technologies. I've been a strong proponent of renewable energy technologies. I've been a strong proponent of the development and promotion of ethanol and biodiesel as a means of reducing our reliance on foreign oil and improving the environment through a companion legislation signed into law last year extending the tax credit for electricity generated from wind and expanding that tax credit to electricity generated from poultry waste. I have written letters in each of the past two years to Senate appropriators supporting significant increases in renewable energy programs, and I was one of 39 Senators to vote in support of a $75 million increase in renewable energy programs last year. I wrote to President Clinton this year asking him to include more money for renewable energy programs in his budget. However, I know that simply calling for increased funding for any new approach is not the way to combat the loss of generation in hydropower, nuclear, coal, and other sources that this Administration has pursued through its energy policies.

I think it's clear that, since coming to Washington in 1993, this Administration has been asleep at the wheel in developing a coherent energy policy. They're more interested in pursuing the limited agenda of a few interest groups than in planning for the energy needs of all Americans.

Instead of strapping on the same blinders that narrowly guide the Clinton Administration, I believe Congress must put all of our options on the table and begin to plan for the long-term energy needs of our nation's consumers.

One of those options is clearly the topic we're discussing today, our nation's tremendous oil reserves in the Section 1002 area of Alaska.

Mr. President, history shows that for two decades rejection has placed special consideration upon this area because of its potential for significant oil and gas reserves. In 1980, Congress passed the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act—or ANILCA. In addition to setting aside over 100 million acres of Alaska for National Parks, Refuges, and Wilderness, the ANILCA legislation specifically left open the future management of a 1.5 million-acre area on the coastal plain of the National Wildlife Refuge. The legislation also authorized the Department of Interior to undertake geological and biological studies of the Section 1002 area and report back to Congress.

After more than five years of conducting these studies, the Department of Interior, in 1987, recommended to Congress that the Section 1002 area be made available for oil and gas exploration and production, and that it be done in an environmentally sound manner.

Congress has responded to this recommendation a number of times since receiving it from the Department of Interior. In fact, both Houses of Congress passed an authorization for oil and gas leasing in the Section 1002 area as part of the 1995 budget reconciliation legislation, but it was eventually vetoed by President Clinton.

Today, as a result of increasing prices for oil and increasing domestic oil and gas production, we find ourselves again debating some decades-old questions. Do we move forward in an environmentally sound manner to develop domestic oil and gas reserves, or do we ask other nations to produce oil for us without similar environmental safeguards? Do we keep American jobs and investments inside our borders, or do we ship our jobs and industries to foreign nations? Do we increase our energy and national security while we have a chance to do so, or do we run around the world begging friend and foe alike to "feel our pain" every time we have an oil supply disruption? For me, the answer is simple. The Administration is opposing any exploration of the
Section 1002 area for environmental reasons, while at the same time beg-
ing Iran, Iraq, Libya and others to in-
crease their production for us. I ask my.colleagues, who are the real environ-
mentalists here? Certainly not the Clinton Administration. It’s clear to me that the Administration’s policy
against exploration in the Section 1002 area, when compared against its policy of begg-
ing for increased oil production abroad, is a net loss for American jobs, family checkbooks, domestic energy security and environment.

Mr. President, I urge my colleagues to take a hard look at the intellectual dishonesty of refusing to explore our domestic oil and gas reserves for envi-
ronmental reasons, while asking other nations to find and produce more oil with significantly fewer environmental protections than we require. I support
the inclusion of this assumption in the budget resolution and I hope we vote to
maintain it.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICIAL. The Sen-
ator from New Mexico is recognized.

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, there
will be 2 minutes of debate, and then we
will have another vote. Votes don’t count on roll-call time. So if you take
20, 30 minutes on a vote, we just have to add that much more to the resolu-
tion because we are not counting vote
time under the statute. I hope you will stay around and vote shortly, after the
debate is finished. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICIAL. The Sen-
ator from Delaware is recognized.

Mr. ROTH. Mr. President, my amend-
ment would simply protect the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge from oil drill-
ning. Following in the footsteps of con-
servationist President Theodore Roo-
vell, President Dwight Eisenhower set aside this Arctic wilderness area for
all time and all generations.

While my amendment protects a wil-
derness, it also protects a legacy. It is a
legacy of foresight and conservation
that has been handed down to us from
generation to generation. I hope we
will pass this legacy on to future
generations—just as we have re-
ceived it from past ones. My amend-
ment will insure that we do.

This is not a partisan debate. The
President I have named were both Rep-
ublicans. I am joined in support of my amendment by many Democrats. To-
gether, both parties have a stake in
this wilderness area. I hope today that both parties will join hands in pro-
tecting it. I urge my colleagues to sup-
port my amendment.

I yield the remainder of my time to
the Senator from California.

Mrs. BOXER. I thank my colleague.
This is truly a bipartisan effort. As
this budget stands, it is the most antienvironmental budget in history
because it is the first time any budget resolution has even been considered for drilling in a
wildlife refuge. We know that when President Eisenhower declared this a
refuge, he never envisioned drilling in
it. Drilling in a refuge is not only un-
necessary; it is destructive.

Please support the Roth-Boxer
amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICIAL. The Sen-
ator from Alaska, Mr. STEVENS, is rec-
ognized.

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, I re-
gret to do this, but my colleague from
Delaware is wrong. I was there. Presi-
dent Eisenhower set aside an arctic
wildlife refuge. We know that when
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wildlife refuge. We know that when President Eisenhower declared this a
refuge, he never envisioned drilling in
at the end of April, at this time we do not
have subsequent plans to export.
We applaud the Administration and the Congress for its wisdom to permit the mar-
time work and to remove a historical pen-
alty imposed on Alaska North Slope oil. The
West Coast is part of the global crude mar-
ket. The ultimate destination of Alaskan
oil has an effect on either West Coast sup-
ply or gasoline prices. Once our acquisition
of ARCO is complete, we would expect to run all
of our Alaska crude through ARCO’s exc-
cellent West Coast refining and marketing
network.

Sincerely,

LARRY D. BURTON.

The PRESIDING OFFICIAL. The Sen-
tator’s time has expired.

Mr. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I
move to table the amendment and ask
for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICIAL. Is there a
sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.
The question is on the motion to table amendment No. 2955. The clerk
will call the roll.
The legislative clerk called the roll.
The PRESIDING OFFICIAL. Are there
any other Senators in the Chamber de-
siring to vote?
The result was announced—yeas 51,
nays 49, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 58 Leg.]
Mr. GRAMM. Mr. President, I yield the remaining time on the Durbin amendment.

AMENDMENT NO. 2973 TO AMENDMENT NO. 2953
(Purpose: To express the sense of the Senate on proposals “to accomplish the strategic goal of completely eliminating the internal combustion engine over, say, a twenty-five year period”)

Mr. GRAMM. 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 Texas [Mr. GRAMM] proposes an amendment numbered 2973 to amendment No. 2953.

Mr. GRAMM. 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:

FEDERAL REVENUE TOTALS
On page 4, line 3, decrease the amount by $0.
On page 4, line 4, decrease the amount by $1.
On page 4, line 5, decrease the amount by $1.
On page 4, line 6, decrease the amount by $1.
On page 4, line 7, decrease the amount by $1.
On page 4, line 8, decrease the amount by $1.

FEDERAL REVENUE CHANGES
On page 4, line 12, increase the amount by $0.
On page 4, line 13, increase the amount by $1.
On page 4, line 14, increase the amount by $1.
On page 4, line 15, increase the amount by $1.
On page 4, line 16, increase the amount by $1.
On page 4, line 17, increase the amount by $1.

NEW BUDGET AUTHORITY
On page 4, line 21, increase the amount by $0.
On page 4, line 22, increase the amount by $1.
On page 4, line 23, increase the amount by $1.
On page 4, line 24, increase the amount by $1.

BUDGET OUTLAYs
On page 5, line 6, increase the amount by $0.
On page 5, line 7, increase the amount by $1.
On page 5, line 8, increase the amount by $1.
On page 5, line 9, increase the amount by $1.
On page 5, line 10, increase the amount by $1.
On page 5, line 11, increase the amount by $1.

NET INTEREST BUDGET AUTHORITY
On page 26, line 3, increase the amount by $0.
On page 26, line 7, increase the amount by $1.
On page 26, line 11, increase the amount by $1.

On page 26, line 15, increase the amount by $1.
On page 26, line 19, increase the amount by $1.
On page 26, line 23, increase the amount by $1.

AMENDMENT NO. 2973 TO AMENDMENT NO. 2953
(Purpose: To express the sense of the Senate on proposals “to accomplish the strategic goal of completely eliminating the internal combustion engine over, say, a twenty-five year period”)

Mr. GRAMM. Mr. President, I thank Senator DURBIN for offering his version of the tax cut proposed by Governor Bush. I believe he will get an opportunity next year to vote on it. I look forward to having that opportunity. I intend to vote for it when it is offered by then-President George Bush. I hope and believe it will pass the Senate by an overwhelming margin.

But let me try, if I might, to explain the dilemma we are in terms of trying to do the Bush tax cut now, as if this were a serious proposal. Then I want to discuss my substitute.

Quite aside from the fact the years do not actually match up because if George Bush is elected President, he will take the oath on January 20 of next year, and therefore his tax cut would begin in fiscal year 2002 in all probability, but let me explain the problem. I am grateful for the opportunity because it tells a story that miraculously the general public does not appear to understand; that is, why can’t we have Clinton’s budget and George Bush’s tax cut?

The reason we cannot—it is an old fact of life—you can’t have your cake and eat it too. President Clinton has proposed a budget that, in the 5 years from 2002 through 2006, would spend, relative to what we are spending now, an additional $494 billion. For the years that this tax cut amendment would be in force, the President’s budget that was submitted this year, if enacted, would raise spending by $494 billion.

During that same period, the Bush tax cut, if adopted, would reduce taxes by $483 billion. That gives rise to two points. First of all, we cannot increase spending on some 80 new programs and program expansions which President Clinton has proposed, increasing spending by half a trillion dollars in 5 years—we cannot have the Government spend all that money and at the same time give it back to working families so they can spend it. We cannot do both. We are going to have to choose.

The question we are all going to have to answer—and by “all” I do not mean just 100 Members of the Senate; I mean every voter in America—the question we are going to have to answer is: Do we want these 80 new programs and program expansions so we can spend in Washington another $500 billion over the first 5 years of the new Presidency, or would we rather eliminate the marriage penalty?

Today, Americans meet, fall in love and get married and they discover they end up paying about $1,200 of additional taxes for the right to be married. Let me make it clear. My wife is worth $1,200—a bargain at the price. But it seems to me she ought to get the same opportunity because it tells a story that is more deadly than that of any military enemy we are ever again likely to confront.

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Today, Americans meet, fall in love and get married and they discover they end up paying about $1,200 of additional taxes for the right to be married. Let me make it clear. My wife is worth $1,200—a bargain at the price. But it seems to me she ought to get the same opportunity because it tells a story that is more deadly than that of any military enemy we are ever again likely to confront.
Governor Bush believes you can spend that money better than the Government. So rather than giving the Government another $494 billion to spend—we are not talking about Social Security; we are not talking about Medicare; we are talking about spending basically on discretionary programs.

The President’s discretionary non-defense budget goes up by a whopping 14 percent when one makes the adjustments for all the phony revenues and shifting when they are not paying and when they are not paying.

If you believe President Clinton and Vice President Gore are right, that we would be better off spending the $494 billion in Washington on your behalf to help you and your family, then you ought to be for spending this money. But if you believe repealing the marriage penalty and repealing the death tax so your family can keep more money to spend on their children and maybe expand their farm or sell your business—and 73 percent of small businesses do not make it into the second generation, in part because of death taxes. If you believe you would be better off spending $483 billion, having the American people own their own farms, than having Washington spend $494 billion for you, then you are going to get to vote on it. This is going to be on the ballot in November, but it is going to have AL Gore’s name next to the spending and it is going to have George Bush’s name next to the tax reductions.

How many people are being confused is that many of our colleagues and the Vice President and President say George Bush wants to give $483 billion in tax cuts, he wants to stop penalizing couples for getting married, he wants to stop taking farms away from people when they die, and he wants to reduce tax rates across the board, and that is dangerous. I say to Senator DOMENICI, they say it is dangerous to give back $483 billion in tax refunds to working people, but they do not say it is dangerous to spend $494 billion. I ask the question: If it is dangerous to give it back to the American people and let them spend it, how come it is not dangerous to spend it right here in Washington, DC? How can it be irresponsible for Governor Bush to be talking about $483 billion in tax reductions, letting working people keep more of what they earn, and how come it is not irresponsible for President Clinton to be talking about spending $494 billion more in Washington?

Mr. DOMENICI. Will the Senator yield?

Mr. GRAMM. I will be happy to yield. Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I want to make an observation and see if my colleague agrees with me. As a matter of fact, if we took President Clinton’s budget and adopted it—and it has a 4-percent increase in nondefense discretionary spending; that is, 13 appropriations bills less defense and military construction. It has a 14-percent increase. I believe it was the Senator who found that is the highest increase in domestic discretionary spending since the years of Jimmy Carter’s Presidency when inflation was rampant.

Mr. GRAMM. Exactly.

Mr. DOMENICI. How many years does my colleague think it would take to eat up all the surplus and be right there ready to use the Social Security surplus if we increased that spending 14 percent for the next few years? How many years?

Mr. GRAMM. It would take 3 years to consume the entire surplus. Why is it less dangerous to let them spend the whole thing in 3 years than giving a tax cut and giving most of that surplus back? The reason this amendment is so important is that I do not think we are ready to debate the Presidential campaign on the floor of the Senate.

The point is, our colleagues from Illinois has offered an amendment that he and me will have to the Bush tax cut. Here is the dilemma. We cannot have Clinton spending and the Bush tax cut. We have to choose between the two. That is what the election is about. If you want this spending, you ought to vote for Al Gore, and you would have the Gore tax increase. As many of my colleagues agree with me, that is the highest increase. I believe it was the Senator who found that is the highest increase. I believe it was the Senator who found that is the highest increase. I believe it was the Senator who found that is the highest increase.
Eliminating the internal combustion engine is a pretty dramatic change, especially over a 25-year period.

He goes on to say the reason he wants to do this is—talking again about these cars and these trucks:

Their cumulative impact on the global environment is more than any enemy we are ever again likely to face.

There is no way we can eliminate the internal combustion engine without starting out over the next 5 years, maybe with a $1.50-a-gallon tax, maybe in 4 years another $1.50, and get rid of the internal combustion engine we would have to get gasoline up $10, $20, $30 a gallon.

Since our colleague from Illinois decided today was the day we ought to begin to debate the Presidential campaign on the floor of the Senate, I thought we ought to have an opportunity to come to the Floor and say they do not agree with the Vice President; they are not quite ready to kiss the internal combustion engine goodbye. I am still hoping to get a four-wheel-drive truck. I am not ready to let AL GORE come in and impose his four-wheel-drive truck. I am not ready saying they do not agree with the Vice President on the floor of the Senate, I begin to debate the Presidential campaign today was the day we ought to start out over the next 5 years, than any military enemy we are ever again security of every nation that is more deadly.

Mr. GRAMM. He tells us what he wants to do this is—talking again about those cars and those trucks.

To get rid of all the internal combustion engines, and the first installment would be a $1.50 tax on gasoline today, then another $1.50 tax 4 years from now. That would only start it. We would have to go out from there. But I want to take a conservative approach, as I always do.

Finally, for those who say, OK, the Vice President wrote this book, but he did not mean it. This book was written for environmentalists. He meant it for them, but he did not mean it for people in Texas or New Mexico—let me read his response when he was asked about it:

"There is not a statement in that book that I don’t endorse, not one."

I do not endorse them. I am against raising gasoline taxes. I am against taking away my pickup truck. I am opposed to it.

I thought this was going to be saved for us to vote on in the election. But since our colleague from Illinois decided to debate the Presidential campaign today was the day we ought to vote on it.

Let me conclude with this remark, and then I will reserve the remainder of my time and let our colleague speak.

I am happy to say the man I support for President wants to cut your taxes. I am happy to say the President wants to cut your taxes. I want the world to know it. I suspect our colleague from Illinois is not going to be proud of the fact that AL GORE wants to raise gasoline taxes as part of a program for a "coordinated global program to accomplish the strategic goal of completely eliminating the internal combustion engine."

So we are offering a sense of the Senate today to say we are not for that. He may be for it. AL GORE is for it. He says he is for it. He wrote the book. He said he was for it as late as 4-26-99. The point is, not that he is not for it—he is for it—but that we are against it. That is the purpose of this amendment.

Should we debating the Presidential campaign on the floor of the Senate? I do not know whether we should or not. But since our colleague from Illinois decided to bring it up, I thought we ought to give people an alternative. It is the same choice they are going to have on election day, on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November of this year.

It is a profound choice. The lives of every American family will be changed if we repeal the death tax. If we reduce the marriage penalty, if we cut tax rates. The life of every American family will be changed if we have confiscatory taxes on gasoline to achieve some extremist goal of eliminating the internal combustion engine.

I reserve the remainder of my time.

Mr. GRAMM. Will the Senator yield?

Mr. DURBIN. Will the Senator yield for a question?

Mr. GRAMM. The Senator will get his 30 minutes. I have my 30 minutes, with all due respect.

What I have done is offer an amendment that says it is the sense of the Senate we should not to be doing this; we should not to be raising gasoline taxes so the Vice President can get rid of our cars and our trucks.

Since the Senator from Illinois decided today we ought to vote on the two alternatives, his argument is that it is OK for President Clinton in his budget to spend a new $494 billion in taxes but it is not all right, it is risky.

I say to Senator DOMENICI, it is terribly risky if, instead of us spending it, we let the taxpayers spend it. I do not get it. It is not risky if, instead of us spending it, we let the taxpayers spend it. I do not get it. I do not understand how it is not risky for us to spend it but somehow it is risky if, instead of us spending it, we let the taxpayers spend it. I do not get it.

So what I have offered, since we cannot do the Bush tax cut until George Bush becomes President—and I would like to hurry the day; if we could do something today that could make it come sooner, God knows, I would sign on as a cosponsor. But I do not think we are going to be able to do it before the Constitution says we can. In any case, what I have done, since we have started this debate, is I have taken the Vice President, who I have known, and I have put it in the first installments of what would be required to get rid of all the internal combustion engines, and the first installment would be a $1.50 tax on gasoline today, then another $1.50 tax 4 years from now. That would only start it. We would have to go out from there. But I want to take a conservative approach, as I always do.

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I believe hundreds of thousands of people are going to lose their jobs as a result of this program.

He further said:

I want to predict here tonight that if we adopt this bill the American economy is going to get weaker and not stronger, the deficit 4 years from today will be higher than it is today and not lower. When all is said and done, people will pay more taxes, the economy will create fewer jobs. Government will spend more money, and the American people will be worse off.

I yield to the Senator, under the resolution, 20 minutes. If the Senator needs more time, it is available.

Mr. DURBIN. I thank the Senator from Nevada.

Mr. GRAMM. Will the Senator yield so I can respond?

Mr. DURBIN. The Senator from Texas would not yield for a question. But I would like to ask him a question. I hope I am not inviting a speech. It is a very simple question.

I am holding Vice President Gore’s book, “Earth in the Balance”, in my hand. Can the Senator from Texas tell me which page he refers to when he says that Vice President Gore has called for a $3 gasoline tax increase? I want to turn to that page immediately. Can the Senator give me the number of the page?

Mr. GRAMM. I would be happy to respond by saying he calls for the elimination of the internal combustion engine over 25 years. Does anybody believe that you could achieve that without taxes driving up the price of gasoline? I think—

Mr. DURBIN. I reclaim my time.

Mr. GRAMM. He tells us what he wants, but he does not tell us the bad news about how we get it.

Mr. DURBIN. I reclaim my time, Mr. President.

If you have been around politics for about 5 minutes 30 seconds, you know
that when you do not have an answer, you answer a question with a question. That is what has happened.

Vice President Gore does not propose a $3 gasoline tax increase. He never has. The Senator from Texas knows it. He is not trying to go on record and keep a tax increase that he has dreamed up of $3 a gallon because he does not want to face the music when it comes to the real tax increases and cuts proposed by the Republican candidate for President, his Governor from the State of Texas, George W. Bush.

That is for real. That is the cornerstone of his campaign. You cannot stand it, Senator, but it is a fact. You make up taxes and put it in the mouth of Al Gore. We take the words spoken by George Bush.

When I ask the Senate to vote on George W. Bush’s tax cut—the mainstay of his campaign—you would think the Republicans would rally behind George Bush. This is their moment. This is the one they want to see elected to the White House. But they run, in the words of our former Senator Dale Bumpers, like the devil runs from holy water, when it comes to a vote on the George W. Bush tax cut. They cannot stand of going on record for what the Senator from Texas says he is so very proud of. He is so very proud of George W. Bush’s tax cut, he has offered a substitute to it. He does not want to be on the record. He does not want to go back to Texas and try to explain that tax cut. I do not blame him. It is a bad idea. It is bad policy.

I make no apology for bringing to the floor of the Senate the major issues in the Presidential campaign. For goodness sakes, what would the world think if the Senate stopped talking to itself and talking about issues that are being debated in America? This is the No. 1 issue in the campaign. I make no apology for bringing it to the floor, asking Democrats on this side and Republicans on the other, to go on record: Do you support it or don’t you?

I make no apology for the progress we have made in this Nation over the last 7½ years under the Clinton-Gore administration. I tell the Senator from Texas and anyone following this debate, I would gladly run on the record of this administration and our economy, I would take it to every State in the Union because we know what has happened and look at it.

Housing starts are up, business creation is up, inflation is under control. We have seen America prosper in a way that has never happened in our history.

It bothers my Republican friends to acknowledge this fact. They think it dropped out of Heaven. They do not think the President had anything to do with it. We know better. We know that on the floor of this Senate, in the House of Representatives, President Clinton’s budget plan, that started reducing the debt and moving us in the right direction, was passed without a single—not one—Republican vote in support. It kills them.

Senator Gramm was just quoted on the floor. He said it would be the end of—I have forgotten his exact words—but the end of civilization as we know it if the Clinton plan passed. Well, guess what. It did pass, and America is not dead. America is doing just fine. American families know we are moving in the right direction. It is interesting to me that my Republican friend from Texas just loves this Bush tax cut to pieces, but he can’t bring himself to go on record to vote for it. He doesn’t want to have to go back to Texas and explain—even in Texas, Governor Bush’s own State. I am offering the Bush tax cut as he has proposed it in his own words. Senator Gramm is offering a figment of his imagination about what Al Gore might have said. When I ask him for a specific page in this book, where there is a $3 gas tax increase, I get a question back to me. Well, if you have been through the first grade, you know how to open a book and go to the right page. That is what he told me. Senator Gramm can’t take us to the right page in Vice President Gore’s book referring to a $3 gas tax because it isn’t there. He is making it up.

Look at what the so-called fair Bush tax cut does to American families. If you happen to have an income of $31,100 a year, it means a $500-per-year tax break under the Bush tax cut. But, boy, if you are in an income category over $300,000, there is a $50,000-a-year tax cut. Senator Gramm proposes the one for which I want the Senate to go on record.

Is this fair? It isn’t fair whether you drive a pickup truck or walk along the shoulder of the highway. It isn’t fair to working families who have to drive pickup trucks to survive. I think we ought to vote, and I think the Senator from Texas ought to withdraw his amendment so we can vote up or down on something of which he is so proud.

To look at what has happened to the deficits under various Presidents. I think the record is clear. I am sure it has been painful for Senator Bob Dole. The American people like the way America is moving forward. I am sure it has been painful for Senator Gramm and others who opposed the President’s suggested policy to get America back on track. I am sure they were wrong. The facts have shown them to be wrong. In fact, we have had the longest period of growth and prosperity in America’s economic history. They want to change that. I say to the Senator from Nevada. Their Presidential candidate, George W. Bush, doesn’t like the way things have been going. He thinks that instead of the policies that have brought America forward, we ought to change it all—a dramatic tax cut, medical, and risky tax cuts that would go to the wealthiest people in America.

When I asked the Republicans in the Senate to vote up or down on whether they want to stand by Governor Bush, they came in with a substitute. They want to change the subject and invent a tax that they cannot even identify with Vice President Al Gore. Vice President Gore has not called for a $3 gas tax increase.

I think the Vice President is right to heighten our awareness of the need to do something to improve air quality in America. I might say to the Senator from Texas—he may not know this—
about 6 years ago, the Vice President, along with President Clinton, went to the major automobile makers of the United States and challenged them to come up with a more fuel-efficient engine, and it is possible, even in my lifetime, that we know the internal combustion engine will be gone, and we will have something that is cheaper to operate and safer for the environment. Whether you are from Texas or Illinois, that would be a good change.

When I listen to the critics of Vice President Gore on the environment, I find it hard to believe. I can't believe that even in the State of Texas you aren't at least sensitive to air and water quality. But to say that anybody who brings up the environment is some pinheaded professor that parks his bicycle straight overstates the case. The American people, particularly younger people, are becoming aware of environmental issues, so about be it. All political leaders should do the same.

Mr. REID. If the Senator will yield, there has been a lot of discussion in the last few weeks about the cost of fossil fuel, gasoline, and diesel fuel being so expensive. It has come to my attention that 56 percent of the fuel that we use in this country comes from foreign nations. Does the Senator think the Vice President was concerned about that and was trying to do something so we wouldn't be as dependent on the oil barams of the Middle East?

Mr. DURBIN. I think the Senator from Nevada is exactly right. It is about time America gets serious about an energy policy. I can recall that in previous administrations, we had a statement, with air that is safe to breathe and water that is safe to drink. If the Vice President is heightening our awareness of environmental issues, so about be it. All political leaders should do the same.

Mr. REID. If the Senator from Texas doesn't believe we should do that; instead, we should take the George W. Bush tax cut. Is there a tax break to some of the wealthiest people in this country.

The list goes on and on. Investments in transportation: So that the FAA can have modern equipment, that we have an airplane with our family we have peace of mind that the best technology is available. Yes, President Clinton wants to spend money. You tell me on what specifics President Clinton's proposal for spending. Is it a wasteful one? You bet it is. For 2 straight years, we have passed emergency appropriations for farmers.

I don't know how he gets back and forth to Texas. When I travel to Illinois, it is on an airplane. I want it safe for all of the other people who use it.

In the education area, the President's proposal would not only modernize our classrooms but increase the number of teachers so we have smaller class sizes. Yes, President Clinton wants to spend money. You tell me on what specifics President Clinton's proposal for spending. Is it a wasteful one? You bet it is. For 2 straight years, we have passed emergency appropriations for farmers.

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I don't know how he gets back and forth to Texas. When I travel to Illinois, it is on an airplane. I want it safe for all of the other people who use it.
Constitution in his pocket, I carry with me a card which has a record of what is happening under the Clinton-Gore administration. Record budget deficits have been erased.

In 1992, the deficit was a record $292 billion. The Congressional Budget Office projected it was going to grow to $455 billion by the year 2000, this year. Instead, we have a projected $167 billion surplus, the third one in a row. That is $222 billion in savings not drained by the Government in 1 year alone. And we have reduced the largest paydown of debt in the history of the United States—$297 billion.

All the deficit hawks on the other side of the aisle hate to hear these numbers, but they are the facts. Under the Clinton-Gore administration, we have addressed the deficit situation. We are no longer talking about a constitutional amendment to balance the budget but are moving in the right direction. The American people want us to continue that. We have people who visit this Capitol at this time of year, usually classrooms from across America. These young men and women who come to watch this Senate and visit our offices deserve a record of a reduced national debt. That is the goal of the President’s proposal and his budget. It is one not shared by George W. Bush. He believes we should give a massive tax cut to the families who need it. For example, a lot of families send their kids to college. They know it is a very expensive undertaking.

We propose on the Democratic side that you be able to deduct from your taxes college education expenses. This gives a helping hand to middle-income families across America so that the kids will finish school with less debt, and maybe no debt.

I think that is a targeted tax cut that makes sense. It makes a lot more sense than the tax cut for somebody making $300,000 a year. That is the George W. Bush tax cut.

We also want to target the tax cut to help pay for long-term care. Families know when their parents and grandparents are elderly that it is expensive to care for them. They want to give them the best. It takes a lot from their savings. We give a tax cut for that purpose—a targeted tax cut to help pay for long-term care. That is a sensible approach.

We think the highest priority should be debt reduction. We are not the only ones who suggest it. For anyone who believes this is a partisan proposal, take a look at that particular article that appeared in the Washington Post. This is from the business section. Alan Greenspan, not known to be a Democrat, the Chairman of the Federal Reserve Board: “Pay down the debt first.” That newspaper was obviously not delivered in Texas because neither the Senator who is speaking today on behalf of his amendment nor the Presidential candidate on the Republican side heard the news. Greenspan said that reduction should be the highest priority—not in their book. From their point of view, the highest priority is making sure the wealthiest people in this country pay less in taxes. That to me doesn’t make sense. Let us pay down this awful debt that has been accumulated during the Reagan-Bush years.

Let us try to put this behind us so future generations have more flexibility in their own lives; so that we have less demand for capital; and interest rates coming down.

So those who are following the debate understand where we are, I put forward on the floor the Bush tax cut asking the Democrats and Republicans to go on the record one way or the other. The Senator from Texas says: No. Let’s try a substitute. He dreams up a tax increase and cannot point to one page in Vice President Gore’s book that shows he gets an increase, and he wants us to vote on that.

I encourage my friends on the floor to turn down the Gramm tax increase. We don’t need a $3 increase. Nobody on this side of the aisle called for it.

I think Senator Gramm should understand this point in time it would be devastating. That is what he wants to vote on because he doesn’t want to vote on the Bush tax cut, which is well documented. That is painful. I am sure, but I think it is important we do it.

Back to the estate tax for a second. In 1995, approximately 2.3 million people died in America; 31,000 out of 2.3 million ended up paying the Federal estate tax, 1.37 percent. The vast majority of our Nation’s citizens simply do not leave estates valued at $600,000 or more, which is the present annual tax threshold, which is going to increase to $1 million, which is the next.

The Senator from Texas would have us believe everyone passing away has as their last act, before the undertaker wheels them out, filing a Federal tax form for the Federal estate tax. It doesn’t happen. They would take away the authority of the Department of Education to provide for the 5, 6, or 7 percent of Federal aid to education across America. I think that is a mistake, too.

The President understands, as most Americans understand, that education is critical for our future. If the Senator from Texas wants to walk away from this commitment to education, I think he is walking away from a commitment which is important for our children to make sure they have the skills and education not only to prosper in this Nation but to be able to compete in a global economy. He may think a tax cut for wealthy people is more important than making certain that our kids are well educated, but I disagree with that. I think most American families understand they get one chance to educate their kids, and they want to do it right.

Mr. REID. Will the Senator yield?

Mr. DURBIN. I am happy to yield to the Senator.

Mr. REID. We have talked about income taxes; that is what the Senator from Texas talked about and that is what the Bush tax cut mainly talks about, the Federal income tax, which is the Senator aware of the article that ran in the Washington Post 8 or 9 days ago, and then ran all over the country, indicating that the Federal
income tax now is at a 40 to 50-year low? Mr. DURBIN. Yes, the Senator from Nevada is correct. Despite all the statements to the contrary, Federal taxes have been going down on American families, just as they have been held to the 1970 level. We have been making real progress in that regard.

What we have tried to do when the Democrats had a voice in the process is make sure that tax cuts went to working families. Those are the folks who need a helping hand. If there is an increased tax burden in this country, it comes primarily from State and local sources and from payroll taxes associated with the Medicare and Social Security programs which, quite honestly, we have to sustain until we address meaningful reform.

On that subject, let me add, President Clinton and Vice President Gore are the most important choice Americans will make in the year 2000 in the Presidential election, then this great deliberative body has lost its way. I think it is important that all Members come to the floor and be recorded on this vote. I yield the Senator from Texas to withdraw his substitute amendment so he can have an up-or-down vote on the Bush tax cut. Surely Gramm wants to go back to Texas and see your Governor and say: I stood by you. I was with you to the bitter end. I defended the Bush tax cut. Surely Gramm wants to come to the floor and be recorded on this vote.

Mr. DURBIN. The Senator from Texas does not believe with the Make in this year's floor of the Senate. He says since I have, is it open season for debate on it. I welcome the debate. For goodness sakes, if we cannot come to this floor and debate the issues that are central to the American family, then this body is not doing what it should. They should. Instead, they want the George W. Bush tax cut. Instead of putting this money into debt reduction and strengthening Social Security and Medicare, providing for prescription drug benefits under Medicare, they would give a tax cut to the wealthiest people in our country. That is the clear choice in the Presidential campaign.

The Senator from Texas does not believe with the Make this issue on the floor of the Senate. He says since I have, is it open season for debate on it. I welcome the debate. For goodness sakes, if we cannot come to this floor and debate the issues that are central to the American family, then this body is not doing what it should. They should. Instead, they want the George W. Bush tax cut. Instead of putting this money into debt reduction and strengthening Social Security and Medicare, providing for prescription drug benefits under Medicare, they would give a tax cut to the wealthiest people in our country. That is the clear choice in the Presidential campaign.

I ask the following question: How is he going to eliminate the internal combustion engine? They are ashamed of it. It is an extremist policy that deserves to be rejected and it will be rejected. They are ashamed of it.

I yield back the time offered to me by Senator Reid under the resolution. Mr. REID. How much time did the Senator have remaining?

I yield back the time offered to me by Senator Reid under the resolution. Mr. REID. How much time did the Senator have remaining?

Mr. Domenici. Mr. President, we have heard an interesting political discussion today. The idea we should be debating the Bush tax cut on the Senate floor is totally political. It brought a political answer as an engaged in a Presidential election instead of a budget.

To the Democrats, anybody who works and makes money is rich. Whenever we try to cut anybody's taxes, they are always rich. They have every excuse in the world to do anything except to give the American people a tax cut.

Finally, let me say again the part of the story that they are not telling is the following: Their budget, which they support, proposes that over the next 5 years we spend $94 billion on new and expanded programs. That is the Clinton budget.

What Governor Bush is proposing is that rather than spend all this money on these programs, we give part of it back to working families. Why is it not risky for us to spend $94 billion on new programs, which is the Clinton budget that they support, and why is it risky for Governor Bush to propose giving less than that amount back to families to let them spend it?

I yield back the time offered to me by Senator Domenici.

Mr. Domenici. Mr. President, we have heard an interesting political discussion today. The idea we should be debating the Bush tax cut on the Senate floor is totally political. It brought a political answer as an engaged in a Presidential election instead of a budget.

The truth of the matter is, we do not have before us a Bush budget. What we have before us is the budget of the President of the United States. For those on the Democrat side who are talking about Bush's budget, let me say they have never offered the President's budget. Nobody has dared offer it because it is so bad that even they know they would not get the votes for it.

That is not the kind of budget we are going to get next year, if George Bush is President. He is going to give us a budget that calls for less Government spending priorities in the United States. There is going to be sufficient money left over in his budget to have a tax cut, tax relief for the American taxpayer, and take care of the Social Security trust fund. There is no doubt in my mind he will present that kind of budget.

We can argue all we want today about what fits in this year's budget. We are operating against the competition of a budget from the President. We are not working with a President who wants to have tax relief. As a matter of fact, this President's budget sets the way to increase taxes in the first year, not decrease them, and to increase them over the first 5 years, not decrease them. As a matter of fact, it is a tax increase budget. We have to compete with that and try to get our business done, having to work with him in the appropriations process. Now we have somebody coming down here telling us Bush's budget does not fit in "your" budget. Of course, it doesn't fit in the President's budget. The President has not even seen what President-elect Bush would submit to us to do with all these duplicative programs. We heard there are
Mr. REID. Objection—just lining it up for later on? OK.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Mexico.

Mr. DOMENICI. I don’t know what the words “queue it up” mean. We ought to get it straight. I don’t object to his sending an amendment to the desk, but I do object to gaining any kind of preferential treatment for that amendment.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I have not requested any preferential treatment. I simply wish to send it to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has a right to submit an amendment. The amendment is submitted. The Senator from Nevada.

Mr. REID. Objection, I ask unanimous consent that the words ‘queue it up’ be stricken. We asked for an up-or-down vote, no half-votes. We said all along we are going to get an up-or-down vote, no matter how long it takes, whether the majority is going to approve their Presidential nominee’s tax cut; it is as simple as that. We asked for an up-or-down vote for the last 24 hours.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, parliamentary inquiry. Is it an appropriate time for a Senator to send an amendment to the desk? Is it appropriate for a Senator to send an amendment to the desk unrelated to the pending amendment, the one that has just been debated, and ask it be placed in the queue for consideration?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. It would take unanimous consent.

Mr. WARNER. I ask unanimous consent this amendment be placed in the queue for consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Mexico.

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The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has a right to submit an amendment. The amendment is submitted. The Senator from Nevada.

