

BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT NOT A GOAL OF THE CLINTON ADMINISTRATION

(Mrs. CHENOWETH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. CHENOWETH. Mr. Speaker, this weekend the Secretary of Labor did state, as we heard on national TV, that balancing the budget is not a goal of the Clinton administration. And you and I both know that without the authority of the President, the Secretary would not have said that nor reflected that view. At a time when every single hardworking American is calling on the Federal Government to get its act together and balance the budget, the Clinton administration is saying, "No, we won't." At a time when every hardworking American family is demanding that Government balance their budgets just like they have to balance their checkbook, the Clinton administration is saying, "No, we won't." At a time when the American people are demanding that the bitter defenders of the old order change their ways and support the concept of balancing the Federal budget, the Clinton administration is saying, "No, we won't."

Mr. Speaker, I stand here today and I say, "Yes, we will." I have heard the people's message as have you, loud and clear, and they want a smaller, smarter Government that costs less and is less intrusive in their lives.

PREVIOUS PRESIDENTS COULD HAVE STOPPED SPENDING IN ITS TRACKS

(Mr. HOYER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I had not intended to give a 1-minute, but I hear this carping about the balanced budget amendment. Twelve out of the last 14 years, we have had a Republican President. Not once, not once did any one of those Republican Presidents submit a balanced budget to the Congress of the United States, not once.

Second, one person, from 1982 to 1989, could have stopped spending in its tracks: Ronald Reagan.

And from 1989 to January 1993, one person, one person, one person could have stopped spending in its tracks: George Bush.

We went from a budget deficit of \$945 billion in 1980 to a budget deficit of \$4.5 trillion, 12 years into Republican leadership of the country.

CONGRESS HAS AUTHORITY FOR SPENDING THE MONEY

(Mr. CHAMBLISS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. Speaker, I came here with a 1-minute speech on unfunded mandates, but as I just listened to my colleague from the other

side of the aisle, I cannot help but ask one question. That is: How much money can the President of the United States spend? The Congress of the United States has authority for spending money.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. CHAMBLISS. No, I will not.

THE AMERICAN PEOPLE WANT A BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT

(Mr. WELDON of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WELDON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I too rise to speak on the issue of the recent quote from our Secretary of Labor, where he said the President is against simply balancing the budget. I believe the American people have clearly spoken this year that they really want serious action, and the fact that they have elected, for the first time in 40 years, a Republican House of Representatives, they are expecting and demanding serious action be taken on this issue of a deficit.

People are concerned; they are concerned about the future for themselves, for their children and their grandchildren. To hear our Secretary of Labor stating that the goal of the balanced budget "is not my goal," and the President is against simply balancing the budget, Mr. Speaker, I believe is a grave disappointment, and the American people need to speak to our President, they need to speak to our Secretary of Labor so that they get the message.

The people want the budget balanced.

WE NEED TO MAKE TOUGH CHOICES TO BALANCE OUR BUDGET

(Mr. GRAHAM asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. Speaker, I too rise to speak on an important topic to everybody in this Nation; that is, the balanced budget amendment.

I will comment on what my colleague across the aisle said. If you want to blame people, that is fine, there is plenty of blame to go around. The only thing the balanced budget threatens is politicians' ability to spend money beyond their means. We simply cannot write bad checks up here and get away with it.

If you want to stop that at home, let people know that you want a bad check from the Congress, and that would be the only one I know who is against a balanced budget amendment.

When we do that, and I hope we do, we have to make some hard choices. The National Corporation for Public Broadcasting, PBS, and the National Endowment for the Arts are things that mean a lot to me personally. But when it comes time to balance the

budget, we are going to have to say "no" to groups of people we have never said "no" to before.

That is what you do every day at home, you have to do things that you have to do within your budget constraints; you have to say "no" to yourself. That is a new and novel idea up here, to say "no."

But let the great debate begin, once the balanced budget amendment passes, I hope we will have the courage to say "no," even to worthwhile projects.

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PROVIDING FOR LUMP SUM PAY- MENT FOR ACCRUED ANNUAL LEAVE TO ELIGIBLE FORMER EMPLOYEES OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on House Oversight be discharged from further consideration of the resolution (H. Res. 35) providing for payment of a lump sum for accrued annual leave to eligible former employees of the House of Representatives, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DREIER). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, reserving the right to object, under my reservation, I will be glad to yield to the gentleman from California [Mr. THOMAS], the chairman of the Committee on House Oversight, for the purpose of explaining the objectives of this legislation.

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. HOYER. I yield to the gentleman from California.

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Maryland [Mr. HOYER] for yielding, and I would tell my colleague that the House Republican transition team has developed a plan for wholesale restructuring of the administration of the House officer. As the gentleman knows, the restructuring involves the transfers of various functions of the new House officers with clear probability of consolidation, reclassification and, to a certain extent, elimination of positions that are under the Committee on House Oversight's jurisdiction.

House rules adopted on opening day, January 4, 1995, require that committee staff be reduced by one-third from corresponding levels in the 103d Congress. In addition to that, three committees have been eliminated. Because of this the Speaker has publicly announced his intention to provide a mechanism for the payment of accrued leave for up to 30 days for departing committee and administrative support

employees. Currently there is no provision in House rules, or in public law, for the lump sum payment of accrued leave, and on January 11, 1995, as the gentleman well knows, the Committee on House Oversight passed a motion to instruct the chairman of the committee to introduce this particular resolution that is in front of us.

