

Coast Guard provided by the conference—\$2.579 billion for operations and \$362 million for acquisition, construction and improvements—is well below the President's requests of \$2.618 billion for operations and \$428 million for acquisition, construction, and improvements.

The Coast Guard has always been able to do more with less, but I am concerned that this level of funding will be inadequate for the Coast Guard to continue successfully to perform important missions and operations. In addition, the conference report contains contradictory provisions concerning funding—the first provision, which I fully endorse, assumes that additional funding of \$300 million will be provided in the Department of Defense Appropriations Act for Coast Guard operations. The second provision, which I oppose, makes available at the discretion of the Secretary of Transportation the transfer of up to \$60 million to the FAA budget. I do not think setting up agencies within a Department to battle one another for funding is a wise course.

I am pleased to see that the conference agreement disallowed the closure of any Coast Guard multimission small boat stations for fiscal year 1996. While I recognize the necessity of the Coast Guard's streamlining efforts, I am worried that efforts to downsize field operations may unreasonably increase the threat to life, property, and the environment. I concur with the views expressed in the Senate Appropriations Committee report that cited the very real though intangible deterrence benefits of these stations. Combined with their direct benefits, I believe these outweigh the value of the management efficiencies and small budgetary savings that may result from their closure. I also agree with the conference report which stated that the Coast Guard's station closure methodology failed to fairly consider distinctions among small boat stations, such as water temperature and survival time. I have proposed provisions in the Coast Guard authorization bill that establish a more formal process for station closures and require the Coast Guard to take the appropriators' concerns into consideration while allowing the Coast Guard the flexibility to modify the levels of its resources as it sees fit.

Once again, I compliment and thank the Senators from Oregon and New Jersey for their leadership in developing this important legislation. While I would have liked for it to do more in some areas, it is a commendable attempt to meet our Nation's transportation needs within the budget limits allotted to them.

I would just like to finally publicly say I am deeply concerned, also, about the reductions in the Coast Guard. I know that the Coast Guard has accepted the Presidential directive and other directives to streamline and to reduce. Those reductions and that streamlining are good, and it is important. But I am convinced that measured

against the extraordinary increase in Coast Guard duties and responsibilities, we are asking them to do more than may be possible.

More than two-thirds of the total budget for the Coast Guard goes to operating expenses for public safety—the marine environment, to enforce laws and treaties, to maintain aids to navigation, to prevent illegal drug trafficking and illegal navigation, immigration, and also to preserve defense readiness. If you look at the increase in responsibility measured against the last 10 years of reduction in resources, once again I think we have to be very careful that we are not shortchanging ourselves.

Madam President, I yield the floor. I thank the Chair.

Mr. WELLSTONE addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

THE RECONCILIATION BILL

Mr. WELLSTONE. Madam President, I thank the Chair, and I will try to make this relatively brief. I know the presiding officer has a conference luncheon to go to.

Madam President, when I go back to teaching in 7 years, one of the classes that I am going to teach is going to focus on what happened on Friday night on the floor of the U.S. Senate. And I say this with a slight smile because you have to have a twinkle in your eye, but at the same time I say it with a tremendous amount of indignation.

In the dark of night my State of Minnesota was cut \$524 million in medical assistance for people in our State. I will come back to that in a moment.

Late afternoon and early evening I kept asking, "Where is the Finance Committee amendment on the formula?" After all, we are not just talking about formula, we are talking about people's lives. At 6 p.m., one version, 9 p.m., the final version. All of a sudden, back room decisions. No chance for review, no chance to talk to constituents. Some States come out doing very well. Texas gains \$5.2 billion; that is good for Texas. California loses \$4.2 billion; that is not so good for California. Then, in a departure from any rational allocation formula, the legislative language of the amendment contains "additional amounts," additional money. We are talking about people leveraging their votes for the following States:

We have \$63 million more for Arizona; \$250 million more for Florida; \$34 million more for Georgia; \$76 million more for Kentucky; \$181 million more for South Carolina; \$250 million more for the State of Washington. And then, at 9 p.m., new legislative language is released adding Vermont to the list, with an additional \$50 million.

Madam President, in the dark of night, a decision was made by somebody, and I came out on the floor at 9 o'clock and said, "Who made this deci-

sion? Who were the people that made this decision accountable to? What happened to my State of Minnesota? On top of \$2.4 billion of cuts in medical assistance, you now have cut my State by \$524 million more."