Mr. REID. 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 Nevada (Mr. Reid), for himself and Mr. Durbin, proposes an amendment numbered 2985 to Amendment No. 2953.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent to waive the reading of the amendment.

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

The amendment is as follows:

The amendment to the desk unrelated to the amendment to the desk? Is it appropriate time for a Senator to send an amendment to the desk?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has a right to modify his amendment. Therefore, a second-degree amendment would not be in order.

Mr. DOMENICI. I don’t understand. We have a second-degree pending. What kind of amendment is he sending? Is it amending the second-degree amendment or the underlying amendment?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. It is a second-degree perfecting amendment, but it is an amendment to his own amendment. Which the Senator has the right to modify. It can be accepted as a modification.

Mr. DOMENICI. I say to my friend, I did not think we were going to be doing this. That is what you kind of said to me. But that is all right. I thought we were going to vote on second degrees, you would have another round of votes on your own, but it is OK if you want to change that now.

Mr. REID. I say to my friend from New Mexico, we are not changing anything with a lead厥厥, if their amendment had been prepared properly, there wouldn’t have been an opportunity for us to do our amendment.

We think there should be an up-or-down vote. We said all along we are going to get an up-or-down vote, no matter how long it takes, whether the majority is going to approve their Presidential nominee’s tax cut; it is as simple as that. We asked for an up-or-down vote for the last 24 hours.

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

The amendment is as follows:

At the end of the amendment add the following:

FEDERAL REVENUE TOTALS

On page 4, line 14, increase the amount by $35,146,000,000.

On page 4, line 15, increase the amount by $65,248,000,000.

On page 4, line 16, increase the amount by $99,450,000,000.

On page 4, line 17, increase the amount by $128,552,000,000.

BUDGET AUTHORITY

On page 4, line 21, increase the amount by $0.

On page 4, line 22, increase the amount by $1,280,000,000.

On page 4, line 23, increase the amount by $1,280,000,000.

On page 4, line 24, increase the amount by $4,186,000,000.

On page 4, line 25, increase the amount by $8,785,000,000.

On page 5, line 1, increase the amount by $15,334,000,000.

BUDGET OUTLAYS

On page 5, line 6, increase the amount by $0.

On page 5, line 7, increase the amount by $136,000,000.

On page 5, line 8, increase the amount by $1,280,000,000.

On page 5, line 9, increase the amount by $4,186,000,000.

On page 5, line 10, increase the amount by $8,785,000,000.

On page 5, line 11, increase the amount by $15,334,000,000.

NET INTEREST BUDGET AUTHORITY

On page 26, line 3, increase the amount by $0.

On page 26, line 7, increase the amount by $136,000,000.

On page 26, line 11, increase the amount by $1,280,000,000.

On page 26, line 15, increase the amount by $4,186,000,000.

On page 26, line 19, increase the amount by $8,785,000,000.

On page 26, line 23, increase the amount by $15,334,000,000.

NET INTEREST OUTLAYS

On page 26, line 4, increase the amount by $0.

On page 26, line 8, increase the amount by $136,000,000.

On page 26, line 12, increase the amount by $1,280,000,000.

On page 26, line 16, increase the amount by $4,186,000,000.

On page 26, line 20, increase the amount by $8,785,000,000.

On page 26, line 24, increase the amount by $15,334,000,000.

PUBLIC DEBT

On page 5, line 22, increase the amount by $0.

On page 5, line 23, increase the amount by $4,979,000,000.

On page 5, line 24, increase the amount by $38,226,000,000.

On page 5, line 25, increase the amount by $69,434,000,000.

On page 6, line 1, increase the amount by $108,235,000,000.

On page 6, line 2, increase the amount by $143,886,000,000.

DEBT HELD BY THE PUBLIC

On page 6, line 5, increase the amount by $0.

On page 6, line 6, increase the amount by $4,979,000,000.

On page 6, line 7, increase the amount by $38,226,000,000.

On page 6, line 8, increase the amount by $69,434,000,000.

On page 6, line 9, increase the amount by $108,235,000,000.

On page 6, line 10, increase the amount by $143,886,000,000.
Mr. DOMENICI. What we are going to do is have a vote on Senator DURBIN's amendment, then have a vote on Senator Grahm's amendment?
Mr. REID. That is right.
Mr. DURBIN. I ask the Senator from New Mexico to yield for a moment.
Mr. REID. We yield time under the resolution.
Mr. DURBIN. Would the Senator from New Mexico allow us, despite all the debate this morning, to describe our actual amendments before the actual vote?
Mr. REID. We usually have 2 minutes.
Mr. DURBIN. That will be fine. Thank you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Mexico.

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the votes relative to the following amendments be scheduled to occur at 2 p.m. in the sequence listed, with no second-degree amendments in order, where applicable, prior to the votes, and there be 2 minutes prior to each vote for explanation, and all votes after the first vote in the sequence be limited to 10 minutes. The amendments are as follows: Reid amendment No. 2985, which I understand is a Durbamendment, essentially—is that correct, Senator—and then Gramm amendment No. 2973—and Senator Gramm is here, it is the same amendment to which he has been speaking—and then Durbamendment No. 2953, as amended, if amended. I also ask unanimous consent that following the allotted 1 hour of debate, the pending amendments be laid aside until the stacked votes. It may be that there is no time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I understand Senator McCaIN has an amendment. We have agreed heretofore on the floor—the minority and majority—that he would proceed as the next amendment. To do that, we have to yield back time that we have on the pending amendment. I yield back any time I have.

Mr. REID. As does the minority.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time is yielded back.

The Senator from Arizona is recognized.

Mr. MCCaIN. I understand that the pending amendment has been set aside.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is correct.

AMENDMENT NO. 2988
(Purpose: To end the “Food Stamp Army”)
Mr. MCCaIN. Mr. President, I send an amendment to the desk and ask for its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Arizona [Mr. MCCaIN] proposes an amendment numbered 2988.

Mr. MCCaIN. 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:

On page 9, line 2, increase the amount by $2,500,000.

On page 9, line 3, increase the amount by $2,500,000.

On page 9, line 6, increase the amount by $10,000,000.

On page 9, line 7, increase the amount by $10,000,000.

On page 9, line 10, increase the amount by $6,000,000.

On page 9, line 11, increase the amount by $6,000,000.

On page 9, line 14, increase the amount by $1,200,000.

On page 9, line 15, increase the amount by $1,200,000.

On page 9, line 18, increase the amount by $2,800,000.

On page 9, line 19, increase the amount by $2,800,000.

On page 9, line 22, increase the amount by $2,000,000.

On page 9, line 23, increase the amount by $2,000,000.

On page 9, line 24, increase the amount by $2,000,000.

On page 4, line 25, increase the amount by $2,800,000.

On page 5, line 1, increase the amount by $2,000,000.

On page 5, line 6, increase the amount by $2,500,000.

On page 5, line 7, increase the amount by $10,000,000.

On page 5, line 8, increase the amount by $6,000,000.

On page 5, line 9, increase the amount by $4,100,000.

On page 5, line 10, increase the amount by $2,800,000.

On page 5, line 11, increase the amount by $2,000,000.

On page 5, line 14, increase the amount by $2,500,000.

On page 5, line 15, increase the amount by $10,000,000.

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

On page 5, line 17, increase the amount by $1,200,000.

On page 5, line 18, increase the amount by $2,800,000.

On page 5, line 19, increase the amount by $2,000,000.

Mr. McCaIN. Mr. President, I thank Senator DOMENICI and Senator REID for allowing me to propose this amendment. I don't intend to take a very long time. I know there are many other pending amendments.

Mr. President, I rise today to introduce an amendment to the Congressional budget resolution for fiscal years 2001 through 2005 that would provide the funding necessary to end the “Food Stamp Army” once and for all.

This amendment increases the defense budget by $28 million over five years—an average of less than $6 million per year—to pay for an additional allowance of $180 a month to military families who are eligible for food stamps. Additionally, the Congressional Budget Office estimates the amendment would save millions of dollars in the food stamp program by removing servicemembers from the food stamp rolls for good.

Last week, I introduced S. 2322, the “Remove Servicemembers from Food Stamps Act of 2000”, that will provide junior enlisted servicemembers who are eligible for food stamps in the paygrade E-1 through E-5 an additional subsistence allowance of $180 a month. A not-yet-published Department of Defense report estimates that approximately 6,300 servicemembers receive food stamps, while the General Accounting Office and Congressional Research Service place this number at around 13,500. Regardless of this disparity, the fact that just one servicemember is on food stamps is a national disgrace, and this situation cries out for repair.

In recent years, annual military pay increases have barely kept pace with inflation—lagging at least 8 percent behind the pay increases in the private sector during the same period. To put the impact of such trends in place dollars, the lowest enlisted rank, currently earns as little as $12,067 per year, plus $2,766 in allowances, which is well below the poverty level for a family of four. In fact, the
number of men and women in the military earning less than $20,000 per year constitutes 45 percent of the Army, 46 percent of the Marine Corps, 26 percent of the Navy, and 18 percent of the Air Force. Of these servicemembers, 111,600 have families and 6,515 are single parents.

Because of this serious disparity in military versus civilian pay, the Congress took action last year to significantly increase military pay across the board. The Senate-passed military pay bill, S. 4, included the same food stamp relief plan in S. 2322, and it was also approved by the Senate as part of the National Defense Authorization bill. However, I was greatly disappointed when the Senate-approved food stamp relief provision was rejected by con-

ferees from the House of Representatives despite the strong support of Admiral Jay Johnson, the Chief of Naval Operations, and General Jim Jones, the Commandant of the Marine Corps. With the military families on food stamps, and possibly thousands more eligible for the program, I cannot understand the Congress’ refusal to rectify this problem in last year’s Na-


It is that Admissions and Generals received a 17 percent pay raise last year, while enlisted families continue to line up for free food and furniture. Last year, we poured hun-
dreds of millions of dollars into programs to make ends meet, and it is an abrogation of our re-

sponsibility as Senators to let this disgrace go on. Sadly, politics, not military necessity, remains the rule, not the exception.

I will not stand by and watch as our military is permitted to erode to the breaking point due to the President’s lack of foresight and the Congress’ lack of compassion. These military men and women on food stamps—our soldiers, sailors, and Marines—are the very same Americans that the President and Congress have sent into harm’s way in recent years in Somalia, Bosnia, Haiti, Kosovo, and East Timor. They deserve our continuing respect, our unwavering support, and a living wage.

S. 2322 is supported by The American Legion, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the National Association for Uniformed Services, the Disabled American Veterans, The Retired Officers’ Association, and every enlisted association or organization that specifically supports enlisted servicemember issues in the Military Coalition and in the National

Military/Veterans Alliance. Associations include the Non Commissioned Officers Association, the Retired Enlisted Association, the Fleet Reserve Association, the Air Force Sergeants Association, the U.S. Coast Guard Chief Petty Officers Association, the Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the U.S., and the Naval Enlisted Reserve Association. I ask unani-
mous consent to include their letters of support in the RECORD following my re-

marks.

I urge my colleagues to support this amend-

ment to the budget resolution that provides the funding for the food stamp relief in S. 2322. It is a step in the right direction toward meeting our responsibilities to our servicemembers and their families.

Mr. President, we must end the days of a “food stamp Army” once and for all. Our military personnel and their families deserve better.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous con-

sent that letters from various service organizations in support of this amend-

ment be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the mate-

rial was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:


Hon. John McCain,
U.S. Senate, Russell Senate Office Building, Washington, DC.

Dear Senator McCain: On behalf of more than 4 million members of The American Legion family, we want to thank you for intro-
ducing S. 2322, the “Remove Servicemembers from Food Stamps Act of 2000.” This critical legislation provides junior enlisted servicemembers in the pay grade E-1, through E-5, who are eligible for food stamps, an additional subsistence allowance of $180 a month.

The American Legion continues to support quality of life features for members of the Armed Forces, as well as junior enlisted military personnel, whether on active duty or as military retirees. People are the foundation of the Nation’s fighting forces.

Military pay must be reasonably com-

parable to compensation in the private sector, not opportunism.

With military families on food stamps, passage of relief legislation to compensate junior enlisted servicemembers with an addi-
tional subsistence allowance is critical to maintaining adequate morale and ensuring retention of America’s military families in the Armed Forces.

American Legion National Commander Alan Lance’s first hand observations after meeting with soldiers, sailors and airmen in Kosovo, Bosnia, and aboard the aircraft carrier, USS George Washington serves to reaffirm your resolve in assisting America’s en-
listed sons and daughters in uniform.

Thank you for recognizing the sac-

rifice of America’s men and women in uniform. America’s servicemembers stand in harm’s way in Somalia, Bosnia, Haiti, Kosovo, and East Timor. They deserve con-

tinuing respect, unwavering support, and a living wage from a grateful nation.

Sincerely,
Steve A. Robertson, Director, National Legislative Commission.


Hon. John McCain,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

Dear Senator McCain: This letter is being provided to you on behalf of The National Association for Uniformed Services to express our strong support for your bill to establish a special subsistence allowance for members of the Uniformed Services eligible for food stamps.

It is disgraceful that the level of compen-
sation of any of the nation’s warriors is so low that they qualify for food stamps. The legislation would address the most serious problems and is a necessary and welcome step toward correcting the inequi-
table compensation provided to members of the Uniformed Services.

We appreciate your long-standing concerns for our men and women in uniform and strongly support the “Remove Servicemembers from Food Stamps Act of 2000.”

Sincerely,
Richard D. Murray, President.


Hon. John McCain,
U.S. Senate, Russell Senate Office Building, Washington, DC.

Dear Senator McCain: On behalf of the Disabled American Veterans (DAV), I commend you for introducing the “Remove Servicemembers from Food Stamps Act of 2000.” Your efforts on behalf of the men and women who serve our nation in its Armed Forces is greatly appreciated.

It is indeed unconscionable that the men and women who are willing to sacrifice their lives in defense of our nation and its ideals are forced to depend on food stamps to feed their families. It also effects the nation’s standing in the military. Our military members deployed around the world must worry about their loved ones at home,
DEAR SENATOR MCCAIN: The Non Commissioned Officers Association of the USA (NCOA) is writing to state its strong support for the "Remove Servicemembers from Food Stamps Act of 2000," legislation that you are preparing to introduce in the very near future. This legislation extends its sincere appreciation for your leadership and support for the enlisted men and women of the U.S. Armed Forces. Count on NCOA's support to get this legislation enacted.

Sincerely,

LARRY D. RHEA, 
Director of Legislative Affairs.

THE RETIRED
ENLISTED ASSOCIATION, 
Alexandria, VA.

Hon. JOHN MCCAIN,
U.S. Senate, Russell Senate Office Building, 
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR MCCAIN: On behalf of the 110,000 members and auxiliary of The Retired Enlisted Association (TREA), TREA National President Fred Athens and TREA National Auxiliary President Kay Claman, I would like to express our support for your efforts on behalf of these members of the Armed Forces currently receiving food stamps.

As we enter into the 21st Century, it is unconscionable that individuals who are serving this great nation are forced to rely on government programs to properly support their families. As you are certainly aware, today's military is "doing more with less" than any time in the recent past. Those in uniform are spending more hours on the job with an ever increasing operational tempo, yet many of these soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines cannot properly feed their children, the time has come to address this issue once and for all.

TREA strongly supports your amendment to the budget resolution which will provide additional monthly stipend. The message this legislation sends is, "We are proud of you, we honor you, we depend on you, and we will support you and your families." As always, this association is ready to support you on this legislation and other matters of mutual concern.

Sincerely,

MARK H. OLANOFF, 
Legislative Director.

FLEET RESERVE ASSOCIATION, 
Alexandria, VA.

Hon. JOHN MCCAIN,
U.S. Senate, Russell Senate Office Building, 
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR MCCAIN: Please be advised that the Fleet Reserve Association (FRA) endorses your proposed bill, the "Remove Servicemembers from Food Stamps Act of 2000." The bill will do the unfavourable publicity concerning junior enlisted members of the Armed Forces who must depend upon food stamps to supplement their military pay and support their families.

FRA salutes you for your strong commitment to the men and women serving in our Nation's uniformed services.

Sincerely,

CHARLES L. CALKINS, 
National Executive Secretary.

AIRCRAFT CREWMEMBERS ASSOCIATION, 
Temple Hills, MD.

Hon. JOHN MCCAIN, 
U.S. Senate, Russell Senate Office Building, 
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR MCCAIN: On behalf of the 150,000 members of the Air Force Sergeants Association, I thank you for introducing legislation important to the enlisted men and women of all components of the Air Force.

This bill would provide $180 dollars a month to any military member who meets the food stamp income qualification threshold. As you indicated, it is unconscionable that our nation allows these brave men and women to subsist below the poverty level. As such, your legislation would provide some much-needed monetary support until such time as our national leaders correct the situation.

Indeed, the lowest ranking members of our Armed Forces often express their dismay as they observe this country spending priorities. In so many different ways, we fail to thank them for their sacrifice. In so many ways, we communicate to them (by the things we do and don't support) that they are just not very important to this nation.

Again, Senator, thank you for introducing this legislation to provide those who meet the food stamp program threshold with an additional monthly stipend. The message this legislation sends is, "We are proud of you, we honor you, we depend on you, and we will support you and your families." As always, this association is ready to support you on this legislation and other matters of mutual concern.

Sincerely,

JAMES E. STATON, 
Executive Director.

EANGUS,

Hon. JOHN MCCAIN, 
U.S. Senate, Russell Senate Office Building, 
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR MCCAIN: The Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States applauds your efforts to assist our Junior Enlisted members within the military.

Although we ask these young men and women to endanger themselves for their country, their country does not provide adequate pay and allowances to provide support for their families.

In the FY 00 Authorization Bill, Congress authorized a mid-year increase for supposedly mid-grade service members. However, in some cases, high-ranking officers making tens of thousands of dollars received upwards of a 17% salary increase, while junior grades received a 5.2% increase overall.

We spend millions of dollars yearly recruiting individuals to join the military. Why can't we find enough monies to enable those who serve in the military to feed their families?

Senator McCain, we wholeheartedly endorse your legislation to help our Junior Enlisted members.

Working for America's Best!

MSG MICHAEL P. CLINK (RET), 
Executive Director.
DEAR SENATOR MCCAIN: Enlisted Sailors, Marines and Coasties who are constituents of the Naval Enlisted Reserve Association (NERA) are again in your debt for championing our cause. Senate Majority Leader Harry Reed and you sought to remove those food stamps that airmen, marines and coasties lose when they are not in the service, and pay parity, which detracts from the military’s ability to attract and retain talent in the junior enlisted ranks, and retain that talent at mid-career.

Our support for your bill is wholehearted and complete. Thanks again for being there for us.

DENNIS F. PIERNER, Executive Director.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I want to put a couple of brief anecdotes which are sometimes disturbing. In a July 20, 1999, piece in the Washington Post entitled “Feeling the Pinch of A Military Salary; For Some Families Pay Doesn’t Cover The Basics,” it starts out by describing:

On a muggy Saturday at Quantico Marine Corps Base, about two dozen Marines and family members quietly pooled through piles of discarded furniture, clothing, and household goods in what has become a weekly ritual at the big Northern Virginia installation. At 8 a.m., the patch of lawn was covered with beds, tables, dressers, and desks. Within 45 minutes, almost all the furniture was gone. The price was right—Everything was free.

The items had been gathered by volunteers who go “trashin’” every Tuesday, scouring garbage left at curbs on the base. Every Saturday, they give away what they collect to needy, eager Marine families.

“We’re talking about the basics of life here, and they have it,” said Lisa Joles, a Marine wife who created the Volunteer Network 2 years ago. “Sometimes, they don’t have a thing. I didn’t know how large the problem was until I got to Quantico.”

One result is that members of the military routinely work second jobs, often without permission from superiors, military officials acknowledged. Enlisted men and women sell goods at Potomac Mills, flip hamburgers at fast food restaurants, do construction work, and deliver packages for UPS. “It seems like everybody who has been here a while has a part-time job,” said Marine Lance Corporal Robert Hyman, who has a second job as a mover. “You really don’t have enough money to make it to the next paycheck otherwise.”

Several evenings each week, as soon as he finishes duty, Quantic Lance Corporal Harry Schein darts off base, picks up his 14-month-old son from day care and drops him off with the boy’s mother. Then he drives up I-95 to Arlington and joins a group of Mar-ines who are moving office furniture until about 11 p.m. On Saturdays and Sundays, he works from 4 p.m. until midnight as a security guard in Alexandria.

The stories go on and on. About a year ago, there was a story piece on 20/20 shown out at Camp Pendleton. Enlisted men and women and their families were lining up for cartons of food. We have a lot of retention problems in the military and we have a lot of recruiting problems. These, I know, are going to be well ventilated by the Armed Services Committee as time goes on. In my earlier years, it would have been hard for me to comprehend the kinds of conditions prevailing among the men and women in the military, particularly in the All Volunteer Force.

Mr. President, I ask for a recorded vote on this amendment, and 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. MCCAIN. I thank the managers, Senator DOMENICI and Senator REID.

I yield the floor.

Mr. DOMENICI. Will the Senator yield off his time?

Mr. MCCAIN. I yield the remainder of my time after Senator DOMENICI speaks, or after anyone else who wants to speak on this amendment.

Mr. DOMENICI. I thank the Senator. We will try to stack this vote, if it is all right with the Senator. We are going to have the three votes.

I commend Senator MCCAIN. I hope what he is suggesting on the floor happens, because the truth is, the U.S. Department of Defense is making it very difficult for this to happen. We have worked with them on a number of occasions. You would be shocked at some of the correspondence I have received.

I want to quote one piece of correspondence. When I said, why don’t you tell us how to take care of the food stamp problem, this is what the Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, Edwin Dorn, wrote to me: It would be a mistake to give higher pay to military personnel who had “a larger family than he or she can afford.”

You can see why that becomes part of the issue when the Department of Defense and the Office of Personnel Management look at families. There are lots of families where the children qualify for food stamps or other forms of welfare, married personnel with families as few as one dependent, for an E-1, do in some cases qualify. I also understand that even sergeants and some junior officers can qualify, depending on their number of dependents and pay allotments. Furthermore, many of these military personnel live off base and receive an additional housing allowance in their paycheck and yet their pay remains sufficiently low that they still qualify for food stamps.

Frankly, I do not believe it is acceptable that the men and women who serve in our Armed Forces and who experience all the rigors and sacrifices of military life, including long separations, other sacrifices the Nation asks of them, should have to pay extra so that they must accept food stamps, or any other form of welfare. This situation reflects extremely poorly on the “Quality of Life” for our Armed Forces personnel that is described to be the primary point of emphasis in The President’s defense budget. This situation not only fails to reward U.S. military personnel at an appropriate level, it will also create recruiting and retention problems for the military services, especially as the pool of available quality recruits shrinks and as downsizing in the services has finally ended.

According to DoD calculations, under the existing military compensation system, a supplemental allowance by family based on grade and number of dependents could put the pay of virtually all current military food stamp recipients above the gross income eligibility criteria for food stamps and would cost $725 million. This, of course, only one possible solution to this problem. Because I know you and the 8th Quadrennial Review of Military Compensation are considering the entire compensation system, I do not want to presume the optimal solution. I do, however, want to impress on you them the benefits they deserve. Because they have that many children, we ought not to cause them to be on food stamps. That is the basic problem we have.

I want to put in the RECORD letters I wrote in 1996, the response I received from Edwin Dorn and from Secretary of Defense Bill Cohen.

I ask unanimous consent that they be printed in the RECORD.

No objection, the letters were ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET,
WASHINGTON, DC, May 15, 1996.

Hon. EDWIN DORN,
Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, Department of Defense, Washington, DC.

DEAR SLEEPER DORN: I am writing to express my very strong concern about an issue involving the fundamental quality of life of many U.S. military personnel. I am writing to you as the defense department official with purview over the 8th Quadrennial Review of Military Compensation to seek your advice and guidance on the problem I am describing.

The issue that troubles me is the fact that according to Department of Defense (DOD) estimates, there are currently almost 12,000 active duty military personnel whose families qualify for food stamps and other forms of welfare, married personnel with families as few as one dependent, for an E-1, do in some cases qualify. I also understand that even sergeants and some junior officers can qualify, depending on their number of dependents and pay allotments. Furthermore, many of these military personnel live off base and receive an additional housing allowance in their paycheck and yet their pay remains sufficiently low that they still qualify for food stamps.

I believe the Senator from Arizona should be the primary point of emphasis in the President’s defense budget. This situation not only fails to reward U.S. military personnel at an appropriate level, it will also create recruiting and retention problems for the military services, especially as the pool of available quality recruits shrinks and as downsizing in the services has finally ended.

According to DoD calculations, under the existing military compensation system, a supplemental allowance by family based on grade and number of dependents could put the pay of virtually all current military food stamp recipients above the gross income eligibility criteria for food stamps and would cost $725 million. This, of course, only one possible solution to this problem. Because I know you and the 8th Quadrennial Review of Military Compensation are considering the entire compensation system, I do not want to presume the optimal solution. I do, however, want to impress on you...
the need to address the problem and to seek a level of compensation for Armed Forces personnel that precludes overall compensation so low that their families qualify for food stamps in another form of welfare.

I very much appreciate your taking my concerns into consideration. I look forward to working with you on this important issue after the Quadrennial Review of Military Compensation makes its report to Congress this summer.

Sincerely,

PETER V. DOMENICI
U.S. Senator

Under Secretary of Defense
Washington, DC
July 22, 1996

Hon. PETE V. DOMENICI,
U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

Dear Senator Domenici: Thank you for your May 15 letter about military families on food stamps. I share your concern for this problem and have given a lot of thought to it. For those reasons, I am especially apologetic about the slowness of my response to you.

The Department has studied this issue twice recently, in 1991 and in 1995, and thus I elected not to include it in the Quadrennial Review of Military Compensation. Their studies confirm an insight contained in your letter: the number of military families eligible for food stamps is largely an artifact of a system that does not count the value of military housing when computing food stamp eligibility. If we were to control for value of housing and for family size (another criterion), the number of military families in this category in 1995 would drop from 12,000 to fewer than 5,000.

This computation does not dispose of the problem. I believe it is concerned that thousands of military families are eligible for food stamps, and that they are regarded by some as impoverished. However, my concern is tempered by the realization that the military member and his/her spouse have made a decision to increase the size of his/her family. The Department does a number of things to accommodate servicemembers' personal choices. As the number of dependents increases, for example, the member becomes eligible for larger family quarters. And, there is no limit on the number of minor dependents eligible for the Defense health program.

This is a difficult issue because it requires us to weigh our concern for military family members against the military member's obligation to exercise judgment. I do not believe it would be prudent to adapt the military compensation system further to accommodate a member's decision to have a larger family that he/she can afford.

I appreciate and share your concern for the quality of life of military families. If there is additional information I can provide, I shall be happy to do so.

Sincerely,

EDWIN DORN
U.S. Senate
Committee on the Budget
Washington, DC
February 11, 1997

Hon. WILLIAM S. COHEN,
Secretary of Defense, Department of Defense,
Washington, DC.

Dear Secretary Cohen: During your inaugural press conference on January 31, you were asked a question about the 12,000 Armed Forces personnel who are currently using food stamps. You responded to the question by stating that it is "not acceptable" for service men and women to be foodstamp recipients. Responding to the same question, General Shalikashvili stated that he believed that the condition of these military families should be changed. Your and General Shalikashvili's responses to this question were, for me, very welcome news; that so many military families qualify for foodstamps does not indicate that the Administration is serious about "quality of life" for our Armed Forces; it indicates the opposite.

Last year, I had an exchange of correspondence on this subject with Under Secretary Dorn, urging him to address the problem. Unfortunately, he chose not to review this matter during last year's Quadrennial Review of Military Compensation. Under Secretary Dorn also seemed to argue that family size is purely a matter of choice to service men and women and that he "did not believe it would be appropriate to accommodate a [service member]'s decision to have a larger family than he/she can afford." A copy of this exchange of correspondence is enclosed.

I hope that you will agree with me that the time has come to take action on this matter and to adjust compensation for those enlisted personnel who you judge to be truly in need. I am in complete agreement with you that the current situation is not acceptable, and I would be very happy to work with you to resolve it.

With best regards,

PETER V. DOMENICI
U.S. Senator

The Secretary of Defense
Washington, DC
March 19, 1997

Hon. PETE V. DOMENICI,
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC.

Dear Pete: Thank you for your letter of February 11 expressing your concern about military members who receive food stamp benefits. You did say that it was unacceptable to have members of the military on food stamps. I attended the January 31, 1997 press conference. However, both General Shalikashvili and I believe that this is a very complex issue, which not only involves the Department's compensation system, but also the structure of government food stamp programs.

I will continue to closely monitor this issue, as I am committed to ensuring that our service men and women enjoy the quality of life they have earned and deserve.

Sincerely,

BILL

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I say to the Senator from Arizona that this is not a lot of money he is asking for here. I guess technically you can't direct it in a budget resolution. But I think when we vote for this this afternoon—I hope everyone will vote for it—we will be saying: Let's begin to solve this problem. Let's not sit around and say families within the military are too big. Let's fix it.

Am I kind of speaking for what the Senator from Arizona is worried about? Am I on the right track?

Mr. MCCAIN. If the Senator will yield, yes, he is doing exactly what I had in mind. I appreciate very much his long-term commitment on this issue. I hope you will continue. We should fix it. I share his dissatisfaction with the Department of Defense in its responsibility towards these young men and women.

I thank the Senator from New Mexico.

Mr. DOMENICI. I believe all time has been yielded on our side. Are we ready for another amendment?
legislation that involved numerous interest groups; legislation that effectively failed at the very last moment in the last Congress; and, again, in this Congress—that was subject to a tumultuous series of legislative maneuvers on both sides of Congress. Yet it only took us 3 months to nationalize, to compromise, and to ultimately pass this bill in the conference.

We just spent 1 month dealing with the issues of transportation in the Transportation Act, a $200 billion legislative initiative.

My suggestion is pretty clear, that this is not routine business as usual by taking this long for a conference. It represents a deliberate decision not to act, a deliberate decision to try by stalling, by delay, by tying this up with the approaching elections so that effectively what we will do is end prematurely the important steps we began last May 20 by adopting commonsense gun control legislation.

This is something that the American people clearly want. It is something that, when they are asked, they will overwhelmingly say are commonsense measures.

A bill was recently conducted in which over 90 percent of Americans responded by saying they wanted child safety locks. In this group, 85 percent of the gun owners responded saying they, too, wanted child safety locks. They also want us to close the loopholes on gun shows by an overwhelming majority. Yet despite overwhelming public support, despite our already accomplished legislation in this party the bill languishes in conference.

In this debate, there is a great hue and cry that we don't need more laws, just enforce the ones on the books. In this debate, law enforcement is on our side. They recognize that in addition to enforcing the laws, we need other commonsense things will give them additional tools, that will go to the heart of many issues that have to be addressed if we want a sane and peaceful society.

This chart indicates the number of associations of law enforcement officials that are strongly supportive of our initiative, including the International Association of Chiefs of Police and the International Brotherhood of Police Officers. Police are on our side. They, too, demand we take effective, prompt action to send this juvenile justice legislation to the President for his signature.

In addition to that, I was this morning with a group of police officers from my home State of Rhode Island and others from Maryland. They were quite clear; they want to see prompt action. When we have the American people overwhelmingly supporting this provision, when we have law enforcement, those men and women who stand most in the line of fire, demanding this legislation be passed, it is indeed puzzling we are not taking effective steps to pass this legislation.

Let me brief you what is at issue in the juvenile justice bill so we can be clear about the nature of this legislation. First, in the juvenile justice bill we passed an amendment requiring that a secure storage or safety device be sold with all handguns. Unlike virtually all handguns produced in the United States, firearms produced in this country are not subject to regulation by the Consumer Product Safety Commission.

Again, one of the great ironies of present-day America is that a toy gun is subject to safety provisions of the Consumer Product Safety Commission; a real gun that can cause real harm and real death—in many cases—is not subject to such regulation. As a result, manufacturers of firearms produce weapons lacking, in some cases, even the most rudimentary safety features designed to prevent the accidental or intentional shooting of children or by children.

The tragedies are undeniable. Each year, suicides and accidental shootings make up more than half of the tens of thousands of gun deaths in the United States. Kids are frequently the victims. This is an important point. The gun lobby tries to suggest that the victims of shootings are being waylaid by armed desperados who are law breakers who will never follow laws. In fact, the reason they are on the streets is that the laws are ineffectual for putting them behind bars. More than half the shootings are accidents, with no criminal intent, or suicide, in which the individual is so depressed and despondent, they are seizing a weapon to destroy themselves.

We have been shocked recently by the tragic death of Kayla Rowland, a 6-year-old shot by another 6-year-old in Mount Morris Township, MI. I believe if a Member came to this floor last May 20 and predicted that a 6-year-old child would be shot by another 6-year-old in a schoolroom in the United States, we would have been hooted down as hysterical demagogues. Sadly and tragically, that has happened.

Mr. DOMENICI. Will the Senator yield?

Mr. REID. I am happy to yield to the Senator.

Mr. DOMENICI. I don’t want my remarks to interrupt his statement. I ask unanimous consent a vote in relation to the pending McCain amendment, No. 2988, occur in the stacked sequence under the same terms as outlined in the previous consent agreement.

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

Mr. DOMENICI. In light of this agreement, there will now be three recorded votes at 2 o’clock.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, as I pointed out, we were all shocked by the death of Kayla Rowland. That week, people were moved by a review of the other deaths of children which are symptomatic of what is happening in America. They don’t capture the headlines across the country as the tragic death of that 6-year-old did, but they suggest what is happening day in and day out—the 12 children in America killed each day.

I will recite some of the stories in which youngsters were killed by firearms. A woman in Carroll County, MD, 18 years old, died of an accidental gunshot wound to the head after she and her friends were admiring her father’s .22-caliber revolver. Her parents were out of the country. They were doing missionary work in Costa Rica.

A simple safety lock on that weapon perhaps could have saved that young woman’s life. This is one of those classic accidents the gun lobby doesn’t want to talk about because it can be effective and should be passed by our legislation which will put trigger locks on the weapons. It is not a question of irresponsible, reckless parents whose moral or logical values contribute to the death of a child. These are missionaries, literally doing the Lord’s work, in Costa Rica, when their child accidentally shoots herself.

A 6-year-old boy and a friend in Sapulpa, WI, were playing around with a .22-caliber pistol his mother kept for protection and usually stored in her dresser. After posing with the gun for a photograph, the boy pointed the gun at his head. It went off, killing him. As his grandmother said: It was kid’s play, total kid’s play.

Again, would a trigger lock have helped? Perhaps.

How about the 15-year-old boy in San Bernardino, CA, who found his stepfather’s handgun while his pregnant mother slept, and he used it to shoot himself.

A 16-year-old girl in Altoona, PA, argued with her father, a gun collector, about his curfew, and then took a .22-caliber pistol his mother kept for protection and usually stored in her dresser. After posing with the gun for a photograph, the boy pointed the gun at his head. It went off, killing him. As his grandmother said: It was kid’s play, total kid’s play.

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We have to do it. It is included in our juvenile justice bill. If we maintain it in conference and bring it to the floor, we can save many children in this country.

Regarding gun shows—and I see my colleagues from New Jersey, Senator Lautenberg, who was the leader in this effort—with the help of Vice President Gore, by one vote we were able to pass sensible rules to close the gun show loophole to require that background checks would always be conducted on the thousands of guns shown around the country.

Currently at most gun shows, one-fourth or more of the dealers are unlicensed. Therefore, they do not have to perform a Brady law background check. This is a serious loophole. If someone is a felon, if someone has a shady background, if someone is irrational and looking for a gun, he or she would go to a gun show, go to a licensed dealer, and then the dealer would not have to do a background check. Then what would happen? That person would certainly keep looking around until he found an unlicensed dealer who had a whole cache of guns and say, Do I have to do a background check? No, no, not at all.

We can see in that supermarket, that bazaar of guns, that is where, likely, those people who do not want a check can go and today they will be able to get a handgun.

It is just common sense to effectively enforce the Brady law, to make sure this gun show loophole is closed, and closed in a way that allows for checking those people who should be checked, the ones for whom you might have to find State records that are not available on a weekend; for whom you might need indeed more than 72 hours to conduct a background check.

Another is the ban on juvenile possession of assault weapons. There is absolutely no reason a youngster should have an assault weapon. These weapons were designed to kill people. I served in the Army at the point where the transition was made between the old M–14 weapon, which was a rifle that had great accuracy, that was part of what some people derided as the old musket Army of aimed fire, and the tactics of the strategists back in the 1960s who said: We do not need aimed fire; a weapon needed a weapon that, in close quarters, can deliver massive rates of fire, high rates of cyclical fire. The whole purpose being not hunting, not target shooting, but destroying other people, which is the nature of warfare. That is where the assault weapon comes. No child needs to have those.

