

wealthy of America. And guess what? The senior citizens, the average senior citizens, earn under \$25,000 a year and pay more than \$3,000 a year in out-of-pocket expenses for their medical care already.

Oh, the AMA jumped on board. I think it is important to note that the AMA, the American Medical Association, stood back from the Republican plan until they got a promise that their fees would be OK. They are going to be OK. They are going to be OK. So they jumped on. Remember, the American Medical Association and 97 percent of Republicans opposed Medicare when it was started in 1965.

This is no shock or surprise. A group that never supported Medicare in the first place jumps on board and plans to demolish it, unnecessarily so, to cut \$270 billion to give \$245 billion to the wealthiest among us.

Now, the Republicans say, "You Democrats, you won't face up to the fact that Medicare is in trouble." This is what they say. They run ads, "Congressman that and Senator that, Democrats don't understand it." We understand it because we are the ones who acted responsibly since 1970 when the trustees started telling us each and every year we had to make adjustments.

For example, in 1970 they said, "We're going to be insolvent in 1972. We have to fix the problem." We fixed it. Almost every year, except a couple times, we were told the Medicare fund had to be made solvent, and every single year we always made it solvent, no problem. As a matter of fact, we just acted in the last Congress to make it solvent. We could not get any Republican help on that. We voted it in in the Democratic Congress.

So they tell you that this is a once-in-a-lifetime problem, and we better act. This has happened year after year after year. The trustees told us the fund was going to be insolvent. Why? Why? Because people are getting older and medical technology is getting better, and, yes, we have to adjust the fund.

So do not be taken in with the argument that Medicare is in desperate trouble and we must cut \$270 billion from it. It is not so. It is not so.

How much do we have to cut from Medicare to make it work? We have done it all the time. We fixed the fund continually throughout these years. What is it going to take? We have a number. We know what it is, and that number is \$89 billion. That is what we have to find to cut out of Medicare to make it safe, to make it solvent and whole to the year 2006, and then, Mr. President, I say to my friends, we will be doing what we should be doing.

So I guess what I need to sum up with is this: I represent more senior citizens than anyone else in the Senate, except for the senior Senator from California, Senator FEINSTEIN. Why? Because we have 32 million people in our State and they are worried. And

they are worried. The average woman over 65 in this country who is on Social Security lives on \$8,500 a year, and she is already spending \$3,000 out of pocket on her medical care. Is this the way we honor our seniors? Is this the kind of legacy we want to leave?

And if this is not bad enough, you should see their Medicaid plan. Two-thirds of our seniors in nursing homes are on Medicaid. Two-thirds of our seniors. And do you know what the Republicans have voted to do? They have voted to decimate that program. The hospitals in my State and every other State are up in arms, the Governors are up in arms—Republican Governors are up in arms—because on top of these Medicare cuts that I showed you, there is \$182 billion of Medicaid cuts, and while they are at it, they have repealed the national standards for nursing homes.

We are going to go back to the dark ages, to the secret tortures of bed sores and sexual abuse and beatings and druggings. Why do you think we have national standards? We did not pass it here for fun. We passed it because of the outrageous things we knew were going on in nursing homes. And do you know what we said? The seniors are a national priority, and we are not going to leave it up to 50 different States.

We have standards for airplanes. We do not leave it up to 50 different States. We have standards for drugs, because we do not want our people poisoned. We do not leave it up to 50 different States. Why on Earth in God's name would we say that we should cancel nursing home standards and leave it up to the States when we know the problems we have and the agonies that our families went through before we had national standards?

Now, look, I am for change as much as anybody else, but I am for good change, I am for positive change, I am for reasonable change. I am not just for change to say I have changed the world.

The House Speaker says he came to bring a revolution—a revolution. Maybe there are some places in our society where we need to have a revolution. I could think of a couple, but I have to tell you, not in the nursing homes of this country do we want to bring a revolution and cancel all the standards and have the secret horrors of the past reappear.

I will tell you, Senator MIKULSKI said she will chain herself to her desk if they try to repeal the spousal impoverishment laws. She can add me to her chain, because I am not leaving this floor if we cancel nursing home standards, and I am not leaving this floor if we now say to the grandpas who put their wives into nursing homes, "We're going after your house, sir, we're going after your car, and you're not going to be able to earn any money, sir. We're taking it all." And once they get through with that, they are going to go after the kids.

That is not a revolution of which I want to be part. That is a revolution of which to be ashamed. That is a revolution that goes back to the dark days of the past. It is like the orphanages. We are going to go back to orphanages, going to go back to secret tortures of nursing homes. What kind of vision is that for our Nation? We must do better than that.

