

districts named in this subsection, except the western district of Michigan, occurring 5 years or more after the confirmation date of the judge named to fill a temporary judgeship created by this Act, shall not be filled. The first vacancy in the office of district judge in the western district of Michigan, occurring after December 1, 1995, shall not be filled."

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I move to reconsider the vote by which the bill was passed.

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

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, on behalf of the leader, I want to announce that there will be no further votes tonight.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that there now be a period for the transaction of routine morning business with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

Mr. FORD addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kentucky.

PRESIDENTIAL BUDGETS

Mr. FORD. Mr. President, I hear all this talk about the budget every day and everybody says the same thing. We could probably just have a tape recording of what we said yesterday, and we get the same thing again today.

Senators act like this is the first budget that has ever been brought before the House or the Senate submitted by a President that has been voted on that did not get any votes.

The distinguished Senator from Mississippi talked about 96 to nothing or 99 to nothing. Remember Ronald Reagan's 425 to nothing in the House. I believe that is correct. I see him shaking his head. So there have been a lot of budgets that have been dead on arrival. Even the Republicans have voted against a Republican President's budget. So this is not new. Senators act like this is the first time for it to ever happen, this is the worst fellow that has ever been up there.

If turning budgets down makes a bad President, then we have had some Republicans up there who had their budgets turned down, so they were not very good Presidents that we are now bragging about.

One statement has been made here that we ought to quit this smoke and mirrors, and we ought to sit down and we ought to do it rather than beating up on the President. You have responsibility; I have responsibility; we all have responsibility to try to get it worked out. We take CBO figures. We take CBO figures and we get letters from the Director of CBO which state the Republican budget is not in balance by \$105 billion.

We did not select that chairman. The majority selected that chairman. That chairman sent us the letter, and we now have it, which says the budget that is being proposed is \$105 billion short.

So what I wish to do, Mr. President, is not stop the Pell grants for my State. I do not want to reduce or eliminate the help for 55,000 higher education students in my State. We are in a global market. We are in global competition. Education is the great equalizer. But oh, no, we are increasing, you hear from the other side, Pell grants by \$100. That may be true, but you are eliminating—if you are not eligible for \$600, you are eliminated from the rolls. So in Kentucky we lose 6,000 Pell grants next year alone—next year alone.

So it just is a little bit disconcerting to me to hear all of these things, and the public ought to be quite confused, quite confused because you get a CBO letter with a gold seal on it that says the budget is balanced, and the next day you get one that says it is not—from the same office, signed by the same person as it relates to whether Social Security is in the trust fund and loaned or it is in the general fund. It cannot be both places. You can say what you want to and argue all day. I do not believe you can find a jury that would say in this particular case that it is both. You can borrow from it and spend it, but the assets are over in Social Security. It cannot be used twice. And so we do not have it.

So the point I am trying to make here, Mr. President, is that we can take care of Medicare without cutting it \$270 billion; \$89 billion is enough. We do not need to put the middle-income people in a problem, and the middle-income people, \$35,000 to \$70,000, is where I would say they are as it relates to Medicaid and nursing homes because you are going to run out of money. That is going to fall on the shoulders of the sons and daughters of the \$35,000 to \$70,000 income families at some point when their parents are in a nursing home on Medicaid and the phone rings about the latter part of July, 1st of August saying, "Come and get dad; come and get mom; we are out of money."

And you change the rules in this bill on regulations on nursing homes. You change the rules as they relate to regulations on nursing homes. Let States do it. The reason the Federal Government is in the business of regulating nursing homes is because the States had it. And the statement has been made, OK, just sedate the elderly; you can handle them easier; then you have fewer employees, you will need fewer employees.

Well, that is just one giant indication that we are headed back to the same place we were when we had to take over the regulation of the nursing homes.