A ban on the importation of large-capacity clips is another provision. It is illegal for these clips to be produced by American manufacturers, but through another loophole they can be imported into the country. Once again, if you are a sportsman out hunting, you do not need a magazine that can accommodate 45 rounds. People who need these types of magazines are folks who should not have them, in a sense, because the potential for violence, the potential for criminal activity is much more enhanced, I believe, when you have a magazine that holds 10, 20, or 50 rounds rather than those old-fashioned hunting rifles which are part and parcel of the American story.

In addition to these provisions, the underlying goal would increase the enforcement capacity of Federal agents and local agents by expanding the successful youth crime gun interdiction initiative to 250 cities by the year 2003, enhancing the efforts to track guns used in crime and identify and arrest adults who sell guns to children. All of these other worthy provisions are there; also, increased penalties on so-called straw purchases—those individuals who buy guns knowing the ultimate recipient is unable to have the gun either because of a criminal record or because of age. It would keep guns out of the hands of violent offenders. It would also allow the Federal Trade Commission and Attorney General to study the extent to which the gun industry markets and distributes its products to juveniles.

They are all reasonable measures. All should be done. But what has been done? Because of the inaction, and delay, no leadership, nothing has been done. The American people have waited too long. Later today, I will be offering, along with 22 of my colleagues, a sense-of-the-Senate resolution calling on the juvenile justice conference to complete and submit the conference report before April 20, the first anniversary of the Columbine shooting, and to include in the conference report the amendments I have just discussed, that were passed by this Senate and the House, to fire-arms by juveniles, convicted felons, and other persons prohibited by law from purchasing or possessing fire-arms.

Will the passage of this amendment stop every gun crime in this country? No, but it will save lives, the lives of those children I talked about, the lives of children shot accidentally, the lives, perhaps, of people who, if they do not have easy access to firearms may think a moment before taking their lives.

If we do these things: Close the gun show loophole, require safety locks to be sold with handguns, if we ban the importation of large-capacity clips and juvenile possession of assault weapons, we will bring some sense to our gun laws and we will provide a meaningful memorial to those children who died at Columbine and those children who die each day by gun violence.

I notice my colleagues from New Mexico and from Vermont are here. I suspect they would like to speak also. As a result, I yield the floor.

Mr. REID. I yield 5 minutes to the Senator, the ranking member of the Judiciary Committee, off the resolution.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Rhode Island, and I thank the other Senator from Rhode Island, and I thank the Senator from Nevada and the Senator from New Jersey, who provided the amendment to report the juvenile justice conference by April 20. I think the distinguished senior Senator from Rhode Island does the whole Senate and the country a service by his amendment.

Congress has kept the country waiting too long for action on juvenile justice legislation. It kept the country waiting too long for action on sensible gun laws. In fact, we are almost up to the first-year anniversary of the shooting in Columbine High School in Littleton, CO.

This morning I was watching the news, seeing some of these young people talking about what they went through, and the memories all came back about what had happened there with students who had lost their lives, nearly 12 months ago, on April 20, 1999.

I mention that date, April 20, 1999, because it has been 11 months since then that the Senate passed the Hatch-Leahy juvenile justice bill. This bill was not a close call. The vote was 73–25. It was a bipartisan bill. It included some very modest but, I believe, effective gun safety measures. Ten months ago, the House passed its own juvenile crime bill.

Then we did not meet or have a conference; we did not meet to talk about it until about 8 months ago. Then we met only briefly. We did nothing and recessed for a 4- or 5-week vacation.

Now it is very easy to see what has happened. By delaying and delaying and delaying, some might have the best of all possible worlds. They could say: Yes, I stood up and voted for some modest gun safety laws; and at the same time they could say to the powerful gun lobby: Don’t worry, it is not going anywhere. We have that bottle-necked up somewhere in a committee, a committee of conference that never meets. Nobody even knows where it is. I doubt if there are 10 people in the House or the Senate who could even name the members of it.

The majority in Congress convened this conference on August 5, 1999, less than 24 hours before the Congress adjourned for its long August recess.

You do not have to be a cynic to recognize this for what it was: a transparent ploy to deflect criticism for delays while ensuring the conference did not have enough time to prepare comprehensive juvenile justice legislation to send to the President before school began in September, 1999.

This is a serious matter. The Senate Democrats and the House Democrats have been ready for months to reconvene the juvenile justice conference and work with Republicans to have an
effective juvenile justice conference report, one that has reasonable gun safety provisions, something along the lines of what we passed 3-1 here in the Senate. Unfortunately, the Republican leadership would not act.

I know there is fierce opposition from the gun lobby. One only has to turn on the television set to see an aging actor telling us why we should not be protecting our young children. I wish instead of listening to somebody who is acting as a movie star and playing a role and has had their livelihood eating out other people's fantasies, they would listen to the nation's law enforcement officers. These are the men and women whom we ask every single day to put their lives on the line for us. These are the people who die protecting us. These are the people most concerned about effective gun laws.

Ten national law enforcement organizations, representing thousands of law enforcement officers, have endorsed the Senate-passed gun safety amendments, and they support loophole-free firearms laws, from the International Association of Chiefs of Police, International Brotherhood of Police Officers, Major Cities Chiefs, National Sheriffs Association, and on and on.

I spent 8 years in law enforcement. I know how much they care. They believe in keeping guns out of the hands of people who should not have them. I am not talking about people who use guns for sports and hunting. I am talking about criminals and unsupervised children.

These thousands of law enforcement officers are asking us to do our duty. Instead of taking all these recesses and vacations, we should stay here a couple of days and pass juvenile justice legislation.

Every parent, every teacher, every student in this country is concerned about school violence. We know there is not any one thing that will stop school violence, but we do know that in the Hatch-Leahy juvenile justice bill there are provisions that help bring about safety in our schools. Don't we owe it to the parents, don't we owe it to the students, don't we owe it to the teachers to make this a safer country? We do not owe it to the parents, don't we owe it to the students, don't we owe it to the teachers to make this a safer country? We do not owe or should not owe anything to any powerful lobby, left or right. We owe our privilege of serving here—the privilege to which this is supposed to be the leaders on gun violence issues.

I was pleased to hear from our friend Vermont, the ranking member on the Judiciary Committee. Vermont is known to have a lot of hunters. Vermont is known as a place where there are a lot of guns. As I heard Senator Leahy say, a lot of these hunters were disappointed at the unwillingness of the gun lobby, personified by the National Rifle Association, in their organizations to step forward and make some commonsense adjustments to the law, getting legislation on the books that says guns should not be available willy-nilly to people who want to buy a lethal weapon.

I hope we will soon deal with an amendment that will codify our interest in controlling gun violence. We are soon coming upon a very important anniversary, April 20 is the 1-year anniversary of the awful tragedy at Columbine High School. Few can forget that awful day, the shock we all felt when we heard about young people in the high school being assaulted by guns and looking at the pictures on television and seeing a young man reaching out for help, fearful for his life, and young people running frantically from the school to get out of the way of the bullets. The consequences were disastrous: 12 classmates were killed, the 2 killers shot a teacher. Twenty-three other students and teachers wounded. I shutter when I recall that bloody carnage.

No parent or grandparent can avoid thinking about the loss of the 20 families when they see the horror of those moments. Yet that assault was not only an assault on Columbine High School, it was an assault on the sensibilities of our country—the innocent young people scarred, desperate, running away from gunfire.

Frankly, I thought that would be the ultimate outrage; that would be the ultimate insult to the lawfulness of our society, to our respect for law, to our respect for life; that this would be the kind of thing people would say: Enough; we have had enough; we want to make a change. The cries of people, the tearful students who lost friends and those who lost relatives, sons and daughters, sent an image across this town that would shake through the halls of this Congress which says: Hey, listen, it's time.

Poil after poll was done at that time. The numbers were that 80 to 90 percent of the people said they wanted the gun loopholes closed. Over 4,000 gun shows a year where anyone—any thief, any felon, anyone who is listed on the 10 most wanted list of the FBI—can walk up, take the money out of their pocket, put it down on the table, and nobody asks: Who are you? What is your address? Where are you from?

That is not what the American people want. I do not understand the NRA and other members of the gun lobby why they would make such an issue of their personal rights. Where are the personal rights of the family to know that when their children go to school each and every day, they will return home in the same healthy condition as when they went to school?

Everyone here has to be aware that on May 14 we are going to have the Million Mom March. I met with people from New Jersey who are participating. I will tell you something. If you talk to these people, you will hear from individual women across this country about what really counts with them, what is the most important thing on their agenda: Is it equal opportunity for jobs? Is it to make sure that pay scales are the same for men and women? What is it that is the most important? I will tell you what the most important thing is: To know their children are safe when they go to school. The Million Mom March is organized around that precept that children should be safe, that this society of ours has had enough of guns and the havoc it wreaks in our Nation.

That tragic day, almost a year ago, was enough to offend women across the
country to organize a million person march in State after State where it will be taking place.

But what has the Congress done to answer the anguish cried by people who have lost a child? Anybody who knows a family who has lost a child, particularly to violence—I guess it does not matter how you lose a child; once you lose a child, it is a terrible thing. The family never recovers. The circumstances never change. Columbine High School will never be the same, they had yet another crazy incident there.

What happens to those cries? What happens to those pleas? They fall on deaf ears. That is what happens. Not enough people listen, to say: You know what. Yes, we understand there is some debate about the possession of a weapon. But there is nothing in the Constitution—no matter how hard the proponents of guns try—that says you cannot wait a few days while we check to see who you are before we give you a gun. Before we give you an automobile, we check out who you are.

What is it that prevents us from saying, look, come on; get together, gun lovers, NRA and the others? What is it that we cannot do to permit: No more gun purchases by anonymous buyers? There isn’t anything in the Constitution that says that. There isn’t anything in the Constitution that says you should not have to have a license, that you should not have to be trained before you buy a gun.

The Senator from Rhode Island, who is going to propose this amendment, as I indicated, was in the Army as an officer. He is a West Point graduate. He served in Vietnam. He knows what it is to be in war. He served during the period of the Vietnam conflict. I served in Europe during World War II when the shooting was going on. I know what the purpose of a gun is. I learned how to use a gun the way I owned one since I got my discharge, I can tell you.

But what is it that prevents us from taking up the simplest, commonsense legislation? It is the gun lobby. The response to the cries of the people who want their kids to be able to go to school safely and return is: No, we have a greater allegiance to the NRA and the gun lobby than we have to families across America. What an outrage. But it does not get anything done.

I am hoping, with Senator REED’s leadership, we are going to get something done today.

Congress has done nothing since that time to protect families from gun violence. When I wrote the law to prohibit domestic abusers from getting guns, it was said that it was an unnecessary thing, it was an imposition of law on our citizens. But 33,000—I thank the Senator from Nevada for mentioning it—33,000 domestic abusers have been prevented from owning a gun. We know something else.

We know the statistics show that about 150,000 times a year a gun is put to the head of a woman, often in front of her children, and a man threatens to blow her brains out. There is no visible wound, but I guarantee you, there are wounds that carry through life. The children never forget. But we cannot act on it.

Well, now waiting for something to happen. We are waiting for the juvenile justice bill, which passed overwhelmingly and went to the House, with our gun-loop-hole-show closer, and it died. The conference committee has been appointed, but nothing has happened since the last date.

We have had support in the past from Senators on the other side of the aisle on the gun show amendment. Senators DeWINE, FITZGERALD, LUGAR, VOINOVICH, WARNER, and Senator Chafee—who is no longer with us—voted for my amendment at that time.

The final juvenile justice bill, as we heard from Senator LEAHY, passed by a vote of 73-25. So there was strong bipartisan support for moving forward in juveniles and trying to reduce gun violence.

But that was back on May 20—11 months ago. What has happened since then? Shootings have not stopped. We saw a 6-year-old murder another 6-year-old, 6 years ago. It killed 2 in the same, even though they had yet another crazy incident there.

From Mount Morris, MI, to Los Angeles, CA; from Fort Worth, TX, as youngsters in a prayer session were violated by a gun-wielding assaulter, to Conyers, GA; no community is safe from gun violence.

But while the vast majority of Americans want Congress to act, some special interests—the National Rifle Association, the gun lobby—have worked with their few allies in Congress, where less than 3 million members of the NRA determine what actions we take on behalf of 260 million Americans. It is not right. Sooner or later, the voters are going to rebel and say: If you do not vote to put common sense into this country, we are going to vote you out of office. That is what ought to happen. Boy, if one time that happens in an area where this is the dominant subject, that would be the end of the gun lobby.

It is the same old reaction. Every time Congress wants to pass gun safety laws, the NRA works hard to prevent its passage. Lately, we heard a lot of criticism about the enforcement of gun laws. But this is kind of a joke because of rhetoric and facts. The number of Federal firearms cases prosecuted by the U.S. attorneys increased 16 percent from 1992 to 1999—4,754 in 1992 to 5,500 in 1999.

So the suggestion that law enforcement is not fighting gun crimes is just wrong. But more importantly, this rhetoric suggests a false choice between enforcement or stronger laws. What we need is both.

Mr. President, I yield the floor, but I move to table the Reid amendment and ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?
There is a sufficient second.

The question is on the motion to table amendment No. 2985. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll. Mr. NICKLES. I announce that the Senator from Delaware (Mr. ROTH) is necessarily absent.

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

The result was announced—yeas 99, nays 0, as follows:

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The motion was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 2973

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there 2 minutes of debate. Who yields time?

Mr. GRAMM. Mr. President, I want to close the debate.

Mr. DURBIN. I am happy to make my statement.

Senator GRAMM came to the floor and waved Vice President Gore’s book, saying it calls for $3 in tax increase but could not point out the page. It is not in there. The statement made by the Vice President to that effect.

Because of the political pain my Republican colleagues have experienced in voting against the tax program Governor George W. Bush proposed, may I ask Members to vote against a tax program which Vice President Gore has never proposed.

This is easy. Vote yes; save a copy of the last roll call.

Mr. GRAMM. Mr. President, in his book “Earth in the Balance,” the Vice President calls for the complete elimination of the internal combustion engine.

I have a sense-of-the-Senate resolution that says we should not undertake that activity, that raising the price of gasoline to the degree that would be required to achieve that goal would be devastating to the American economy.

I believe the Vice President saying we should have a policy to completely eliminate the internal combustion engine in 25 years is irresponsible policy. It sought to be rejected. The only way to achieve it would be astronomical taxes, rationing, and confiscating people’s cars and trucks. I want the world to know and the Vice President to know we are against it.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to amendment No. 2973. The yeas and nays have been ordered. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll. Mr. NICKLES. I announce that the Senator from Delaware (Mr. ROTH) is necessarily absent.

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

The result was announced—yeas 99, nays 0, as follows:

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The amendment (No. 2973) was agreed to.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 2985, AS AMENDED

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to amendment No. 2985, as amended. The amendment (No. 2985), as amended, was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 2988

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields time on the McCain amendment? Mr. DOMENICI. I will take the time. The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Mexico.

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I do not think anybody objects to this amendment. This is an effort to say to the American people, we have to do it now. We have a problem with the health care system that is not being fixed.

The amendment (No. 2988) was agreed to.

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The amendment (No. 2988) was agreed to.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 2993, AS AMENDED

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to amendment No. 2993, as amended. The amendment (No. 2993), as amended, was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 2998

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields time on the McCain amendment? Mr. DOMENICI. I will take the time. The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Mexico.

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I do not think anybody objects to this amendment. This is an effort to say to the Department of Defense we want them to fix the problem of food stamps in the military. It adds a small amount of money over the years to target the solving of the food stamp problem in the military.

That is essentially the McCain amendment. We should adopt it. He wants a rollcall vote. I believe the yeas and nays have been ordered.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields time in opposition?

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I am not sure who controls time in opposition. I do not oppose it, but I would like 30 seconds. I ask unanimous consent that I have 30 seconds.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. The Senator from Michigan is recognized.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I am going to vote for the amendment—I believe most Members will—but we must make sure we do not create an inequity, an unfairness in the process. We will be paying different amounts of money to the same people, same rank, and we may actually be giving the extra money to the wrong people.

Senator McCain’s amendment, it seems to me, has exactly the right purpose: to get rid of food stamps going to some members. But we have to do it right. Senator WARNER is going to be holding hearings in our committee on this whole food stamp situation. We, hopefully, can accomplish this goal in a way which does not create a discriminatory situation.

I have one last fact. We all should be glad to know the number of our service members on food stamps has gone down, from 19,400 in 1991 to 11,900 in 1995, to 6,300 in 1999. The number of people on food stamps has gone down dramatically, not only numerically but also as a percentage of the force.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to amendment No. 2988. The yeas and nays have been ordered. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

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

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

The result was announced—yeas 99, nays 0, as follows:

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I ask unanimous consent that the amendment be ordered. The Senator from New Mexico is recognized.
The amendment (No. 2988) was agreed to.

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

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

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, if the Senator from Alaska will withhold, I yield 3 minutes to the Senator from New York for a request involving another Senator.

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

The remarks of Mr. SCHUMER pertaining to the introduction of S. 2370 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, regular order.

AMENDMENT NO. 2911

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the amendment previously proposed.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Alaska (Mr. STEVENS) for himself, and Mr. BYRD, Mr. INOUYE, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. SHELBY, Mr. CAMPBELL, and Mr. COCHRAN proposes an amendment numbered 2911:

Strike Section 208.

The Senator from Georgia (Mr. COVERDELL) yields the floor to the Senator from Virginia.

Mr. ROBB. Mr. President, I respond to my distinguished colleague from Georgia by saying, first of all, this is not an amendment to raise taxes. This is simply an amendment to give up $3.9 billion of the tax cut that is in the resolution.

Second, there are no Federal strings attached. One of the benefits of this particular approach is we are not dealing with school policy, which can be very sensitive. We are dealing with bricks and mortar. For the most part, we are doing this through a tax credit that leverages the money so they can get a whole lot more bang for the buck.

It is a way to keep us from being involved in local school policy. It provides maximum flexibility in the way the funds are used.

Finally, with all due respect to my distinguished colleague, he talked about less attentive. You can translate "less attentive" into "less resourced." Most of the Federal programs designed to help are for those localities and institutions that simply don't have the resources to meet the critical needs of their students. This is designed to help some of those localities, including localities with very old schools that have leaking roofs and simply don't have modern heating, air conditioning, ventilation, and other accommodations that are part of the modern school system or could not have the modern technology.

This gives them a chance to compete on a more equal footing. I hope it will
be the pleasure of our colleagues to set aside this part of the tax cut for the very important purpose of investing ultimately in our children, by investing in a nonintervention, nonintrusive way in school policy, in the bricks and mortar that will provide the kind of environment where they can learn.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, the bottom line, whether you call it a tax increase or reduction of a tax relief proposal, the net effect is between $4 billion and $6 billion is not going to be in the checking accounts of American citizens if this amendment is adopted that could theoretically otherwise be there. Taxpayers will have less if the amendment is adopted.

The second point the Senator from Virginia makes about underresourced has merit. But so does mine. Yes, there are some school districts that are underresourced; those are the responsibility of those States, not the Federal Government.

It is equally true that many of these jurisdictions do have the resources and for whatever reason have not made that the priority it maybe ought to have been. There is no doubt about it. We can name any number of jurisdictions that have underequipped schools that sit in municipalities or counties that have innumerable resources.

Mr. MURRAY. Mr. President, I take a moment to commend my colleagues—Senator ROBB, Senator HARKIN, Senator LAUTENBERG, and Senator DORGAN, for bringing this important amendment to the floor.

I commend the work they have done and their commitment to school modernization which means so much to our communities and the children who attend the public schools in this country.

I have heard the other side say throughout this debate they have made a commitment to education. But I am concerned, as I look at their budget, that a real commitment is missing. I believe that part of making a real commitment to education requires providing resources to our schools. Today, my colleagues are offering an amendment as a way to offer this choice.

Today, a record 53.2 million children are enrolled in elementary and secondary schools. By 2009, this number will be 60 million. As a result, local communities need to build or modernize 6,000 public schools, and repair an additional 8,300 public schools. In addition, the average public school building in this country is 42 years old. These schools need improvements.

What kind of message do we send to our children when they can go to shopping malls, movies theaters, and baseball stadiums that are significantly nicer than their schools? What kind of message does that send about our priorities?

This amendment would once again provide us with a clear choice on the issue of education. Do we want a tax cut, or do we want to provide to modernize our schools. This amendment would allow the federal government to take a roll as a partner in helping our districts meet the pressing need of modernizing our school buildings.

The amendment would provide $1.3 billion in grants and loans to help schools address urgent facilities issues, and provide tax credit bonds to help communities finance the cost of new construction and major repairs for schools.

This Congress has made a commitment over the past two years to reducing class size. This program is truly making a difference in our schools. I believe we have the opportunity this year to continue the efforts to reducing class size, and providing funds for school to make sure they have the facilities to provide for these smaller classes.

A decent sized class in an adequate facility is not too much for our children. I hope you are all able to make this choice and support this amendment.

Mr. ROBB. How much time remains on this side?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Nine seconds.

Mr. ROBB. I yield the entire 9 seconds to the distinguished Senator from Iowa.

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I wholeheartedly support the amendment of the Senator from Virginia. It is what is needed for this country. It is a national obligation. We ought to be rebuilding and modernizing our schools. The Senator from Virginia has it right.

AMENDMENT NO. 310 TO AMENDMENT NO. 2965
(Purpose: To reduce revenue cuts by $5.9 billion over the next 5 years)

Mr. COVERDELL. I send the substitute to the Robb amendment No. 2965 to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Georgia [Mr. COVERDELL] proposes an amendment numbered 310 to amendment 2965.

Mr. COVERDELL. 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:

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On page 5, line 65, increase the amount by $1.

On page 5, line 66, increase the amount by $1.
Congress should pass, and the President should sign significant education tax relief legislation for America’s teachers and students.

Mr. COVERDELL. Parliamentary inquiry: It is my understanding that with the second-degree amendment before the Senate, there is now an hour equally divided on this measure; is that correct?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields time?

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, the bipartisan education savings account which was passed in March and had been threatened by a veto from the President makes education more affordable for millions of Americans. I might say, during that debate of our proposal to empower parents, to empower local school districts and communities, there was a similar debate with the Senator from Virginia on a similar subject. We prevailed at that time.

At that time, the Senator from Virginia basically was attempting to fund this by eliminating the loss of tax revenue that occurs in the education savings account. As I understand the amendment now, it would reduce the tax relief in the budget resolution. So it is a very similar debate that is occurring between the Senator from Virginia and our side.

I want to refresh the Senate on what has passed the Senate and will soon find its way to the President’s desk. As I said a little earlier, the President has at least given an indication that he would veto it, so I think it is entirely appropriate that we reassert our position in the budget resolution.

The education savings account starts with the current law, which allows families to save up to $500 per year while the interest in an account is exempt from taxes as long as the savings are used for college education. We have taken the same proposal and expanded it to $2,000 per year instead of $500, and we have said a family can use the savings in that account anywhere in the country for education of the child, from kindergarten through college—even after college if the student is a dependent.

We have taken what everybody on both sides of the aisle has said is a grand idea and expanded it. Everybody on both sides of the aisle has said is a grand idea and expanded it. Everybody on both sides of the aisle has said is a grand idea and expanded it. Everybody on both sides of the aisle has said is a grand idea and expanded it. Everybody on both sides of the aisle has said is a grand idea and expanded it. Everybody on both sides of the aisle has said is a grand idea and expanded it. Everybody on both sides of the aisle has said is a grand idea and expanded it.

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We have taken what everybody on both sides of the aisle has said is a grand idea and expanded it. Everybody on both sides of the aisle has said is a grand idea and expanded it. Everybody on both sides of the aisle has said is a grand idea and expanded it. Everybody on both sides of the aisle has said is a grand idea and expanded it. Everybody on both sides of the aisle has said is a grand idea and expanded it. Everybody on both sides of the aisle has said is a grand idea and expanded it. Everybody on both sides of the aisle has said is a grand idea and expanded it. Everybody on both sides of the aisle has said is a grand idea and expanded it. Everybody on both sides of the aisle has said is a grand idea and expanded it. Everybody on both sides of the aisle has said is a grand idea and expanded it.

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, the bipartisan education savings account which was passed in March and had been threatened by a veto from the President makes education more affordable for millions of Americans. I might say, during that debate of our proposal to empower parents, to empower local school districts and communities, there was a similar debate with the Senator from Virginia on a similar subject. We prevailed at that time.

At that time, the Senator from Virginia basically was attempting to fund this by eliminating the loss of tax revenue that occurs in the education savings account. As I understand the amendment now, it would reduce the tax relief in the budget resolution. So it is a very similar debate that is occurring between the Senator from Virginia and our side.

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their children to private schools or parochial schools and about, if I recall, $7 for those in public schools.

This is designed to get around the difficulty the distinguished Senator found in incorporating a voucher provision. Vouchers address 10 percent of the population. Our responsibility is to the 90 percent of the children who are in schools in America who do have access to them. Even if we were to make vouchers available to every schoolchild in America, we only have infrastructure that can support a little over 10 percent of the population. This takes money that would otherwise be available in this case, for much needed school construction which the States cannot afford and which, by his own admission, would help disproportionately those school districts that do not have the resources, that do not get a chance to play on a level playing field.

It would take the money we could use to leverage to build even more schools and renovate even more schools to run the voucher route, again, in a bill that will not even go to the President. This particular resolution does not go to the President for signature. It will have no impact on whatever the President chooses to do about the particular legislation the Senator and those who supported his position passed last time around.

Let’s not support vouchers in another form to find a way to make it impossible for the Federal Government, without strings attached, to provide support for bricks and mortar in local school districts and divisions that need the assistance. We want to move away from a situation where we have trailers instead of classrooms. If colleagues support the underlying amendment, they will be supporting school construction and renovation. If they support the substitute, they will be supporting school vouchers. I hope it will be the pleasure of this body to reject the substitute and support the underlying amendment. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nevada.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I yield 5 minutes to the Senator from Iowa, Mr. HARKIN, off the institution.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I thank my colleagues for giving me this opportunity.

This amendment by Senator Robb has right when he tries to invest in rebuilding and modernizing our public schools. States and local communities are struggling right now to renovate existing schools. School construction and modernization is necessary for our kids in the 21st century.

The average school in America right now, as Senator Robb said, is 42 years old. Technology is placing new demands on our schools. As a result of increasing use of technology, many schools must install new wiring, telephone lines, and electrical assistance. The demand for the Internet is at an all-time high, but in the Nation’s poorest schools only 39 percent of classrooms have Internet access.

In 1998, the American Society of Civil Engineers issued a report on our Nation’s infrastructure. The report found many problems with a lot of our infrastructure, but the most startling finding was with respect to our Nation’s public schools.

The American Society of Civil Engineers reported that a third of public schools are in worst condition than any other sector of our national infrastructure. This is an alarming fact. I ask unanimous consent that a copy of the American Society of Civil Engineers report card be printed in the RECORD.

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

### AMERICAN SOCIETY OF CIVIL ENGINEERS—1998 REPORT CARD FOR AMERICA’S INFRASTRUCTURE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Comments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Roads</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>More than half (59 percent) of our roadways are in poor, mediocre or fair condition. More than 70 percent of peak-hour traffic occurs in congested conditions. It will cost $373 billion to eliminate the backlog of needs and maintain repair needs. Another $54 billion is needed for modest improvements—$157 billion total.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bridges</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Nearly one of every two bridges (48 percent) are in fair or poor condition. If we do not act, it will require $120 billion to eliminate the current backlog of bridge deficiencies and maintain repair levels.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mass Transit</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Twenty percent of buses, 23 percent of rail vehicles, and 38 percent of rural and specialized vehicles are in deficient condition. Twenty-one percent of rail track requires improvement. Forty-eight percent of rail maintenance buildings, 65 percent of rail yards and 45 percent of signals and communication equipment are in fair or poor condition. The investment needed to main-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aviation</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>There are 22 airports that are seriously congested. Passenger expansions are expected to climb 3.9 percent annually to 2021. At current capacity, this growth will lead to a $262 billion increase in capital investment needs by 2024. Estimates for capital investments range from $140-160 billion in the next five years to meet design requirements and expand capacity to meet demand.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Schools</td>
<td></td>
<td>Third of all schools need expensive repair or replacement. Nearly 60 percent of schools have at least one major building problem, and more than half have inadequate environmental conditions. Forty-six percent lack basic wiring to support computer systems. It will cost about $12 billion to repair, renovate and modernize our schools. Another $60 billion in new construction is needed to accommodate the 3 million new students expected each year.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Drinking Water</td>
<td></td>
<td>More than 16,000 community water systems (29 percent) did not comply with the Safe Drinking Water Act standards in 1993. The total infrastructure need remains large—$138.4 billion.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wastewater</td>
<td>A+</td>
<td>Today, 60 percent of our rivers and lakes are fishable and swimable. There remain an estimated 300,000 to 400,000 contaminated groundwater sites. America needs to invest roughly $140 billion over the next 20 years in its wastewater treatment systems. An additional 2,000 plants may be necessary by the year 2016.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dams</td>
<td></td>
<td>There are 2,100 regulated dams that are considered unsafe. Every state has at least one high-hazard dam, which upon failure would cause significant loss of life and property. There were over 1,570 pounds per person per year. Total expenditures for managing non-hazardous municipal solid waste increased from 208 to 218 million tons annually by the year 2000, even though the per capita waste generation rate will decrease from 1.06 to total non-hazardous municipal and industrial hazardous waste that has been cleaned up. The NPDES list has been cleaned up. The NPDES list has been cleaned up. The MPTC is expected to grow to 2,000 in the next several years. The price tag for Superfund and related clean up programs is an estimated $750 billion and could rise to $1 trillion by the end of the next 30 years.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solid Waste</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>We are faced with the issue of what to do with solid waste. The average American produces about 4.5 pounds of waste per day. Total solid waste will increase from 208 to 218 million tons annually by the year 2000, even though the per capita waste generation rate will decrease from 1.06 to 1.01 pounds per person per year. Total expenditures for managing non-hazardous municipal solid waste increased from $208 to $218 billion in the next five years to meet design requirements and expand capacity to meet demand.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hazardous Waste</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>There are 2,100 regulated dams that are considered unsafe. Every state has at least one high-hazard dam, which upon failure would cause significant loss of life and property. There were over 1,570 pounds per person per year. Total expenditures for managing non-hazardous municipal solid waste increased from $208 to $218 billion in the next five years to meet design requirements and expand capacity to meet demand.</td>
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America’s Infrastructure: $3.2 Trillion (estimated five-year need). Each category was evaluated on the basis of condition and performance; capacity vs. need, and funding vs. need.

A = Exceptional; B = Good; C = Mediocre; D = Poor; F = Inadequate.

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, because of increasing enrollments and aging buildings, local and State expenditures for school construction have increased dramatically by 39 percent in the last several years. However, this increase has not been enough to address the needs.

The National Education Association recently surveyed States about their need to modernize public schools and upgrade education technologies. According to their preliminary report, $254 billion is needed to modernize school facilities; $54 billion is needed to upgrade education technology. In my State of Iowa, for example, $3.4 billion is needed for school facilities and $540 million for education technology.

It is a national disgrace that the nicest places our children see are shopping malls, sports arenas, and movie theaters, and some of the most rundown places they see are their public schools. What kind of a signal does that send when we place on them, their education, and their future? How can we prepare our kids for the 21st century in schools that did not even make the grade in the 20th cen-
S2300

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD — SENATE

April 6, 2000

there were only 20. The wiring is getting old, schools are catching on fire, water pipes are bursting, and they do not have the new technology our students need.

If there is one thing that cries out for our intervention on a national level, it is this. We need to rebuild and modernize our schools and to build new schools where needed. All one has to do is read Jonathan Kozol’s book “Savage Inequalities: Children in America’s Schools” to understand in this system of ours, where schools are financed by local bond issues, that if you have an area with high-income residents, high property values, you get pretty darn good schools. But go to areas where there are low-income people and low property values; that is where we find the poor schools.

Yet a child educated in one of those poor schools does not stay in that local school district. That child moves to Iowa, California, Virginia, Georgia, or anywhere; that child becomes a burden on all of society. That is why this cries out for a national solution.

To hear my friends on the other side, they say leave it up to the local school districts and let them handle it. Sure, if you live in a rich school district, you are fine.

But if you live in a poor area of America—rural or urban—you do not have the wherewithal to build those new schools and to get the wiring and the upgrades that you need.

That is why it is a national problem. It requires a national solution. That is why I hope the Coverdell amendment will be defeated and that we could get to the underlying Robb amendment and let the kids of this country and their parents and their families know that this national effort is going to go forward to rebuild our schools.

I compliment the Senator from Virginia for his amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia concludes his remarks, I think generally speaking it has never been viewed, as a voucher.

I yield the floor. When the Senator from Virginia concludes his remarks, I think that is both prepared to yield back time on this substitute amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. ROBB. I request, from the Senator from Nevada, 2 minutes from this resolution.

Mr. REID. The Senator from Virginia is given 2 minutes from the resolution.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. ROBB. Mr. President, I will be very brief.

I thank my colleague from Georgia for the clarification. I did not suggest that this was a voucher. I suggested it was another run around the difficulty in establishing vouchers. The fact is that three-quarters of the benefits under the education IRA that the distinguished Senator from Georgia was able to pass through this body, which will be vetoed by the President of the United States, would go to people who are already enrolled in private schools. So it may not be a duck, but it certainly looks, talks, and walks like a duck.

With respect to the need, I suggest to the Senator from Georgia—and I do this in a friendly spirit—looking at all of the schools and the current estimates, Georgia faces an $8.5 billion shortfall for school modernization, which includes $7.1 billion for infrastructure and $1.5 billion for technology needs. There is a projected 30.5 percent increase in this shortfall in the decade ahead. Georgia would be among the States to benefit from this particular provision.

But the bottom line is that we have a choice between a plan that we know the President would support and one that would provide some 6,000 schools built or modernized and some 25,000 schools repaired, as opposed to the alternative, where we would have 198 schools built or modernized and none repaired.

At the same time, we would be transferring funds that could be used to support public education that would be supporting private education. It is as simple as that. I ask our colleagues to reject the substitute and support the underlying amendment.

With that, I yield to the distinguished Senator from Nevada.

Mr. REID. The ranking member of the Budget Committee, who has been working today with his staff to resolve our vote-athon later, to get rid of a lot of these amendments that are around, is yielded 5 minutes off the resolution.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. LAUTENBERG. I thank my friend from Nevada.

I commend the Senator from Virginia for his very thoughtful amendment. I listened carefully to what he had to say. Senator Robb has the respect of all of us, regardless on which side of the aisle your political initiation or interests fall.

As he said, if it looks like and sounds like a duck and talks like a duck, then we kind of know what it is. I think that is a proper characterization, in all fairness to the distinguished Senator from Georgia. If it is a tax-saving device that is to be used as access to private schools, it obviously is. If it is not a voucher, it sure enough resembles one so much that the disguise is more than penetrable.

I wish to talk about the Robb amendment. Senator Robb talks about the need to modernize our Nation’s schools. Boy, I salute that. I am the product of public education. In fact, my parents barely could afford to send me to a free school.

I have taken an interest in the community from which I came, Paterson, NJ. It is industrialized, one of the poorest cities in the State of New Jersey—in fact, one of the poorest cities in America in ranking.

I looked at the situation with the schools there, schools that I attended. In particular, I looked at one school, a school that we called school No. 6, that I attended where they are barely able to keep plaster on the walls and keep the place in fit condition. I also went to high school in the same city for a while. Knowing my age, one recognizes how old those schools might be. The fact is, we both weathered storms, the schools and I, over a lot of years. But what a far cry shows Hall of Fame, also a much more recognizable participant.

We look at these schools and see how inadequately prepared they are for contemporary times. We question what we ought to do there. Since I come out of the computer business, those are my roots. I am a member of something that probably is not noticeable on everybody’s calendar, but I am a member of the Information Processing Hall of Fame, which is in Dallas, TX. My former colleague, Bill Bradley, was a Hall of Famer, but of a much more recognizable participant.

But what I know is that unless we go to the Patersons of the country, unless...
we go to the cities of the country that are in desperate need of improvements in the physical structure of their schools, we are going to find ourselves leaving out a significant portion of our population—whether rural or urban.

I do not mean to boast, but I personally made a contribution to a school in Paterson, N.J. There are 100,000 wires in the building, and I paid for some them all.

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Mr. REID. Mr. President, this was an amendment in the second-degree.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland has the floor. As long as she has the floor, no one else can call for regular order with respect to amendment S 673.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I have the floor. I in no way mean to have sharp elbows with the Senator from Alaska. I was only trying to get order to continue my presentation.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is entitled to be heard.

Ms. MIKULSKI. If people want to argue about who has the floor, they can go off the floor and continue those arguments. Mr. President, I would like, if we are going to have exchanges ——

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Will those who are having discussions in the right side of the well take their conversations off the floor.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Thank you, Mr. President.

