

We are not quite there yet as far as getting a solution, but I have resolved that Cindy and I, my wife, and I have two grandchildren, Chase and Cole, 4 years old and 2 years old, and I resolved when they were born, my being in Congress, that I did not want them to look back 65 years from today and say, if only my granddad would have done what in his heart he knew he should have done when he was in the Congress, we would not be in the mess we are in today. That is the spirit in which we participate today.

That is why I have enjoyed my association with all of my Blue Dogs, the two that have joined us today, and all, in the policy discussions that lead us to be able to come to the floor and to say these things and not apologize to anybody.

We sincerely believe that paying down the national debt is the best thing that this Congress ought to do, with no exceptions. Then we believe that we ought to deal with the five priority areas that we outlined, and we have already talked about them: defense, agriculture, health care, education, and veterans.

In some of those instances, we are prepared to say we need to spend some additional dollars in the short term to make the investment so that our country will meet those obligations. But we do it within the spirit of all of the Social Security Trust Funds going against the debt, paying down the debt, half of any projected surpluses being set aside, and then meeting those priorities, including a tax cut with the other 50 percent of that debt. That is what we are here to talk about today.

Mr. Speaker, I yield for any additional comments. We have got a few more minutes. If we are through, I am always a great believer, once one has said everything that needs to be said, nothing else needs to be said, and we will let these folks go home.

Mr. TURNER. Mr. Speaker, I want to say that the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BERRY) and I appreciate the compliment about our age. I am not sure we deserve it. But it has been a pleasure to join the gentleman from Texas (Mr. STENHOLM) and the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BERRY) in this dialogue this evening.

Mr. BERRY. It certainly has, Mr. Speaker. I think that the point that the gentleman from Texas (Mr. STENHOLM) made about our grandchildren, grandparents love to talk about their grandchildren, but I think that the point that the gentleman makes, that I do not want to have to face my grandchildren 20 years from now and look them in the eye and let them ask me, "Why did you not do something when you had the chance?"

I think we all know what we need to do, and it is a matter of having the political will and the courage to do the right thing and see that we do not leave our children and grandchildren with this huge debt to pay off. I think that is the responsibility that we have.

We also have an obligation to the five areas that the gentleman just mentioned to see that they get taken care of, too. But, again, it has been a pleasure for me to join my colleagues this evening. I thank both of my colleagues for their leadership in this area.

Mr. STENHOLM. Mr. Speaker, lest anyone misunderstand, the main point that we have made regarding the tax cut, we totally acknowledge all taxes belong to the taxpayer. We acknowledge that. I have no difficulty with those that say, if there is a surplus, we are going to return it to you because you can better make the decision of how to spend it, unless we are talking about national defense, and I would question that statement.

But what we add to this, that simple statement is, also, it is your debt. The \$5.6 trillion is current taxpayer debt of which you, if you are in your 30s, 40s, 50s, or 60s, you have enjoyed the fruits of the spending of this \$5.6 trillion. Why not take some of your dollars to pay down that debt. The choice is to increase the debt and to pass it on to your children and grandchildren.

The Blue Dogs say that is wrong. We encourage the President to do that which he is going to do, that is veto the tax bill. Then we hope that we can settle down and deal in a responsible way with the budget that does what we have talked about today.

Mr. SANDLIN. Mr. Speaker, the American people have spoken. They do not want Republicans to jeopardize this country's economic growth by forcing through an irresponsible, reckless tax cut and ignoring the growing national debt.

I am a strong advocate of a sound budget and fiscally responsible tax cuts, but the best tax cut we can give the American people is a promise we will first pay down the national debt by setting aside some of the true surplus—the non-Social Security surplus.

Our first priority in a budget discussion should be debt reduction. However, the Republicans have chosen to ignore this fiscal necessity and make promises they can't fulfill. Our primary goal should be to maintain the strong and growing economy that has benefited millions of Americans. Using that simple objective as our guide, it is clear that the best course of action this body could take is to use any budget surpluses to start paying off the \$5.6 trillion national debt. Reducing the national debt is clearly the best long-term strategy for the U.S. economy.

Economists from across the political spectrum agree that using the surplus to reduce the debt will stimulate economic growth by increasing national savings and boosting domestic investment. Paying down our debt will reduce the tremendous drain that the federal government has placed on the economy by running up a huge national debt.