One of the things that we see coming down the pike is hiding the sale of power marketing administrations in

the House bill on page about 470-something where it is now the Secretary of Energy, Interior and Army cannot sell PMA's, but in the House bill you repeal those three and then you instruct those three Secretaries to have a report on how to sell PMA's by the end of next year. And now you have put it in the appropriations bill, and those that are opposed to the sale of PMA's, you better go look at the appropriations bill, Interior bill, and see what they have done there and refuse to sign the conference report until the PMA sale is in that appropriations bill.

I see the Senator looking at his watch. I will quit any time he wants me to.

I yield the floor.

Mr. THOMAS addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. THOMAS. I would have looked at my watch sooner.

Mr. FORD. I would not have quit sooner, though.

FOUR CHANGES TO BE MADE

Mr. THOMAS. I want to talk a little bit about the business that we are approaching this week. It seems to me it is the most important opportunity that we have had in 25 years, and the Senator and the previous speakers talked about the reasons why we cannot make these changes and the reasons why this is wrong and the reasons why it has to be some other way. The real test is that we have been talking that way for 25 years, and the results speak for themselves.

We find all kinds of reasons why we cannot balance the budget. So what has the result been? A \$5 trillion debt. It has resulted in the interest on the debt being the largest single line item in the budget. But we have been talking that same talk for 25 years: Cannot do it.

I wish to talk a little bit about why we should do it and why we have the greatest opportunity we have had in a very long time to do the same, to complete at least four things that I think most of us, particularly most of us that are new here, apparently came here to do, and it is the first time there has been a chance to do that, and I wish to talk about the benefits of doing it.

They are four changes that need to be made and four changes that can be made in the next couple of weeks, fundamental changes, not messing around the edges, not talking about change but never doing it. All of us have watched this Government for a long time. Most of us have watched this Congress talk about it; we want change. The fact is, it has not changed. The fact is, the debt has continued to grow. So we have a chance to make some fundamental changes, to not only turn around the arithmetic but to turn around the morality and the fiscal responsibility of making this Government sound within. Maybe more importantly than that, shaping the Government in the way that you would like to

see it be shaped when we go into a new century, that you would like to see it be shaped when you turn it over to your kids or your grandkids.

Do we want a Government that is \$5 trillion, \$6 trillion, \$7 trillion in debt? I do not think so. Despite all of the rhetoric, despite all the talk every year, the same thing has gone on, and I guess that is how you really measure it—by results, not by talk, not by whether it is CBO or whether it is OMB, but what are the results. And the results are that the debt has gone up each year.

So we have a chance to make fundamental change, fundamental change in at least four areas. One of them is to balance the budget, a change you would not think we would even need to make, a change to make income and outgo the same. Can you imagine that? That is the way it has to be with families, the way it has to be with businesses. But we have not done that. We have spent more than we have taken in, and we put it on the credit card.

Someone asked recently in a letter to a column called Ask Marilyn, and they talked about the problem with a credit card.

Let me quote from it.

Let's suppose you have an income of \$125,760 that comes not from work but from the contributions of all your friends and relatives who work. You're not satisfied with what \$125,760 can buy this year, so you prepare for yourself a budget of \$146,060 and charge the \$20,300 difference to your credit card, on which you're already carrying an unpaid balance of \$452,248—boosting that to \$472,548, on which you pay interest daily.

Multiply that little scenario by 10 million, and you have the national budget.

The second thing we can do is strengthen and save Medicare. We can do that. We can do that. Reform welfare, we can pass that here. We can reform welfare for the very first time. We can reduce the burden to taxpayers.

Now, why is this the right thing to do? It is because that is what we said we would do when we came. That is what we told voters we would do when we came. That was in the contract for America. The President said he was going to do those four things when he ran. But he did not do it. So, that is what we need to do. These are key issues and these are attainable goals.

There is great opposition to change always, mostly from people who have put the programs that are now in place in place, from people who talk about the failure of the present program and use as an example what is wrong now and the reason why we cannot change based on programs that are already in place and have been put in place by the folks that are opposing change. That is where we are.

So, we need to make changes if we expect some different results. But guess what? Folks want to continue to do the same thing and anticipate that the results will be different. It will never happen.

