

free calls for information and assistance were turned away each day. Hundreds of thousands of ordinary Americans were inconvenienced, or had to temporarily forego benefits for which the Government requires things like Social Security cards, because we could not reach a budget agreement.

And the problems did not stop there. Some of our most vulnerable people suffered from the Government shutdown: 13 million AFDC recipients, 273,000 foster care children, over 100,000 children receiving adoption assistance services and over 100,000 Head Start children had their services delayed. And I have not even mentioned the 9 million Americans whose vacations and outings were ruined because they were turned away from our national parks and museums.

Mr. President, we must prevent this situation from occurring ever again. The Government shutdown caused inconvenience, occasional trauma, and a wide-spread increase in the cynicism of the American people, now more convinced than ever that our executive and legislative branches of Government are incapable of doing their jobs.

We can do our jobs, Mr. President, and we must see to it that we do them without allowing the Federal Government to again shut down. We must come to grips with the fact that, under current rules, Government shutdowns are a risk that must be addressed. 1995 was not the first year in which we had a Government shutdown. Over the last 20 years there have been numerous such occurrences, and even more numerous stopgap funding bills passed at the last minute to prevent them.

Part of the problem Mr. President, is our complicated budget process. As currently constituted, this process seems designed to confuse the people as they seek to understand what we are doing and exactly who is holding up agreement. In addition, Mr. President, the American people have elected divided government. They have chosen a President with one set of priorities, and a majority in Congress that in some ways has significantly different priorities.

As a result of a convoluted process and conflicting priorities, we are in the midst of a 2-year budget stalemate. I sincerely hope that the budget agreement announced on Friday will produce tax relief for the American people, a balanced budget by 2002, sufficient funding for our national defense, and much-needed spending restraint. If it includes these things, Mr. President, we may at last see an end to the budget stalemate.

But we cannot sit idly by in the hope that all will be well. We can and must strive in the meantime to ensure that this year no shutdown will occur even if the budget deal breaks down.

That is why I am urging my colleagues to support provisions in this continuing resolution that would put a safety net under our Government, and under the American people. It would

create a statutory continuing resolution, triggered only if the appropriations acts do not become law or if there is no governing continuing resolution in place. This legislation would ensure that the Government does not shut down by funding Government programs next year at 98 percent.

What this means, Mr. President, is that the Federal Government, in case of a budget impasse, would be funded at a level sufficient to continue essential services—sufficient to prevent any real inconvenience to the American people—without undermining the incentive to pass appropriations bills on time.

It is my hope that we will not need this provision. It is my conviction that we should enact it so that the American people will continue to receive the services they expect from their Federal Government even if there is a budget impasse. I urge my colleagues to support this important, safety net provision.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there further debate on the amendment?

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that my pending amendment be set aside temporarily.

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

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

AMENDMENT NO. 235

(Purpose: To assure sufficient funding for Essential Air Service under the Rural Air Service Survival Act)

Mr. STEVENS. 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 Alaska [Mr. STEVENS], for Mr. KERREY, for himself, and Mr. DORGAN, proposes an amendment numbered 235.

Mr. STEVENS. 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 in the bill insert the following new language:

SEC. . Section 45301(b)(1)(A) of title 49, United States Code, is amended inserting before the semicolon "and at least \$50,000,000 in FY 1998 and every year thereafter".

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, it is my understanding that the proponents of amendments Nos. 95 and 96 agree to this language. This new language is to be a substitute for the proposals before the body regarding international flight user fees. It has been agreed to by both sides and, therefore, is ready for passage.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there further debate?

The question is on agreeing to the amendment.

The amendment (No. 235) was agreed to.

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, I move to reconsider the vote and I move to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that we now go into a period for routine morning business.

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

U.S. FOREIGN OIL CONSUMPTION FOR WEEK ENDING MAY 2

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, the American Petroleum Institute reports that for the week ending May 2, the United States imported 8,106,000 barrels of oil each day, 805,000 barrels more than the 7,301,000 imported during the same week 1 year ago.