Listen to the American public—our constituents are telling us to meet our obligations by paying down the national debt. The folks I represent understand that, when you have some extra resources, you pay your debts first. They don't understand how we can be talking about giving away money we don't have on tax cuts we can't afford. They want us to use this opportunity to pay down our debt.

We hear a lot of talk about "giving the American people their money back". We should start by paying off the debt. The best tax cut we could provide for all Americans, and the best thing that we can do to ensure that taxes remain low for our children and grandchildren, is to start paying down our \$5.6 trillion national debt.

Reducing our national debt will provide a tax cut for millions of Americans by restraining interest rates. Lower interest rates will put money in the pockets of working men and women by saving them money on variable mortgages, new mortgages, auto loans, credit card payments, and other debts. The reduction in interest rates we have had as a result of the fiscal discipline over the last few years has put at least \$35 billion into the hands of homeowners through lower mortgage payment considering that more than twenty five percent of all individual income taxes go to paying interest on our national debt. These economic realities should teach us a valuable lesson: fiscal discipline, demonstrated by paying down the debt, is the best way to keep putting money into the hands of middle class Americans and ensure that future generations can enjoy a prosperous, stable economy.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina (at the request of Mr. GEPHARDT) for today and the balance of the week on account of Hurricane Floyd hitting his district.

Mr. ETHERIDGE (at the request of Mr. GEPHARDT) for today after 1:30 p.m. on account of Hurricane Floyd hitting his district.

Mr. McNULTY (at the request of Mr. GEPHARDT) for today after 3:00 p.m. on account of personal reasons.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida (at the request of Mr. GEPHARDT) for today on account of official business.

Mr. SHAW (at the request of Mr. ARMEY) for today until 3:00 p.m. on account of official business.

SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. PALLONE) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. PALLONE, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. LIPINSKI, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. GREEN of Wisconsin) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. WELDON of Florida, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. FOSSELLA, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. CHABOT, for 5 minutes, today.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

Mr. THOMAS, from the Committee on House Administration, reported

that that committee had examined and found truly enrolled a bill of the House of the following title, which was thereupon signed by the Speaker:

H.R. 2488. An act to provide for reconciliation pursuant to sections 105 and 211 of the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2000.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. STENHOLM. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 6 o'clock and 55 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until Friday, September 17, 1999, at 10 a.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 8 of rule XII, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

4161. A letter from the Director, Conservation Operations Division, Natural Resources Conservation Service, USDA, transmitting the Service's final rule—Technical Assistance (RIN: 0578-AA22) received August 24, 1999, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

4162. A letter from the Director, Defense Procurement, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's final rule—Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement; Officials Not to Benefit Clause [DFARS Case 99-D018] received September 8, 1999, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Armed Services.

4163. A letter from the Director, Office of Defense Procurement, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's final rule—Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement; Multiyear Contracting [DFARS Case 97-D308] received August 9, 1999, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Armed Services.

4164. A letter from the Director, Defense Procurement, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's final rule—Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement; Oral Attestation of Security Responsibilities [DFARS Case 99-D006] received August 24, 1999, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Armed Services.

4165. A letter from the Alternate OSD Federal Register Liaison Officer, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's final rule—Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Uniformed Service (CHAMPUS); Prosthetic Devices [DOD 6010.8-R] (RIN: 0720-AA49) received August 24, 1999, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Armed Services.

4166. A letter from the Director, Defense Procurement, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's final rule—Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement; Acquisitions for Foreign Military Sales [DFARS Case 99-D020] received September 8, 1999, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Armed Services.

4167. A letter from the Acting Assistant Attorney General, Department of Justice, transmitting the 1998 annual report regarding the Department's enforcement activities under the Equal Credit Opportunity Act, pursuant to 15 U.S.C. 1691f; to the Committee on Banking and Financial Services.

4168. A letter from the Federal Register Liaison Officer, Regulations & Legislation Division, Office of the Thrift Supervision, Department of the Treasury, transmitting the

Department's final rule—Letters of Credit, Suretyship and Guaranty [No. 99-34] (RIN 1550-AB21) received September 3, 1999, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Banking and Financial Services.