What I was talking about was that if you have access to technology and access to those who can teach you technology, your future as a person, a community, and even our country, is bright. But if you are on the wrong side of the divide and don’t have access to technology, and will never know how to learn to use technology, your future is quite dismal and, as a person, you could end up functionally obsolete in the United States of America.

The Presiding Officer comes from the State of Washington, which is one of the most robust, high-tech States in the United States of America. He knows from his conversations with those tech tycoons that what we are facing in the United States of America is a workforce shortage of people who know how to use technology. Also, not only in the new “dot-coms” or the new “dot-commers,” what we also face is a skill shortage, even in the old economy.

In my own hometown of Baltimore, where they make steel or build automobiles, we have gone from smokestacks to “cyberstacks.” Walk with me along the minivan plant in Baltimore or come with me in the steaming steelmills of Baltimore, and you will see steelworkers and automobile workers are now tech workers.

I want to be sure that every person in the United States of America is ready for the new economy. That is why we want to emphasize K through 12. We will practice the basics from K through 12. We are going to ensure that no child is left out or left behind in this new economy. We want to practice in the budget of the States. We want to make sure there is universal access to technology in schools, libraries, and community centers. We want to practice the “B” which is the “best” trained teachers. We also want to practice a “C” which is the “computer” literacy for every child by the time they finish the eighth grade.

Those are our national goals. That is what we hope we are able to do. But in order to do that, we have to put our resources with our national commitment.

First of all, I truly believe that the Government cannot do this alone. That is why an amendment I will be offering later on will put aside $200 million in tax incentives to encourage public-private partnership.

Why is this important? Because the Government can’t do it alone. The private sector is already doing important, exciting things, and improving access to technology. But technology empowerment can’t be limited to a few ZIP Codes, or recycled factories, where great work is being done in my own hometown. We need to encourage private sector donations of high-quality technology, sponsorship of community centers, and the sponsorship of training. I have seen many examples in my own hometown.

While we look forward to providing technology, one of the most important things is to make sure our teachers are trained. If our teachers are not trained, our technology could end up in closets and our children could be left not learning what they need to learn. The budget amendment calls for $600 million for teacher training.

Everywhere I go, teachers tell me they want to help their students cross the digital divide. But they need the training to do this. Technology without training is a hollow opportunity.

In the State of Maryland, the superintendent of public education established what we call a “tech academy” so that public schoolteachers could come from across the State to learn how to use this. Guess what. Six hundred teachers came and 400 had to be turned away. We now have an incredible waiting list.

No teacher should have to stand in line to learn how to use technology so they can teach children how to use technology. We want to make sure that young people coming up in our teacher schools learn technology. Those teachers who are the fourth grade reading specialists should know as much about technology as some computer whiz.

In addition to this, our amendment provides access—$400 million—for school technology and school libraries, for hardware and software technology everywhere. We want to make sure our school libraries are high-tech media centers.

Why is this important?

In my own community, in some schools we have a ratio of one computer per five children.

To the Senator from Georgia, I would note that in some of our private schools it will be mandated that every child come with a laptop.

But I say to my colleagues and others who are listening, if you are a poor child, you are most likely to live in a poor neighborhood. The poor neighborhood has poorer schools. They do not have technology in their classroom or a media center in their library.

Please, in the United States of America, with all the money we are going to spend in this budget, let’s put $400 million to be sure our schools and our libraries do have the hardware and software where they need it.

Our children only learn in schools and in libraries, though those are crucial places. Many of them learn out in the community. This is why our amendment will provide $100 million to create 1,000 community technology centers. Community leaders have told me that we need to bring technology to where the children learn. They don’t learn only in schools; they learn in communities.

I saw for myself what technology meant to a community center at a public housing project. The adults learned technology during the day and the children learned technology through structured afterschool activities sponsored by the Boys and Girls Clubs in the afternoon.

In my own town of Baltimore, I spoke to the Urban League to see what they were doing to help get our children ready for the future. They told me they had to forage for funds, and there was not one Federal dollar available to help the Urban League help those children get ready for the future.

Certainly, if we can spend $18,000 a year on one person in prison, we can spend the money to create 1,000 community centers to keep our children in school and get ready for the new economy.

Mr. President, in addition to that, speaking of the Boys and Girls Clubs, we are including in our amendment Senator Biden’s excellent proposal to provide $20 million to place computers and trained personnel in those Boys and Girls Clubs. What a tremendous opportunity.

In April we are celebrating Boys and Girls Clubs Month. There are great programs from the Boys and Girls Clubs. Michael Jordan is one; President Bill Clinton went to one when his mother worked as a nurse and the Boys and Girls Clubs was one of his afterschool activities. Boys and Girls Clubs have been training and helping young people stay on the right track for a number of years. We not only want to teach them about hoop dreams; we want to teach them about technology. This is why this is so crucial.

We also provide $25 million to create an e-Corps within AmericaCorps. This will provide funds for 2,000 volunteers to teach technology in their schools and community centers.

In addition, we want to make sure we provide private sector deployment of broadband and networks in underserved urban and rural communities. We need these funds to build the super information highway with on and off ramps for all.

They have in my State the Mountain Counties, a nice tourism word for Appalachia. With the old economy fading in coal mining and without the railroad jobs, and so on, we are trying to
Let me begin by expressing my deep thanks to Senator MIKULSKI for her leadership in the Senate in crafting this initiative. And I should mention that she has not only worked with her Senate colleagues on this, but has reached across to the House of Representatives, joining with the members of the Caucus of Black and Hispanic Caucuses, to ensure that it addresses the digital divide in a comprehensive and extensive way. She has also sought out the opinions of parents, teachers, children, business people and workers all across our State and the Nation to ensure that every community can reap the benefits of technology.

Moreover, I am pleased that members of the technology sector of our economy are participating so fully and have played such a key role in helping to develop this initiative. With the technological giants joining us in this effort, we are off to a great start in helping to ensure that every man, woman and child in our country will have the opportunity to access the Internet.

I believe we have a tremendous opportunity right now, with our economic prosperity, to begin closing this digital divide. We have the lowest unemployment and the lowest inflation rate in our country in more than 30 years. In our African-American and Hispanic communities, unemployment has fallen to some of the lowest levels in history.

And to help sustain this economic recovery, we must provide the tools to enable our people to obtain the skills necessary to compete in a global economy—an economy that is growing by leaps and bounds in part due to the technology sector and the opportunities it presents.

We are the world’s leader of this technological revolution and our children are on the cusp of enjoying the full benefits of what it has to offer. In the United States of America, every child in our country will have the opportunity to access the Internet.

I am prepared to allow my good friend from Georgia to complete this summary of this amendment.

Mr. STEVENS. What is the par- 
estutes allotted on the amend- 
merit of the 30 minutes on the 
senator’s comments. I was misinformed. I apologize to the Senator.

I want to make certain when the time comes, we get to the floor as intended.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Mexico—to do anything other than complete the work on the Robb amendment?

There are a lot of people I might try to take advantage of, but one of them is not the Senator from Alaska.

Mr. STEVENS. What is the par- 

tutes allotted on the amend- 
Mr. REID. We have no more amend- 

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is correct.

Mr. COVERDELL. In answer to the question of the Senator from Nevada, you have several speakers on the amendment and we will probably use the majority of the 30 minutes on our side.

Mr. REID. We don’t appear to have any speakers.

There was no attempt—and I explained this in detail to the Senator from New Mexico—to do anything other than complete the work on the Robb amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Idaho is ready to pro- 

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. COVERDELL. We have 30 min- 

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

Mr. REID. Parliamentary inquiry.

Under this circumstance, the time is being equally divided?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. If no one 

Mr. REID. Mr. President, unless the majority is ready to proceed, we have a Senator to speak, and I can yield him some time off the resolution. But if the Senator from Idaho is ready to pro- 

Mr. COVERDELL. We. are. Mr. Presi- 

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Mr. COVERDELL. We have 30 min- 

Mr. REID. We have 30 minutes allotted on the amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Idaho is ready to pro- 

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The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has 25 minutes remaining.

Mr. DOMENICI. Thank you.

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, I want to be brief, but I think it is important to respond for the record because we have had a lot going up and sort of ought to instruct the judiciary committees that are in conference now over juvenile justice—and he is doing it based on guns and guns alone. So for a few moments let me talk about what is in the juvenile justice bill that has been covered up by the debate that has produced no results for this country and, most importantly, should not.

I know the Senator has not talked about the alcohol prevention for minors that is in the bill or the cultural violence issues or the gangs or the juvenile Brady bill and the gun safety provisions that were already in a bill before Columbine and before Senators came to the floor and began to muck up the process of a very well thought out bill. There are provisions for juvenile offenders to allow the U.S. attorney to prosecute juveniles as adults for violent felonies and serious drug offenses. It treats Federal delinquency records for serious crimes such as murder, rape and armed robbery and assault similar to records of adults and other offenders.

Why are we stymied? Why has the Congress not rushed to judgment on gun laws? More gun laws—adding more to the 35,000 gun laws that are already on the books of America's cities, counties, State, and Federal Government. Let me tell you why.

In a recent poll by Zogby, recognized by most as a very creditable pollster, here was the question asked of the American citizens: Which of the following is the best way to solve the gun violence in America? Mr. President, 52 percent said prosecuting criminals who use a gun in the commission of a crime; 48 percent said letting a majority of the American people are saying no more laws; Attorney General Janet Reno, go after the criminal who misuses his or her rights under the Constitution.

Then 15 percent said having parents and schools teach self-control. Now we are up to 67 percent of the American people who, when asked the question, are saying: Don't pass more laws; enforce the ones you have. Work on the cultural problems that America has. Two percent of the American people are willing to suggest that somehow the Congress can miraculously change the culture of our society or the violence in America. The juvenile justice bill itself, absent what was put on it by this Senate, will go a great deal further in our combating juvenile crime than anything else.

The Senate will vote its will on this issue, and it should. That is appropriate. But it will not be voting the will of America, an America that is saying: Get busy and enforce the law; saying to the parents of school-age children of America: Get involved in the lives of your children. Work with them in developing self-control. Work with your schools and your communities. That is not passing a law. That is changing your schedule as a parent. That is taking time out of your busy lives to get involved with your kids.

That was the tragedy of Columbine and the infractions of America. Somehow we have become so busy we cannot give our children time. When violence erupts in America as a result of a juvenile offender and a misdirected child, we run to the Congress of the United States and say: Fix it. We cannot fix these kinds of things, and the American people innately know it. That is why they so clearly said to the Senator from California or to the Senator from Connecticut or to other Senators: Stacking up laws and stacking up law books does not a safer world make. That is why the Senate has rejected it. That is why the House has rejected it. That is why my colleagues on the other side of the aisle gain absolutely no value and political traction on this issue—because the American people have it figured out.

I am not surprised. The American people are collectively much brighter than most of us. I ask the Senate to reject this amendment.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields time? The Senator from Nevada.

Mr. REID. I yield to the Senator from California for 5 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I thank the assistant Democratic leader for this time. I came to talk about the Mikulski amendment, which I was honored to introduce in the Senate. It is the right thing to do for sustained success in this century.

I come from a State that boasts Silicon Valley. In Los Angeles, we have a similar high-tech area. In San Diego, we have a magnificent high-tech area, and it is moving all over our State. Those companies have to go to foreign countries to get human capital. People are being offered very high salaries to come to America. Therefore, we must train our young people or all those good jobs will not go to Americans, and that will be a very sad situation, indeed.

The last point I will make is that if you have young children or if you have grandchildren—and I am fortunate to have a grandchild—you can see that 2- and 3-year-olds find their way on computers. A lasting memory I have of my grandson is at the age of 2-1/2, with his thumb stuck in his mouth, his blanket hanging down, and the other hand on the mouse figuring out how to use the computer. Now he is 6. I hate to admit it, but he understands the concepts—probably as well as I do. At least when the computer freezes up, he figures out a way to make it work.

If children are gravitating in that direction and they can understand this technology and the brain capacity is expanding at amazing rates at age 3, 4, and 5—we have to make sure our families can give them this opportunity. It is the right thing to do for them. It is the right thing to do for our education system. It is the right thing to do for our Nation.

The Mikulski-Boxer amendment, which is supported by many others too.
As one can see from the chart behind me, exactly the opposite occurred. It is astounding to me. I left office in 1992, and under President Bush's administration, there were 7,048 prosecutions of criminals for illegal use of guns under existing laws then, and we have more laws today than we had then. Look at what we had. The Department in 1997 set about to reduce these gun prosecutions to 3,807 in 1998. I find that astounding. I came to this body 3 years ago. I know how to pull out the Department of Justice statistics book. I used it to look up every district attorney, every Federal prosecutor. I could see how my district was doing and other districts were doing. I looked at the numbers. It was stunning to me.

In the last 3 years I have been here, I do not believe I have missed an opportunity to call those numbers to the attention of the Attorney General of the United States, the Deputy Attorney General of the United States, the Associate Attorney General of the United States, or the Chief of the Criminal Division. It has been 10, 15, or more times. Most of the time I have had this very chart with me.

I said: I am astounded. They said: The States are prosecuting more cases, and we are trying to go after big gun cases.

Fundamentally, the numbers went down. The intensity of the effort went down. Then an experiment occurred. The U.S. attorney in Richmond, VA, appointed by President Clinton, got with the chief of police in Richmond, who is a young, aggressive African American, to do something about gun violence in Richmond. He said: We have a project under President Bush, 12 years as U.S. attorney.

A lot of other laws have been passed in recent years that are supposed to work. I am telling you about the 7,000 prosecutions of felons who were in the possession of a gun during the commission of a crime, the 7,000 prosecutions of felons, in the possession of automatic weapons, lying on their forms when they applied to buy one, and that sort of thing. That is the bread and butter of prosecuting gun cases. That is the meat and potatoes of it. We passed a lot of other laws. They want to pass another law to go even further than what this Congress has passed to restrict the sale of guns at a gun show saying it is going to affect crime in America. That is absolutely bogus. That is baloney. That is politics.

We tried to reach a reasonable agreement, but I am not going to vote for some sort of restriction on gun shows that says to people who have been doing this for 50 years that they have to wait 3 days before they can sell a gun. By then the show is closed and has gone back to a State somewhere far away. That is not necessary.

We have tried to reach an accord with the White House on that. They do not want an accord. They think they can get a political issue.

Let me show you what I am talking about, what is really important on guns.

They passed a law called 922(q), title 10, governing the possession of firearms on school grounds. That was a few years ago before I came to the Senate. It was not too many years ago.

In 1997, they had five prosecutions in the whole United States. In 1998, they had eight prosecutions in the whole United States. They passed a law that it is unlawful to transfer firearms to juveniles. I support that law. I support the one on the possession of firearms on school grounds, too. But, look, in 1998, they prosecuted those cases; and in 1998, six of those cases.

Another law deals with the possession or transfer of a semiautomatic weapon; that is, the assault weapons. You remember we had to have this assault weapon ban. It was worthy of debate.

An assault weapon looks like a military M-16, an AK-47, but it really is not. The assault weapons are semiautomatic, not fully automatic as are the military weapons. If it is a fully automatic weapon, it has been illegal since the days of Al Capone. I do not believe I have ever failed to prosecute a case in
Senator HATCH, and others on the Judiciary Committee, to pass a juvenile crime bill that I believe will work to reduce crime in America. It has some gun amendments on it that restrict gun use in America. It makes it a felony to sell one of these assault weapons to a young person. And there are other offenses we added to that. But they are not going to really affect crime. Frankly, certainly, they will not if they do not get enforced.

I suggest that what we need to do is to enforce the laws we have. I know Mr. Sessions, the Director of the National Rifle Association, made the comment that the President wanted violence in America, and that is why he would not enforce these laws. He got so mad about it. He said be different. It was deliberate. I do not agree with that.

But I will say to you right now what I said in the hearings before my committee: There have been good and decent people all over America who are determined to stand up. And I think this administration is guilty of hypocrisy.

The more important thing is that we had to pass it, and we were going to enforce these laws. But their executions have plummeted under the administration.

I say to the people of America, and the Members of this Senate, if we repudiated, throughout this country, Project Exile in Richmond, and if it were carried out under existing laws, that all these laws and those gun laws were enforced steadfastly—if criminals who are using guns are given enhanced sentences, as Federal law requires; if you carry a firearm during a drug deal, you must receive 5 years without parole consequent to any sentence you receive for the drug offense—the word starting out of the administration.

It did in Mobile, AL, where I prosecuted. Drug dealers quit carrying guns because if they carried a gun, they would be taken to Federal court, and when they were prosecuted, they would be sentenced and sent off, in exile, to some Federal prison way out of the State.

It does work. It worked in Richmond. That is what we need to do. We need to be skeptical of the news media that always say or not so many years is against gun violence by whether they vote for every bill the Clinton administration proposes. If you do not vote for every bill they propose, then you are for gun violence.

I was a prosecutor. I prosecuted a lot more cases, firearms cases, than the Clinton administration did and my brother U.S. attorneys did. So that offends me. I do not believe it is right.

This amendment that has been proposed, this sense of the Senate, is just a political deal. I worked hard with Senator HATCH, and others on the Judiciary Committee, to pass a juvenile crime bill that I believe will work to reduce crime in America. Nearly 90 percent of Americans favor requiring child safety locks on all new handguns, including 85 percent of the gun owners who were surveyed. In addition, 89 percent also favor background checks on all sales at gun shows. This is what the American people want. It is not what the gun lobby wants. That is why we have waited 1 year, not in prison, in administration, essentially trying to strangle this measure we passed so that it won't come back to the floor.

There has been one meeting of the conference, which is just trying to kill it or by indifference, has done. If we forget about Columbine, that we will forget about the violence that is plaguing the country.

Anyone who is suggesting that these measures are designed to end crime in America is being slightly hyperbolic. What it might do is prevent those hundreds, perhaps thousands, of deaths a year by handguns through accidents, through suicides, through the mishandling of weapons. That in itself will be a great achievement.

I had the opportunity this morning to talk about some of the incidents involving children, young people, who might have been deterred, not from criminal activity but gun accidents, gun violence. I was particularly shocked in my home community of Providence by a bunch of young people, 16-, 17-year-olds, horsing around, getting into a little bit of an ego contest. What happened? They were in a place where they turned around, somebody in the crowd had a gun. Not the two young people wrestling but somebody had a gun. They got the weapon. One person, out of a sense of just total irrationality, fired, hitting the other young man in the head, critically wounded the young man, and was so distraught by remorse for what he had done that he ran into a backyard and killed himself.

That is what we are talking about in terms of gun violence. There is no law that would prevent that.

Mr. SESSIONS. Will the Senator yield?

Mr. REED. I yield another 5 minutes to the Senator from Alabama.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, from the Floor. I yield 5 minutes to the Senator from Rhode Island, the sponsor of the legislation which is the subject matter of this discussion.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. REID. I thank the Senator from Nevada.

My resolution is very clear. It asks that the conference report return the report back to us on the juvenile justice bill, so we can vote up or down on the measures. They passed on May 20 of last year, in response to Columbine, which provide for safety locks on handguns, ban large clips for automatic weapons, and would also close the gun show loophole. All of these measures are supported by an extraordinary majority of Americans.

Nearly 90 percent of Americans favor requiring child safety locks on all new handguns, including 85 percent of the gun owners who were surveyed. In addition, 89 percent also favor background checks on all sales at gun shows. This is what the American people want. It is not what the gun lobby wants. That is why we have waited 1 year, not in prison, in administration, essentially trying to strangle this measure we passed so that it won't come back to the floor.

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Mr. SESSIONS. Will the Senator yield?

Mr. REED. I would like to finish my remarks.

We can do much more, and we should do much more. I have heard people say all weapons should be secured in the home, if they are stored there. The child safety lock will ensure that takes place, 76 percent of the gun show loophole, the GAO has done a report that suggested, under the Brady instant check, 73 percent of these background checks are finished almost immediately, conducted almost simultaneously with the request, that 90 percent of all checks are completed within 2 hours. It is only those checks that raise serious questions that go beyond 2 hours, which will in no way interfere with the operation of a gun show. It is in those checks where the most likely violations occur in terms of giving a weapon which you should not have. In fact, those people are 20 times more likely to be unable to acquire a weapon.
In the nature of a gun show, many of the dealers at gun shows are licensed gun dealers. They are subject to the Brady law. They have to do the background check. We can’t abandon reason when we come to the floor. If you are looking for a weapon and you know you have a Brady check when you go to a gun show, where are you going to go? You will go not to the licensed gun dealer but someone who is selling guns and doesn’t have to do a background check. Then you will hope, if anything, if there is going to be an arrest, you will be arbitrarily that you won’t be caught. That is what the statistics show in the GAO report.

Mr. SESSIONS. Will the Senator yield on one point? Mr. REID. I would like to finish. My colleagues want to speak on other matters. Let me say something about this mantra about enforcement: You just have to enforce the laws.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator’s 5 minutes have expired.

Mr. REED. I ask for 2 additional minutes.

Mr. REID. Two minutes under the resolution.

Mr. REED. The NRA, the gun lobby, talks about enforcement. They have persistently, over decades, frustrated real enforcement. For 10 years they refused to support the Brady bill and told their members it would effectively destroy the right to bear arms in America, resulting in total, strict gun control of Americans.

With respect to the operation of inspections, in 1986 the McClure-Volkmer Act was supported strongly by the NRA—$1.5 million of lobbying activity. That legislation limits ATF’s ability to conduct unannounced inspections. If you want to enforce the law, that is fine. Then why does the gun lobby go ahead and try to constrain the law so that we can’t effectively enforce laws that are on the books already? If you look at the budget of ATF agents, it has declined. Fortunately, they have increased over the last year. As a result, we have more prosecutions, more referrals.

The Wall Street Journal suggests, based upon evidence from a Chicago investigation:

While firearm-rights enthusiasts argue that there are enough gun laws on the books, and the problem is merely lax enforcement, the Chicago case illustrates that in some areas, the gun laws have holes and enforcement is harder than one might think.

That is the Wall Street Journal, not some radical newspaper in this country.

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

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I am going to yield time now to Senator Graham of Florida. Senator Graham and some of his colleagues—Senator Bayh, Senator Edwards, Senator Landrieu—have an important education amendment they have been waiting to offer. They will not be able to offer it now, but they will offer it at some subsequent time. The 25 minutes remaining under this amendment are going to be divided among them to speak on this very important education amendment. I yield 5 minutes to the Senator from Florida.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida is recognized.

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I have a Senator who wants to speak on the actual amendment itself, Mr. Hatch.

Mr. HATCH. I will be happy to wait for 5 minutes.

Mr. REID. We have other people to speak. We will hear from Senator Graham and then go to you. How much time do you wish to take?

Mr. HATCH. How much time do we have left on this side?

Mr. DOMENICI. Do we have 6 minutes remaining on our side?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is correct.

Mr. DOMENICI. I will yield Senator Hatch 4 minutes of that.

Mr. REID. Senator Graham is going to speak for 5 minutes, and then Senator Hatch is going to speak on the Reed amendment. Then we will go back to the other individuals.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, I will be offering an amendment, which is described as Graham amendment No. 1, in which I am joined by Senators Lieberman, Breaux, Lincoln, Breaux, Robb, and Edwards, which relates to a new approach to the Federal role in primary and secondary education.

This is the first major legislative initiative of the Senate New Democrats. We are a group of Democrats who feel passionately about the importance of a partnership between the Federal Government and the State and local school districts for the benefit of our children, but we feel pragmatic as to the means by which we can achieve that appropriate partnership.

We are going to advocate that that partnership has several fundamental principles. One of those is accountability for student results. A second is additional resources.

If I could put it in a common form, we believe you will not make the cow bigger by just weighing the cow every day; that you have to provide the resources in order to be able to achieve the high goals, and to meet the accountability standards we believe are necessary to set for our children in order to achieve our national objectives.

We also are believers in the principle of greater flexibility at the State and local levels; that our Federal programs should be more focused and concentrated. We believe the primary focus of Federal programs should be on the children in the greatest need, the at-risk children, the children who too often face the cracks of current American education.

Individual members of our group will speak to the various principles of this legislation. I want to use the remainder of my time to talk about the issue of accountability because, in my opinion, that is a central and fundamental issue. It is a word that has many different meanings. Some people define accountability in the context of an accountability—that is to be certain you have properly accounted for all of those things that were input into the education system; that you have the appropriate number of books in the school library, as an example. We believe those are important.

We do not believe that is the accountability the Federal Government should be looking for from States and local school districts. We also do not believe that accountability is accountability for student performance alone. We recognize that student performance is heavily influenced by many factors, particularly the socioeconomic circumstances of the family of the student. The challenge, rather, is an accountability that takes into account all aspects of the experience in the school and the classroom that has contributed to the students’ educational growth and development.

So we will be attempting to present an accountability framework that is school focused, but is determined by how much educational value the school experience has added to the students’ progress.

I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the Record an article that appeared in the Tallahassee Democrat entitled “Bush Plan Grades Students Poverty Levels,” as an illustration of these different approaches to the concept of accountability.

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

[From the Tallahassee Democrat, Aug. 16, 1999]

BUSH PLAN GRADES STUDENTS POVERTY LEVELS

(BY WALTER TSCHINKE)

The Bush administration and the legislature, after months of lobbying, wrangling, dealing and agonizing, has given us the A+ Plan with its school accountability report (www.frm.edu/doe/schoolgrades/acccount.htm). Upon analysis, it turns out to be merely an elaborate and expensive way to grade the schools on the poverty or affluence of their students.

The Bush/Brogan report assigns each school a grade primarily on its raw, overall accountability that depends on how affluent the school focused, but is determined by how much educational value the school experience has added to the students’ progress.

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school/affluence/poverty, we are able to assign the same grade as the Bush/Brogan 'performance-based' system with 26 out of 33 schools in Leon County. And we did this without a single test score.

**SCORES DON'T TELL US ABOUT PERFORMANCE**

Is this a fair, or even a sensible, way to grade our schools? Only if you think poverty should be punished. Does the Bush/Brogan grade of these schools tell you anything new about their educational performance? Of course it does not. It tells us what proportion of the student body comes from poor families. It is not our aim to dwell on the poverty-performance link. But no school grading system that does not take this socioeconomic factor into account is useful in telling us what our schools are really doing. Would it not be much fairer to adjust school performance for poverty before grading them?

I think it would, and hereby offer the Prof. Walter’s Level-Playing-Field School-Grading System as an alternative to the Bush/Brogan School Accountability Report.

We begin with a so-called regression analysis of the school performance data (three standardized tests) against the poverty level of the student body. This statistical method shows us how much of the test score is predicted by the poverty level of the student body. I detailed this relationship in a March 14 My View column (also found on my website at educationhttp://www.fsu.edu/biology/faculty/ wrt.html). For every percent that poverty increases, the school’s score drops by an average of 1.5 points. The most affluent schools, those with fewer than 15 percent poor students, have scores higher than 230, while the poorest, with more than 75 percent poor students, have scores below 120, less than half of the scores of the most affluent schools. Next, we take the difference between each school’s actual test scores and the test score predicted by the regression for a school of that socioeconomic condition. These differences tell us how much better or worse than average a school tested, given its particular level of poverty. By doing this, we have removed the effect of poverty on test scores. The result is that the maximum difference in test scores has shrunk from 175 points to only about 70 (the lost 105 points is a test of our Nation's intelligence to invest intelligently in our children today and even more fundamental to the growth of America). We understand that education is a test of our Nation’s intelligence about shaping its future. I am pleased to be joined by my colleagues in this effort and look forward to their illumina on these principles of our education proposal.

The PRESIDENT-OF-OFFICE. The Senator from Utah is recognized.

**MR. HATCH.** Mr. President, I think Senator DOMENICI, chairman of the Budget Committee, for his outstanding leadership on the budget resolution.

Mr. President, I feel compelled to make some short remarks today because the topic has strayed away from the budget and focused once again on gun control. This topic—and many misleading statements about it—were perh racted in this chamber when the Senate considers the budget resolution.

This year, I hope we can see through the rhetoric and focus on what objective observers already know to be true: The statistics prove that the Clinton administration has failed to enforce federal gun laws. For example:

- Between 1992 and 1998, so-called Triggerlock prosecutions—prosecutions of defendants who use a firearm in the commission of a felony—dropped yearly 50 percent, from 7,045 to approximately 3,800.
- Despite over 6,000 incidents of children carrying guns into public schools last year, the Clinton Justice Department prosecuted only eight cases under the federal law against possessing firearms on school grounds in 1998, and only five cases in 1997.
- It is a federal law to transfer a fire arm to a juvenile, yet the Clinton Justice Department prosecuted only four cases in 1998, and only five in 1997.
- Similarly, for all its talk about the dangers of semiautomatic assault weapons, the Clinton Justice Department has an equally poor record for prosecuting cases under the current laws governing those weapons. The Clinton administration brought only four cases in 1998, and only four in 1997, under the federal law criminalizing the possession of semiautomatic assault weapons.

Now, Mr. President, you will not hear the Clinton administration or the gun control advocates in Congress talk about these statistics, even though it is these statistics—not a wish-list of new laws and regulations—that reveal the true story of gun misuse in America. Instead, the number that gun control advocates talk about is the 500,000 felons and other prohibited purchasers that the Brady background check prevented from buying firearms since the Brady law was enacted.

Let me point out that with the original Brady law this administration wanted was a 7-day delay once you tried to buy a weapon. We reduced it to 5-day. We knew something had to be done, so we instituted an instant check system so you can find out immediately whether a person is capable of purchasing a weapon. It was our instant check system that caught these, according to the President, 500,000 people. Actually, it was about 400,000 people.

But even this statistic points out the Clinton administration’s lack of commitment to enforcing federal gun laws. Evidence of this is the number of people who were thwarted in their attempts to purchase firearms violated 18 U.S.C. section 922(a)(6) by stating under oath that they were not disqualified from purchasing a firearm. How many of those 500,000 were prosecuted between 1996-1999? Only about 200 were even re ferred for prosecution.

Mr. President, the only thing worse than this poor enforcement record is the Clinton administration’s disingen and lack of federal gun prosecutions on a lack of resources. The facts demonstrate that, during the period when federal gun prosecutions decreased nearly 50 percent, the overall budget of the Department of Justice has increased by 54 percent.

The Clinton administration also tries to hide its failure to prosecute gun crimes behind its never-ending calls for more federal gun control laws. The irony of the administration’s position was evident at an oversight hearing last year, when I questioned Attorney General Reno about the decline in federal firearms prosecutions. She replied...
that many firearms violations have been prosecuted in state court, and she indicated that state court is the proper forum for these cases. As chairman of the board of the Federalist Society, I agree that most firearms crimes can be prosecuted as well as those in federal court. Nevertheless, I find it ironic and hypocritical for the administration to argue that crimes involving firearms should be prosecuted in state court at the same time they are calling for more federal gun control laws. If the administration really believes that the dismal record on gun prosecutions is because gun laws are a state issue, it should be consistent and stop pressuring Congress for even more federal gun control laws that it does not intend to enforce.

The relevance of all this to the budget resolution is that there are several actions the Justice Department could take right now—with no additional laws or resources—that would have a positive impact on reducing crime in America. First, the Justice Department should use state law enforcement grants to encourage States to enact mandatory minimum sentences for firearm offenses based on 18 U.S.C. §924(c), and that such sentences are required in state court. The key to Project Triggerlock is the 5-year mandatory minimum prison sentence for any person who uses or carries a firearm in a crime of violence or serious drug trafficking offense. This 5-year prison sentence is in addition to the prison term for the underlying crime. As I mentioned earlier, most of these gun crimes can be prosecuted in state court as well as federal court. By encouraging States to enact stronger penalties for gun crimes, there will be less need to prosecute these cases in federal court.

Mr. President, there is a precedent for the federal government encouraging States to increase penalties. The Truth-in-Sentencing Grant Program provides prison construction funds to States that adopt truth-in-sentencing laws. Truth-in-sentencing laws require violent criminals to serve at least 85 percent of their sentences. Due to truth-in-sentencing grants, more than 70 percent of prison admissions last year occurred in states requiring criminals to serve at least 85 percent of their sentence.

Now, I move to what the Justice Department should take is using the funds provided in the budget resolution to designate at least one assistant United States attorney in each district to prosecute federal firearms violations. As the U.S. attorney’s office in Richland, Virginia has shown, federal prosecutors, in cooperation with state and local law enforcement, can help reduce violent crime. The U.S. attorney’s offices should focus their efforts on federal firearms violations until the States enact longer sentences for state firearm offenses.

Finally, the Justice Department should place mental health adjudications on the National Instant Check System (NICS). It is a federal crime for any person who has been adjudicated as a mental defective or who has been committed to a mental institution to possess or purchase a firearm. Despite this commonsense federal law, mental health adjudications are not included on the NICS system. Consequently, mentally ill persons can buy firearms from licensed dealers because the dealers are not notified by the NICS system of the mental disqualification. The NICS system is designed only until the mental health adjudications are included. These commonsense ideas would go a lot further toward reducing the number of crimes committed with firearms than the administration’s current practice of ignoring federal violations, asking for more gun restrictions, and blaming lack of funding for their abysmal record of prosecutions.

It is pathetic that there are 2,000 laws, rules, and regulations on the books of care of our country, of which 550 are in order, including one to instruct the committee that is in conference. We are going so far overboard that we are making this floor much like a circus. Actually, I am hopeful that this will not be too long from now that the Parliamentarian will reverse himself. I don’t know how we will do it. Maybe we will instruct him to do it himself. A Parliamentarian ruled that senses of the Senate were in order on budget resolutions even if they did nothing to the resolution.

Now we are dreaming them up. We have a gun amendment on a budget resolution. We have instructions to a committee in conference on a Budget Committee. I don’t know what kind of people they are making, but if anybody thinks they are effective just because they win one of these sense of the Senate, let me say, constituents and politicians don’t believe they are effective because they do nothing.

So if you want to run a TV ad that you got something passed in a sense of the Senate, I hope the other guy is smart enough to say that is baloney; it did nothing. We would be out of here if we didn’t have these—out of here as far as substantive amendments. It is getting worse, not better, on both sides. On our side, we have 20 sense-of-the-Senate resolutions. I am going to ask them to file them pretty soon and see how many have the courage to call them up and vote on those.

I yield the floor.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I yield 5 minutes to the Senator from Indiana to speak on the education amendment that will be offered at a subsequent time.

Mr. BAYH. Thank you, Mr. President. I thank my colleagues. I particularly express my appreciation to Senator Domenici, and Senator Graham, and Senator Edwards, Lieberman, Lincoln, and others, who are also speaking on the issue that has been near and dear to my heart for many years. It is the cause of improving the public education system in this country. Together we have to argue that crimes involving firearms can be prosecuted in state court as well as federal court. By encouraging States to increase prison sentences for the underlying crime. As I mentioned earlier, most of these gun crimes can be prosecuted in state court at the same time they are calling for more federal gun control laws. If the administration really believes that the dismal record on gun prosecutions is because gun laws are a state issue, it should be consistent and stop pressuring Congress for even more federal gun control laws that it does not intend to enforce.

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I yield the floor.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I yield 5 minutes to the Senator from Indiana to
recognize that we need to focus not just upon how much money is spent but, instead, how much our children learn.

We need to focus on outcomes of the process, just as we add inputs necessary to achieve additional standards. We need to also focus on high academic standards that are important to the success of all of our children. This is important because there is a growing gap between the haves and have-nots in our society, and there is just as much gap in knowledge and learning as in anything else.

We must ensure that every child gets good access to education and is held to these high educational standards to ensure that for the first time in the history of our Nation we don't experience the creation of an underclass characterized by people who do not have enough knowledge and learning to participate in the opportunities of the 21st century.

Just briefly, this approach is targeted on things that are important, such as adding good teachers, the latest technology, and focusing upon students who are at greatest risk, which is at the heart of the challenge we face as a country.

In closing, let me say this: The cause of educating our children is, by definition, the cause of shaping our future. But in doing so, we stay in touch with the fullest wellsprings of our past. It was Thomas Jefferson, the third President of the United States, who, after his public career, founded the University of Virginia and dedicated his life to the cause of education, who once said that, "a society that expects to be both ignorant and free is expecting something that never has been and never shall be."

As we debate this amendment, I urge my colleagues to support it because, in doing so, we not only ensure the future well-being of our economy, not only what kind of society we will one day have, but the vitality of our democracy itself.

I thank my colleagues for their forbearance.

I yield the floor.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, last May, in the wake of the Columbine massacre, this Senate took action, passing a comprehensive juvenile justice bill that would begin the long process of addressing the problems that plague the youth in this country.

Parts of the bill addressed our crisis of violence.

These provisions included: A comprehensive package of measures I authored with Senator HATCH to fight juvenile possession of assault weapons and high capacity ammunition magazines; a provision to close the gun show loophole; a requirement that safety locks be included with every handgun sold in America; and my proposal to ban the importation of large capacity ammunition magazines.

