

(Two trillion, three hundred billion, thirteen million)

Twenty-five years ago, July 24, 1972, the Federal debt stood at \$434,436,000,000 (Four hundred thirty-four billion, four hundred thirty-six million) which reflects a debt increase of nearly \$5 trillion—\$4,934,445,340,728.99 (Four trillion, nine hundred thirty-four billion, four hundred forty-five million, three hundred forty thousand, seven hundred twenty-eight dollars and ninety-nine cents) during the past 25 years.

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 11:49 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Ms. Goetz, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 2160. An act making appropriations for Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies programs for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1998, and for other purposes.

ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

The message also announced that the Speaker has signed the following enrolled bills:

H.R. 709. An act to reauthorize and amend the National Geologic Mapping Act of 1992, and for other purposes.

H.R. 1226. An act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to prevent the unauthorized inspection of tax returns or tax return information.

The enrolled bills were signed subsequently by the President pro tempore (Mr. THURMOND).

At 2:48 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Hays, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has agreed to the following concurrent resolution, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H. Con. Res. 123. Concurrent resolution providing for the use of the catafalque situated in the crypt beneath the rotunda of the Capitol in connection with memorial services to be conducted in the Supreme Court Building for the late honorable William J. Brennan, former Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States.

The message also announced that the House disagrees to the amendments of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 1119) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 1998 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe personnel strengths for the such fiscal year for the Armed Forces, and for other purposes, and agrees to the conference asked by the Senate on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses thereon; and that the following Members as the managers of the conference on the part of the House:

From the Committee on National Security, for consideration of the House bill, and the Senate amendments, and modifications committed to conference: Mr. SPENCE, Mr. STUMP, Mr. HUNTER, Mr. KASICH, Mr. BATEMAN, Mr. HANSEN, Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania,

Mr. HEFLEY, Mr. SAXTON, Mr. BUYER, Mrs. FOWLER, Mr. MCHUGH, Mr. TALENT, Mr. EVERETT, Mr. BARTLETT, Mr. LEWIS of Kentucky, Mr. WATTS, Mr. CHAMBLISS, Mr. RILEY, Mr. DELLUMS, Mr. SKELTON, Mr. SISKI, Mr. SPRATT, Mr. ORTIZ, Mr. PICKETT, Mr. EVANS, Mr. TAYLOR of Mississippi, Mr. ABERCROMBIE, Mr. MEEHAN, Ms. HARMAN, Mr. MCHALE, Mr. KENNEDY of Rhode Island, Mr. BLAGOJEVICH, Mr. SNYDER, and Mr. RODRIQUEZ.

As additional conferees from the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, for consideration of matters within the jurisdiction of that committee under clause 2 of rule XLVIII: Mr. GOSS, Mr. LEWIS of California, and Mr. DICKS.

As additional conferees from the Committee on Commerce, for consideration of sections 344, 601, 654, 735, 1021, 3143, 3144, 3201, 3202, 3402, and 3404 of the House bill, and sections 338, 601, 663, 706, 1064, 2823, 3136, 3140, 3151, 3160, 3201, and 3402 of the Senate amendment, and modifications committed to conference: Mr. BLILEY, Mr. SCHAEFER of Colorado, and Mr. DINGELL.

Provided, That Mr. OXLEY is appointed in lieu of Mr. SCHAEFER of Colorado for consideration of sections 344 and 1021 of the House bill and section 2823 of the Senate amendment:

Provided further, That Mr. BILIRAKIS is appointed in lieu of Mr. SCHAEFER of Colorado for consideration of sections 601, 654, and 735 of the House bill, and sections 338, 601, 663, and 706 of the Senate amendment:

Provided further, That Mr. TAUZIN is appointed in lieu of Mr. SCHAEFER of Colorado for consideration of section 1064 of the Senate amendment.

As additional conferees from the Committee on Education and the Workforce, for consideration of sections 374, 658, and 3143 of the House bill, and section 664 of the Senate amendment, and modifications committed to conference: Mr. GOODLING, Mr. FAWELL, and Ms. SANCHEZ.

Provided, That Mr. RIGGS is appointed in lieu of Mr. FAWELL for consideration of section 658 of the House bill and section 664 of the Senate amendment.

As additional conferees from the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight, for consideration of sections 322 and 3527 of the House bill, and sections 1068, 1107, 2811, and 3527 of the Senate amendment, and modifications committed to conference: Mr. BURTON, Mr. HORN, and Mr. WAXMAN.

As additional conferees from the Committee on House Oversight, for consideration of section 543 of the Senate amendment, and modifications committed to conference: Mr. THOMAS, Mr. NEY, and Mr. GEJDENSON.

As additional conferees from the Committee on International Relations, for consideration of sections 1101-111, 1202, 1204, 1205, 1207, 1210, and 1231-1234 of the House bill, and sections 1009, 1013, 1021, 1022, 1056, 1057, 1082, and 1085 of the Senate amendment, and modifications committed to conference: Mr. GILMAN, Mr. BEREUTER, and Mr. HAMILTON.

As additional conferees from the Committee on the Judiciary, for consideration of sections 374, 1057, 3521, 3522, and 3541 of the House bill, and sections 831, 1073, 1075, 1106, and 1201-1216 of the Senate amendment, and modifications committed to conference: Mr. HYDE, Mr. SMITH of Texas, and Mr. CONYERS.

As additional conferees from the Committee on Resources, for consideration of sections 214, 601, 653, 1021, 2835, 2901-2914, and 3404 of the House bill, and sections 234, 381-392, 601, 706, 2819, and 3158 of the Senate amendment, and modifications committed to conference: Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Mr. TAUZIN, and Mr. MILLER of California:

Provided, That Mr. HEFLEY is appointed in lieu of Mr. SAXTON for consideration of section 3404 of the House bill.

Provided further, That Mr. DELAHUNT is appointed in lieu of Mr. MILLER of California for consideration of sections 2901-2914 of the House bill, and sections 381-392 of the Senate amendment.

As additional conferees from the Committee on Science, for consideration of sections 214 and 3148 of the House bill, and sections 234 and 1064 of the Senate amendment, and modifications committed to conference: Mr. SENSENBRENNER, Mr. CALVERT, and Mr. BROWN of California:

Provided, That Mr. ROHRBACHER is appointed in lieu of Mr. CALVERT for consideration of section 1064 of the Senate amendment.

As additional conferees from the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, for consideration of sections 345, 563, 601, 1021, 2861, and 3606 of the House bill, and section 601 of the Senate amendment, and modifications committed to conference: Mr. SHUSTER, Mr. GILCREST, and Mr. BORSKI.

As additional conferees from the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, for consideration of sections 751, 752, and 759 of the House bill, and sections 220, 542, 751, 752, 758, 1069, 1074, and 1076 of the Senate amendment, and modifications committed to conference: Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. BILIRAKIS, and Mr. KENNEDY of Massachusetts.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following measure was read the second time and placed on the calendar.

S. 1065. A bill to amend the Ethics in Government Act with respect to the appointment of an independent counsel.

The following measure was read the first and second times by unanimous consent and placed on the calendar:

H.R. 2160. An act making appropriations for Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies programs for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1998, and for other purposes.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, which were referred as indicated:

EC-2598. A communication from the Director of the Office of the Secretary of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, a rule entitled "Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Uniformed Services" (RIN0720-AA36) received on July 24, 1997; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-2599. A communication from the Secretary of Defense, transmitting a notice of a retirement; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-2600. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works), transmitting, pursuant to law, a rule received on July 24, 1997; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2601. A communication from the Administrator of the U.S. General Services Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of an alteration prospectus; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2602. A communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Performance Improvement 1997: Evaluation

Activities of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services"; to the Committee on Labor and Human Resources.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. WARNER, from the Committee on Rules and Administration, without amendment:

S. Con. Res. 33. A concurrent resolution authorizing the use of the Capital Grounds for the National SAFE KIDS Campaign SAFE KIDS Buckle Up Car Seat Check Up.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second time by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mrs. HUTCHISON (for herself, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. FAIRCLOTH, and Mr. NICKLES):

S. 1068. A bill to amend section 353 of the Public Health Service Act to exempt physician office laboratories from the clinical laboratories requirements of that section; to the Committee on Labor and Human Resources.

By Mr. MURKOWSKI (for himself and Mr. WARNER):

S. 1069. A bill entitled the "National Discovery Trails Act of 1997"; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. JEFFORDS:

S. 1070. A bill to provide for a regional education and workforce training system in the metropolitan Washington area, to improve the school facilities of the District of Columbia, and to fund such activities in part by an income tax on nonresident workers in the District of Columbia; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. D'AMATO (by request):

S. 1071. A bill to facilitate the effective and efficient management of the homeless assistance programs of the Department of Housing and Urban Development, including the merger of such programs into one performance fund, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LUGAR, Mr. HARKIN, and Mr. KERREY):

S. Con. Res. 43. A concurrent resolution urging the United States Trade Representative immediately to take all appropriate action with regards to Mexico's imposition of antidumping duties on United States high fructose corn syrup; considered and agreed to.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mrs. HUTCHISON (for herself, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. FAIRCLOTH, and Mr. NICKLES):

S. 1068. A bill to amend section 353 of the Public Health Service Act to exempt physician office laboratories from the clinical laboratories requirements of that section; to the Committee on Labor and Human Resources.

THE CLINICAL LABORATORY IMPROVEMENT ACT AMENDMENTS OF 1997

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, I rise today to introduce legislation that is critically needed to reduce the regulatory burdens on our doctor's offices today.

In 1988, Congress passed the Clinical Laboratory Improvement Act as a reaction to reports about laboratories that inaccurately analyzed PAP smears. CLIA 1988 was intended to address the quality of laboratory test performance. Unfortunately, the regulations enacted as a result of the CLIA 1988 legislation did not reflect the intent of the act. What in effect happened following the passage of CLIA 1988 was a series of regulations that substantially increased the amount of paperwork to be performed in physician offices and now ultimately increases the cost of health care to the patients. There has been little, if any, documentation that the CLIA 1988 reforms resulted in an improvement in patient care.

In fact, a Texas Medical Association study showed that the annual cost of the labor and administrative overhead added by CLIA averages \$4,435 per physician. This is in addition to the cost of registration, controls, proficiency testing, and inspection or accreditation. At a time when the entire health care industry is under pressure to control health care costs, the CLIA regulations not only subject physicians to increased administrative costs but also decrease the amount of time devoted to patient care.

One Texas physician describes his CLIA inspection as being left with a feeling that nothing of any real value was accomplished. Dr. McBryer from the Texas Panhandle relates the inspection:

We were written up for such monumental things as the fact that I had not signed the procedure manual for one of our lab machines. Therefore, everything done on that machine, including the training, was out of compliance. The fact that the manufacturer's rep had come and trained the staff was to no avail. Everything was out of compliance because I didn't sign it. It didn't matter that they had learned how to use it. That was irrelevant.

The CLIA amendments I am introducing will reduce the burdens on physicians who perform laboratory tests in their offices and thereby free up resources and time to dedicate to patient care. In Texas alone, of the physicians who provided testing services in their offices prior to CLIA, 27 percent have closed their office labs, and another 31 percent have discounted some type of testing, as a direct result of the CLIA 1988 reforms. This has resulted in some areas of Texas experiencing physician shortages. Many physicians are concerned about the possible consequences to patients caused by the decreased access to testing or the delay in obtaining results. In the wake of the health care reform debate, it is important to promote quality-driven cost-effective ways of delivery care.

Mr. President, the CLIA 1997 amendments will not jeopardize the quality of laboratory testing. This bill will exempt physician office lab tests from the CLIA 1988 restrictions that have caused many physicians to discontinue simple laboratory tests due to the excessive amounts of regulation involved in the performance of these tests. The CLIA 1997 amendments that I am introducing today in the Senate will have the narrow purpose of ensuring that essential laboratory testing performed by physicians remain a viable diagnostic option for physicians and their patients without the excessive rules and administratively complex requirements that currently exist, and, most importantly, eliminate the strain the CLIA 1988 legislation is placing on patients in rural areas who are losing access to necessary testing and care.

I hope that all my colleagues will join me in supporting this legislation, which will reduce health care costs and improve the ability of patients to receive laboratory tests in a timely fashion while providing the much needed regulatory relief to physicians all over the country.

By Mr. MURKOWSKI (for himself and Mr. WARNER):

S. 1069. A bill entitled the "National Discovery Trails Act of 1997"; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

THE NATIONAL DISCOVERY TRAILS ACT OF 1997

Mr. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I rise today for the purpose of introducing legislation that I think is most significant. This legislation will particularly appeal to those who are inclined to enjoy the outdoors because it will establish our Nation's first coast-to-coast multiuse hiking trail. Take a moment and think about that. You will be able to hike from coast to coast on a hiking trail. That means off the highways, away from the roads, behind the freeways. A true outdoor experience.

Trails are one of America's most popular recreation resources. Millions of Americans hike, they ski, they jog, they bike, they ride horses, they drive snow machines and all-terrain vehicles, they observe nature, commute, and relax on trails throughout the country.

A variety of trails are provided nationwide, including urban bike paths, bridle paths, community greenways, historic trails, motorized trails, and long-distance hiking trails. This legislation will establish the American Discovery Trail, or ADT as it is commonly called. The ADT is a continuous coast-to-coast trail to link the Nation's principal north-south trails and east-west historic trails with shorter local and regional trails into a nationwide network.

Mr. President, by establishing a system of discovery trails, this new category will recognize that using and enjoying trails close to home is equally as important as traversing remote wilderness trails, of which we have many in my State of Alaska. Long-distance