Madam President, the majority leader came out and said, "But Minnesota is doing better than in the House formula." That is true. There we were being cut \$3.5 billion. But we thought we had an understanding. We thought there was an agreement and the reductions had been reduced by \$1 billion and the Senate by \$2.4 billion. Then the majority leader said something to the effect, "Well, the Governor supports this."

Madam President, I am really pleased that the Governor of Minnesota does not support this. Governor Carlson is meeting with the majority leader. He is coming to Washington, DC, to try and find out what happened, and to advocate for our State, which is exactly what he should do. Whether we are Democrats or Republicans, we should be advocating for our States.

The most serious part of this decisionmaking process is—actually, there is an "A" and a "B" to the serious part. A, it is in the dark of the night, behind closed doors—decisionmaking, cutting deals, accountable to nobody, no review, no opportunity to talk to constituents. That is problem No. 1, regardless of what happened to different States.

Problem No. 2: My State was cut by \$524 million.

Problem No. 3: Let us translate the statistics in human terms. We have 425,000 recipients on what we call "medical assistance" in Minnesota; 300,000 of them are children. Sixty percent of our payments go to elderly and nursing homes. Many people with disabilities rely on this support so they can stay at home and not be institutionalized. We are projected to grow from 425,000 to 535,000 medical assistance recipients in the year 2002.

Madam President, I intend to fight this all the way. Minnesota was shafted in the dark of the night decisionmaking, and a lot of people in my State are going to be hurt. I am going to make sure this formula is reversed.

Madam President, I think the more people in the country get a chance to see what is in these budget bills, the more they are not going to like it. If the President is strong and he vetoes these bills—which he should—there is no Minnesota standard of fairness in these budget cuts—and the people have a chance to be engaged in this process. I am absolutely convinced that we can inject some fairness, some elementary basic Minnesota fairness, back into this process. But, for right now, I am not letting up. I heard the Senator from Florida give a brilliant speech Friday night. I say to my colleague from Florida, I am not letting up on this. I am fighting this all the way,

until Minnesota gets some fairness in this formula. I am not going to let folks, in a back room deal, shaft my State and a lot of the citizens in my State.

I am delighted that the Governor of Minnesota is going to join in this effort to make sure we get a fair formula.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will now stand in recess until the hour of 2:15.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:54 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m.; whereupon, the Senate reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. CRAIG).

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1996—CONFERENCE REPORT

The Senate continued with the consideration of the conference report.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the conference report. The yeas and nays have been ordered.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. LOTT. I announce that the Senator from Oregon [Mr. HATFIELD] is necessarily absent.

I further announce that, if present and voting, the Senator from Oregon [Mr. HATFIELD] would vote "yea."

Mr. FORD. I announce that the Senator from New Jersey [Mr. BRADLEY] is necessarily absent.

The result was announced—yeas 87, nays 10, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 557 Leg.]

YEAS—87

Abraham	Feinstein	Mack
Akaka	Frist	McCain
Ashcroft	Glenn	McConnell
Baucus	Gorton	Mikulski
Bennett	Graham	Moseley-Braun
Bingaman	Gramm	Moynihan
Bond	Grams	Murkowski
Boxer	Grassley	Murray
Breaux	Gregg	Nickles
Brown	Harkin	Nunn
Bryan	Hatch	Pell
Bumpers	Helms	Pressler
Burns	Hollings	Pryor
Campbell	Hutchison	Robb
Chafee	Inhofe	Roth
Coats	Inouye	Santorum
Cochran	Jeffords	Sarbanes
Cohen	Kassebaum	Shelby
Conrad	Kempthorne	Simon
Coverdell	Kennedy	Simpson
Craig	Kerry	Smith
D'Amato	Kohl	Snowe
DeWine	Kyl	Specter
Dodd	Lautenberg	Stevens
Dole	Leahy	Thomas
Domenici	Levin	Thompson
Exon	Lieberman	Thurmond
Faircloth	Lott	Warner
Feingold	Lugar	Wellstone

NAYS—10

Biden	Ford	Reid
Byrd	Heffin	Rockefeller
Daschle	Johnston	
Dorgan	Kerrey	

NOT VOTING—2

Bradley	Hatfield
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So the conference report was agreed to.