Americans relied on foreign oil for 55.9 percent of their needs last week, and there are no signs that the upward spiral will abate. Before the Persian gulf War, the United States obtained approximately 45 percent of its oil supply from foreign countries. During the Arab oil embargo in the 1970's, foreign oil accounted for only 35 percent of America's oil supply.

Anybody else interested in restoring domestic production of oil—by U.S. producers using American workers? Politicians had better ponder the economic calamity sure to occur in America if and when foreign producers shut off our supply—or double the already enormous cost of imported oil flowing into the United States—now 8,106,000 barrels a day.

THE VERY BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, at the close of business yesterday, Tuesday, May 6, the Federal debt stood at \$5,337,028,737,421.51.

One year ago, May 6, 1996, the Federal debt stood at \$5,096,257,000,000.

Five years ago, May 6, 1992, the Federal debt stood at \$3,882,040,000,000.

Ten years ago, May 6, 1987, the Federal debt stood at \$2,278,744,000,000.

Fifteen years ago, May 6, 1982, the Federal debt stood at \$1,057,151,000,000, which reflects a debt increase of more than \$4 trillion (4,279,877,737,421.51) during the past 15 years.

TOBACCO TAXES

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, last Friday's Wall Street Journal published the results of an April 1997 poll it conducted with NBC News. One of the questions in the survey deserves special attention.

The poll asked whether the American people support increasing cigarette taxes by 43 cents a pack, and returning much of the revenues to the States to provide health care for the Nation's uninsured children.

An overwhelming 72 percent of the respondents favored this proposal, which is contained in the legislation that Senator HATCH and I introduced last month.

The detailed breakdown of the responses shows that the plan has broad support among people of all ages, incomes, races, educational backgrounds, party affiliations, and geographic regions. Support is at least two-to-one in all 36 groups, and it is three-to-one or even four-to-one in 17 of the groups.

North and South, East and West, the American people support the Hatch-Kennedy bill.

I ask unanimous consent that the detailed breakdown of the Wall Street Journal-NBC News poll may be included in the RECORD.

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

Question: Two Senators, a Republican and a Democrat, have proposed increasing cigarette taxes by 43 cents a pack, and giving much of the money raised to help states provide health insurance for uninsured children. Based on this description, do you favor or oppose this plan?

WALL STREET JOURNAL/NBC NEWS POLL—APRIL 26–28, 1997

(Figures in percentage)

	Favor	Op- pose	Not Sure
All adults	72	24	4
Men	67	30	3
Women	76	20	4
Northeast	73	20	7
Midwest	73	26	1
South	69	28	3
West	74	23	3
Whites	70	26	4
Blacks	80	16	4
Age 18–34	73	25	2
Age 35–49	74	23	3
Age 50–64	66	30	4
Age 65 and over	72	21	7
Under \$20,000 income	74	23	3
\$20,000–\$30,000	76	21	3
\$30,000–\$50,000	70	28	2
Over \$50,000	70	26	4
Urban	76	21	3
Suburb/towns	70	26	4
Rural	70	28	2
Registered voters	73	23	4
Non-registered adults	65	32	3
Democrats	79	18	3
Republicans	67	29	4
Independents	69	27	4
Clinton voters	80	17	3
Dole voters	64	31	5
Liberals	79	19	2
Moderates	79	19	2
Conservatives	64	31	5
Professionals/managers	76	21	3
White collar workers	77	20	3
Blue collar workers	62	35	3
High school or less	66	30	4
Some college	75	22	3
College graduates	75	21	4

CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM

Mr. GORTON. Mr. President, the Conservation Reserve Program, a program vitally important to my State and many others, has recently been threatened on many fronts. I would like to make clear my intentions and views on several matters relating to the CRP.

Last week Congressman BOB SMITH was successful in passing H.R. 1342, legislation requiring USDA to reenroll winter crop land not accepted in the new CRP for one year. For the record, H.R. 1342 has received strong support from producers in my State and like Chairman SMITH, I, too, am very concerned for winter crop producers throughout the country. Unfortunately, we have received a loud message from the President that he strongly objects to the bill and would veto the measure if passed by Congress.