But the crisis in leadership remains. Despite passage by both Houses of Congress almost one year ago, the conference committee on this bill has met only once—in early August of last year. No real issues have been discussed. No progress has been made. The bills sit in legislative purgatory, apparently never to see the light of day again.

It now seems clear that these bills will die a quiet death at the end of this short session. As a result, all of the important issues we debated will remain un-addressed. Gang violence, juvenile delinquency, school reform, and a host of other problems will remain unsolved.

And nobody within the walls of this Chamber or elsewhere has any doubt why this stalemate persists. This bill would have passed months ago were it not for those four, simple, targeted gun measures buried within the text of the bill.

This, Mr. President, demonstrates just how deeply this Congress is dominated by just one special interest group—these people who fervently resist any regulations on firearms, no matter how mild, no matter how targeted, and no matter how much the American people want it.

Some argue that we don't need more gun control laws—enforcing our current laws would be enough. But those arguments miss the point entirely.

Of course we should be enforcing our current laws. And we are. The evidence clearly shows that gun prosecutions are up. In fact, since 1992, the total number of federal and state prosecutions has increased sharply—about 25 percent more criminals are sent to prison for state and federal weapons offenses now than in 1992 (from 20,681 to 25,186).

The number of higher-level federal firearms offenders sent to prison (those sentenced to five or more years) has gone up more than 54 percent (from 1049 to 1406) in six years.

The number of inmates in federal prisons on firearm or arson charges (the two are counted together) increased 51 percent from 1993 to 1998, to 8,979.

And we are working to improve this situation.

Just last week, my colleague Senator KOHL and I introduced legislation that would expand Project Exile to 50 cities and provide law enforcement with ballistics technology that will make it far easier to identify and to punish the perpetrators of gun violence.

Early last year, I wrote the Secretary of the Treasury several times to demand greater attention to those who violate the Brady Law. I asked why so few violators had been prosecuted, and I was told that the resources just aren't there.

That is why I support the President's request to fund at least 500 additional ATF agents and 1,000 new prosecutors to focus on guns.

But enforcing our current laws has been made tougher by the concerted efforts of the NRA to disparage and to destroy the very people tasked with enforcing those laws. The so-called "NRA-induced loopholes." That is a letter that was completely contradictory to what they are saying they want now.

In fact, every time the opportunity arises to increase federal law enforcement capabilities by increasing ATF investigatory ability, the NRA fights it tooth and nail:

The NRA fought the Brady bill for 10 years.

They successfully defeated all attempts to allow the Consumer Products Safety Commission to regulate the safety of firearms.

In 1986, the NRA got legislation passed which restricts ATF inspection of gun dealers to once per year. Even dealers who are the source for hundreds of crime guns cannot be routinely inspected more than once a year without a special court warrant.

For years, the NRA has successfully blocked ATF computerization of gun sale records from gun dealers that have gone out of business. As a result, when a gun is traced as part of a criminal investigation, the files must often be retrieved manually from warehouses where the old records are kept. This can add days or even weeks to the time it takes to start tracking down the perpetrators of gun violence.

By the time the records are found, the trail may already be cold.

And most importantly, the NRA fights against funding our law enforcement agencies at levels adequate to enforce our current laws. As former New York City Police Commissioner William Bratton has said, "The NRA has strenuously opposed increased financing for the [ATF] and has successfully lobbied against giving it the authority to quickly investigate the origins of guns sales."

The ATF has been left underfunded, understaffed, and unable to adequately enforce our current gun laws.

And the simple fact is that our current laws—even if fully enforced—are just not enough. Those laws are riddled with NRA-induced loopholes. Guns are still too easy to get. And too many children die every day for us to ignore the problem. The Columbine incident shocked this nation and this Congress to its core—as did the school shootings in Jonesboro, Arkansas; West Paducah, Kentucky; Pearl, Mississippi; Springfield, Oregon; and Edinboro, Pennsylvania. And in my own state of California, we saw a hateful bigot kill a
Let me give some specifics about gang-sponsored violent crime.

Killing: Around the country, every year, gang members kill over 3,000 people. Last year in Los Angeles alone, there were 136 gang-related killings.

Drug dealing: A survey of law enforcement agencies suggests that about 75% of gang members are involved in illegal drug sales; that about one-third of gangs are organized specifically for the purpose of trafficking in drugs; and that gangs make over 30% of crack cocaine and marijuana sales. (Department of Justice)

Guns: Ninety percent of gang members report that their fellow gang members carry concealed weapons and 80% report that those members had taken guns to school. Worse, the study showed that gang members favor powerful, lethal weapons over smaller caliber handguns. (Ohio State University study)

The Senate-passed juvenile justice bill includes a number of key measures to address this complex problem. The bill:

Provides $100 million annually in federal aid for certain intense gang activity areas, so those communities can afford to create joint task forces with federal and local law enforcement and to support community gang prevention efforts;

Increases sentences for interstate drug gang activity;

Makes it a Federal offense to recruit young people into a gang;

Enables Federal law enforcement to prosecute gangs who cross state lines to commit gang crimes such as drive-by shootings;

Increases penalties for transferring handguns to minors.

Since we passed the juvenile justice bill last May, an estimated 30,000 people have died from gunshot wounds, including 3,700 children.

If history is any judge, millions of large capacity ammunition feeding devices have been approved for import—in the year preceding the juvenile justice bill, more than 11 million of those clips were approved.

All of the commonsense gun, gang, and other provisions in the juvenile justice bill are now at risk of disappearing without a trace, and I urge the majority to proceed with the conference and come to a compromise.

The compromise should preserve intact the Senate-passed gun control legislation, which represents the bare minimum we should do this year to stem the gun violence that is increasingly common on our streets and in our schools.

I also urge this body to pass the President’s gun enforcement initiative. That initiative, which will fund more than 500 new ATF agents and 1,000 new prosecutors, is vital to the enforcement of our current gun laws.

The crisis of leadership has come to a head. It is time for this Congress to take serious and bipartisan steps to stem the tide of youth and gun violence that continues to plague this nation.
I thank the Chair and yield the floor.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I yield 10 minutes off the resolution to the ranking member of the Budget Committee, Senator Lautenberg, to speak on the Reed amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. Lautenberg. Mr. President, I will try to consolidate my remarks because I know everybody is anxious to complete work on the budget resolution.

I am compelled, as I listen to the discussion, to talk to the Reed amendment and to talk to those who would disparage our efforts to have sensible gun violence control in this society.

I heard it said that what we need in law enforcement is more enforcement; that what we need is a more sincere effort, a better effort. People here don't believe that is the case. They want to see more laws to give them the tools to do the job.

We heard it said that President Clinton and his administration want to let criminals wander the streets. It is somewhat akin to the argument we hear from those who are NRA spokespersons who say President Clinton is looking for more killings to make his political case. It is an outrageous thing. We hear that all we have to do is look at how many laws are on the books.

I ask the question: Is the deciding factor how many laws we have on the books? On the record, there is no evidence that suggests that people here and elsewhere believe we ought to know who is who buys a gun at a gun show. That is the problem.

I heard someone say today we have 20,000 laws on the books related to guns. But in this country we kill more than 20,000 a year with guns. We kill over 10,000. That is only a page per victim, if you want to judge it on that basis. It is outrageous.

That is not the problem. The problem is that people here don't believe guns kill. People here don't believe we ought to know who it is who buys a gun at a gun show. That is the problem.

This morning, I had the privilege of standing with Senator Reid and the head of the State police department from Maryland. What he was advocating was more law enforcement, more laws to give them the tools to work with.

We had police officers from the area around Providence, RI. They were asking the same thing. They said, give us the tools. It is said, you have enough tools, like the weight of the number of the bills, the numbers of pieces of legislation that you have—again, as if that were the yardstick by which we measure the performance of the society.

Go tell the parents of the kids who were killed in Columbine or those who stood at Port-Worth, TX, or those who were killed in Columbine or those who were killed in Colorado or those who were killed in New York. This is an outrageous thing. I hope we can get past the partisan discussion and look into the faces of the mothers, distant though they are, listen to the pleas of the mothers, the fathers, the grandfathers, grandmothers.
brothers, and sisters and say we have done the right thing—we have tried to reduce gun violence in our society. I yield the floor.

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I thank the distinguished minority whip for his tremendous cooperation. Without his help and cooperation, we wouldn't be where we are. We might, indeed, get this budget resolution finished. Many thanks for that go to Senator Reid.

In the interest of orderliness, I ask consent that all first-degree amendments to the pending budget resolution be submitted at the desk by 7 p.m. this evening.

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

Mr. DOMENICI. Members, for first-degree amendments, walk up and file them. You don't have to stand on the floor. Just give them to the clerk so we can have a list of all of them filed and they will have a number and we can work with them in an orderly fashion to finish this task.

I also ask any subsequent second-degree amendments offered from the floor must be relevant to the first-degree amendment that they are amending.

Mr. REID. It would be tremendously helpful, especially to the staff, if after the amendment is filed at the desk there be a copy left with both managers.

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

Mr. DOMENICI. I think that is an excellent suggestion. We will understand where we are.

On behalf of the leader, let me one more time say any Member who has not submitted their first-degree amendment at the desk must do so by 7 p.m. in order for it to be available to be called up for consideration during the remainder of the budget resolution.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, under the time on the Reed amendment, I offer 10 minutes to the Senator from North Carolina to speak about his education amendment or on whatever else he chooses to speak.

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

Mr. DOMENICI. Will the Senator yield?

Mr. EDWARDS. I yield the floor.

Mr. DOMENICI. I note the presence of the Senator from California, Mrs. Boxer.

During the debate on this ANWR amendment, the distinguished Senator stated this was the first budget resolution that ever addressed ANWR, and in the meantime it called it an anti-environment resolution. I clarify, and I think she agrees, that in 1996 in the budget resolution we not only referred to ANWR but we recognized the ANWR instruction to the Energy and Natural Resources Committee. I wonder if the Senator would acknowledge that.

Mrs. BOXER. I absolutely acknowledge it and state that was one of the reasons the President vetoed that legislation and we beat it back. We will have this fight again. My friend is absolutely right. It is the second time that ANWR was put into a budget resolution. He is correct.

Mr. DOMENICI. For the record. Since we are clarifying the record, could I ask the Senator from California whether or not she discussed the photograph that she displayed on the floor?

Mrs. BOXER. Yes, we have gotten confirmation. This had to do with Senator Murkowski. We have gotten confirmation from the biologist who took that photo, that that photo is in the proposed ruling area, and he has sent us chapter and verse of exactly where he was.

Senator Domenici is correct, this is the second time we had this in. We beat it back the last time, and I hope we can beat it back this time.

Mr. REID. Senator Edwards, the Senator from North Carolina, is to be recognized for 10 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. President, first I would like to speak on the Graham amendment. The most important thing we do as a country is educate our children. What we should be doing in this debate is talking about making this decade the education decade. We have great roads, great technology, great airports, a great economy in this country. We should be working toward making our schools the envy of the world. Instead, we have children who go to the local mall and go to beautiful, shiny buildings and stores and then the next morning go to schools that are falling down, with roofs leaking, with floors that are covered over with patchwork carpet. We have to do better.

We need to send a clear and unmistakable signal to the American people that our children are our future; that doing business as usual is not good enough. The Graham amendment provides for accountability. It is a critical component of what needs to be done in our education system in this country.

No. 4, this amendment targets those kids who are most in need, the kids in this country who are having the most problems in the poorest areas, in the rural areas, particularly in places such as rural North Carolina, eastern North Carolina—chronically economically disadvantaged areas where the kids are not on a level playing field. They do not have a chance. They do not have self-esteem. They don't feel as if they can compete with kids who go to school in richer, urban areas.

We need to give these children a chance. We need to put them on the launching pad with all other children so they can compete. That is what this amendment does. It targets the money to those kids who most need the help.

Finally, it takes the resources that we are providing them and focuses those resources in the places where they will do the most good.

So these five components are things that all will go toward improving our public school system: more resources; local control where we want the control to be; accountability, making sure the school systems responsible for performing; making sure the resources are focused; and making sure they are targeted at those kids who are most in need.

We need to show, in this body, that we are committed to the single most important thing we do in this country, which is educating our kids.
The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nevada.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I yield to the Senator from Arkansas, Mrs. LIncoln, 5 minutes off the resolution; and yield 5 minutes off the amendment to the Senator from Louisiana, Ms. LANDREU.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

Mrs. LIncoln. Mr. President, I am proud to rise in strong support of the amendment by my friend Senator BOB GRAHAM. There are several of us in this body who have come together to build a consensus of a commonsense, result-oriented solution to educating our children in this Nation. This amendment combines two concepts that are essential to improving our system of public education—greater investment and tough accountability standards.

Now Mr. President, before I get into the details of why this amendment is so important I think we have to take a minute to consider the current state of education in this country. I am not sure how the rest of my colleagues feel, but I think it is difficult to deny that the status quo in our education system is simply not acceptable. It is not working, and we are not doing a good enough job in educating our children. We are certainly not doing the best job we could be doing.

And if we think things are bad now, we should expect it to get worse or 15 years into the future. I continue to be amazed at the pace of high-tech development in this country and the incredible advancements that take place every day. This progress is only going to continue, and our children are the ones who will be left behind in the global high-tech world.

If we do not do something to change the way we approach education, if we do not increase our Federal investment and accountability from our system and our educators, then we are only fooling ourselves, and we are cheating our children.

Our children are our greatest national resource, and their education is worthy of a significant investment. Unfortunately, the budget resolution before us today once again falls short of our responsibility to make quality education a top priority in this Nation.

Under the budget resolution before us, America would receive $6.6 million less in Title I funds than it would under the administration’s plan. That means more than 10,000 students in my home State would be denied the critical support this program provides.

In addition to the annual budget, we in the Senate have the difficult task before us this year of passing legislation that reauthorizes the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

Quite frankly, we need a bold new approach that targets resources to the neediest districts, decisions in the hands of local educators, and maintains national priorities like school safety and educational technology.

I have joined with a group of my moderate Democratic colleagues in the Senate to promote a “Third Way” on ESEA, one that synthesizes the best ideas of both sides into a whole new approach to federal education policy.

Like our “Three Bill,” the additional funding contained in this amendment would allow schools to raise student achievement, implement effective professional development programs for teachers, improve English language instruction and encourage innovation in the classroom.

This investment is especially important to rural school districts, like many of those in Arkansas, that cannot afford to meet all of their needs with limited local resources.

We must do more than just throw more money at the problem of underachievement in the classroom. We also must demand results.

To qualify for additional funding under this amendment, educational proposals by the Elementary and Secondary Education Act would have to contain greater accountability; incentives to set high student achievement standards; an emphasis on education for disadvantaged students; and funds for our neediest, most impoverished schools.

Congress must do all it can to help our schools meet the challenges they face today and will face in the future.

Our most important responsibility is to help States and local school districts raise academic achievement and deliver on the promise of equal opportunity for all students.

I believe in the children of this country. I believe that through this amendment, we can truly make a difference by making a bigger investment and setting our children’s education as one of our top national priorities. I urge the support of this amendment, and I thank my colleagues for their attention. I think the time may have to the Democratic leader.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BENNETT). Who yields time?

Mr. REID. Mr. President, we still have time left under our amendment. We have 8 more minutes before the other side can offer an amendment. I yield 3 minutes to the Senator from Connecticut to speak on the amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, with deference to my friend and colleague from Louisiana, I am going to be brief.

Mr. President, I rise today in support of the amendment offered by my colleague, Senator GRAHAM. This amendment would set aside and protect $15 billion over the next five years, holding funds in reserve so that resources are available — once legislation reauthorizing ESEA is enacted. The amendment also that to qualify for funds, ESEA reauthorization must contain a few fundamental elements: (1) increased accountability; (2) the ability of States and localities to set high student performance standards; (3) the targeting of funds to the most impoverished areas and schools most in need of improvement; and (4) the concentration of Federal resources on key national goals of improving education for disadvantaged children, teacher quality, innovative education strategies, serving limited English proficient students, student safety, and educational technology.

In the upcoming debate on ESEA, I will join with several of my colleagues in offering a new approach that meets these qualifications. It is an approach that would refocus our national policy on helping States and local school districts raise academic achievement for all children, putting the priority for Federal programs on performance instead of process, and on delivering results instead of developing rules. Our approach calls on States and local districts to enter into a compact with the Federal Government to work together to strengthen standards and improve educational opportunities, particularly for America’s poorest children. It would provide States and local educators with significantly more Federal funding and significantly more flexibility in targeting aid to meet the specific needs. In exchange, it would demand real accountability, and for the first time impose consequences on schools that continually fail to show progress.

In order to implement effective educational policy, we have to first recognize that there are serious problems with the performance of many public schools, and that public confidence in public education will continue to erode if we do not acknowledge and address those problems soon. While student achievement is up, we must realize the alarming achievement gap that separates minorities from whites and low-income students from their more affluent counterparts. According to the State-by-State reading scores of fourth graders on the National Assessment of Educational Progress, the achievement gap between African American and white students grew in 16 States between 1992 and 1998. The gap between Hispanic and white students grew in nine States over the same period of time. Most alarmingly, student data reveals that the average African-American and Latino 17-year-old has about the same reading and math skills as the average white 13-year-old.

We must also question whether our schools are adequately preparing our youth to enter the globally competitive market place when, as one report states, “Students are being unconsiously eliminated from the candidate pool of Information Technology (IT) workers by the knowledge and attitudes in their K-12 years. Many students are not learning the basic skills of reading, writing, and communieation that provide the foundation for higher education or entry-level jobs in IT work.’’
We also have to acknowledge that we have done a very good job in recent years in providing every child with a well-qualified teacher, a critical component to higher student achievement. We are failing to deliver teachers to the classroom who truly know their subject matter. The national survey found that one-fourth of all secondary school teachers did not major in their core area of instruction, and that in the school districts with the highest concentration of minorities, students have less than a 50 percent chance of getting a math or science teacher who has a license or a degree in their field.

While more money alone will not solve our problems, we cannot honestly expect to reinvent our schools without it either. The reality is that there is a tremendous need for additional investment in our public schools, not just in urban areas but in every kind of community. Not only are thousands of crumbling and overcrowded schools in need of modernization, but a looming shortage of two million new teachers to hire and train lurks on the horizon. Add to this, billions in spiraling special education costs to meet.

We also have to recognize the basic math that faces us. To raise standards at a time of profound social turbulence that we will need to expend new sums to reach and teach children who in the past we never asked to excel, and who in the present will have to overcome enormous hurdles to do so. At the same time that schools are trying to cope with new and complex societal changes, we are demanding that they teach more than they ever have before. Employers and parents alike what better teachers, stronger standards, and higher test scores for all students, as well as state-of-the-art technology and skills to match.

It is a tribute to the many dedicated men and women who are responsible for teaching these children that the majority of our schools are as good as they are, in light of these intensifying pressures. I believe any child can learn—and child—and that has been proven over and over again in the best schools in both my home state of Connecticut and in many of America’s cities.

There are, in fact, plenty of positives to highlight in public education today, which is something else that we have to acknowledge, yet too often do not. I have made sure that the children that we educate and serve know that the Garland school districts elevate the performance of their schools.

The first would enhance our long-standing commitment to providing every child, regardless of the school they attend, with access to a quality education. The second would combine with the national blueprint to ensure that our schools are more than they are today. And the third would redefine the role of federal funding to help ensure that limited English proficient students are served.

Under our approach, funding for LEAP programs would be more than doubled to $1 billion a year, and for the first time be distributed to states and local districts through a more targeted formula based on their LEAP student population. As a result, school districts serving large LEAP and high poverty student populations would be guaranteed federal funding, and would not be penalized because of their inability to hire savvy proposal writers for competitive grants.

The fourth would respond to the public demands for greater choice within the public school framework, by providing additional resources for charter school start-ups and new incentives for expanding local, intradistrict choice programs. And the fifth would radically restructure the remaining ESEA and ensure that funds are much better targeted while giving local districts greater flexibility in addressing specific needs. We consolidate more than 20 different programs into a single High Performance Initiative, and after school programs, improving school safety, and building technological literacy. We increase overall funding by more than $200 million, and distribute this aid through a formula that targets more resources to the highest poverty areas.

The boldest change we are proposing is to create a new accountability title. As of today, we have plenty of rules and requirements on inputs, on how funding is to be allocated and who must be served, but little or any attention to outcomes, on how schools ultimately perform in educating children. This bill would reverse that imbalance.
by linking Federal funding to the progress States and local districts make in raising academic achievement. It would call on State and local leaders to set specific performance standards and adopt rigorous assessments for measuring how each district is faring in meeting those goals. In the State plans that exceed those goals would be rewarded with additional funds, and those that fail repeatedly to show progress would be penalized. In other words, for the first time, there would be consequences for poor performance.

In discussing how exactly to impose those consequences, we have run into understandable concerns about whether you can penalize failing schools without also penalizing children. The truth is that we are punishing many children right now, especially the most vulnerable of them, by forcing them to attend chronically troubled schools that are accountable to no one, a situation that is not acceptable any more. This bill minimizes the potential negative impact of these consequences on students. It provides the States with three years to set their performance-based goals and put in place a monitoring system for gauging how local districts are doing, and it provides additional resources for States to help school districts identify and improve low-performing schools. If after those three years a State is still failing to meet its goals, the State would be penalized by losing administrative funding by 50 percent. Only after 4 years of under performance would dollars targeted for the classroom be put in jeopardy. At that point, protecting kids by continuing to subsidize bad schools becomes more like punishing them.

I must address another concern that may be raised that this is a block grant in sheep’s clothing. There are substantial differences between a straight block grant approach and this streamlined structure. First, in most block-grant proposals the accountability mechanisms are vague, weak and often non-existent, which is one reason why I have opposed them in the Senate. Our bill would have tangible consequences, pegged not just to raise test scores in the more affluent suburban areas, but to closing the troubling achievement gap between students in poor, largely minority districts and their better-off peers.

It is a commonsense strategy—reinvent in our public schools, reinvent the way we administer them, and restore a sense of responsibility to the children we are supposed to be serving. Hence the title of our bill: the Public Education Reinvention, Reinvestment, and Responsibility Act, or the Three Rs for short. Our approach is humble enough to recognize there are no easy answers to turning around low-performing schools, to lifting teaching standards, to closing the achievement gap, and that most of those answers won’t be found here in Washington anyway. But it is ambitious enough to try to harness our unique ability to set the national agenda and recast the Federal government as an active catalyst for success instead of a passive enabler of failure.

I am pleased to support the Graham amendment which will ensure we have the necessary resources to provide for the kind of education reform that I have outlined. Reauthorization of the status quo is not the answer. We need real reform that concentrates resources around central national goals, targets those resources to the most impoverished areas and schools in greatest need, and holds States and localities to a new, higher standard of accountability for results in raising student academic achievement.

I am pleased to support the Graham amendment which will ensure we have the necessary resources in reserve to provide for the kind of education reform that I have outlined. Reauthorization of the status quo is not the answer. We need real reform that concentrates resources around central national goals, targets those resources to the most impoverished areas and schools in greatest need, and holds States and localities to a new, higher standard of accountability for results in raising student academic achievement.

I am very grateful for the strong statements that have been made by my colleagues in support of this amendment by Senator Grahams. This amendment is, in a sense, our first statement of support for a major reform of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, which we intend to offer when the act comes before the Senate in May.

There are two facts to state about the Federal role in education and what is happening throughout the country. The first is that we have not achieved what the ESEA was adopted to achieve in 1965, and that is to close the academic achievement gap between advantaged and disadvantaged children. The proposal that I will offer, along with Senators BATH, LANDRIEU, LINCOLN, KOHL, GRAHAM, ROBS, and BREAUX, is aimed at investing more money in the education of disadvantaged children while giving local authorities the flexibility to set achievement goals and decide what they think is the best pathway, and then to hold them accountable for producing measurable results. It will reward those who succeed and, for the first time ever, impose real consequences on those who do not.

The second reality in American education today is that there are also cases of magnificent reform happening at the local and State level, which we must recognize. These success stories include many of the same elements—more accountability, more innovation, more rigorous state and local standards, more higher standards, more resources for the classroom, and superb work by great teachers and school administrators.

Our proposal will streamline more than 40 current ESEA programs into five performance-based grants that will support and expand these reform efforts that are occurring at the grassroots level in America. It is a common sense proposal built upon the core principles of reinvention, and responsibility that will finally provide the full, decent, and equal education we want for all our children, and the educational reform that our children need.

I thank my friend and colleague from Florida for offering this amendment. We have a very strong working group in favor of reform. We hope this proposal not only represents innovation and change that will be a catalyst for broad-scale national education reform, but that it will constitute a bridge on which Members of both parties can meet in the Senate to accomplish the most sweeping reform of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act in its storied history.

I thank the Chair and my friend from Nevada, and particularly my patient and learned friend from Louisiana. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, I rise in support of the Graham amendment. I acknowledge the very helpful comments made by my colleague from Connecticut and others who have spoken about this amendment.

I realize my time is short. I would like to begin by saying that in 1965, when President Lyndon Johnson first signed the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, it was 32 pages long with 5 program titles. Today, the bill is over 1,000 pages and contains over 60 programs. We need to get back to basics, and that is what the Graham amendment is about.

If these 1,000 pages of rules, regulations, and procedures were reworked, each of these 60 programs is the answer, then we should be satisfied with the status quo. A few minutes ago, my colleague from Arkansas spoke about what the status quo means for our children. I rise to urge my colleagues, Republicans and Democrats, to say no to the status quo.

As the Senator from Connecticut, our leader on this issue, has acknowledged, there are many wonderful schools and many wonderful teachers, and some wonderful superintendents and active parents. The problem is they are becoming the exception rather than the rule. Let me just share just a few startling and disturbing statistics.

In many school districts, 40-, 50-, or 60-percent failure rates are the rule, not the exception to the rule. Every day in America, 2,806 children drop out of the school system because it is not working for them.

According to the National Education Goals Report, 92 percent of our fourth graders scored below proficient in math and 70 percent scored below proficient in reading.
For every 100 children who start kindergarten each year, only 27 percent eventually graduate from college.

If you are happy with these statistics, then do not vote for the Graham amendment. I, for one, cannot live with these numbers and I am here to insist on change for our kids.

Let me say that although we are all talking about change, there is right change and there is wrong change. There is change that gets us on the right track and there is change that takes us further away from where we want to go.

Some Republican leaders offer vouchers as the solution to the dilemma I just outlined. Those same Republican leaders also talk about block grants, minimal accountability, and then wait- ing 5 years for results. I personally do not think that is the solution.

On the Democratic side, unfortunately, there are many leaders who just want to talk about more programs, more money, more strings, and more micromanagement. But more money and more programs are not the answer.

The Graham amendment is about a clean break away from the old ways. Away from the sort of the "romance," if you will, of vouchers, which really are an abandonment of our public schools and the children who need them the most.

The Graham amendment says we need to talk about performance and outcomes. We need to minimize the paperwork, the redtape, the regulations. We need to help our schools set high performance standards, reward them when they meet those performance standards, and make sure there are serious consequences when they fail to do so.

We cannot have a system any longer that fails a third of our children. It is important for us to break with the past. That is what this amendment attempts to do.

It does not do it all. There are many other steps we have to take. But it is an important step. A bold step. It talks about real accountability. It requires that States and local districts set and meet targets for boosting student performance. It will offer awards to those who meet their goals and withhold funding from those who repeatedly fail to do so.

The amendment suggests greater flexibility. It acknowledges that the local level has the tools necessary to make these decisions and give them the power to do so. While it does not call for consolidation specifically, it does call for us to concentrate our re-
sources around broad titles, including teacher quality, professional development, smaller classroom sizes

Finally—I know I am getting to the end of my time—it increases funding to the end of my time—it increases funding and smaller classroom sizes, sources around broad titles, including

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importance of that. We recognize that the
States and local school districts have the
primary responsibility, but we think the Federal Government should be a more active part-
ner and that the principles in this
amendment and the principles we will
be offering when we debate the Ele-
mentary and Secondary Education Act
are critical to achieving that construc-
tive partnership.

The most obvious thing this amend-
ment will do—since we are talking about
an amendment to a budget resolu-
tion—is to reserve an additional $15
billion, over the next 5 years, for the
purposes of the Federal Elementary
and Secondary Education Act.

We do that because we believe that
additional amount of Federal contribu-
tion, particularly with the flexibility,
targeted at the most in-need students,
with an accountability system that re-
lates to student performance in the
classroom, that that investment is
going to be a necessary part of lifting
the performance of our American stu-
dents, especially those who are most in
need.

If we fail to do that, if we fail, at the Federal level, to make that additional commitment to their education, I am afraid we are consigning the next dec-
ade of American public education to
the same critique we hear so much of
today—that we are not doing an ade-
quate job of preparing our children for
the future, that we are contributing
not just to a digital divide but to a so-
cioeconomic divide among our chil-
dren, and that those children who do
don't get the support we have tradi-
tionally associated with the fam-
ily's contribution to child development
will continue to fall further and fur-

ther behind their fellow students who are more advantaged.

We believe this is a pragmatic ap-
proach to a passionately held goal of
improved American education.

Mr. President, I urge the adoption of this amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Sen-
ator from Nevada.

Mr. REID. Off the resolution, I yield to the Senator from Florida, Mr. GRAHAM, 3 minutes off the resolution.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Sen-
ator from Florida.

Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, I ex-
press my appreciation to my colleagues
in the Senate, our new Democrats, for
having so eloquently outlined the goals
of our amendment and what those goals represent in our vision of Amer-
ican public education.

We believe American public edu-
cation is fundamental to our Nation's
progress. We are going to be faced with
economic challenges from both here
around the world. The only way Amer-
ica will be able to maintain its current
standard of living and improve that
standard for the next generation is by
an investment in our people, which
means an investment in public edu-
We believe passionately in the
importance of that. We recognize that the
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This independent veterans budget is
just such a budget proposal. What Sen-
ator JOHNSON has done—and I am
proud to join him on an addi-
tional $1.4 billion over where they
were. The Budget Committee has stuck
with that. That is a huge help.

But Senator JOHNSON and I have had
the honor and the opportunity to work
with a lot of veterans organizations—
the VFW, the Paralyzed Veterans of
America, the Disabled American Vet-

ers—who have put together an inde-
pendent budget. They did this, starting
last year, and did a lot of good grass-
roots organizing across the country.

It went way beyond just veterans
coming to Washington, DC, and testi-
fying because the message from the
Congress to the veterans was: We are
not just interested in what you are op-
posed to or what you say you need
more money for. We want to see a care-
ful outline.

This independent veterans budget is
just such a budget proposal. What Sen-
ator JOHNSON has done—and I am
proud to join him on an addi-
tional $500 million above and beyond
the $1.4 billion increase from the Sen-
ate Budget Committee that would be
an investment, especially in veterans' health care.

We have a real challenge in veterans' health care. We talked about this in our
millennium bill. What we have au-
thorized is essentially decent care for
a veterans population that is an aging
population. We have many veterans
who are 75, 80 years old. What we have said now is we should be looking at the
whole population in this country in the
same way—is this is a population
where there are some huge gaps, some
large needs. We need to get serious about it.

How can we pass legislation saying, veterans, we are going to make a commitment to long-term care. We are especially going to make a commitment to make sure our fellow vets are not forced into nursing homes. We will make a commitment to making sure that there is the support for you to stay at home and live at home in as near a normal circumstance as is possible with dignity.

I was in the VA medical center about a month ago. It was very poignant. Quite often the men are World War II veterans. They have had a hip operation, a knee operation. If you spend any time out there in the lounge and talk to their wives, they are scared to death about when their husbands come home because they can’t take care of them any longer without help. They don’t know what they are going to do. Whether it be respite care, whether they can be put in a health nurses within the VA health care system, we have to get serious about this.

The $500 million doesn’t do the job, but it goes in the direction of having a veterans budget that is an honest-to-God response to the needs of veterans in this country.

In my State of Minnesota, I think the real heroes and heroines are the county veterans’ service officers. They are not a part of the VA, but they are on the front lines of veterans’ health care. They are on the front lines of meeting the needs of veterans and their families. I have had several meetings with these county veterans’ service officers—lots of people come; a lot of veterans come—who are advocates for the veterans. In our State, the medical center in Minneapolis is really a flag-ship place, but veterans wait for up to 18 months for some of the specialized care they need. That is too long a wait. We have a long list of veterans waiting. We have staff that are overworked, sometimes having to work one shift after another.

We have an aging veterans population. We have made the commitment in the millennium bill, but we have not backed it up with the investment of resources. We have too high a percentage of the veterans population that is a part of the homeless population. Too many of them are Vietnam vets, still struggling with posttraumatic stress syndrome.

If my colleagues have had any meetings with these vets, they know they are the most poignant meetings. Quite often, veterans will be sitting in a room with you. People will get up and leave and come back and get up and leave. They are struggling; you can see it. Quite often, you have substance abuse that occurs with this as well. We are not providing the treatment.

This amendment is a terribly important amendment. I yield the rest of my time to my colleague from South Dakota, Senator Johnson, who took the lead on the Budget Committee. He is the one who introduced the amendment. I am proud to be on the floor with him in partnership pushing for this.

Mr. STEVENS. Will the Senator yield for a parliamentary inquiry, Mr. President?

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, I have the right to call for regular order, but how much more time is left on this amendment?

Mr. WELLSTONE. I say to my colleague, I think about 7 minutes. The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota has 6 minutes 7 seconds.

Mr. STEVENS. I thank the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Dakota, Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, I commend my colleague, Senator WELLSTONE of Minnesota, for his extraordinary work on this issue. He has long been a champion of veterans in Minnesota and the opportunity to work with him on this and many other issues.

I am appreciative of Chairman DOMENICI’s effort to secure a $1.4 billion increase in outlays in the budget. We have been talking about this since a year ago, when I was offering on this floor a $3 billion increase in veterans’ health care appropriations which was necessary at that time to catch up after 3 years of frozen VA budgets. Of the $3 billion that was passed, ultimately, by the time the Appropriations Committee was done, we had about $1.7 billion. Even so, it was a significant increase. It has done a lot to breathe additional viability into our VA health care system. This year, Senator DOMENICI has proposed a $1.4 billion increase. That is encouraging. However, the Authoritative Independent Budget produced by 40 different veterans groups and medical societies—including Amvets and Disabled American Veterans of America, and the VFW—recommends that the VA require an additional $500 million in outlays over the Budget Committee’s level to raise the funding level to the point where it is requested in the Independent Budget of a $1.9 billion increase for fiscal 2000. This amendment pays for this. This amendment would get us to that needed level.

We need to make a fundamental decision in this body about where our priorities lie. We are talking now about multibillion-dollar surpluses in the Federal budget over the coming years. We ought to be cautious about whether they materialize or not, but certainly we can be optimistic that we will be in black ink in the coming years.

The question then is, Are we going to fully fund the veterans’ health care programs at the level the veterans organizations themselves contend—I think rightfully so? Are we going to put them as a first priority honoring those people who put their lives on the line and make our liberties possible or are we going to fall back to the point where, again, we only use the dollars that are left over after other things have been done?

To me, this ought to be a first-priority item. We have an opportunity on the floor this evening to make it very clear in the other body that, in fact, veterans’ health care is a first priority item and that we will take care of that. When we are done with dealing with veterans’ health care issues, we will then move on to whatever other priorities might be, whether they be tax cuts, education, health care, or other matters facing the country. This ought to be at the top or near the top of our agenda as we debate the look of the Federal budget in this coming year.

I applaud the constructive steps that have been taken on veterans’ health care. I certainly am appreciative of the work of Senator WELLSTONE in helping to raise the visibility of this issue. At this juncture, as we shape this budget resolution which creates a roadmap, which creates the parameters for where the appropriations committees will go next, we need to send them this kind of message that, in fact, we want full funding for veterans’ health care.

This is our opportunity to make that statement. We should not let this opportunity go by without making it clear that we are committed to this reasonable level of funding, after those many years of frozen VA budgets, that the VA requires.

Mr. President, I yield back my time.

AMENDMENT NO. 2931

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska, Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, what is the regular order?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The regular order is the Stevens amendment No. 2931.

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, this is the first of a series of three amendments that deals with points of order in the budget resolution, as it was reported to the Senate.

I have the feeling that this is deja vu because every year we face the same kind of concept. In the current budget resolution, for instance, that we are operating on for this fiscal year, there is, in fact, a point of order against emergency spending that requires 60 votes for emergency spending of a non-defense character. The resolution that was reported to the floor extends that to cover defense spending also.

It also has what is called the firewall that covers both budget authority and outlays for defense and nondefense. And it has a series of two other points of order that deal with delayed obligations and advance appropriations. That makes the management of the 13 bills our subcommittees work on annually and the supplemental and emergency bills that we face extremely difficult.