So, yes, we need to act. We can take \$89 billion out of Medicare and solve the problem, but we do not have to cut out \$270 billion to funnel into a tax cut for the wealthiest among us. We must not go after Medicaid and destroy the program and have a situation where our moms and dads and grandmas and grandpas are in deep, deep trouble, one is thrown into a nursing home, the other is thrown into the poor house. We must do better than that, I say to my friends, and we can if we sit down across the table and work together.

I am from one State that will really bear the brunt of these changes. I am willing to sit with my colleagues on the other side of the aisle from night to the next morning to the next night to the next morning until we reach a compromise.

Back off of that tax cut, limit it to the middle class, and then we will have some dollars that we can offset these cruel and outrageous cuts. Back off your plans to destroy education and environmental protection. If they back off their tax cuts, we can do it, and I hope we can come together and do it.

I look forward to working with my colleagues to ensure that this extreme revolution is rolled back today before it hurts our people. I yield the floor.

Several Senators addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

CUBAN LIBERTY AND DEMOCRATIC SOLIDARITY [LIBERTAD] ACT OF 1995

The Senate continued with the consideration of the bill.

AMENDMENT NO. 2915

(Purpose: To express the sense of the Senate regarding consideration of a constitutional amendment to limit congressional terms)

Mr. ASHCROFT. Mr. President, the debate on sanctions against Castro's Cuba is an important one. But so is the issue for which I rise today.

It had been my understanding—and the understanding of most term-limits advocates—that the Senate would be devoting all of today and Friday to the issue of term limits for Members of Congress.

But that is not the case—the debate and vote have been delayed. I believe this delay to be a mistake, and today I look to establish a record of support for term limits through a simply-worded sense-of-the-Senate resolution.

This amendment will state a single, simple idea—that the Senate should pass term limits. It is an important

signal that the Senate is a new and different body than it was just 10 months ago.

The results will not be binding, but they will be revealing. This vote will show the American people, who supports term limits and who does not. That is important, for identifying support now is vital to achieving victory later.

Last fall, the American people sent a message as strong as it was clear: They said they wanted politicians to seek fundamental change in the way that Washington works and the way that Washington looks. And they entrusted Republicans to initiate those changes.

No issue is more symbolic of changing Washington than term limits—they are the foundation of the people's agenda. That is why efforts to again delay the first-ever vote on term limits are so disturbing.

The delay on term limits sends the wrong message at the wrong time. With Ross Perot experiencing yet another political rebirth; with trust for Congress at another all-time low; with voter anger at record highs; what the American people want to see are real efforts at reform. This attempted delay signals the admission of defeat before a fight. That is not the kind of message we should be sending.

The American people are expressing serious reservations about our ability to get things done. We must show them that we have not given up.

The American people want us to fight on term limits. As you can see, Americans in 23 States have fought for term limits. Those States can be seen on the map behind me in red. States with more than 100 million people have voted on and passed term limits, surely 100 U.S. Senators can find the time to register their views on this issue.

Why are term limits so important? Because they are our last, best hope to change a fundamentally corrupt system. In this reform, the American people see the possibility of reining in congressional power by restoring competitive elections—franking, fundraising, and so forth; reconstituting congressional accountability—turnover, and so forth; reinvigorating a Congress that's lost touch—new ideas, new people, and so forth.

Unfortunately, the people's clear will is in direct conflict with the National Government's rulings.

A year ago, the Clinton administration argued before the Supreme Court that term limits were unconstitutional.

On May 23, in *U.S. Term Limits versus Thornton*, the Supreme Court agreed with the Clinton administration and denied the people of America the right to limit congressional terms.

To all of the voters in the States highlighted in red behind me, the Clinton administration and the Court said, "Tough luck, we know better."

Our Nation's executive and judicial branches have spoken—they oppose term limits. The only hope left is our

legislative branch—this Congress. And for this Congress, the only option the Court left was a daunting one—a constitutional amendment requiring two-thirds ratification by Congress.

Mr. President, amending the Constitution is never easy, and following the House's rejection of term limits and the Supreme Court's ruling on them, many are saying that the fight is over—that it may be a good political issue for the 1996 election, but a deadend for this Congress.

In fact, many of them have come to me and said "John, we appreciate what you've done, but we have given up on the Congress."

Well, let me just say something to all the advocates across the country whose cause is my concern. I will continue to fight—fight to ensure that the 228 names listed behind me, including mine, are once again subjected to the will of the people; fight for this idea that has become an ideal; and fight to ensure that this Congress will not only vote on term limits, but pass a resolution restoring the American people's right to limit congressional terms.

Mr. President, Lincoln said, "Let us have faith that right makes might, and in that faith, let us, to the end, dare to do our duty as we understand it." Today, the will of the American people stands in direct contrast to the will of the executive and judicial branches of our Government. But I know that they too believe that right makes might and that they are depending on us to dare to do our duty.