Mr. DOLE addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican leader.

Mr. DOLE. Mr. President, is leader time reserved?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Yes.

MIDDLE EAST PEACE FACILITATION ACT

Mr. DOLE. Mr. President, tonight at midnight, the Middle East Peace Facilitation Act [MEPFA] will expire. Last night at 8:20, a written request for a short-term extension was faxed to my office by the State Department. This morning, I spoke to Secretary of State Christopher about the issue. Until the letter and phone call, my office had received no communication about the need for the latest extension. I know the Secretary is concerned that a delay in extending the act could be read as lack of support for the Middle East peace process. I share that concern, but I am also concerned that we have an administration that refuses to deal responsibly with Congress.

I want to be very clear: the U.S. Senate has gone on the record on repeated occasions supporting the Middle East peace process. We have extended MEPFA three times this year: on June 23, on August 11, and on September 29. Each time the Congress acted promptly. I hope we are able to act today as well.

We support the peace process. We understand the risks being taken by both sides. We understand that peacemaking is not easy, and that the process is subject to disruption. As I speak today, Israel's withdrawal from the West Bank town of Jenin has started. Our lead negotiator in the Middle East, Dennis Ross, called my office this morning from Israel to express his concern over the consequences of not extending MEPFA.

Extending MEPFA allows the President to waive certain provisions of law concerning the Palestine Liberation Organization. It allows the provision of United States assistance to the Palestine authority, and it allows a Palestinian office to operate in the United States. The Foreign Operations Appropriations Conference Report provides for a permanent extension of MEPFA but it is not likely to be enacted soon.

If Congress does not act today to provide another short-term extension, the President's waiver authority will lapse. Under these time constraints, unanimous consent is required to proceed.

Today, I am informed the chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, Senator HELMS, will object to any unanimous-consent request extending MEPFA unless the terms of a previous agreement entered into by the full Senate have been met. The last time the Senate extended MEPFA, Senator HELMS and Senator KERRY of Massachusetts worked out an agreement providing for consideration of S. 908, the Foreign Relations Reorganization Act.

For the benefit of all Senators, I would like to briefly review what has

happened over the last month. On September 29, the Senate passed an extension of MEPFA and entered into an agreement providing for consideration of S. 908 after the managers agreed on an amendment. On October 10, Senator HELMS wrote to Senator KERRY and urged him to make some kind of offer. The next day, Senator KERRY responded that "progress was being made" in developing an offer.

On October 19, Senator KERRY met with Senator HELMS and provided an outline—not legislation—of a proposed managers' amendment. Later that day, Senator HELMS made a counter offer to Senator KERRY, changing the amount of savings from reorganization from \$1.2 billion over 4 years to \$2.5 billion over 5 years. Senator KERRY's response was to propose 25 additional changes in the bill and to request unprecedented guarantees about the outcome of a House-Senate conference.

Until this morning, Senator HELMS had heard very little from Senator KERRY or his staff. While staff negotiations have begun, there is no agreement on the central issue of cost savings. Once again, the administration has refused to provide information to Congress about cost information. I hope the Democrat manager, Senator KERRY of Massachusetts, is able to make a legislative agreement today, whether the administration is willing or not.

The State Department wants Senator HELMS to lift his objection to proceeding with MEPFA despite the almost total lack of effort over the last 32 days. Senator HELMS is completely within his rights to object to any unanimous-consent request. I hope that as the day proceeds, Senator KERRY and the administration decide it is finally time to deal seriously with the Senate majority.

Contrary to some of the statements made by the administration, Senator HELMS is not insisting on "getting his way." What he is insisting on is that the will of the majority be heard, and that the Senate simply have a chance to vote on whether to save money by reorganizing our international affairs agencies.

I believe in the importance of bipartisan cooperation. Let me point out that if the administration had not orchestrated a filibuster of S. 908 earlier this year, the Middle East Peace Facilitation Act would have been permanently extended by now—in that same legislation. Unfortunately, due to the administration's intransigence and refusal to negotiate, MEPFA is once again a last-minute demand on a busy Senate schedule.

I hope we are able to work together on MEPFA, and I hope it happens today. I hope a managers' amendment is filed today. However, it is going to be very difficult, if not impossible, to work together on one issue today if there is no cooperation from the other side on moving to conference on the budget reconciliation bill.