I have had a long series of conversations. I told someone I sort of feel like Houdini. Every year, I get a different set of chains and the configuration of the box I am put in before I am
put in the water differs, but everybody expects me to get out of it. I must say to the Senate, before this year is over, you might find some new approaches that help me get out of the chains. But these mechanisms, primarily for enforcement, ought to apply to the Senate as well, and I am pleased to see the Appropriations Committee.

In fact, if you examine the rules, I had to get up and start thinking about these amendments, because you will find it very interesting. We have a series of rules that govern the Senate, and if we ever really followed them, we would not have the trouble that we have once in a while here on the floor. The interesting thing is that those rules do not apply to the appropriations process in most instances because the framers of those rules understood the real complexities of the appropriations process and the fact that we do deal with emergencies and with various extraordinary circumstances in the course of each appropriations process.

I look back and see that I am not going to be corrected.

Mr. STEVENS. I will retain 4 minutes of the time and yield the rest of the time to Senator from New Mexico.

Mr. GORTON. Two minutes.

Mr. DOMENICI. I yield 2 minutes to Senator GORTON.

Mr. GORTON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the current amendment be set aside and we call up, first, amendment No. 2942, and then No. 3011, both of which have been agreed to by both sides.

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

The amendment (No. 2942) was agreed to.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

RESOLVED, That the Senate (a) finds:

(1) The impending retirement of the baby boom generation will greatly increase the demand and need for quality long-term care and it is incumbent on Congress and the Appropriations Committees to ensure that Medicare and Medicaid patients are protected from abuse, neglect, and mistreatment.

(2) Although the majority of long-term care needs and expenditures do accrue to caring for elderly and disabled patients, incidents of abuse and neglect and mistreatment do occur at an unacceptable rate and are not limited to nursing homes alone.

(3) Currently, Federal and State safeguards are inadequate because there is little or no information sharing between States about known abusers and no procedures for tracking abusers from State to State and facility to facility.

(b) SENSE OF THE SENATE.—It is the sense of the Senate that the assumptions underlying the functional totals in this concurrent resolution on the budget assume that a national registry of abusive long-term care workers, as it is proposed to be accomplished by building upon existing infrastructures at the Federal and State levels that would enable long-term care providers who participate in the Medicare and Medicaid programs to conduct background checks on prospective employees.

Mr. GORTON. Mr. President, this is an amendment by Senator Kohl of Wisconsin, and I would urge its immediate consideration.

Mr. GORTON. Mr. President, I send it to the Appropriations Committee.

Mr. GORTON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the current amendment be set aside and we call up, first, amendment No. 2942, and then No. 3011, both of which have been agreed to by both sides.

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

The amendment (No. 2942) was agreed to.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Washington (Mr. Gorton), for himself and Mr. Jeffords, proposes an amendment numbered 2942.

Mr. GORTON. 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:

SEC. 1. SENSE OF THE SENATE CONCERNING THE PRICE OF PRESCRIPTION DRUGS IN THE UNITED STATES.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Senate makes the following findings:

(1) Today, two-thirds of senior citizens in the United States have access to prescription drugs through health insurance coverage.

(2) However, it is difficult for many Americans, including senior citizens, to afford the prescription drugs that they need to stay healthy.

(3) Many senior citizens in the United States leave the country and go to Canada or Mexico to buy prescription drugs that are developed, manufactured, and approved in the United States in order to buy such drugs at lower prices than such drugs are sold for in the United States.

(4) According to the General Accounting Office, a consumer in the United States pays...
on average 1/3 more for a prescription drug than a consumer pays for the same drug in another country.

(5) The United States has made a strong commitment to supporting the research and development of new drugs through taxpayer-supported funding of the National Institutes of Health, through the research and development credit, and through other means.

(6) The development of new drugs is important because the use of such drugs enables people to live longer and lead healthier, more productive lives.

(7) Citizens of other countries should pay a portion of the research and development costs for new drugs, or their fair share of such costs, rather than just reap the benefits of such drugs.

(b) Sense of the Senate.—It is the sense of the Senate that the budgetary levels in this resolution assume that the cost disparity between identical prescription drugs sold in the United States, Canada, and Mexico should be reduced or eliminated.

Mr. GORTON. Mr. President, this amendment relates to the discrimination in the price for prescription drugs on the part of American companies between drugs sold in the U.S. and drugs sold for less overseas, and it expresses the concern of the Senate about that discrimination and the desire that it be reduced or eliminated.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask my friend from Washington, Senator Gorton, has this been approved by the majority and minority, signed off on; is that true?

Mr. GORTON. Yes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, the amendment is agreed to.

The amendment (No. 3011) was agreed to.

Mr. DOMENICI. Now, Mr. President, Senator ALLARD wishes to speak. Can he do what he wanted to do in 3 minutes?

Mr. ALLARD. I can.

Mr. DOMENICI. I yield 3 minutes on the amendment.

Mr. ALLARD. Thank you, Mr. President.

Mr. President, frankly, I had no intention to come to the floor today, as I received a generous amount of time yesterday to debate my amendment concerning the national debt. I appreciate the chairman of the Budget Committee giving me some time to speak momentarily.

After listening to the dialog today and reading the content of the sense-of-the-Senate amendment by the Senator from Rhode Island, I felt a sincere need to come and speak to you all this evening.

Since last April’s tragic events in my home State at Columbine High School, the town of Littleton, it seems as though the students and community of the Columbine High School have been mentioned almost on a daily basis in the floor of the Senate in Washington, DC. This tragic event has become a new flag to be waved by those in this body who seek to further politicize the issues of crime, law enforcement, and the second amendment. I ask you, Mr. President, why has this politicalicking done to help heal the wounds in my home State? I have staff from Littleton. I have staff in Littleton, and I have staff in my State offices who will go home this very night in Littleton, CO.

This tragic event shocked the people in that community, and to date I fail to see any benefit to those in Littleton from the current policy and polarization coming from this Chamber.

I have with me two articles published this week: Denver Rocky Mountain News editorial documenting the April visit of President Clinton to Littleton.

It would be utterly tasteless for any politician—from the President to local state representative—to attempt to make political hay over Columbine on the brink of its anniversary.

Washington Post Article “Columbine, Reflections of a Painful Past”:

Students, parents and school officials here are viewing this anniversary with trepidation. They are apprehensive about the emotions it may rekindle—and about the crush of journalists and curiosity seekers expected to arrive.

A Columbine Senior said, “It is not the kind of thing that really falls away very quickly. We’re healing. But it is always in people’s emotions. There is always a hint of it in the background.’’

I am ashamed that part of background noise that disturbs the healing of these tender wounds in a Colorado community is the increasing effort by some to make this event the driving force behind their own policy goals.

As the chairman of last year’s Juvenile Justice Task Force I worked closely with a number of members of this body to determine causes and solutions for America’s juvenile justice problems. The causes are intricate and many. We made our recommendations and we contributed to the juvenile justice bill currently in conference committee.

We are here today to work on a budget resolution for the coming fiscal year. We have had, and will have again, policy debates on the many issues this amendment addresses. We should have those debates in the realm of sensible, comprehensive debate. We should not do is continue painful rhetoric that inflames the wounds of the Littleton community.

I ask unanimous consent that the Denver Rocky Mountain News article mentioned in my statement be printed in the RECORD.

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

[From the Washington Post, Apr. 6, 2000]

At Columbine, Reflections on a Painful Past

(By Amy Goldstein)

LITTLETON, Colo., April 5—One of Matt Varney’s best friends is Pat Ireland, a Columbine High School student who, last April 20, was captured on television tumbling, shot and bleeding, out a school window. A year later, Varney said that his friend inspires and Sobers him still.

“Watching him heal—he’s everlasting pursuit to get better—he’s healed me,” said Varney, a sophomore.

I have the deep feeling they have trouble seeing him, knowing these two guys took away so much from him.”

Varney had left Columbine for lunch two minutes before a pair of fellow students rampaged through the building, murdering 13 people and wounding two dozen others before turning their guns on themselves. This one of two dozen Columbine students and staff members who volunteered to sit on a stage for a town meeting to describe how the national headlong rush has influenced their school and themselves.

For nearly two hours, they talked of friendships that have tightened. The solidarity of teachers willing to fill in for one another on a difficult day. The solace they draw from faith and family and writing poetry.

They talked too, of sadness that endures. “Sometimes, I just want to shout out at night, ‘I don’t know why it was us,’” said Gino Gonzales, a senior. “It isn’t the regular life of a teenager.”

The strains that linger, mental health and school officials say, are mounting in the days leading to the first anniversary of the massacre. The community is responding with a series of events intended to commemorate the occasion and, at the same time, minimize the disruption of a community still striving for equilibrium.

Tonight’s town meeting was the opening event and the first time that the Jefferson County school district’s students and staff to speak publicly about the shooting and its aftermath. “Columbine” suddenly became known worldwide as a synonym for school violence on an Easter Sunday morning when a pair of juniors, Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold, crossed a soccer field and entered the building with guns blazing, fatally shooting a dozen students and a science teacher before turning their guns on themselves in the high school library. They had also laced the building with bombs, most of which never went off.

Like other commemorative events that will take place this month, tonight’s 90-minute forum, “Conversations With Columbine,” was tightly controlled, with reporters allowed to request individual interviews with participants afterward only by handing their business cards to school system representatives. Reporters and television crews who want a glimpse inside the school may have one—but only in small, guided tours arranged later this month. Community leaders also have said that reports from the National Rifle Association may turn out in force to try to counteract welling support here for tighter gun control measures being debated in the Colorado legislature.

“We don’t want the masses, but we have to be prepared for the masses,” Rick Kaufman, a school system spokesman, said this week. Outwardly, Littleton has recovered a sense of normalcy. Adjacent to the Columbine campus, the grass has grown back in Clement Park, which last spring became a muddy encampment for dozens of television satellite trucks and a makeshift shrine for students bringing flowers and placards to memorialize the dead. The park was filled with young boys playing lacrosse after school in the spring sunshine.
The police tape was removed long ago from the school, a sprawling beige brick structure near the entrance to a quiet residential neighborhood. But there are reminders and frailties still propelling themselves down the school’s corridors in wheelchairs. ‘‘It is not the kind of thing that really falls away,’’ said senior Peter Forsberg, who hid last April 20 in the school’s Spanish office for hours. ‘‘We’re healing. But it is always in people’s emotions. There is always a hint of it in the background.’’

[From the Denver Rocky Mountain News]

The Timing of Clinton’s Visit

Would Bill Clinton politicize the anniversary of Columbine? Perish the thought! Why, didn’t the president wait three whole weeks after the Columbine shootings last year before he publicly linked them to a lack of gun control? And didn’t he cool his heels a full week before he introduced a package of gun measures that the White House described as ‘‘the most comprehensive gun legislation any administration has put forward in 30 years’’? There’s sensitivity for you.

Yes, this president has been the very model of self-control, avoiding the temptation to exploit the Columbine tragedy to advance a long-held political agenda. Most impressive of all, he waited a whole month after Columbine—think of the foregoing—before he called for a Federal Trade Commission probe into the marketing of violent video games and other products.

That is why we were so shocked that anyone would suggest that Clinton might actually try to politicize the anniversary of Columbine when he visits Colorado on April 12 to campaign for a state initiative that would mandate background checks at gun shows. What on Earth in the president’s record raises that unworthy suspicion?

It would be utterly tasteless for any politician—from the president to a local state representative—to attempt to make political hay out of Columbine in the heart of its anniversary. President Clinton, whose tastefulness in all matters is legendary, would be just about the last person we’d expect to pursue such a crude maneuver.

So by all means, let the public accept the assurances of SAFE Colorado, the gun-control group pushing the ballot initiative, that the timing of the president’s visit coincides with the Columbine anniversary of April 20 is a mere coincidence and meant to signify nothing. Of course that’s true. There are only 52 weeks in a year after all, and this patry number puts a terrific strain on the schedule of such a busy world leader. If you wonder why Clinton would come to Colorado barely a week before the anniversary of Columbine and attend a political rally on gun control, blame the burdens of the presidency if you must blame something, but please do not blame this man whose very career is dedicated to discretion and respect for private grief.

As impressed as we are with Clinton’s sensitivity to the horror of Columbine, we are pleased to see that his upcoming visit is evolving the usual carefully reasoned rhetoric from gun-rights advocates. ‘‘I just think (Clinton’s) just doing what he always does,’’ said the bill’s main sponsor, the victims to push his agenda,’’ said Bill Dietrich, legislative director of the Colorado State Shooting Association. Dietrich’s thought process is yet another enlight-ened contribution to the debate over guns, and it follows a series of equally diplomatic comments last month by the executive vice president of the National Rifle Association.

Among other things, the NRA’s Wayne LaPierre claimed that President Bill Clinton ‘‘needs to be cranking up in this country. He’s willing to accept a certain level of killing to further his political agen-da and his vice president’s.’’

It is heartening to see, as the Columbine anniversary approaches, so much evidence of maturity and mutual respect on both sides in the gun-control debate. Now can we see why we’re so confident that the exploitation of Columbine is the furthest thing from the minds of Clinton, those who arranged his visit and those who will protest it. After all, how could anyone possibly com-plain about their behavior up till now?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

MR. WARNER. Mr. President, I thank the distinguished manager, Senator DOMENICI.

Senator STEVENS and I have an amendment at the desk calling for a $4.1 billion increase in total defense spending.

We recognize that the House of Representatives is taking similar action. This would be parallel action.

At no time in contemporary history have there been more threats and more challenges affecting the security of this country. At the same time, at no time in my memory—I have been asso-ciated with the military as far back as World War II—has there been a really less incentive for the young men and women of the Nation to join and proudly wear the uniform and incentives for those in the middle grades of our mil-i-tary to stay in after enormous ex-pectations for the compensation they receive them. When they finish their obligated period and first-term enlistments—the first term for officers and oftentimes pilots is 6 to 8 years—they are highly sought after by the private sector in our mag-nificent economy.

We have this coincidence of pressures being put on the military today. I urge my colleagues to vote favor-ably on the current version of the Stevens amendment of $4 billion for extra defense spending to meet the threats worldwide and to provide the proper benefits and care for the men and women of the Armed Forces and their families; to provide for the in-crease in procurement for the mod-ernization they need with the addi-tional dollars for training.

This Nation has witnessed the de-ployment of the men and women of the Armed Forces overseas for the last 6 or 8 years, more times than any other President has sent them out into harm’s way. For too many years, the size of our defense budget has been based on constrained funding, not on the threats facing our country and the military strategy necessary to meet those threats. We began to make some progress last year when, for the first time in 14 years, we had a real increase in the authorized level of defense spending. We must continue the mo-men-tum we started last year when the Congress provided the personnel incentives nec-essary to reverse the negative trends in recruiting and retention. The Secre-tary of Defense, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, and the Service Chiefs have all said that fulfilling our com-mitment for healthcare to our military retirees will be among the highest pri-orities this year. I believe, there is overwhelming support in the Senate to con-tinue funding an effort to correct the most critical readi-ness, modernization, and recruiting and retention problems in our military.

Any analysis of our defense budget should begin with an analysis of the worldwide threat that our military faces—both now and in the future. The world remains complex and dangerous, and the United States is continually called upon to provide the requisite leadership in our nation’s con-flicts which continue to erupt in this rapidly changing world. The negative impact that the large number of con-tingency operations in which our mili-tary is engaged worldwide is having on the readiness of our military forces concerns me. We have had troops in the Persian Gulf—engaged in active mili-tary operations against Iraq—for over a decade, in Bosnia for over four years, and now in Kosovo—with no end in sight for any of these operations.

The Joint Chiefs of Staff have testi-fied that they still have a shortfall in funding of $9.0 billion for this fiscal year—fiscal year 2000; a requirement for an additional $15.5 billion above the budget request to meet shortfalls in fiscal year 2001; and a requirement for an additional $85.0 billion over the next five years. These were requirements identi-fied by the Service Chiefs as their un-funded, validated requirements—not a set of ‘‘wish lists.’’

As the elected representatives of the American people, we have no higher re-sponsibility than ensuring the safety and security of our people by maintaining a strong and capable military. As chairman of the Armed Services Com-mittee, I cannot sit idly by—knowing of the many shortfalls in defense fund-ing that currently exist—without at least trying to address the many ur-gent needs of our military.

The Administration’s budget request for fiscal year 2001 took some positive steps in the right direction. The Senate Armed Services Committee added an additional $500 million, but more needs to be done.

While the fiscal year 2001 defense budget request does reach the $60 billion modernization goal set in fiscal year 1995, this goal has not kept pace with requirements and has never been adjusted for inflation. Estimates from the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) have more accurately placed the fund-ing necessary to meet modernization requirements at $90.0 billion annually, with other organizations stating that even larger increases are necessary.

We must continue the momentum we started last year when the Congress provided the personnel incentives nec-essary to reverse the negative trends in recruiting and retention. The Secre-tary of Defense, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, and the Service Chiefs have all said that fulfilling our com-mitment for healthcare to our military retirees will be among the highest pri-orities this year. I believe, there is overwhelming support in the Senate to con-tinue funding an effort to correct the most critical readi-ness, modernization, and recruiting and retention problems in our military.
enact the important initiatives contained in the bipartisan healthcare legislation introduced by the Senate and the Armed Services Committee leadership. Adding the funds in this amendment makes it possible to fund this important initiative for military retiree health care.

The increase of $4.0 billion contained in our amendment will allow us to bring defense spending to a more appropriate level and address some of the urgent needs of the military—those who remain vigilant, forward thinking, and prepared to address these challenges.

Mr. Tenet, the Director of Central Intelligence, this afternoon, in his excellent opening statement at a very sobering hearing before the Armed Services Committee in January by saying:

The fact that we are arguably the world’s most powerful nation does not bestow invulnerability; in fact, it may make us a larger target for those who don’t share our interest, values, or beliefs.

We must ensure that our military forces remain ready to meet present and future challenges.

I want to express my appreciation again to the distinguished chairman of the Appropriations Committee and the chairman of the Budget Committee for assisting us on this amendment. I want to also thank the highly professional staff members of the Appropriations Committee and the Budget Committee for their assistance for working out this amendment.

I also want to thank Senator Domenici and his staff for assisting me last evening in working out a solution which will provide for the implementation of a Thrift Savings Plan for the active and reserve components of our military.

I urge adoption of this amendment. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

AMENDMENT NO. 281, AS MODIFIED

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, I send a modification to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The amendment is so modified.

The amendment (No. 281) as modified is as follows:

On page 27, line 7, decrease the amount by $4,000,000,000.
On page 27, line 8, decrease the amount by $2,000,000,000.
On page 41, line 5 and all that follows through page 45, line 22; and insert the following:

(c) EXCEPTION FOR DEFENSE SPENDING.—Subsection (b) shall not apply against an emergency designation for a provision making discretionary appropriations in the defense category.

SEC. 209. RESERVE FUND PENDING INCREASE OF FISCAL YEAR 2001 DISCRETIONARY SPENDING LIMITS.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Senate finds the following:

(1) The functional totals with respect to discretionary spending set forth in this concurrent resolution, if implemented, would result in legislation which exceeds the limit on discretionary spending for fiscal year 2001 set out in section 251(c) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985. Nonetheless, the allocation pursuant to section 302 of the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974 to the Committee on Appropriations is in compliance with current law spending limits.

(2) Consequently unless and until the discretionary spending limit for fiscal year 2001 is increased, an aggregate appropriation which exceed the current law limits would still be out of order in the Senate and subject to a supermajority vote.

(3) The functional totals contained in this concurrent resolution envision a level of discretionary spending for fiscal year 2001 as follows:

(A) For the discretionary category: $600,579,000,000 in new budget authority and $922,326,000,000 in outlays.

(B) For the highway category: $26,920,000,000 in outlays.

(C) For the mass transit category: $4,639,000,000 in outlays.

(4) To facilitate the Senate completing its legislative responsibilities for the 106th Congress in a timely fashion, it is imperative that the Senate consider legislation which increases the discretionary spending limit for fiscal year 2001 as soon as possible.

(b) ADJUSTMENT TO ALLOCATIONS.—Whenever a bill or joint resolution becomes law that increases discretionary spending limit for fiscal year 2001 set out in section 251(c) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985, the appropriate chairman of the Committee on Appropriations shall increase the allocation called for in section 302(a) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 to the appropriate Committee on Appropriations.

(c) LIMITATION ON ADJUSTMENT.—An adjustment made pursuant to subsection (b) shall not result in an allocation under section 302(a) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 that exceeds the total budget authority and outlays set forth in subsection (a)(3).

SEC. 210. CONGRESSIONAL FIREWALL FOR DEFENSE AND NON-DEFENSE SPENDING.

(a) DEFINITION.—In this section, for fiscal year 2001 the term ‘‘discretionary spending limit’’ means—

(1) for the defense category, $310,819,000,000 in new budget authority and $297,050,000,000 in outlays; and

(2) for the nondefense category, $289,760,000,000 in new budget authority and $237,583,000,000 in outlays.

(b) POINT OF ORDER IN THE SENATE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—After the adjustment to the section 302(a) allocation to the Appropriations Committees is made pursuant to section 302(a), as provided in paragraph (2), it shall not be in order in the Senate to consider any bill, joint resolution, amendment, motion, or conference report that exceeds any discretionary spending limit set forth in this section.

(2) EXCEPTION.—This subsection shall not apply if a declaration of war by Congress is in effect.

(c) WAIVER AND APPEAL.—This section may be waived or suspended in the Senate only by a affirmative vote of the Members, duly chosen and sworn. An affirmative vote of three-fifths of the Members of the Senate, duly chosen and sworn, shall be required in the Senate to sustain an appeal of the ruling of the Chair on a point of order raised under this section.

SEC. 211. MECHANISMS FOR STRENGTHENING BUDGETARY INTEGRITY.

(a) DEFINITION.—For purposes of this section, the term ‘‘budget year’’ means with respect to a session of Congress, the fiscal year of the Government that starts on October 1 of the calendar year in which that session begins.

(b) POINT OF ORDER WITH RESPECT TO ADVANCED APPROPRIATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—It shall not be in order in the Senate to consider any bill, resolution, amendment, motion or conference report that—

(A) provides an appropriation of new budget authority for any fiscal year after the budget year that in excess of the amounts provided in paragraph (2); or

(B) provides an appropriation of new budget authority for any fiscal year subsequent to the year after the budget year.

(2) LIMITATION ON AMOUNTS.—The total amount, provided in appropriations legislation for the budget year, of appropriations for the fiscal year subsequent shall not exceed $23,686,000,000.

(c) POINT OF ORDER WITH RESPECT TO DELAYED OBLIGATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), it shall not be in order in the Senate to consider any bill, resolution, amendment, motion, or conference report that contains an appropriation of new budget authority for any fiscal year which does not become available upon enactment of such legislation or on the first day of that fiscal year (whichever is later).

(2) EXCEPTION.—Paragraph (1) shall not apply with respect to appropriations in the defense category; nor shall it apply to appropriations reenacting or continuing or for the fiscal year that is in excess of the amounts provided in paragraph (2) which appropriation is not delayed beyond the specified date and does not exceed the specified amount.

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

Mr. STEVENS. Yes.

Mr. DOMENICI. Let me suggest that this modification is supported by Senator Stevens, Senator Domenici, Senator Gramm, and Senator Warner, and I understand on the other side Senator Inouye has told Senator Stevens he supports it.

We are obviously trying tonight to complete our work and get a budget resolution that we can take to conference with the House of which we are proud.

Frankly, we came out of committee with $595.6 billion available in program authority for defense and domestic accounts.

In addition, we said in that budget resolution that we were reiating what we had used for 3 years: The first 3 years of the balanced budget agreement between the President and the
Congress—to wit, a firewall—so the defense money couldn’t be used for domestic spending or vice versa.

In this amendment, we retain that, but we have added $4 billion in program authority to defense.

There will be no mingling of that money with domestic and no mingling of domestic money with defense.

That firewall stays in this modification offered by Senator Stevens on behalf of himself and other cosponsors.

In addition, the budget resolution had a 60-vote point of order for emergencies.

With this amendment, we have returned to the law as it was before this budget resolution; that is, last year we had in the budget resolution that 60-vote point of order which would apply to domestic spending. That is retained, not modified, and it is not expanded to include defense.

In addition, the House of Representatives adopted in the budget resolution a limitation on advanced appropriations, a technicality often used but not always used by Presidents and Congress as they complete their appropriations work. It is a legitimate tool of appropriating. The House, in their resolution, appropriated. The House has accepted it also as some-what to their compromise, and he was one of a nondefense delayed obligations, which is what the appropriators are looking for. But it is not too high because the House has accepted it also as something they can live with based on this year’s levels and the levels of last year. It is a pretty good one that will allow flexibility of management, which is what the appropriators are looking for. But it is not too high because the House has accepted it also as something they can live with based on this year’s levels and the levels of last year. It is a pretty good one that will allow the House to stay with that number through the fiscal year.

I remind those who are thinking about domestic spending that we have increased the advanced appropriations amounts from $13 billion to $23 billion. That is a pretty good one that will allow the House to stay with that number through the fiscal year.

There is a point of order, if you do more. We are agreeing here to do what the House did.

Senator Stevens has negotiated with us, and we are going to the House level on that number. That means for those who are concerned, we are keeping some very rigid discipline, but we are going to the House number, and the number that was very much discussed in the Budget Committee, we are back to that number.

Senator Gramm of Texas has agreed with their compromise, and he was one who wanted to lower the number.

We are beginning to develop a package that looks to have consensus on our side. I wasn’t sure any Democrats were going to vote for our budget resolution. I hope they do with these modifications. We have Senator Inouye agreeing with these modifications. It doesn’t mean he is committed to the budget resolution.

There are no nondefense delayed obligations except for those listed in the budget and those that are ordinary and appropriations except for those listed in the budget resolution.

That firewall stays in this modification offered by Senator Stevens on behalf of himself and other cosponsors.

In addition, the budget resolution had a 60-vote point of order for emergencies.

With this amendment, we have returned to the law as it was before this budget resolution; that is, last year we had in the budget resolution that 60-vote point of order which would apply to domestic spending. That is retained, not modified, and it is not expanded to include defense.

In addition, the House of Representatives adopted in the budget resolution a limitation on advanced appropriations, a technicality often used but not always used by Presidents and Congress as they complete their appropriations work. It is a legitimate tool of appropriating. The House, in their resolution, appropriated. The House has accepted it also as some-what to their compromise, and he was one of the Republican Party that had diverse views on this budget resolution ought to be in concurrence on this. I believe it does precisely what most of us would like.

I remind those who are thinking about domestic spending that we have increased the advanced appropriations amounts from $13 billion to $23 billion. That is a pretty good one that will allow flexibility of management, which is what the appropriators are looking for. But it is not too high because the House has accepted it also as something they can live with based on this year’s levels and the levels of last year. It is a pretty good one that will allow the House to stay with that number through the fiscal year.

We still have some additional time. The distinguished Senator from Texas, who is a valued Member of the Senate and of the Budget Committee, with whom I worked very hard to carve the budget resolution, is here. I yield 7 minutes to the distinguished Senator from Texas.

Mr. GRAMM. Mr. President, I would hate to have to make a living negotiating with Senator Stevens. In the dull moments when we sit here and listen to some droning speech and look at the names written in our desk drawers—many of which we do not even recognize and never heard of—my guess is that someday people will see Senator STEVENS’ name in one of these drawers and they will know who he was.

I believe it is worthy of support. I believe we have a fighting chance to hold it through the appropriations process. If we do, the Nation will be the big beneficiary.

I reserve the remainder of my time.

Mr. THURMOND. Mr. President, as the Senate debates the Fiscal Year 2001 Budget Resolution, I want to again bring to the attention of my colleagues the testimony by General Shelton, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, before the Senate Armed Services Committee on September 29, 1998.

“IT IS the quality of the men and women who serve that sets the U.S. military apart from all potential adversaries. These talented people are the ones who won the Cold War and ensured our victory in Operation Desert Storm. These dedicated professionals make it possible for the United States to accomplish the many missions we are called on to perform around the world every single day.”

It has been glaringly evident to me, and I suspect to some of my colleagues, that there has been little or no mention of national security issues during this debate on the budget resolution. Maybe it is because defense does not rank very high in the polls which reflect the concerns of the American people.

Or maybe it is because everyone assumes that the defense budget is adequate at this point and we should not have to debate it. I am here today, along with the Chairman of the Armed Services Committee, Senator Warner, and members...
of the Armed Services Committee, to
tell you that the level of defense spend-
ing proposed by the President and this
budget resolution is inadequate.
To highlight the problem let me point out that despite the two percent increase in the President’s budget for
fiscal year 2001 and another $500 million
increase in the budget resolution,
the Joint Chiefs of Staff have identi-
cied a requirement for an additional $15 billion to meet shortfalls in readiness and
modernization for fiscal year 2001.
Mr. President, we have the best sol-
diers, sailors, airmen and Marines,
however, all their professionalism is
for naught if they do not have the equi-
ment and supplies to carry out their mission. Since the end of Operation Desert Storm, which re-
lected both the professionalism and
material quality of our Armed Forces,
the defense budget has declined by $50 billion. Yet the pace of the military op-
erations has not declined, in fact the
pace of operations exceeds that of the Cold War era. Not only are the men and
women of our military stretched to the
limits, but also their equipment. The $4 billion increase in the Defense Budget proposed by Mr. Domenici, Chairman of the
Committee on Appropriations, will not resolve the short-
fall identified by the Nation’s most
senior military commanders, it will
however provide the necessary funding to
improve recruiting, retention, health care, and most important readi-
ness.
Mr. President, I urge the adoption of
Senator Warner’s amendment to en-
sure we meet the Nation’s security needs. We must not leave the false im-
pression that the increase in the Presi-
dent’s budget and the additional fund-
ing proposed in the budget resolution
will result in increased security for our Nation.
Mr. Domenici. How much time re-
 mains on the amendment as modified?
Mr. Domenici. Yes, this program costs $315 million
over the next 5 years. However, since the House in-
cluded funding for Medicare in its
budget 2 weeks ago, and the House
leadership has committed to a vote on
this bill by Mother’s Day, May 14. This is
not a permanent entitlement.
Mr. Domenici. Senator Chafee has
been asking for time. I yield 2 minutes to Senator Chafee.
Mr. L. Chafee. Mr. President, I am
sending amendment No. 2944 to the
desk for immediate consideration.
The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk
will report.
Mr. L. Chafee. I ask unanimous
consent reading of the amendment be
dispensed with.
Mr. Reid. Mr. President, it is my un-
derstanding this is not the time to
offer amendments.
The PRESIDING OFFICER. It would
require unanimous consent to offer the amendment.
Mr. Reid. Objection.
The PRESIDING OFFICER. The ob-
jection is heard.
Mr. Domenici. The Senator from
Rhode Island understands the amend-
ment is not agreed upon on the other side, but I yield time for him to speak.
The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Sen-
ator from Rhode Island.
Mr. L. Chafee. Mr. President, I am
pleased to be joined by a bipartisan
group of cosponsors, including Sena-
tors Mikulski, Snowe, and Grassley,
in offering this amendment.
In 1990, Congress passed legislation to
authorize the Centers for Disease Con-
trol to pay for screening tests to detect
breast and cervical cancer on low-in-
come and uninsured women. Regret-
tably, this legislation did not authorize the treatment for those screening tests
tragically indicating cancer. I cannot
believe any legislator would not want to
correct this omission.
Diagnosis without treatment is leav-
ing women with the life-threatening
disease nowhere to turn. Screening
must be coupled with treatment to re-
duce mortality. Specifically, the sense
of the legislation introduced by Senator John Chafee which would
give States the option to provide treatment through the Medicaid pro-
gram for women diagnosed with breast or
cervical cancer under the CDC screening program. I truly believe this is
a corrective measure.
Yes, this program costs $315 million
over 5 years. However, the House in-
cluded funding for Medicare in its
budget 2 weeks ago, and the House
leadership has committed to a vote on
this bill by Mother’s Day, May 14. This is
not a permanent entitlement.
Women would only be eligible for Med-
icaid during the duration of treatment.
The coverage would continue only until the treatment and followup visits
are completed. Without Medicaid cov-
erage, we are leaving these women to
an unreliable, fragile, and deterior-
ing system of charity care where they
are often unable to get the treat-
ment they need. Only about 6,200
women nationwide would be eligible for
Medicaid under this legislation. This
small investment stands to save lives
for low-income and uninsured women
with breast and cervical cancer all over
America. Since we have already made
the commitment in Congress to diag-
ose these women, we owe it to them
to provide followup treatment.
I urge my colleagues to join me in
supporting this amendment. We must
finish the job we started in 1990 by fill-
ing this gap in a vital Federal program.
The PRESIDING OFFICER. The time
of the Senator has expired.
Mr. Grassley. Mr. President, I am
happy to join Senator Chafee in intro-
ducing the sense-of-the-Senate amend-
ment to urge the Senate to pass S. 662,
the Breast and Cervical Cancer Treat-
ment Act.
This bill was originally introduced by
the late Senator John Chafee, who
dedicated much time and energy to
this important legislation. It is with
great honor that we carry with his ef-
forts for passage of this critical legisla-
tion. I would like to submit for the
RECORD a letter I received from an
Iowan. Her story illustrates the urgent need for passage of this bill.
Barbara Morrow of Evansdale, Iowa,
was diagnosed in January 1995 with
breast cancer after being screened by
the CDC Early Detection Program. Be-
cause she had no insurance and no
money, she had little hope of finding
medical care to treat her disease.
After exhaustive efforts, she was able
to secure medical treatment from doc-
tors willing to perform charity care.
Unfortunately, in January 1999, she
learned that her breast cancer had
spread to her lungs. She returned to
the same doctor who treated her ear-
lier. For 14 months, she has been re-
ceiving chemotherapy and is alive
today.
Ms. Morrow owes more than $70,000
for treatment she has received. She
pays what she can each month to the
hospital where she receives her care.
The bills cause great worry and she
has had little hope of finding medical
care to treat her disease.
It is urgent that Congress pass S. 662 to allow women to receive the treatment they need to beat this disease. We have an opportunity to make a real difference in the lives of thousands of women and mothers across the Nation. I urge your support for this amendment.

I ask unanimous consent that the letter sent to me by Barbara Morrow be printed in the RECORD.

The Senator from New Mexico.

Mr. DOMENICI. I reserve 2 minutes of our time. How much time do we have left?

Mr. DOMENICI. I yield myself 4 minutes.

Mr. President, I say to the Senate, I am not sure I will have a chance later tonight to summarize this budget resolution that I hope sometime tomorrow we are going to adopt, with an amendment that the distinguished Senator from New Mexico and others put together, that we have been discussing and of which I was a part.

Let me first say this budget resolution has the right priorities. It increases defense at the same time it increases spending for such things as education—at least the equivalent amount of increase the President has. We leave how the education program is to be structured up to the appropriate committees and the appropriators, but we give them plenty of resources to have an increase. With some reform, we may be able to do better at education than we have done in the past.

In addition, we have extra funding for the National Institutes of Health—not as much as some people would want but a very substantial increase—$1.1 billion. I know some would like more than that, but I remind everyone, for the last 5 years the National Institutes of Health have been increased in their entire history, year over year. That is why they are doing such remarkable things and that is why in a few more years of increases we may find breakthroughs in cancer and many other diseases that beset mankind.

In addition, we have reduced the debt of the United States in this budget resolution by $177 billion. It was not too many years ago, perhaps Lyndon Johnson’s budget for a budget of $1.1 trillion was $177 billion. This year we are reducing the deficit—the debt owed to the public—by $177 billion.

For those who think our tax relief in this budget is too much, let me remind you: In the first year, if we accomplish them, they are $13 billion. That is $13 billion compared to $177 billion in debt reduction. It is pretty good, Ameri can. As a matter of fact, I am not sure I will have a chance later tonight to summarize this budget resolution that I hope sometime tomorrow we are going to adopt, with an amendment that the distinguished Senator from New Mexico and others put together, that we have been discussing and of which I was a part.

Although my initial treatment for breast cancer was complete without a lot of bills, the expenses began to mount from then on. I needed a cath-a-port flush every 6 weeks, check ups every six months, and a bone scan every time I had an ache. In January 1999, Dr. Gerretts sent me for an x-ray of my lungs. It was bad news. The breast cancer had spread to my lungs.

Dr. Gerretts once again sent me to Dr. Nadipuram. Dr. Nadipuram sent me to the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics and the University of Iowa City for treatment. At the University of Iowa I had many biopsies, scans, and tests. Recurrence was a possibility in my brain also. University of Iowa told me I did not fit the criteria for their stem cell transplant program and all they could offer me is chemotherapy that would keep me alive for six months.

I returned to my home in the Waterloo area devastated, with no money, no insurance, and no hope. I once again asked Dr. Nadipuram to treat my recurring breast cancer. He has been treating me with chemotherapy ever since and I am still alive 14 months later.