I know that this is an issue that makes some of my fellow Senators uncomfortable. One need only look at the endless delay in consideration of term limits to confirm this suspicion. This, however, is an issue of enormous importance to the American people. They will hold us accountable—they will remember.

I made a promise during my campaign last year. A promise that I would pursue certain issues with determination and discipline. Term limits on Members of Congress was one of those issues. And I intend to fulfill my promise.

And so today, I offer a simple sense-of-the-Senate resolution. At issue here is whether the Senate will "pass a constitutional amendment limiting congressional terms." And while the amendment is not binding, Mr. President, it will be revealing.

For an overwhelming majority of Americans want term limits. We shall now see how many in the U.S. Senate share their desire.

I send the amendment to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Missouri [Mr. ASHCROFT] proposes an amendment numbered 2915.

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

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

The amendment is as follows:

At the appropriate place, add the following:

SEC. . SENSE OF THE SENATE REGARDING CONSIDERATION OF A CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT TO LIMIT CONGRESSIONAL TERMS.

It is the sense of the Senate that the United States Senate should pass, prior to the end of 1995, a constitutional amendment limiting the number of terms Members of Congress can serve.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 2916 TO AMENDMENT NO. 2915

(Purpose: To express the sense of the Senate regarding consideration of a constitutional amendment to limit congressional terms)

Mr. ASHCROFT. Mr. President, I send to the desk a second amendment regarding a constitutional amendment to limit congressional terms.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Missouri [Mr. ASHCROFT] proposes an amendment numbered 2916 to amendment No. 2915.

Mr. ASHCROFT. Mr. President, 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:

Strike all after the word "SEC. ." and insert the following:

SENSE OF THE SENATE REGARDING CONSIDERATION OF A CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT TO LIMIT CONGRESSIONAL TERMS.

It is the Sense of the Senate that the United States Senate should pass, prior to the end of the First Session of the 104th Congress, a constitutional amendment limiting the number of terms Members of Congress can serve.

Mr. ASHCROFT. Thank you for this opportunity. I yield the floor.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I came forward to speak on something else, but I am curious and interested on the term-limit issue. The question being proposed: Should there be term limits? There are term limits in this country. The term limits are 6 years for a U.S. Senator and 2 years for a Member of the U.S. House of Representatives.

Should someone be elected to the House who becomes, from their experience, a slothful, indolent oaf of some sort, voters very quickly in 2 years in the House and 6 years in the Senate can send them into complete and immediate retirement.

There are term limits. I think the question the Senator is proposing is what kind of term limits should exist.

I respectfully say I do not spend a lot of time speaking about this subject, but the retirement of SAM NUNN in the Senate this week ought to remind all of us of something important once again. It is important to remember that you can put a half dozen new people in a basket in this Chamber who have been around 6 months, 9 months,

or a year—that would include myself when I came—and you would not have the experience SAM NUNN gained during the final 12 of his 24 years in the U.S. Senate in dealing with international and defense issues.

That is a debate we will have at some later point. I think it does not favor this country to suggest somehow that we should have prohibited this country from the service given by Calhoun, Clay, Webster, and, yes, Goldwater and Humphrey and DOLE and others. These are people who spent a lot of time serving the public interests, amassing a great deal of experience and served this country well.

I do not spend a minute worrying or thinking about term limits. That is up to the American people. If they choose to change the Constitution to limit their choice in a different way, they have every right to do that, and will do that if that is their pleasure.

KEEP BLOCK GRANT MONEY AT HOME

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I came to the floor to speak about another subject. I was here when Senator BOXER from California spoke on Medicare and Medicaid, and I shall not do that except to say this: I am intending at some point to gather together the legislation that we are block granting back to all the Governors in the States. We are doing this under the presumption that somehow the Governors are able to discern better how to spend all this money—Medicaid, a whole range of areas, tens of billions of dollars that will be sent back to the States through block grants.

They will send back less money but block grant it with fewer strings. The presumption is that the money will go from the taxpayers to the Federal Government; we send it to the Governors, saying, "go ahead and spend it."

My theory is, why put miles on all this money? Why send a tax dollar from Bismarck, ND, to Washington, DC, only to send it back to the Governor of North Dakota? Why do you want to send it from California to Washington to send it back to the Governor? Why not keep it at home? Want to block grant? Why collect it and have it run through Washington? That is like passing an ice cube around. Why lose money? Why not say to the Governors, "Look, if you want to do this, God love you, God please you, you do it. You raise the money. You tax the folks in your State, and you spend it."