What are good things to be gained? Of course, we balance the budget. We will do something about that interest that is going on. The largest line item can go to something else, can be used for tax deductions, can be used for many things, put more money into the private sector because it will not take it out of the private sector to fulfill this. It would change the interest rates, reduce the interest rates. But maybe most of all it shows some responsibility in fiscal responsibility in terms of our future and the future of our kids.

Welfare: We need to change the pattern of welfare. Everybody believes we ought to have welfare programs to help the people who need help, but then to help them back in, help them back in to the private economy. We need to move it to the States. The States are the laboratories that develop effective distribution systems.

Medicare: We all want Medicare to continue to serve the elderly. It will not unless we make changes. There is no question that you have to make a change; there is some question, I suppose, how you do it. But it will go broke if we do not do something. We need to have choices. Why should not the elderly have choices? We have been able to contain some, the increased costs in health care costs—not in Medicare, not in Medicaid. It continues to go up at 10 percent. We can do that.

Tax reductions: We ought to leave more money into the pockets of families. We ought to leave more money in businesses to be reinvested in jobs for the economy. We have a chance to do these things and a chance to do them in the next 2 or 3 weeks. Mr. President, I hope that my associates will take that opportunity and cause that to happen.

I yield the floor.

Mr. ASHCROFT addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

SAVING OUR CHILDREN

Mr. ASHCROFT. Mr. President, this week we will have an opportunity to save our children's future. Time and time again there are individuals that have come to the floor of the Senate to speak to this deliberative body about the rights of the children. But the truth of the matter is, we have been spending the inheritance of our children, not just their inheritance, but also we have been spending their yet unearned wages at an alarming rate. We need to begin consideration of a budget reconciliation bill which indeed will save our children from having their resources consumed in advance of their having earned them.

Our current national debt is \$5 trillion. Children born this year will have to pay interest of about \$200,000 over their lifetime. That is just interest—not principal. When we think about the children, I think we ought to think carefully about what we do to the chil-

dren when we displace the costs of our consumption to the next generation, to the children born and yet unborn. For decades now the Federal Government has spent beyond its means and lived beyond its resources. It has done so at the expense of the next generation.

During the debate over the current plans to limit the size and growth in spending, I have been reminded of the philosopher's words, "They sought to heal by incantations a cancer which requires the surgeon's knife." We cannot react to the countries' fiscal crisis by saying a few rosy words. We cannot make a few incantations and heal the problem we have in terms of the finances and resources of this country. We need to take the surgeon's knife.

It is important to note that the surgeon's knife is an instrument of therapy, not an instrument of destruction. It is an instrument which will provide for better health. I believe we will do that, and we will make responsible—yes—difficult choices. We take the knife to the cancer and we take the knife where it is necessary to pare back the increase that would otherwise happen too frequently, with the kind of wasteful increase we have had in the past.

We have to stop an ever-increasing spiral of debt, a spiral which is a spiral of abuse against the next generation. In the past few months, we have made some difficult choices surrounded by the familiar incantations of those still clinging to the discredited and irresponsible philosophy of spending without consequence or budgeting without accountability.

Mr. President, I believe in the purpose for which we were sent to Washington. The people were demanding and expecting that we would balance the budget and they are expecting that we will end business as usual. They are expecting us to listen to them. We must continue. We have made progress, but we must continue on this historic journey toward meeting their demand—we represent them. We must fulfill their expectation by passing a balanced budget reconciliation bill that puts us on a path to fiscal responsibility.

Now, there are those who came here in this session of the Congress who decided that two rules have to be changed; therefore, we cannot call the budget balanced. They say now, we must use different figures, different procedures than we would have used in the past. I think it is time for us to balance the budget according to the rules and to get that behind us. There are other things we might do in the future to improve our fiscal health.

Let us take this directive from the American people. Let us balance the budget. We could put our heads in the sand rather than to face this Nation's fiscal realities. We could produce a plan, I suppose, that would allow minor changes. We could only tinker with the operations so that we stave off the Medicare bankruptcy for several months or a couple of years. We need