I applied for Social Security disability benefits after my diagnosis for recurring breast cancer. Over a year later, I will finally begin to receive benefits April 19, 2000. However, my medical bills have accumulated and these bills must still be paid by me. I owe over $60,000. I have accumulated from the Allen Hospital, Covenant Hospital, Covenant Clinic, a radiologist, and Dr. Nadipuram all of Waterloo. I also send money to the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics and the doctors at the University of Iowa. In spite of this I continue to be hounded by all of these institutions and doctors asking me to pay more. I am afraid I often cannot do so if I should quit treatment so I will not saddle myself and my family with so much debt.

But, my grandson was diagnosed with cancer at age 9. He is now 16 and my daughter and I continue to care for him. I must stay alive to help my daughter and grandson.

Breast cancer treatment is overwhelming. Being unable to pay for treatment is devastating. Please pass S. 662 so that women who are diagnosed with breast cancer through the CDCBCCEDP can receive treatment.

Sincerely,

BARBARA MORROW.

Mr. STEVENS, Mr. President, using my time, I would be honored if the Senator would let me be a cosponsor of the amendment.

Mr. WARNER. Likewise, I ask the Senator if I might be a cosponsor. My father was a medical doctor anddevoted much of his career to the very subject the Senator addressed in his amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection the letter is received. The Senator from New Mexico.

Mr. DOMENICI. I reserve 2 minutes of our time. How much time do we have left?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Mexico has 18 minutes. The Senator from Alaska has 3 minutes.

Mr. DOMENICI. I yield myself 4 minutes.

Mr. President, I say to the Senate, I am not sure I will have a chance later tonight to summarize this budget resolution that I hope sometime tomorrow we are going to adopt, with an amendment that the distinguished Senator from New Mexico and others put together, that we have been discussing and of which I was a part.

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So we will be busy doing that. It will be tough. But if we can get out of here tomorrow, leave the Senate and say we did some good work, we have a budget resolution, let’s go to conference—we are pretty close with the House—then the appropriators can start the work.

My colleagues go to Senator Stevens, Senator Stevens and I have become friends. I have been here a long time. He has been here longer. I am chairman of the Budget Committee; he is chairman of Appropriations. I think neither of us, at least we work a long time for his chairmanship. Might I say, I believe when we are finished today everybody will be thankful he was willing to sit down with us and work this out.

I thank the distinguished majority leader for his help, Senator Lott, and I thank the Senator from Texas, Mr. Gramm, and all Members who have participated in getting us this far.

There are many more amendments, there are about that, in the vote-arama and otherwise, but I think we will come out with a budget resolution we can confer upon that will be very close.

I reserve the remainder of my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. L. CHAFEE). The assistant minority leader.

Mr. REID. I yield to the distinguished Senator from West Virginia, Mr. Byrd, 25 minutes.

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

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, let me preface my remarks by saying I had joined with Senator Stevens in two amendments that were at the desk earlier, one dealing with section 208, and one dealing with section 210.

I understand both of those have been modified. I still want to speak, however, to the subject matter here. In doing so, may I say I have no closer friend than Senator Stevens. It has been that way, and it is going to continue to be that way. He is chairman of the Appropriations Committee, and I think I have supported him throughout all the time he has been chairman, and he has certainly been a great supporter of mine. He is the chairman; I am not. He carries some responsibilities that I do not carry at this moment. So what I have to say is not to be perceived as criticism of anyone. I have supported him, and I hope one will perceive it as that, and I hope he will not. I merely want to speak to the subject matter of the two sections we are about to strike and to say why I am opposed to those two sections. I want to make that clear for at least my side of the aisle, and I want to make it for the people out there who are watching. I do not bear any rancor toward anyone on the other side of the aisle, but I think these things ought to be said.

I rise, Mr. President, to speak about the two amendments we would have offered. The first of our amendments would have stricken section 208 of the budget resolution. That section would establish a 60-vote point of order in the Senate against the use of an emergency designation in any spending or revenue legislation.

Senators will recall that last year’s Senate budget resolution contained a simple majority point of order against any emergency designations on all discretionary spending—both defense and nondefense. But, when the budget resolution came out of the conference with the House, the Senate provision had been changed. The conference agreement on last year’s budget resolution did away with the simple majority point of order and replaced it with a 60-vote point of order on defense discretionary spending only! The conference chose to eliminate the point of order for defense emergency spending altogether. When the conference agreement on last year’s budget resolution came back to the Senate, there was no way to attack that particular provision. Budget resolution conference reports are limited as to time and, therefore, filibuster proof. The Budget Act sets a time limit on their consideration, which a final vote will occur. The majority had the votes to adopt that conference agreement, and did so. That is why, for fiscal year 2000, we have the ridiculous and totally unjustifiable requirements on emergency spending.

Let me say that again, Mr. President. When the budget resolution last year was acted upon by the Senate, it had a simple majority vote point of order, but when it went to conference with the Members of the other body, it came back to us with a 60-vote point of order. The House conference had a voice in changing that point of order by which the Senate has had to live in the intervening time.

I think our Members ought to be fully aware of that. It did not leave the Senate floor last year with a 60-vote point of order. It went to the conference with the other body, and they helped to change it. If I may use that term, by which we have to live. They are not bound by the 60-vote point of order, but we are. It came back to us in the conference report which we could not change.

We ought to be aware of those things when we send these resolutions to the other body. I do not blame the other body. I am not criticizing them. They may actually have had nothing to do with it, but it was changed in conference.

Here is the perfectly ridiculous aspect of this 60-vote point of order requirement under which we have to live here. If your constituents suffer from any disasters that can occur at any time, such as droughts, floods, hurricanes, tornadoes, earthquakes, or any other catastrophe—maybe an act of God—emergency spending for the relief of those constituents is subject to a 60-vote point of order in the Senate. The House has no such supermajority point of order.

In the Senate for fiscal year 2000, if any Senator wishes to raise a point of order against emergency spending in the nondefense area, it will take 60 votes, or that emergency spending will be deleted from any appropriations bill or conference report thereon.

My example, it is for Hawaii, Mr. Inouye, has a catastrophe. If there is an act of God that is visited upon his State, he may be perfectly justified in asking for an emergency designation to deal with it. But in the Senate, a 60-vote point of order will lie against that funding for the relief of his State, and 41 Members of the Senate can deny him and deny his people relief. God forbid that any catastrophe should hit his State, or the State of the Senator from Nevada who is sitting before me. If his State is suddenly hit by a catastrophe and they need disaster relief, 41 Members, a minority in the Senate, can say no, and the people of Nevada would be denied that relief.

In other words, we can send our brave men and women in uniform around the world, whether it be to Bosnia or to Kosovo or to Iraq or anywhere else, and provide emergency funding to pay for those operations, and still hold the costs, without facing a point of order against such spending. But when it comes to helping the people at home, the constituents who send us here, those who pay the taxes, those who have been brought on by an act of God, no, a point of order can be made against that funding, and it would take 60 votes for those people in that disaster-stricken State to get relief.

That is preeminently unfair. One can say what one wants, but that is unfair. I cannot understand why anyone would want to insist on a point of order that would require 60 votes when it comes to helping the people who send us here, the people who pay the taxes.

We should not unduly hamstring spending intended to cover either defense or nondefense emergencies. While we have discretionary spending caps in the law, provisions must be made to deal with the unexpected. And we should not encumber the flexibility to answer those emergency needs with parliamentary devices which make responding to them difficult.

I should point out, Mr. President, that as chairman of the Appropriations Committee during the time of the 1990 budget summit and as a participant in that summit, I worked very hard to include the exemption for emergency spending that is now contained in section 253(b)(A) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act. That 1990 budget summit between the Bush administration and Congress was necessary in order to avoid huge across-the-board sequesters of Federal spending that would have occurred under Gramm-Rudman. Those sequesters, or automatic across-the-board cuts, were in the magnitude of 40 percent, and could have
devastated the Nation. And so, we had no choice but to reach an agreement. In the end, after months of negotiations both here in Congress and at Andrews Air Force Base, an agreement was finally reached and subsequently enacted by Congress and signed by President Bush.

An important feature of the 1990 budget agreement was that, for the first time, statutory caps were placed on discretionary spending. As a participant in those negotiations, I was intimately involved in the setting of those discretionary spending caps and the other budgetary enforcement provisions contained in the 1990 budget summit agreement. In order to agree to those caps, I felt that it was critical that the Appropriations Committees be held “harmless” for economic and technical miscalculations that occur in each year’s budget projections. In other words, if discretionary appropriations are held to a specific spending cap each year, that discretionary spending should not be automatically cut because of technical or economic miscalculations by either the Office of Management and Budget or the Congressional Budget Office.

Another critical exception was the allowance of emergency spending to be included in annual appropriations acts, without having the cost of those emergency charges against the discretionary spending caps. No human being can determine what nature has in store for the Nation in terms of natural disasters, such as, hurricanes, tornadoes, drought, floods, fire, or military emergencies around the world. So, we had to have some way to address those needs outside of the very stringent budgetary caps that were being placed on discretionary spending. The result was the enactment of section 251(b)(2)(A) of the Balanced Budget Act of 1990, the Budget Control Act. That Section of the Budget Act has by and large worked well since its enactment in 1990. However, in recent years, without going into detail, there have been a number of instances where such emergency designation has not been fully justified. Therefore, I support the inclusion in the budget resolution, criteria such as those set forth in section 208(a)(2). Those criteria read as follows:

(A) In general, the criteria to be considered in determining whether a proposed expenditure or tax change is an emergency requirement are:

(i) necessary, essential, or vital (not merely useful or beneficial);

(ii) sudden, quickly coming into being, and not having been anticipated;

(iii) an urgent, pressing, and compelling need requiring immediate action;

These are real emergencies.

(iv) subject to subparagraph (B), unforeseen, unpredictable, and unanticipated;

(v) not permanent, temporary in nature.

(B) UNFORESEEN—An emergency that is part of an aggregate level of anticipated emergencies, particularly when normally estimated in advance, is not unforeseen.

So, Mr. President, what I object to is not that any emergency requirement should have to meet those criteria. What I object to is the creation of a 60-vote point of order against all—against all—emergency designations in any appropriations bill, whether they meet the criteria or not. In other words, Section 208 of the budget resolution would allow any Senator to file a point of order against any emergency designation, even if it met the criteria set forth in section 208. That point of order could then be waived or suspended in the Senate only by an affirmative vote of three-fifths of the Members duly chosen and sworn.

In other words, a minority of 41 could thwart the efforts of Senators or a Senator to deal with a catastrophe that had stricken his State. A minority, a minority of 41, could thwart the effort. It takes 60 votes, a supermajority.

Mr. President, this onerous section should be stricken from the budget resolution.

Mr. President, Alexander Hamilton had something to say about supermajorities. Let’s see what he had to say about supermajorities.

In the Federalist No. 75, here is what Hamilton said:

...all provisions which require more than the majority of the body to its resolutions; have a direct tendency to embarrass the operations of the government and an indirect one to subject the sense of the majority to that of the minority.

That is Alexander Hamilton speaking.

What did Madison have to say about supermajorities? In the Federalist No. 58, here is what James Madison said about supermajorities:

It has been said that more than a majority ought to have been required for a quorum; and in particular cases, if not in all, more than a majority of a quorum for a decision.

That is what we are talking about here. We are talking about the need for more than a majority—60 votes for a decision.

That some advantages might have resulted from such a precaution cannot be denied. It might have been an additional shield to some other article. But another obstacle generally to hasty and partial measures. But these considerations are outweighed by the inconveniences in the opposite scale. In all cases where justice or the general good might require new laws to be passed, or active measures to be pursued, the fundamental principle of free government would be reversed.

That is what we are talking about here. Let’s read that again. Madison said:

In all cases where justice—

Any Senator whose State has been hit by a catastrophe would feel it is only justice—only justice—that his State receive some disaster relief.

Madison said:

In all cases where justice or the general good might require new laws to be passed, or active measures to be pursued—

We are talking about an active measure here. That is what Madison had in mind.

In all cases where justice or the general good might require new laws to be passed, or active measures to be pursued, the fundamental principle of free government would be reversed.

He is talking about the requirement of supermajorities now. He is saying that the fundamental principle of free government would be reversed. It would be no longer the majority that would rule. The power would be transferred to the minority. In this instance, in this legislation, the power to rule is going to be transferred to a minority.

This is a democratic republic. A lot of people say it is a democracy. It is not a democracy. It is a republic. All legislative bodies that abide by democratic principles, all republics that abide by democratic principles, have as the basis of those principles the principle that the majority rules. That is not the case here. If Senator Inouye’s State needs help because of a typhoon, the minority won’t necessarily rule. It won’t in the State of New Mexico. It won’t in the State of Senator Reid. It won’t in my State. A minority can rule. Forty-one votes can come between justice and the people of our States.

I am against the 60-vote point of order when it comes to nondefense or defense spending. That is what we were trying to do in the amendments that were originally sent to the desk.

Madison again is speaking:

It would be no longer the majority that would rule: the power would be transferred to the minority. Were the defensive privilege limited to particular cases, an interested minority might take advantage of it to screen themselves from equitable sacrifices to the general weal, or, in particular emergencies, to extort unreasonable indulgences.

Madison foresaw that in situations where supermajorities were required, there could be situations in which the minority would extort unreasonable indulgences in return for their support.

So much for Hamilton and Madison for today. They are certainly not going to be listened to, I would anticipate. An adoption would severely curtail the ability of Congress to respond to unforeseen urgent needs of the people of this country who have suffered devastation caused by floods, severe droughts, tornadoes, hurricanes, and earthquakes.

Under section 208, a minority of just 41 Senators could prevent the enactment of the spending to address all of these needs. What would happen under this provision in the case of regional emergencies which may only affect one State, such as an earthquake in California or a hurricane in North Carolina or floods in North Dakota, or drought conditions in Texas? Funding for disasters such as these, which affect only one area of the country, could be in danger. If a point of order is made by any Senator who may have his nose out of joint for some reason—he may just not want to help another Senator to help his people—those emergency funding provisions for that State or region would need 60 votes or funding for disaster assistance would not be forthcoming.
The PRESIDING OFFICER. The time that has been yielded to the Senator from West Virginia has expired.

Mr. REID. How much time does the minority have on this, Mr. President?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Twenty-nine minutes.

Mr. REID. I yield the Senator 9 minutes.

Mr. BYRD. I thank the distinguished minority whip.

This point of order is an unwise and cumbersome device that could prevent the committee from responding to the urgent needs of our Nation. Now, why do we want to do that?

The second amendment, which I joined in offering, would have stricken section 210 from the budget resolution. That section would reinstate a congressional firewall on defense and non-defense discretionary spending for fiscal year 2001. This section of the budget resolution would set defense spending for fiscal year 2001 at $306,919,000,000 in new budget authority and $305,050,000,000 in outlays. For the non-defense category, the cap would be set at $289.7 billion in new budget authority and $327.5 billion in outlays.

In other words, this budget resolution would cap defense spending at a level that is $9 billion above what it would take to maintain this year’s level of spending adjusted for inflation. But the cap for nondefense spending would be set at a level requiring a cut of $19 billion in budget authority below this year’s spending level. In other words, section 210 of the budget resolution now before the Senate would take away from the Appropriations Committee the ability to determine, through their committee markups, what the appropriate levels of defense spending or domestic spending should be.

Imagine that. How silly can we get? The Appropriations Committee is being prevented from using the judgment of its members, their expertise, to decide even the most basic levels of defense and domestic spending for this Nation. Instead, this budget resolution sets that figure. I have been on the Appropriations Committee now going on 42 years. That is longer than anybody has ever served. The budget resolution sets that figure. I have been on the Appropriations Committee prior to their even having finished their hearings. The Budget Committee will have usurped all of those decisions with the construction of these firewalls.

I believe this is an unwarranted and unacceptable micromanagement on the part of some Members. I don’t blame all of the members of the Budget Committee. I know they have their problems. I have great respect for the chairman of the Budget Committee. He has always been very fair to me. He sits on the Appropriations Committee likewise. He knows what this does to the Appropriations Committee. He is trying to do a good job and he does a splendid job. But a lot of these things, those who are in the driver’s seat at a particular given moment have the votes, and those who would do otherwise, such as Senator STEVENS, in other cases, or Senator DOMENICI, they have to look elsewhere.

I thought we had all learned our lesson about substituting structural devices for human judgment with the Gramm-Rudman experience. Setting up procedural barricades often creates more problems than it solves when it comes to funding real priorities for a vast and complex nation. Autopilot politics amounts to an abdication of our responsibility to debate and weigh reasonable alternatives, as we are expected to do and as we are elected to do by the people.

The distinguished chairman of the Appropriations Committee, my good friend, Senator STEVENS, is one of the most knowledgeable experts in the history of the Senate. When it comes to the funding needs of the Department of Defense. Do we have to squander his experience and the accumulated expertise of the members of the Appropriations Committee? Here sits one on my left, Senator STEVENS. He is on the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee of the Senate.

Do we have to squander their experience, their accumulated expertise, by constraining these mindless, artificial firewalls that attempt to constrain the funding process before it is even begun? Well, these sections, I assure you, my fellow Senators, will greatly increase the difficulty faced by the Appropriations chairman in marking up and presenting to the Senate the 13 fiscal year 2001 appropriations bills. The speed and efficiency sought by all of us to get this essential work done will not be aided by these unwise and irresponsible budget barnacles. Let us scrap them off before they do their damage.

Mr. President, how much time do I have left of my 9 minutes?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. One minute.

Mr. BYRD. I thank the Chair. I know that my remarks tonight will result in no favorable action that will override the die that has already been cast. I am confident of that. And to that extent, they were remarks made in futility. But for the record they were not futile. Appropriations Committee prior to their even having finished their hearings. The Budget Committee will have usurped all of those decisions with the construction of these firewalls. I believe this is an unwarranted and unacceptable micromanagement on the part of some Members. I don’t blame all of the members of the Budget Committee. I know they have their problems. I have great respect for the chairman of the Budget Committee. He has always been very fair to me. He sits on the Appropriations Committee likewise. He knows what this does to the Appropriations Committee. He is trying to do a good job and he does a splendid job. But a lot of these things, those who are in the driver’s seat at a particular given moment have the votes, and those who would do otherwise, such as Senator STEVENS, in other cases, or Senator DOMENICI, they have to look elsewhere.

I thought we had all learned our lesson about substituting structural devices for human judgment with the Gramm-Rudman experience. Setting up procedural barricades often creates more problems than it solves when it comes to funding real priorities for a vast and complex nation. Autopilot politics amounts to an abdication of our responsibility to debate and weigh reasonable alternatives, as we are expected to do and as we are elected to do by the people.

The distinguished chairman of the Appropriations Committee, my good friend, Senator STEVENS, is one of the most knowledgeable experts in the history of the Senate. When it comes to the funding needs of the Department of Defense. Do we have to squander his experience and the accumulated expertise of the members of the Appropriations Committee? Here sits one on my left, Senator STEVENS. He is on the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee of the Senate.

Do we have to squander their experience, their accumulated expertise, by constraining these mindless, artificial firewalls that attempt to constrain the funding process before it is even begun? Well, these sections, I assure you, my fellow Senators, will greatly increase the difficulty faced by the Appropriations chairman in marking up and presenting to the Senate the 13 fiscal year 2001 appropriations bills. The speed and efficiency sought by all of us to get this essential work done will not be aided by these unwise and irresponsible budget barnacles. Let us scrap them off before they do their damage.

Mr. President, how much time do I have left of my 9 minutes?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. One minute.

Mr. BYRD. I thank the Chair. I know that my remarks tonight will result in no favorable action that will override the die that has already been cast. I am confident of that. And to that extent, they were remarks made in futility. But for the record they were not futile. Appropriations Committee prior to their even having finished their hearings. The Budget Committee will have usurped all of those decisions with the construction of these firewalls. I believe this is a...
vote in the sequence be limited to 10 minutes. The amendments are as follows: the Stevens amendment, No. 2931; the Robb amendment, No. 2965 and, if not tabled, then votes in relation to the Reed of Rhode Island amendment, No. 3010; and the Coverdell amendment, No. 3010.

Mr. REID. We have no objection. The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DOMENICI. Therefore, several votes will occur beginning approximately 8:15, is that correct?

Mr. REID. That is right.

Mr. DOMENICI. This evening, in a stacked sequence, as just agreed upon by the Senate, I yield the floor.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I yield 5 minutes to the Senator from New York, hoping that next year he will be with the majority.

Mr. SCHUMER. I thank the Senator from Nevada. I would love to call him major minority whip, a job he would perform as admirably well as he does the job majority whip. I thank him for his friendship and leadership. I also thank my friend from West Virginia. It is always a pleasure to sit on the floor and listen to his words and his wisdom.

I rise in support of the amendment of Senator Reed of Rhode Island, who has done such a fabulous job with his leadership on this budget, on closing the gun show loophole, the Lautenberg amendment, which passed this body a while back. I will address one point. My colleagues laid out very well the many reasons to be for the Reed amendment. I want to add an additional reason.

The only argument that we have heard from the National Rifle Association, and others, against closing the gun show loophole is that allowing for a 3-day waiting period would effectively shut down gun shows because they are weekend operations. They argue if somebody bought a gun on Saturday morning and it took 72 hours to check, by then it would be Tuesday morning and the gun show, which predominates on the weekend—something that I stipulate is true—would be closed.

Fortunately, one of our colleagues—somebody with whom I disagree, Senator Craig Thomas of Wyoming—asked the GAO to do a report on purchases at gun shows. What is the report said, and I urge my colleagues to read it. It didn't get much publicity, but I think it is dispositive in this debate. The report debunks the myth that the 3-day waiting period would shut down gun shows. This is what the report showed, colleagues, and I hope people will listen because I think it is important: “Seventy-eight percent of all the instant checks are completed within 3 minutes.” That means 78 percent of those guns checked at gun shows—gun shows because they are weekend operations. They argue if somebody bought a gun on Saturday morning and the check takes 3 minutes or 2 hours.

The background check won't affect gun shows more than a pittance. Ninety-five percent of all guns will be able to be purchased by people who have the right to purchase those guns having passed the Brady check within 2 hours. My colleagues, there is no reason why we can't pass the Lautenberg amendment, as the Reed amendment does. The bill is not so simple as the measure it is going to close down gun shows. Will it stop a good number of felons from receiving guns? By all means. That is the purpose. I don't think anybody in this body would challenge the fact that we don't want felons to receive guns.

Second, perhaps tomorrow, probably in the vote-arama, the Senator from Illinois and I will offer an amendment on enforcement. I know he will address that at some length. The Reed amendment does just what many who disagree with us on gun control have asked us to do. They said: Why don't we enforce the present law?

The fact is, that every time we try to increase enforcement by adding ATF agents and giving those agents more authority, we have been opposed by the very people who are asking us for enforcement.

But there is real hope. Something called Project Exile, supported by the NRA and by Chuck Schumer, has now sprung up and has done well in three cities, including Rochester in my State.

Last year on this floor, when we debated the budget, we added some $50 million to Project Exile. And now four cities in my State of New York—Buffalo, Rochester, Syracuse, and Albany—will get the advantage of Project Exile.

The NRA and gun control advocates such as myself have agreed on this issue. Perhaps we can agree on more. I hope we will get universal support for the Durbin-Schumer amendment.

Getting back to the other Reed amendment, I hope my colleagues will listen to the facts that I have laid out. If we would agree to the Reed amendment, we would ratify the Lautenberg amendment as passed out in the conference, and we would move forward on an issue that is so vital for the safety of Americans and for the future of our country.

Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Nevada for his generosity. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Mexico.

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, how much time do I have?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Eleven minutes.

Mr. DOMENICI. I yield 4 minutes to the distinguished Senator from Vermont.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President, I thank my colleague from New Mexico, especially for his leadership on the Budget Committee and for his efforts in 1997 which greatly contributed to the fiscal policy that has led this country from an era of deficits to an era in which we anticipate budget surpluses for the foreseeable future.

He has had a challenging job crafting budget resolutions that balance the many real and competing needs of the Nation. He has been a strong advocate for education and an even stronger advocate for funding IDEA. In fact, last year, I joined him in calling for an increase in education funding of $40 billion over five years. Regrettably our colleagues on the House Budget Committee did not share this commitment. This year he has taken up the challenge of balancing the competing needs. The budget resolution that he has brought before us is a product of difficult negotiations between competing viewpoints.

I begin my remarks with a question to which I will time and time again return. In 1974 we made a commitment to fully fund IDEA. If 25 years later we cannot meet this commitment in an era of unprecedented economic prosperity and budgetary surpluses, when do we plan to keep this pledge.

The American people have a right to ask us—If not now, then when?

In the early years, when we were running large budget deficits, it was understandable that we couldn't meet those commitments.

During those same years this body, by almost unanimous votes, voted—99 Members sometimes—that “when feasible” we would fully fund our commitment to our States and our school districts. That time has come. We now have large surpluses with more than enough resources to meet our commitment now and well into the future.

I have behind me a chart which compares the funding levels in my amendment with the levels that will be required to fully fund IDEA. This shows where full funding is.
This shows the bipartisan amendment I will be offering and how it will take us to full funding. And this is where we will be if we do nothing but live within this budget that is before us. Make no mistake. The budget resolution before us does not fully fund IDEA. Despite the repeated pledges we have made to fully fund IDEA, this budget resolution sends a clear message that this body has no intention of fulfilling this commitment anytime in the next five years.

I was one of the few, now in this body, that were present at the time that P.L. 94–142, The Education of All Handicapped Act was passed. As a freshman Member of Congress, I was proud to sponsor that legislation and to be named as a member of the House and Senate conference committee along with then Vermont Senator Bob Stafford.

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

We pledged to pay 40% of these costs but we have continuously claimed that we couldn’t afford to. We started in 1976 with 12.5%. Then we slipped to 6%. Those were tough budget deficit times. Lately we have come up to 13 percent—still less than ¼ of our pledge.

Today, however, instead of making good on our promise now, those who object to my amendment cry, that would be mandatory spending—that’s bad. How can it be bad policy to fund what we made a pledge to fully fund IDEA as soon as feasible. The House adopted language that I advocated with budget surpluses projected far into the future, full funding is within our grasp. If not now, then when?

But as he has pointed out several times during the year, we are only supporting 13 percent of these costs. In 1975, we made a pledge which we did not keep. In 1997 we made that same pledge once again when we reauthorized IDEA.

I say to my colleagues on both sides of the aisle: If not now, then When?

In the 105th Congress we felt it important to reaffirm our commitment to full funding for IDEA. We added language to the FY 1999 Budget that stated that IDEA should be fully funded as soon as feasible. This language was adopted unanimously by the Senate. At that time, we still faced budget deficits and it was argued that full funding was not feasible. Today, however, in an era of unprecedented economic prosperity and with budget surpluses projected far into the future, full funding is within our grasp. If not now, then when?

In the 106th Congress we continued to press for full funding for IDEA. The FY 2000 budget resolution made room for about a $500,000,000 increase in funding for IDEA. Once again, the Senate adopted language that I advocated with Senator Gregg calling for full funding for IDEA as soon as feasible. The House of Representatives adopted a bipartisan free standing resolution that called for full funding.

The budget resolution that is before us assumes that funding for IDEA will increase by $1 billion in FY 2001 and $2.5 billion in FY 2002. If there is time remaining, I will take time later on to discuss my concerns about whether these assumptions require cuts in other programs that we will not have the will to make at the end of the day. What is very clear, however, is that this budget resolution does not claim to fulfill our obligation to fully fund IDEA. The budget resolution assumes that the Federal government will never fund more than about 20% of the costs of educating disabled students. One half of what we have promised over and over again.

If our amendment fails, adoption of this budget resolution will make it clear to the Nation that this Congress does not intend to fulfill its commitment any time in the next five years.

Our amendment is simple. It provides a path by which we will achieve full funding for IDEA in fiscal year 2005. It sends a clear message to the Nation that we, as a body, make good on the commitments we make.

I want to tell you that I am tired of being party to promises that this body hasn’t kept. The time is now. I urge you to ask your people back in your state. Ask parents, teachers, and education administrators. Ask your governors. "What would you prefer— that IDEA should not be funded or, that we fully fund IDEA so you can have more money for education, and pay less property taxes?”

Fulfill the pledge that you made to your people. I tell you that if you want a hero’s welcome, you will vote in favor of this. If it wins, let me tell you that they will be out on the streets marching to meet you when you come home. If you do not, I wouldn’t want to go home.

Tomorrow morning I will have a chance to drive this point home once again. Tonight I want to close by thanking my cosponsors for their stalwart commitment to fully funding IDEA. Senator Frist, Chairman of the Appropriations, has been a strong advocate for IDEA. Senator Feingold has worked closely with me on this amendment and has been instrumental in getting us to the place we are today. Senator Collins has worked long and hard to persuade members of this body that we should fully fund IDEA. I also want to thank Senators Dodd and Kennedy and Harkin with whom I have worked for many many years to improve educational opportunities for disabled students. Similarly, I am grateful for the efforts of Senator Snowe and Senator Chafee. I feel confident that with their efforts, our amendment will prevail.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I yield to the Senator from New Jersey 5 minutes.

Mr. TORRICELLI. Mr. President, I thank Senator Reid of Nevada for giving me the time earlier in the debate. My colleague from North Carolina, Mr. Edwards, rose to remind our colleagues that while the flooding earlier in the year may be over and not in the headlines of our newspapers, Hurricane Floyd is still a reality for many communities around our country.

Towns such as Boothbay, NJ—and as indeed Mr. Edwards pointed out, Princeville, NC—Florida to Maine, Hurricane Floyd left a path of destruction so large that FEMA declared it to
be the eighth worst disaster of the decade. In New Jersey by comparison, it was worse:

Two-hundred and fifty-three municipalities in New Jersey, the populations of 4.2 million people, were stricken.

More than 40,000 structures, including homes, schools, and businesses, suffered severe damage.

Over 20,000 residents of New Jersey alone applied for federal assistance, and municipalities submitted over 2,000 requests for public assistance to remove debris or to repair damages.

While FEMA has led an effort of providing assistance to homeowners, the greatest problem is how to rebuild their own economic infrastructure.

Bound Brook, NJ, alone, a community that was entirely inundated by this flooding, lost 7 percent of its annual revenue and 37 percent of its property value. A month after Floyd, the property value is still not repaired. We have, literally, towns that have been wiped out, places such as small towns in eastern North Carolina, that were devastated.

The people whose lives have been destroyed in North Carolina as a result of Hurricane Floyd, are still absolutely innocent. They are people who for generations have been law-abiding, taxpaying citizens, and for the first time in their lives, instead of writing tax checks to go to Washington, they are asking for something in return. If our Government cannot respond to a crisis such as Hurricane Floyd, we serve absolutely no purpose.

Our people in North Carolina are hurting and they need help. This amendment provides for $250 million for this purpose that would best address the needs of the people in 13 States, not only North Carolina, that were devastated by Hurricane Floyd.

These are the components. First, $50 million for economic development. These communities that have been destroyed need long-term relief plans, and they need the resources to develop and implement those plans. Places such as Princeville and Tarboro that were literally completely wiped out by the hurricane have lost wastewater treatment plants, plants that have to be replaced. We have to provide the resources for that.

There is $150 million in community block grants. North Carolina has immi-

nent emergency housing needs. Our State has responded by providing millions and millions of dollars in State money to help with these needs. These are people who were in rental housing who have no place to live. Rental housing will almost never be replaced if we do not provide the resources to do it. It is going to leave literally thousands of North Carolinians with no place to live, without a home—families totally wiped out.

Finally, there is $50 million for community facilities in a grant program which is specifically designed to address the needs of individual communities. For example, Princeville lost its fire station; the town of Windsor lost its library. These are things that need to be replaced, and these folks need help.

My people in North Carolina do not ask this Senate for a handout. They are doing everything they know how to do. The people of North Carolina have responded heroically to this tragedy. The State of North Carolina has responded by providing hundreds of millions of dollars—unprecedented in the history of this country. All they are saying now is that it is time for the Federal Government to meet our obligations in Washington to respond in a responsible way, and to provide these folks whose lives have been devastated, whose communities have been completely wiped out, with the help they so desperately need.

They are not asking for a handout. They are asking us to do what any responsible Federal Government would do under these circumstances, which is to provide them with the resources to provide emergency relief, and to meet their needs.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair recognizes the Senator from New Mexico.

Mr. REID. I yield 1 minute to the Senator from Maine.

Mr. DOMENICI. I yield 2 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Ms. COLLINS. I thank the chairman of the Budget Committee. He has done a terrific job. I thank Senator Reid as well for yielding me time so I can discuss this very important matter.

I am very pleased to be a cosponsor of Senator Jeffords’ amendment to finally start on the path toward paying the share of special education costs that the Federal Government promised to pay when the legislation was passed 25 years ago.

During the last recess of the Senate, I met with more than 70 superintendents, principals and superintendents from western and eastern Maine to discuss education issues. Originally, my thought was to discuss the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, but the No. 1 issue on their minds was the escalating costs of meeting the needs of children with special needs; the costs of special education.

If the U.S. Government kept the promise it made back in 1975, it would mean an additional $60 million to the schools in the State of Maine. That is money that would free up other money so that schools could meet their own needs—whether this is hiring more teachers, improving their libraries, upgrading their science labs or providing special professional development, whatever the need of that particular school and that particular community.

If we take this step of starting to meet our obligations under the special education law, it will make a tremendous difference not only to the schools in Maine but to schools throughout our country. The Jeffords-Collins amendment would mean an additional $155 million to the schools of Maine over the next 5 years.

I am very pleased to be an original cosponsor. This has been one of my priorities since my election to the Senate. I know it is the No. 1 priority of the school districts in the State of Maine.

I thank my colleagues for making the time available to me. If I have additional time, I yield it back to the chairman of the Budget Committee. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ENZI). The Senator from Alaska.

AMENDMENTS NOS. 2932 AND 3009 WITHDRAWN

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, I wish to announce, and to withdraw amendment 2932 and amendment 3009. I ask unanimous consent they be withdrawn.
The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendments (Nos. 2932 and 3009) were withdrawn.

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, I thank those who listened regarding the appropriation process and the actions we have taken to try to assure we will have the ability to meet the needs of the Nation. It is a very trying process. I think the compromise we have worked out will be enough for us to do our work.

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I have two observations.

I wish Senator BYRD were on the floor. He spoke about the 60-vote point of order in terms of history, and what great Americans have said about super-majority being applicable in the year we are in, and the 60-vote point of order on emergencies. We have passed very large emergency appropriations for Y2K. In fact, I think it might have been as much as $8 billion. Nobody raised a point of order. There was no point of order voted upon.

We had hurricane assistance; we had Y2K emergency assistance, all of which fell within the purview of meeting 60 vote points of order in terms of history, and what great Americans have said about super-majority being applicable in the year we are in. Nobody raised a point of order. They had it raised, it would have gotten 60 votes.

I don’t believe what is being predicted will happen. I believe when there are real emergencies, they will get adopted on the floor. We did not and nobody will even raise that 60 votes. If they do, they will get 60 votes.

My last observation is we have lots of 60 vote points of order in the Budget Act, some of which the distinguished Senator from West Virginia has supported in the past. We entered into a 5-year agreement with the President, bipartisan, both Houses, with a firewall on defense for the first 3 of the 5 years. We lived with it in exactly the way the distinguished Senator from Nevada and nobody will even raise that 60 votes. If they do, they will get 60 votes.

I yield whatever time I had remaining.

Mr. REID. I miscalculated the time when I spoke earlier, and I still have 7 minutes. I yield 5 minutes to Senator DURBIN on the Reed amendment.

Mr. DOMENICI. I reserve the remainder of my time.

Mr. REID. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The time has expired.

Mr. STEVENS. How much time do we have remaining?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska has 1 minute. The Senator from New Mexico has 3 minutes. The Senator from Nevada has 2 minutes.

Mr. DOMENICI. I yield my time.

Mr. REID. I yield the time of the minority.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 291, AS MODIFIED

Mr. STEVENS. I yield back my time and ask for a vote on my amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time has been yielded back.

The question is on agreeing to amendment No. 2931, as modified. The amendment (No. 2931), as modified, was agreed to.

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

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

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 2965

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, parliamentary inquiry. Is it not correct that the Robb amendment, No. 2965, is now pending for a vote?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is correct.

Mr. DOMENICI. There are 2 minutes? I waive my minute if the minority will waive its minute.

Mr. REID. We waive our minute. Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I move to table the Robb amendment.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The yeas and nays are as follows: Yes, 59; Nays, 40.
The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The question is on agreeing to the motion to table amendment No. 2965. The clerk will call the roll.

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

Mr. NICKLES. I announce that the Senator from Alabama (Mr. SESSIONS) is necessarily absent.

The result was announced, yeas 54, nays 45, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 62 Leg.]

YEAS—54

Abraham  Fitgeral  McCain
Aliard   Frist    McConnel
Ashcroft Gorton   Murkowski
Bennett  Gramm   Nickles
Bond     Grams    Roberts
Brownback Grassley  Roth
Burns    Gregg    Santorum
Burns    Hagel    Shelby
Campbell Hatch    Smith (NH)
Chafee, L. Helms    Smith (OR)
Cochrane Hutto    Snow (SD)
Collins  Hutchison  Specter
Covey    Inhofe    Stevens
Craig    Jeffords  Thomas
Crapo    Ky   Thompson
DeWine   Lott    Thurmond
Demintec Logue    Voinovich
Enzi     Mack     Warner

NAYS—45

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

NOT VOTING — Sessions

The motion was agreed to.

Mr. LOT T. Mr. President, 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.

Mr. LOT T. Mr. President, that was a 35-minute vote. I apologize for letting it go on that long. You can see how hard it is going to be to get through a vote-arame if we do that. Our plan now is to have two more votes tonight. If Senators would stay in the Chamber or close to the Chamber, we could do those votes in no more than 15 or 20 minutes. Maybe we could cut the second one down to 10. That would certainly help.

We are now ready to go into the pe- riod for the votes on the number of amendments that are pending, the so-called vote-arama.

Having said that, any Senator who has timely filed their amendment at the desk can call it up for Senate con- sideration. However, there is no allotted time for that.

Therefore, I ask unanimous consent that, as we did last year, in a way that I think is the fairest to try to explain what the amendments are, in that brief period of time, there be 2 minutes equally divided prior to each vote for explanation, and all votes in the vote-arama be limited to 10 minutes each after the first vote.

Mr. DASCHLE. Reserving the right to object. I just suggest that we also ensure that either side has at least a block of five amendments that are going to be offered so we can look at them ahead of time. Nobody knows, on either side, what the amendments are. If we gave them five by five, we can analyze them and decide whether we will table them, second degree them, or whatever. I think it is very important to do that. I suggest that as well.

Mr. LOT T. I think that is obviously a good suggestion. Let me add to this, if I could, Mr. President, that we are going to go forward with two more amendments tonight, one on each side—the Bond amendment on our side and the Daschle amendment on their side. After that, we are going to stop for to- night because we still have a large number of amendments that have not been able to be worked through. I am going to ask the managers on both sides to get all these amendments lined up and to get the first five on each side ready for in the morning so we won't have to wait until we come in. Also, we will come in at 9 o'clock so we can get an early as possible start. Some would like to be able to go home and do com- mitments as early as possible. But as it now stands, because of the number of amendments and the fact that we haven't had an opportunity to line up all the amendments in order, the man-agers requested we do it this way.

I emphasize that as soon as we finish the votes on amendments that are of- fered, and a vote is required, when we finish those, we will be through. So you may want to take that into consideration as to whether or not you insist on your amendments at least take them five by five. We can finish at 10 or 11 o'clock, or 12, but we need to go ahead and complete that. Having said that, I am looking at this way, but I could more easily be looking our way. A lot of amendments are still pending on both sides that really could be handled in some other way. I hope Senators will consider doing that. I thank the managers for the time they spent and the cooperation we have been getting from Senator DASCHLE and Senator BOND doing his usual good job. But our managers need this time to- night and early in the morning to start getting amendments racked up so we can vote on the first five.

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I won- der if the majority leader might enter- tain having a 10-minute vote on the first vote now. We have all come to vote. It seems we can accelerate that process.

Mr. LOT T. I will accept that sugges- tion.

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Mr. President, I would like to ask this. Can't we limit the clock and keep the promise to 10 minutes instead of having 1 or 2 persons cause the other 98 to be here? Mr. LOT T. We can do that. It re- quires that Senators stay here and that we stay attentive and say “turn it in.” We are trying to be considerate of both the floor and the Senate staff. Obviously, we need to stop. If we get unanimous consent for it to be 10 minutes, we will stop it. I amend the UC so that we may have 2 minutes equally divided on each amendment and that this vote and the next vote be 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered. Mr. LOT T. With that, I yield the floor.

AMENDMENT NO. 2913

(Purpose: To express the sense of Senate against the Federal funding of smoke shops)

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read as follows:

The legislative clerk read as follows: The Senator from Missouri (Mr. BOND) pro- poses an amendment numbered 2913.

Mr. BOND. Mr. President, I ask unan- imous 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 end of title III, add the following:

SE C. SENSE OF THE SENATE AGAINST FED- ERAL FUNDING OF SMOKE SHOPS.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Senate makes the follow- ing findings:

(1) Smoking began by children during their teen years and even earlier turns the lives of far too many Americans into nightmares decades later, plagued by disease and premature death.

(2) The Federal Government should leave a legacy of more healthy Americans and fewer victims of tobacco-related illness.

(3) Efforts by the Federal Government should seek to protect young people from the dangers of smoking.

(4) Discount tobacco stores, sometimes known as smoke shops, often benefit a smoke shop or other tobacco product, often at significantly reduced prices, with each tobacco outlet often selling millions of discount cigarettes each year.

(5) Studies by the Surgeon General and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention demonstrate that children are particularly susceptible to price differentials in ciga- rettes, such as those available through smoke shop discounts.

(b) SENSE OF THE SENATE.—It is the sense of the Senate that the budget levels in this resolution assume that no Federal funds may be used by the Department of Housing and Urban Development to provide any grant or other assistance to construct, operate, or otherwise benefit a smoke shop or other to- bacco outlet.

Mr. BOND. Mr. President, this amend- ment simply asks the Department of HUD should stop using community development block grant funds to build discount cigarette stores known as smoke shops.
A year ago, a doctor called up and said there was a new discount smoke shop in his neighborhood and it was funded by Federal dollars. I didn’t know what the sign said, so I sent staff out. Here it is: Smoke Shop, Discount Tobacco. Our policy is supposed to discourage smoking. Inside, we found wall-to-wall cigarettes, 25 percent or more off. These are your tax dollars at work.

Instead of funding what we could have funded, $42 million went to six of these stores—instead of building a water tower or elders’ wellness centers.

I wrote to HUD and said stop funding them. The letter I got back from the assistant said: You haven’t proven that discount cigarettes encourage smoking. Well, it is about time we taught HUD some common sense. The Secretary of Housing now says: If you tell me to stop funding it, if you stop me from funding it, I will stop.

I urge colleagues to vote aye.

Mr. INOUYE. Mr. President, I am against smoking, but this amendment picks on Indians. Why don’t we include all discount tobacco stores? Why don’t we include Walmart, KMart, and all these places that sell discount tobacco? Why just pick on Indians?

Mr. BOND. Mr. President, the amendment says we should not fund any discount smoke shops. It doesn’t say Indians.

Mr. INOUYE. The Senator’s sense of the Senate mentions Indians, Indian smoke shops.

Mr. BOND. It does not.

Mr. INOUYE. Mr. President, I am against this sense-of-the-Senate resolution, and I hope we will vote it down.

Mr. CAMPBELL. Mr. President, in 1997 this body considered wide-sweeping tobacco legislation and the Indian Affairs Committee held several hearings on this issue and in fact reported a bill to reduce smoking in Native communities.

The rate of smoking in Native communities is the highest in the country and Natives suffer emphysema, lung cancer, and related problems as a result of that smoking.

The resolution we are now considering would as a practical matter apply to smoke-shops that offer “discount tobacco” products without defining that term.

There are “discount cigarette” stores right across the river in Virginia, there are “discount tobacco” outlets in airports around the country, and there are “discount stores” on Indian lands.

Now, if this resolution were to apply to all tobacco outlets, I would support it. I am dismayed that Secretary Cuomo would support the amendment given that it would not affect Community Development Block Grant funds for non-Indian tobacco outlets.

As a practical matter only Indian outlets are affected and there are no potential non-Indian tobacco sellers that would be affected. Though it may not be the preferred economic activity of some in this chamber, many Indian tribes rely on selling tobacco, which is a legal commodity, to generate revenues.

The targeted nature of this resolution as well as the economic hardships created by it led me to support the Vice Chairman of the Committee on Indian Affairs, Senator INOUYE, and his Motion to Table the Bond Amendment. The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to amendment No. 2913.

Mr. INOUYE. Mr. President, I move to table the amendment and 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 amendment No. 2913.

Mr. LOTT. 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. LOTT. 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. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask that we proceed to the vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion to table amendment No. 2913. The yeas and nays have been ordered. The clerk will call the roll on the motion to table.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

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

The result was announced—yeas 19, nays 81, as follows:

[Roll Call Vote No. 63 Leg.]

YEAS—19

Abaka
Biden
Campbell
Cleland
Daschle
Edwards
Helms

NAYS—81

Abraham
Allard
Ashcroft
Baucus
Bayh
Bennett
Bingaman
Boner
Boxer
Breaux
Brownback
Bryan
Burton
Byrd
Chafee, L
Coehran
Collins
Conrad
Cuerdell
Craig
DeWine
Dodd
Domenici
Dorgan

Lautenberg
Leahy
Lieberman
Lincoln
Leit
Lugar
Mack
McCaIN
Mikulski
Mikulski

The motion was rejected.

The question is on agreeing to the amendment.

The amendment (No. 2913) was agreed to.

Mr. BOND. I move to reconsider the vote.

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

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 2964

(Purpose: To express the sense of the Senate regarding the need to reduce gun violence in America)

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I call up amendment No. 2964.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED), for himself, Mr. DASCHLE, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. LUTENBERG, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. DURBIN, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. KURI, Mr. TORRICELLI, Mr. LEVIN, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. ROBS, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. BIDEN, Mr. BYRD, Mr. KERRY, Mr. REID, Mr. INOUYE, Mr. HUSKAN, Mr. RANKIN, Mr. WYDEN, Ms. MURK-, and Mr. L. CHAFEE, proposes an amendment numbered 2964.

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

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

The amendment is as follows:

At the end of title III, insert the following:

SEC. 316. SENSE OF THE SENATE REGARDING THE NEED TO REDUCE GUN VIOLENCE IN AMERICA.

(a) FINDINGS.—It is the sense of the Senate that:

(1) On average, 12 children die from gun fire everyday in America.

(2) On May 20, 1999, the Senate passed the Violent and Repeat Offender Accountability and Rehabilitation Act, by a vote of 73 to 25, in part, to stem gun-related violence in the United States.

(b) SENSE OF THE SENATE.—It is the sense of the Senate that the levels in function 750 of this resolution assume that Congress should—

(1) pass the conference report to accompany H.R. 1501, the Violent and Repeat Juvenile Offender Accountability and Rehabilitation Act, including Senate-passed provisions, with the purpose of limiting access to firearms by juveniles, convicted felons, and other persons prohibited by law from purchasing or possessing firearms; and

(2) consider H.R. 1501 not later than April 20, 2000.
forward on commonsense gun provi-
sions.

The National Rifle Association con-
tinues to talk about Second Amend-
ment rights. But we say what about the
right to live of the 12 children a day, every
day, who die because of fire-
arms violence in the country? What about the
right of citizens to be free from crime, when
criminals can go to gun shows and purchase
weapons without a back-
ground check? What about the right of
law-abiding citizens to live peaceably in
their neighborhoods? It is time for
Congress to stop kowtowing to the
NRA. It is long past time for Congress
to act responsibly, and adopt sensible
measures to close the loopholes in our
current gun laws.

That means—closing the gun show
loophole—requiring the sale of child
safety locks with firearms—prohibiting
juveniles from possessing semiauto-
matic assault weapons—banning im-
ports of large capacity ammunition
clips—expanding the number of cities
that participate in gun tracing—giving
ATF and other federal law enforcement
agencies the resources they need for
more effective enforcement of our gun
laws.

Nothing we do will interfere with the
rights of responsible gun owners. But,
it has everything to do with the rights
of men, women, and children to live
peacefully in their communities.

Ninety percent of the American peo-
lple support background checks on gun
shows; 88% favor child-proofing guns.
But every attempt we make to act is
met by a stonewall of resistance from
our Republican colleagues. And every
day, we learn of more tragedies of fam-
ilies who lose loved ones to senseless
gun violence because we fail to act.

Congress must end its obstruction
and enact critical reforms that have
been pending for too long. If this Con-
gress won’t act, the American people
will elect a Congress in November that
will act.

It has been almost a year since the
tragic shooting at Columbine High
School. In literally dozens of cases
since then, children have brought guns
to schools, and there have been at least
seven school shootings since Col-
umbine.

According to the Department of Edu-
cation, over 6,000 students were ex-
pelled in the 1996–1997 school year for
bringing guns to public schools. Ac-
cording to a study by the Centers for
Disease Control, 8% of all students re-
ported bringing a gun to school in a 30-
day period.

It is time for Congress to finish the
job we began last year and pass the
gun control provisions in the juvenile jus-
tice legislation. Students, parents and
teachers across America are waiting
for our answer.

We need to help teachers and school
officials recognize the early warning
signs and to prevent violence before it
occurs.

We need to assist law enforcement of-
ficers in keeping guns away from
criminals and children.

We need to close the gun show loop-
hole.

Above all, we need to require child
safety locks on firearms, so that we
can do all we can to prevent senseless
shockingshootingss like the first grade
gun killing that occurred a few weeks
ago in an elementary school in Michi-
gan.

The Senate passed this needed legis-
lation last year. It is time for House
and Senate conferees to write the final
bill and send it to the President, so
that effective legislation is in place as
soon as possible.

The lack of action is appalling and
inexcusable. Each new tragedy is a
fresh indictment of our failure to act
responsibly.

We have a national crisis, and com-
monsense approaches are urgently
needed. If we are serious about dealing
with youth violence, the time to act is
now. There is no reason why this Con-
gress cannot enact this needed legisla-
tion.

The civic leaders and families of this
country deserve better than what this kow-
tow-to-the-NRA Congress has given them so
far.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, on April 20
of last year, America and the world
were shocked by the gun violence and
carnage at Columbine High School.
Shortly thereafter, on May 20, this
Senate passed legislation within the ju-
enile justice bill that provided for
sensible gun control measures, includ-
ing safety locks on firearms, back-
ground checks on all guns at gun shows
and the ban on the importation of large
clips for automatic weapons. Since our
vote on May 20, the measure has lan-
guish in the conference committee
that has met only once—last August.

My amendment is very straight-
forward and simple. It asks that the
conferes send to the House this meas-
ure so we can vote so we can do what
the American people want. Over 90 per-
cent of American people want gun
locks on weapons. A large number of
them want to close all the loopholes in
the gun shows. We must do that to re-
spond to America, not just with respect
to Columbine, but for the 12 young
children each day that die in America
because of sunfires.

I urge passage of this amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The
Chair recognizes the Senator from
Utah.

Mr. HATCH. The juvenile justice bill
provides $450 million in accountability
in block grants for all kinds of prob-
lems; $547.5 million in prevention
grants for juveniles, $75 million in
grants to update felony records, et
cetera, none of which basically will
pass as long as we stay in the gunfight.

A majority of Republicans and Demo-
crats in the House will not support the
Lautenberg amendment. A majority of
the Republicans and Democrats in the
Senate will not support the Dingell
amendment. So we are stuck with one
of the most important anticoime juve-
nile justice bills in history because we
can’t resolve the gun process.

The best thing we can do is strip it
out, fight that another day, and do it
this way. We cannot get a conference
report and call a conference when all
we will do is polarize the situation and
divide people even more. I think we
have to come to a conclusion and pass
a juvenile violence bill, regardless of
what happens. I hope we can vote down
this amendment. It is not helping.

Mr. CRAIG. I ask for the yeas and
nays on the amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a
sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The question is on agreeing to amend-
ment No. 2964. The clerk will
call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there
any other Senators in the Chamber de-
siring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 53,
nays 47, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 64 Leg.]
country which have historically shared receipts taken in by the Forest Service and BLM. The decline in those receipts over the last ten years has had devastating effects on many rural school districts, especially in the rural West, and the agencies have projected a $1.1 billion over the next five years to stabilize the flow of resources to these counties.

Mr. BINGAMAN. I know that Senator DOMENICI is aware of another situation that has had a negative impact on States’ share of Federal mineral receipts. Subtitle C of Title X of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1993 put in place a system for allocating mineral revenues between the States and the United States that is complicated and difficult to administer. It has resulted in confusion and conflict between States and the Federal Government, and the Inspector General of the Department of the Interior has noted that the agencies’ budgeting processes and accounting systems were not designed to accumulating costs in the detail required for administering the system. The system is criticized by both the States and the Federal agencies charged with administering it, and it is time for it to be changed.

Mr. DOMENICI. Senator BINGAMAN is correct, and I understand he has introduced legislation to correct that provision. We now have a CBO preliminary estimate of the budgetary impact of that bill.

Mr. BINGAMAN. In that regard, I ask the Chairman of the Budget Committee if the amount available in the section 203 reserve fund would accommodate this legislation, and if it could be included within the intent of this reserve fund.

Mr. DOMENICI. As we are considering this resolution, I cannot say for sure that the reserve fund would accommodate Senator BINGAMAN’s bill, since the cost estimate of the budgetary impact of the recently reported legislation is not yet complete. It is my hope, however, that when we convene the conference on this resolution, we will have estimates on the impacts of both bills. It is my intention to move in that conference to the Senate position with an amendment to accommodate both the Forest Service receipt stabilization legislation, and the mineral receipt sharing legislation.

Mr. BINGAMAN. I thank the Chairman for taking the time to clarify this point for us. I can assure you that this issue is very important to our States, and we look forward to working with you and the rest of our colleagues to address this situation in the near future.

THRIFT SAVINGS ACCOUNTS

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, in the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2000, the Congress authorized active and reserve members of the uniformed services to participate in the Thrift Savings Plan now available for federal civil service employees. This was an important part of the recruiting and retention package which the Senate passed, and which was enacted into law last year.

Under that authority, provided in last year’s Defense Authorization Act, service members would be eligible to deposit up to five percent of their basic pay, before tax, each month. The government is not required to match the service member’s contributions. In addition, the bill would be permitted to directly deposit special pays for enlistment, reenlistment and the lump-sum for electing to remain in the “Redux” retirement program—pre-tax—up to the extent allowable under the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, into their Thrift Savings account.

Unfortunately, and unpredicably, the President failed to identify the offsets in the budget he submitted to the Congress in February.

Mr. President, we must adjust the outlays and revenues in the Budget Resolution to permit the Thrift Savings Plan to be extended to members of the uniformed services. This Thrift Savings Plan does not cause the loss of revenues, but defers the tax due until the service member retires. This is an important point—there are no lost revenues, and the cost of this initiative is cheaper than losing our most qualified military personnel.

Making the Thrift Savings Plan available to military personnel would come at no cost to the budgetary outlay or revenue. Participating in a Thrift Savings account would encourage personal savings and enhance the retirement income for service members, who currently do not have access to a 401k savings plan. Under current Thrift Savings Plan regulations, participants may borrow from Thrift Savings accounts for such worthy purposes as college tuition and purchasing a home. When implemented, military personnel would be able to include a savings program that would enhance the value of their retirement system and permit them to improve their quality of life.

The Armed Services Committee continues to receive testimony strongly supporting a Thrift Savings Plan for military personnel as a strong incentive for both recruiting and retention. Testimony from the Joint Chiefs of Staff and Reserve Chiefs of Staff confirm that the Thrift Savings Plan would be an important incentive for recruiting military personnel and retaining highly trained military personnel on active duty or in the Ready Reserve. Chiefs of Staff have indicated that this plan, combined with the pay raise, the repeal of the Redux retirement system, and the increased bonuses in the FY 2000 bill, would alleviate the hemorrhage of trained and experienced military personnel we are now experiencing.

This critical initiative was not included in the President’s budget request, but it is necessary to assist in retaining our military service personnel. We must correct this shortcoming in the President’s budget.

The Senate has supported extending the Thrift Savings Plan to military personnel on three previous occasions. It is time that we complete the process and provide the necessary funding that would permit military personnel to join the federal workforce in the Thrift Savings Plan.

Mr. DOMENICI. The Chairman of the Armed Services Committee has crafted an important provision that can improve retention in our Armed Services. The cost effectiveness of the provision is particularly notable. It is regrettable that the Administration’s lack of compliance has caused the delay of an entire year in the effective date of this provision of last year’s Department of Defense Authorization bill, Servicemen and women deserve a colleague of the Administration’s failure to act.

I understand that you also have a problem with moving forward on legislation that permits military personnel to participate in the Thrift Savings Plan. I must say that a “revenue loss” is attributable to such legislation and this makes the legislation potentially vulnerable to a Budget Act point of order.

As my friend from Virginia knows, our budget resolution, S. Con. Res. 101, as well as the budget resolution passed by our colleagues in the House of Representatives, H. Con. Res. 290, last week, provides for up to $150 billion in reductions over the next five years. It is my understanding that the revenue loss in the form of deferred revenue associated with your TSP provision is $10 million in 2001 and $321 million over the next five years.

Mr. WARNER. I thank my friend for his commitment to correct this shortcoming in the President’s budget and I assure my colleague, the Chairman of the Armed Services Committee, that the revenue assumptions in the budget resolution can accommodate the revenue loss associated with your TSP statute. Moreover, let me say that I will make sure it will happen in the statement of managers on the conference report on this year’s budget resolution that the revenue assumptions will permit your TSP provision to move forward and to be implemented without the threat of a Budget Act point of order.

Mr. WARNER. I thank my friend for his commitment to correct this shortcoming in the President’s budget and for his leadership in reducing the hemorrhage of trained and experienced military personnel. I also want to express my appreciation to the highly professional staff of the Budget Committee for their assistance in working out a solution to this important issue.

Mr. CHAFEE. Mr. President, I voted against the amendment offered by Senator ROBB, which would use the tax code to provide assistance to school districts to build and renovate school facilities. There is no doubt that many states and local school districts need help to address the dilapidated conditions of their schools. However, I do
not believe that the approach presented by Senator Rums, which has been repeatedly defeated by the Senate, is the best solution.

Earlier this year, I was pleased to co-sponsor legislation known as BRICKS—the Building, Renovating, and Constructing Schools Act—which Senator Snowe introduced. Senator Snowe's bill authorizes the use of $20 billion for school construction and repairs. She pays for her proposal by borrowing from the Exchange Stabilization Fund (ESF).

According to the Snowe proposal, states would receive funds only at the request of the Governor. They would be distributed in accordance with the formula prescribed under Title I, which provides federal assistance to the lowest achieving, low income students. I believe this is a far better approach with potential for bipartisan support.

Mr. President, it will be regrettable if the vote on the Robb amendment prevents a vote on an amendment by the senior Senator from Rhode Island, Senator Reed. I am an original co-sponsor of the Reed amendment which simply expresses the sense of the Senate that gun safety provisions in the Senate last year should be brought before the Senate for final action. As a co-sponsor of the Reed amendment and a strong supporter of gun safety laws, particularly those which are intended to keep guns out of the hands of children, my vote against the Robb amendment should in no way be considered a vote against the Reed amendment.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, I rise to address a serious problem with one of the obscure assumptions both of this budget resolution and the President's budget. Both the Administration's submission and this budget resolution contain an assumption that $350 million of anticipated Medical Care Cost Recovery Fund (MCCF) receipts will be remitted to the Treasury from the VA. I strongly oppose this assumption. It flies in the face of current policy—and all logic—since it would result in a $350 million decrease in VA health care funding at the same time that Congress proposes an increase. The budget resolution is essentially assuming the VA is being given a "loan" from Treasury which it must pay back.

The VA has historically had difficulty in meeting their projected third party collection goals as it is, using the projected collections as a means to pad the budget on paper. By substantially reducing the incentive for aggressive collections by the VA, the MCCF receipts are even less likely to reach projected levels—and fewer funds for veterans health care.

This proposal is nothing more than an obscure, cynical maneuver to give extra scoring room on the appropriations bills later in this year at the expense of veterans. However, this provision will require legislation to be put into effect, and I want my colleagues to know that I will strongly oppose any efforts to pass such legislation as that process moves forward this year.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, as we debate the priorities for spending in the federal budget for the next fiscal year, I am pleased to have voted yesterday for the Bingaman education amendment. Unfortunately, the Senate tabled this amendment yesterday by a 54 to 46 vote. This amendment begins to address some of the critical needs of our schools. But more importantly, it says it is not just for aid funds in general. We think education is a priority. We think education should be nourished, not starved.

This amendment adds important resources in several ways:

It supports the $4.5 billion or 12.6 percent increase for education that the President proposed for FY 2001 over the previous year.

It adds $1 billion for Title I, the program that helps school districts educate economically disadvantaged students. If Congress follows through with FY 2001 appropriations, this would bring total Title I funding next year to $9.9 billion, up from $8.5 billion in FY 2000.

It adds $2 billion to train new teachers and current teachers.

It provides $1.75 billion to continue to reduce class sizes in the early grades.

It increases funds for afterschool programs to give students extra help.

It provides $1.3 billion to repair schools in high-need areas.

It adds $1 billion for special education, programs to help disabled students.

It raises the maximum Pell Grant, aid for needy college students, from $3,500 to $3,700.

This amendment is timely because the federal share of elementary and secondary education has declined from 14 percent in 1980 to 6 percent in 1999–2000. Hopefully, this amendment will begin to reverse that decline.

The schools in my state face huge challenges, overcrowded classrooms, teacher shortages, growing enrollments, decrepit buildings. In short, they are overwhelmed.

California has 5.8 million students, more students in school than 30 states have in total population and one of the highest projected enrollments in the country.

California will need 300,000 new teachers by 2010. Eleven percent or 30,000 of our 285,000 teachers are on emergency credentials.

California has 40 percent of the nation's immigrants; we have 50 languages in some schools. Children from these families need special attention, not just in English language learning but in dealing with huge adjustments of learning to live in a new country.

California's students lag behind students from other states. Only about 40 to 45 percent of the state's students score at or above the national median, on the Stanford 9 reading and math tests.

For school construction, modernization and deferred maintenance, California needs $21 billion by 2003 or 7 new classrooms per day. Two million California children go to school today in 86,000 portable classrooms.

California's Head Start programs serve only 13 percent of eligible children.

For higher education, the University of California has the most diverse student body in the US. Federal programs provide nearly 55 percent of all student financial aid funds that students received. Our colleges and universities are facing "Tidal Wave II," the demographic bulge created by children of the baby boomers who will inundate California's colleges and universities between 2000 and 2010 because the number of high school graduates will jump 30 percent.

California's schools are in crisis. The needs of my state are huge.

While these needs cry out for resources, the federal government is contributing only 6 percent of total education funding. Funds are so short in my state that California teachers are spending around $1,000 a year out of their own pockets to pay for books, markers, other school supplies, according to the San Diego Tribune, August 16, 1999.

Why should we be increasing funds for education? Let me answer that question by giving you an example of the state of our schools, as expressed by a young student. I would like to read a letter from Hannah Wair, a 14-year-old from Santa Rosa, California, who graphically describes her school:

Santa Rosa, CA.

December 13, 1999.

Diane Feinstein,

California's Head Start programs

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, as I said, I am concerned about the amount of money that is given to the Santa Rosa City Schools. It seems as though far too many kids attend these schools without computers, books, and sports equipment. On top of that, most of the schools (with an exception of a few new ones) are in need of extensive repairs. Many schools have dirty, bathrooms and locker rooms that have not been repaired or updated in about 20 years. The fields and tracks are invaded with weeds and rocks, and there have been many injuries because of this. Many of the classes are over-populated, with an average of 30 or 35 students per class. This gives the students less attention, which makes it harder to learn.

While there are many aspects that need to be improved about our schools, they are still great schools, and I'm sure that you could change all of this in only a matter of time. Thank you so very much for your time. I hope to hear from you soon!

Sincerely,

Hannah Wair.

The Clinton-Gore Administration has proposed to increase education funding in FY 2001 by 12.6 percent, to $40.1 billion. Yet the budget before us does not add to the President's education request by $1.7 billion. I submit, Mr. Chairman, that this is no time to be cutting education:

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD—SENATE
S2337

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Santa Rosa, CA.

December 13, 1999.

Diane Feinstein,

Hart Senate Office Building,

Washington, DC.

Dear Ms. Feinstein: My name is Hannah Wair, and I am 14 years old and I attend Rincon Valley Middle School in California. I am writing you this letter because I am very concerned about the amount of money that is given to the Santa Rosa City Schools. It seems as though far too many kids attend these schools without computers, books, and sports equipment. On top of that, most of the schools (with an exception of a few new ones) are in need of extensive repairs. Many schools have dirty, bathrooms and locker rooms that have not been repaired or updated in about 20 years. The fields and tracks are invaded with weeds and rocks, and there have been many injuries because of this. Many of the classes are over-populated, with an average of 30 or 35 students per class. This gives the students less attention, which makes it harder to learn.

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American students lag behind their international counterparts in many ways. American twelfth grade math students were outperformed by students from 21 other countries, scoring higher than students from only two countries, Cyprus and South Africa.

Title I funds are designed to help disadvantaged children. Grants designated by Congress in 1965 to provide supplementary services to low-achieving children in areas with high concentrations of poverty. Title I reaches virtually every school district and is very important in my state. Schools serving disadvantaged populations of students receive fewer resources than other schools, according to the Public Policy Institute of California in a new report.

With 18 percent of the country’s Title I students, it is only 4 percent of Title I funds. At least, 775,000 eligible Title I students are not getting services in my state.

It is my hope that when Congress takes up the Elementary and Secondary Education Act reauthorization and the FY 2001 appropriations bill, we will rectify the long-standing inequities in the funding formula to give fast-growing states like mine their fair share of Title I and other funds.

I urge adoption of the education amendment. This debate today is not just about raw numbers, this increase or that decrease. This debate is about the future of our nation. We must ask some fundamental questions about our spending priorities. Why it is important to increase spending on education? Here are some reasons:

The economy of my state is transitioning from manufacturing to a more high-skill, service and technology jobs. Since 1980, jobs in the “new economy” (services and trade) have jumped nearly 60 percent.

Over the next 10 years, nationally, computer systems analyst jobs will grow by 94 percent; computer support specialists, by 102 percent; computer engineers, 109 percent. Jobs for the non-college educated are stagnating.

High tech employers say they cannot find qualified people. They plead for Congress to expand visas to bring in employees from abroad.

Low literacy levels are powerful predictors of welfare dependency and incarceration. More than half the adult prison population has literacy levels below those required by the labor market.

Near 40 percent of adjudicated juvenile delinquents have treatable learning disabilities that went untreated in school.

Seventeen years ago, the nation’s attention was jolted by a report titled A Nation at Risk. In April 1983, the Reagan Administration’s Education Secretary, Terrell Bell, told the nation that we faced a fundamental crisis in the quality of American elementary and secondary education. The report said:

Our nation is at risk. If an unfriendly foreign power had attempted to impose on America the mediocre educational performance that exists today, we might well have viewed it as an act of war.

The report cited declines in student achievement and called for strengthening graduation requirements, teacher preparation and establishing standards and accountability.

Today, we still face mediocrity in our schools. While there are always exceptions and clearly there are many excellent teachers and many outstanding schools, we can do better. To those who say we cannot afford to spend more money on education, I say we cannot afford to fail our children. Our children choose to be illiterate or uneducated. It is our responsibility and we must face it up to it.

I urge adoption of the education amendment.

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, the Senate yesterday approved my amendment to the fiscal year 2001 budget resolution that establishes a reserve fund which creates room in the Senate budget resolution for military retiree health care improvements. I thank Budget Committee Chairman DOMENICI for working with me and supporters of my amendment. I also want to recognize the driving force behind this issue: the thousands of military retirees and
April 6, 2000

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD—SENATE
S2339

their dependents across this country who have established an impressive grassroots effort. Their work, in conjunction with the efforts of the Retired Enlisted Association, the National Association of Uniformed Services, the National Military and Veterans Association, and similarly inclined Officers Association, have brought military health care to the forefront.

My amendment would allow the Senate Armed Services Committee to increase spending on military retiree health care while considering the fiscal year 2001 Department of Defense Authorization bill. It is important to note that my amendment must also be approved by the House and Senate conference committee on the budget resolution in order for the Senate Armed Services Committee to use the reserve fund.

A promise of lifetime health care has been broken. Testimony from military recruiters themselves, along with copies of earlier literature dating back to World War II, show that health care was promised to active duty personnel and their families upon the personnel's retirement.

However, the creation on June 7, 1956, of space-available care for military retirees at military hospitals has led to a broken promise of health care coverage for these men and women and their families. Post-cold-war downsizing of military bases and their medical services have left many retirees out in the cold. A final insult is the fact that military retirees and their dependents are kicked off of the military's health care system, Tricare, upon turning age 65.

Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Gen. Henry Shelton, testified before the Senate Armed Services Committee and said: "Sir, I think the first thing we need to do is make sure that we acknowledge our commitment to the retirees and their dependents and that what we basically committed to at the time that they were recruited into the armed forces."

Defense Secretary William Cohen testified before the Senate Armed Services Committee and said: "We have made a pledge, whether it's legal or not, it's a moral obligation that we will take care of all those who served, retired veterans and their families, and we have not done so."

My colleague Brooks, served as a peacekeeper with the United States Army in Bosnia, and he was recently deployed to Kosovo. I know how important "quality of life" issues are to military personnel and their families. Our country asks young men and women to willingly work in combat zones and receive minimal pay compared to the private sector. As compensation, military personnel have been promised that their health care needs and those of their families will be taken care of now and upon retirement. Despite the best efforts of many talented health care providers in the military, this promise has been broken, and it is impacting a young man or woman's decision to make career of the military.

The question is whether Members of Congress want to make military retiree health care a priority instead of an afterthought. I am hopeful that, as similar to that seen with my reserve fund amendment, we in Congress can choose military retiree health care as a priority this session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair recognizes the Senator from Alabama.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, in order to make some logic out of this vote-arama process, on behalf of the leader, I ask unanimous consent that the first 10 amendments be voted on tomorrow be the following and that as stated earlier all votes after the first vote be limited to 10 minutes, with 2 minutes for explanation prior to each vote. The amendments are: the Santorum amendment on military/vets benefits; the Conrad amendment on lockbox; the Abraham amendment on SOS lockbox; the Johnson amendment on veterans; the Ashcroft amendment on SOS Social Security investment; the Mikulski amendment on digital divide; the Bob Smith amendment on RX; the Graham of Florida amendment on education; the Voinovich amendment on strike tax reconciliation; and the Kennedy amendment on Pell grants.

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

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, on behalf of the leader, I now ask unanimous consent that there be a period for the transaction of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

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

HONORING THE GOOD WORKS OF THE SOCIETY FOR MATERNAL-FETAL MEDICINE

Mr. THURMOND. Mr. President, I rise to recognize the vital work performed by a group of tireless and dedicated professionals: The members of the Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine (SMFM). I congratulate the Society for its outstanding achievements, and note this year they celebrated their 20th annual meeting.

It is often said that the United States is home to the finest pool of health care professionals in the world. I could not agree more. Each and every day, these professionals provide cutting edge care for millions across the country. Treatments that did not exist just ten years ago are now saving lives on a routine basis. I am hopeful that we may make this high level of care for granted.

The Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine is one group that demonstrates the tremendous talent we have in our country. For many of us, "maternal-fetal medicine" may not be an everyday term. However, we all acknowledge that mothers experiencing complicated pregnancies require and deserve the best care possible. Maternal-fetal specialists provide care or consultation during complicated pregnancies. In addition, they provide education and research concerning the most recent approaches to the diagnosis and treatment of obstetrical problems. As a result of their expertise, they promote awareness of the diagnostic and therapeutic techniques for optimal management of these complicated pregnancies. In addition, it should be noted that maternal-fetal medicine specialists are complementary to obstetricians in providing consultations, co-management or direct care before and during pregnancy.

Mr. President, I urge my colleagues to join me in congratulating the members of the Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine for their outstanding work. I also want to acknowledge the fine work of Dr. Peter Van Dorsten, President of the SMFM, who resides in my home state of South Carolina. There is no doubt that Americans across the country will join me in thanking these unique individuals.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, seven months have elapsed since the House of Representatives passed the bi-partisan Dingell bill to enhance company and HMO abuses, and more than six months have passed since House and Senate conferees were appointed to prepare the final version of this important measure.

Today, I am releasing a new study by the Minority Staff of the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee that documents how devastating this long delay has been for millions of Americans and their families, and how urgently it is for the House-Senate conference to complete its work as soon as possible.

Drawing on data gathered by the University of California School of Public Health and the Harvard School of Public Health, the report documents unacceptable high numbers of patients who are denied needed care, who suffer increased pain, or whose health has seriously declined because too many HMOs and insurance companies put profits above patients.

According to the study, 59,000 patients each day—22 million patients a year—report added pain and suffering as the result of the actions of their health plans. Large numbers of patients have specialty referrals delayed or denied. Others have been forced to increase doctors. Still others are forced to take prescription drugs that are different from the drugs their doctor prescribed.

In addition to patients' reports of significant problems as the result of actions of their health plans, thousands of physicians report seeing patients every day whose health has seriously declined as the result of abuses