Knowing the President would veto H.R. 1342, I felt it necessary, at the very least, to send a letter to Secretary Glickman requesting that he permit producers to begin preparing CRP ground immediately for fall planting. I would like producers in my State to know that I will continue to work with Secretary Glickman to see that he addresses this problem. Further, let it be known, that I will oppose any attempt to cap or earmark enrollments to the Conservation Reserve Program.

Yesterday, 13 Senators joined me in sending a letter to Secretary Glickman outlining 3 critical issues concerning the Conservation Reserve Program. Let me now outline the issues raised in the letter.

First, producers throughout the country are currently faced with serious uncertainty as to whether or not their bids to enroll land in the CRP will be accepted. I believe it is very important for Secretary Glickman to notify producers this month whether their offers are accepted. I understand that Secretary Glickman is sympathetic to this problem and has announced he will notify all producers by late May. I have expressed my concern to Secretary Glickman and have encouraged him to allow producers to immediately begin preparing their land for fall planting of winter crops without penalty. This will allow producers to begin ground preparation in the event they are not accepted into the program. Producers in my State are concerned they will not have enough time nor enough moisture in the ground to grow winter crops if they do not begin preparing their land immediately. Simply put, time is running out for producers in my State. I understand that Secretary Glickman is willing to help solve this problem and I am hopeful that he will address this situation in a timely fashion.

Second, the House Appropriations Committee has placed a provision in the Emergency Disaster Supplemental bill capping CRP enrollments at 14 million acres. Many Senators, including myself, believe that this cap threatens the environmental commitment we made when we passed, and the President enacted, the 1996 Farm Bill. As a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, I will work hard to see that this provision is omitted during the Emergency Disaster Supplemental Conference.

Third, the President has proposed reducing CRP enrollments by 2 million

acres to pay for the development rights of Crown Butte, Inc. I believe, as do many other Senators, that any cap or reduction in CRP enrollments would jeopardize the commitment Congress made to improve water quality, enhance wildlife habitat, and reduce wind and soil erosion.

In closing, I thank my colleagues for their support. The CRP is a vitally important program and I look forward to working with my colleagues and Secretary Glickman as we address these concerns.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that our letter to Secretary Glickman be printed in the RECORD.

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

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE,
NUTRITION, AND FORESTRY,
Washington, DC, May 6, 1997.

Hon. DAN GLICKMAN,
Secretary of Agriculture, U.S. Department of
Agriculture, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SECRETARY: We are writing to bring to your attention three matters of concern regarding the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP).

First, it is critically important that you fulfill the pledge you made in your April 29 letter to House Agriculture Committee Chairman Bob Smith that producers will be notified by late May of whether their offers to enroll land in the CRP have been accepted. As you are well aware, growers whose offers are not accepted into the program will not have enough time, nor the appropriate weather conditions, to prepare their current CRP acreage for fall planting. We understand that you are sympathetic to this unfortunate predicament and ask that you rectify this situation immediately. We seek your prompt approval of ground preparation practices necessary for fall planting of winter crops on all expiring CRP acreage without loss of payments. Specifically, we request that producers be permitted to remove cover crops without penalty beginning immediately.

Second, we applaud your opposition to any effort that would cap or earmark CRP enrollments. Like you, we believe the provision by the House Appropriations Committee to cap CRP enrollments at 14 million acres would jeopardize USDA's efforts to improve water quality, enhance wildlife habitat, reduce wind and soil erosion, and enroll additional acres under the Department's continuous signup initiative. We will be working hard to see that this provision, or any similar effort, is struck during the Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Conference. We welcome your support in this effort.

Third, we do not support President Clinton's proposal to reduce CRP enrollment by 2 million acres to pay for the development rights of Crown Butte Mines, Inc. We believe that limiting CRP enrollments would threaten the substantial environmental commitment we made when Congress passed and the President enacted the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996.

We strongly encourage you to address the time sensitive nature of our request. Winter crop producers throughout the country are in serious jeopardy and if they so choose, should be allowed to prepare their land for fall planting immediately.

We look forward to hearing from you and appreciate your support for an extremely important program.

Sincerely,
RICHARD G. LUGAR.