I tell you, that is the best way to have lack of accountability of Federal funds quickly. That is, for the Federal Government to tax the citizens, get the money and give it to another level of government someplace else and say, "By the way, here is the pot of money. We tied it with a bow. No strings attached. You go ahead and spend it as you wish." Do you want to have horror stories, in 3 years, 5 years, 10 years, about how the taxpayers' money is

spent? You just move free money around and have Governors spending money they did not raise.

I am going to offer some legislation here that says whatever it is you are block granting, let us take all of that and reduce the Federal taxes by that amount and say to the Governors: You do it. Raise your own money and spend your own money. It is a far more effective and far more efficient way to do business. That is for another day. But I intend to do that because I do not believe that block grants of the type we are talking about serve the taxpayers' interests. Let them do it at home. Let them raise the money at home and let them also decide how to spend the money at home.

Mr. President, I understand another Senator wishes to speak on the legislation that is on the floor. Because of that, so Senator KASSEBAUM has the opportunity, I would like to take just about 5 or 8 minutes, and I will not extend beyond that, so I can finish. I was intending to speak longer, but I will shorten it so the Senator has an opportunity to speak on the bill.

Will that be acceptable to the Senator from Kansas?

Mrs. KASSEBAUM. Mr. President, that is fine. I will be happy to wait.

THE TRADE DEFICIT

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, actually I was here before the Senator from Ohio rose, but I was waiting to speak on the issue of the President of Mexico visiting Washington, DC, and the news reports about that. I want to talk just a bit about it, because here is what is happening.

President Zedillo, of Mexico, visits Washington, DC. There is a state dinner at the White House for the President. I am sure the President of Mexico is a wonderful person. He and President Clinton are talking about trade between our two countries; they are dining together and talking about our mutual interests.

Then we have press stories. This is yesterday's press story. It says, Mexico, in fact, has made a \$700 million payment toward the \$12.5 billion debt that it owes this country from the loans we gave Mexico. In fact, they made the \$700 million payment early, and is that not a wonderful thing, that Mexico paid early?

That is a nice thing. I am pleased about that. But I would like to ask a question of both President Clinton and the President of Mexico. And I will ask a question, because President Clinton and senior trade officials in the administration say that NAFTA, the trade agreement with Mexico, "has created 340,000 jobs in the United States." This says, "The senior U.S. official, who asked not to be identified, said NAFTA, the trade agreement with Mexico, has created 340,000 jobs in the United States."

I can understand why this person did not want to be identified. I can under-

stand why somebody who puts out this kind of nonsense does not want to be identified. But let me remind those who have dinner together and talk about the United States-Mexico relationship, that the year before we had a free trade agreement with Mexico we had nearly a \$2 billion trade surplus. In fact, the year before that it was a nearly \$6 billion trade surplus with Mexico. When we had NAFTA up for consideration here in the U.S. Senate, the surplus was nearly a \$2 billion.

Guess what? This year that nearly \$2 billion surplus with Mexico is going to go to a \$15 billion—some estimates say \$18 billion—trade deficit. We pass NAFTA with Mexico, we have a \$2 billion trade surplus, and 2 years later we have a \$15 to \$18 billion trade deficit with Mexico. Then we are told this creates jobs. Are people drinking from the wrong jug someplace? You create jobs when you have an \$18 billion deficit? Of course you do not create jobs. You lose jobs.

Here is what we lost. The promise by these economists who flail their arms around was that we would have 220,000 new jobs if we just pass NAFTA—exactly the opposite has happened. We have lost about 220,000 jobs as a result of that trade agreement. So, I say to President Clinton and President Zedillo and others, that when we talk about these trade relationships, let us get the facts straight.

Why does it matter? It matters because this relates to jobs, opportunity, and growth in our country. It is not just Mexico. It is Japan. It is China. It is a whole series of problems we have in trade. We have a \$65 billion trade deficit with Japan. It is an outrage. American jobs are moving overseas wholesale. American corporations, as all of us know, have decided we are going to allow our marketplace to be a sponge for Japanese goods and Chinese goods and, yes, Mexican goods.

When these American companies produce to sell elsewhere, they decide to produce in Sri Lanka and Bangladesh and China and Indonesia. Why? Because you can hire cheap labor in those places. So an American company shuts down an American plant, moves the jobs overseas, produces something for pennies an hour—often hiring kids to do it—and then ships the product back to Pittsburgh or Fargo or Denver, and says, "Isn't this wonderful? Our profits are up."

Yes, your profits are up—and our jobs are gone. Then we measure all this. The Nation's leaders measure all this with a thing called gross domestic product, GDP.

It has been a big year for GDP, I tell all these economists. Do you know why it's been a big year for GDP? Because we have had all these hurricanes. Do you know, when you have hurricanes, the GDP increases? I bet nobody knows that. Only those folks in the Federal Reserve Board, with thick glasses, who live in concrete bunkers and count all the beans know that. They know you