The resolution that we are looking at, House Resolution 35, authorizes compensation to departing committee and administrative support employees in the form of a lump sum payment for any accrued leave, up to a maximum of 30 days, as certified by their committee chairmen or the relevant employing authority. It also allows Members, not just committees, but Members, in this Congress to compensate any departing personal office staff for any annual leave accrued under each Member's office policy. Any employee who is rehired in the legislative branch within 30 days will not receive that accrued leave payment since there was a simple interruption of employment rather than termination.

Accrued leave compensation for departing committee staff will be paid out of the appropriate House account. Compensation for departing Member office employees will be paid from the Member's 1995 clerk hire account. Compensation for departing administrative support employees will be paid from funds already appropriated for the relevant employing authority for fiscal year 1995 operations. Further, any committee or administrative support employee who is terminated prior to July 1, 1995, as a result of the continuing restructuring will also be entitled to compensation under this resolution for accrued leave up to 30 days.

I will also tell the gentleman that there is an amendment at the desk, which I will offer at the appropriate time, which makes a date change in the resolution from January 3, 1995, which was the date in the motion that passed the committee, to December 31, 1994. It was not the intent of the committee to exclude from eligibility for accrued leave payments those employees who may have been taken off the payroll between December 31 and January 3, and so the amendment simply backs up the time from January 3 to include December 31, January 1, and January 2.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, further reserving the right to object, I want to congratulate the chairman of the Committee on House Oversight for bringing this legislation forward. There have been a lot of discussions. We have a lot of individuals who, as a result of the changeover in terms of the Republican leadership of the House of Representatives, there has been a substantial change of personnel. This policy was very important, in my opinion, and shared on this side of the aisle, and shared, I think, in a bipartisan fashion to treat those departing employees

fairly so that in, at minimum, they received consideration for the annual leave they had accrued during the course of their service for the Congress and for individual members, and I congratulate the gentleman from California [Mr. THOMAS] for his leadership in this effort in a bipartisan fashion.

We have adopted this; it is a good policy.

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. HOYER. I yield to the gentleman from California.

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Maryland [Mr. HOYER] for yielding, and I do want to underscore the fact that, as the gentleman knows, and he was very cooperative in moving this forward, we have actually extended this policy beyond the specific discussion of those committee and administrative personnel who were leaving to make sure that the Members' personnel offices were treated in a similar fashion. Since there is no policy on the books, this is a policy which will now be established which I do believe is useful, not only in the transition, but in the professional handling of staff which will be further seen in the bill on accountability to come up just after this, and I thank the gentleman.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, further reserving the right to object, I understand the gentleman has no further speakers on this issue. If that is the case, I will withdraw my reservation of objection.

Mr. Speaker, I withdraw my reservation of objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 35

Resolved,

SECTION 1. LUMP-SUM PAYMENT FOR ACCRUED ANNUAL LEAVE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—An eligible employee of the House of Representatives—

(1) who is separated from employment involuntarily;

(2) whose last day of employment is during the period beginning on January 3, 1995, and ending on June 30, 1995; and

(3) who is not reemployed by the House of Representatives, the Senate, or an agency of the legislative branch within 30 days after such last day of employment;

shall be paid a lump sum for the accrued annual leave of the employee.

(b) PAYMENT.—The lump sum—

(1) shall be paid, as certified under subsection (c), in an amount equal to the value of the total accrued annual leave of the employee or the value of 30 days of accrued annual leave of the employee, whichever is less;

(2) shall be paid—

(A) for clerk hire employees, from the clerk hire allowance of the Member for calendar year 1995;

(B) for committee employees, from amounts appropriated for committees; and

(C) for other employees, from amounts appropriated to the employing authority for fiscal year 1995; and

(3) shall be computed using the rate of pay in effect with respect to the employee on the last day of employment of the employee.

(c) CERTIFICATION.—For purposes of this resolution, accrued annual leave of an employee shall be certified by the appropriate employing authority—

(1) as of December 31, 1994, in the case of an employee whose last day of employment is January 3, 1995; and

(2) as of the last day of employment of the employee, in the case of an employee whose last day of employment is after January 3, 1995, and before July 1, 1995.

SEC. 2. REGULATIONS.

The Committee on House Oversight shall have authority to prescribe regulations to carry out this resolution.

SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.

As used in this resolution—

(1) the term "eligible employee" means, with respect to the House of Representatives, an employee whose pay is disbursed by the Clerk of the House of Representatives or the Chief Administrative Officer of the House of Representatives, as applicable, except that such term does not include—

(A) an employee under the clerk hire allowance whose appointing Member is not a Member of the House of Representatives in the One Hundred Fourth Congress; or

(B) a uniformed or civilian support employee under the Capitol Police Board; and

(2) The term "agency of the legislative branch" means the Office of the Architect of the Capitol, the Botanic Garden, the General Accounting Office, the Government Printing Office, the Library of Congress, the Office of Technology Assessment, and the Congressional Budget Office.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. THOMAS

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. Speaker, I offer an amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Amendment offered by Mr. THOMAS: Page 1, line 9, strike out "January 3, 1995" and insert in lieu thereof "December 31, 1994".

Page 3, beginning on line 5, strike out "January 3, 1995" and insert in lieu thereof "December 31, 1994, or January 1, 2, or 3, 1995".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California [Mr. THOMAS].

The amendment was agreed to.

The resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the provisions of clause 5 of rule I, the Chair announces that he will postpone further proceedings today on the motion to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote is objected to under clause 4 of rule XV.

Such rollcall vote, if postponed, will be taken after debate has concluded on the motion to suspend the rules, but not before 5 p.m. today.