4169. A letter from the Director, Financial Crimes Enforcement Network, Department of the Treasury, transmitting the Department's final rule—Amendment to the Bank Secrecy Act Regulations—Definitions Relating to, and Registration of, Money Services Businesses (RIN: 1506-AA09) received August 24, 1999, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Banking and Financial Services.

4170. A letter from the Acting General Counsel, National Credit Union Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule—Truth in Savings—received August 17, 1999, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Banking and Financial Services.

4171. A letter from the Acting General Counsel, National Credit Union Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule—Loan Interest Rate [12 CFR part 701] received September 8, 1999, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Banking and Financial Services.

4172. A letter from the Acting General Counsel, National Credit Union Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule—Organization and Operation of Federal Credit Unions—received September 8, 1999, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Banking and Financial Services.

4173. A letter from the Acting Director, Mine Safety and Health Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule—Health Standards for Occupational Noise Exposure (RIN: 1219-AA53) received September 8, 1999, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

4174. A letter from the Assistant General Counsel for Regulatory Law, Office of Environment, Safety, & Health, Department of Energy, transmitting the Department's final rule—Radioactive Contamination Control Guide [DOE G 441.1-9] received September 7, 1999, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.

4175. A letter from the Director, Regulations Policy and Management Staff, FDA, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's final rule—Indirect Food Additives: Adjuvants, Production Aids, and Sanitizers [Docket No. 99F-0994] received September 8, 1999, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.

4176. A letter from the Chairman, National Committee on Vital and Health Statistics, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Second Annual Report to Congress on the Implementation of the Administrative Simplification Provisions of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act, pursuant to Public Law 104-191, section 263 (110 Stat. 2033); to the Committee on Commerce.

4177. A letter from the Director, Office of Regulatory Management and Information, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule—Regulation of Fuel and Fuel Additives: Extension of California Enforcement Exemptions for Reformulated Gasoline Beyond December 31, 1999 [FRL-6432-1] received September 8, 1999, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.

4178. A letter from the Director, Office of Regulatory Management and Information, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule—Louisiana: Final Authorization of State Hazardous Waste Management Program Revisions [FRL-6431-2] received September 7, 1999, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.

suant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.

4179. A letter from the Director, Office of Regulatory Management and Information, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule—Revisions to the Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Regulation for Public Water Systems [FRL-6433-1] (RIN: 2040-AD15) received September 7, 1999, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.

4180. A letter from the Director, Office of Regulatory Management and Information, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule—Approval and Promulgation of State Plans for Designated Facilities and Pollutants; North Dakota; Control of Emissions From Existing Hospital/Medical/Infectious Waste Incinerators; Correction [FRL-6421-9] received August 11, 1999, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.

4181. A letter from the Director, Office of Regulatory Management and Information, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule—Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; California State Implementation Plan Revisions for Six California Air Pollution Control Districts [CA 009-0143a; FRL-6420-4] received August 11, 1999, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.

4182. A letter from the Director, Office of Regulatory Management and Information, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule—Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; California State Implementation Plan Revision: Bay Area Air Quality Management District, Kern County Air Pollution Control District, Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District, South Coast Air Quality Management District [CA 172-0157a; FRL-6420-3] received August 11, 1999, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.

4183. A letter from the Director, Office of Regulatory Management and Information, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule—Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; California State Implementation Plan Revision: South Coast Air Quality Management District; Ventura County Air Pollution Control District; Mojave Desert Air Quality Management District [CA 126-163a; FRL-6419-9] received August 11, 1999, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.

4184. A letter from the Director, Office of Regulatory Management and Information, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule—Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Maryland; Control of VOC Emissions from Reinforced Plastics Manufacturing [MD077a-3034; FRL-6419-1] received August 11, 1999, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.

4185. A letter from the Special Assistant, to the Chief, Mass Media Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule—Amendment of Section 73.202(b), Table of Allotments, FM Broadcast Stations (Cedar Key, Florida) [MM Docket No. 99-72 RM-9323] received September 8, 1999, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.

4186. A letter from the Legal Counsel, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule—Amendment of Parts 2 and 15 of the Commissions Rules to Further Ensure That Scanning Receivers Do Not Receive Cellular Radio Signals [ET Docket 98-76, FCC 99-58] received August 11, 1999, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.

4187. A letter from the Director, Office of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory