

fund, and no responsible citizen would tap into their retirement fund unless it was an absolute last resort—and they would certainly look to pay it back. Congress must act accordingly.

Mr. President, all of us in Congress should take the equivalent of a blood oath that we are not going to touch Social Security. Period. It would be the most important thing we could possibly do to bring fiscal accountability to this country because we've been using the social security trust funds and public borrowing to fund tax reductions and spending for the last 30 years and in that same period of time, we've seen our national debt increase over 1,300 percent.

Think of that—1,300 percent.

We have to remember that there is no such thing as a free lunch, but there are such things as hard choices. That is what we should be about—making the hard choices.

I know that first hand because as Governor, I have been there; I had to make the \$750 million in spending cuts, but because of the fiscally responsible choices we made, we had the lowest growth in 30 years and had 17% fewer employees—excluding prison workers.

In addition, we ultimately gave Ohio a general revenue rainy day fund of over \$935 million—after it had been depleted to 14 cents.

Think of that. It was at 14 cents—a Medicaid rainy day fund of \$100 million and real tax cuts. I am talking about real tax cuts for the last 3 years, including last year for all Ohioans who had an across-the-board reduction in their State income tax of almost 10 percent.

That is why I came to Washington—to try and bring fiscal responsibility to our nation and this Congress so that my children and my grandchildren as well as all children and grandchildren are not saddled with the cost of those things that my generation did not want to pay for, and guarantee our covenant to the American people in regard to Social Security and Medicare.

I would like to remind my colleagues that with each passing day, we're paying \$600 million in interest payments just to service the national debt—a national debt that is \$5.6 trillion.

Most Americans do not realize that 14 percent of their tax dollar goes to pay off the interest on the debt. Fifteen percent goes for national defense. Seventeen percent goes to non-defense discretionary spending. And 54 percent goes for entitlement spending.

So how much is our interest payment in comparison to other federal spending? It is more than we spend on Medicare. It's five times more than the federal dollars we spend on education. And it's 15 times more than we spend on medical research at NIH.

If we are fortunate enough that the projections of an on-budget surplus actually occurs—I would like to see that—the best possible course of action that we could take is to use those funds and pay down the debt. With debt reduction you get lower interest rates, a continued strong economy and lower government interest costs.

Indeed, as Federal Reserve Chairman Greenspan testified before the House Ways and Means Committee "(T)he advantages that I perceive that would accrue to this economy from a significant decline in the outstanding debt to the public and its virtuous cycle on the total budget process is a value which I think far exceeds anything else we could do with the money."

Mr. President, we must avoid using Social Security to meet our financial obligations. Instead, we should greet the millennium with a promise to our citizens that we will engage in truth-in-budgeting, not use gimmicks and re-order our spending to reflect our national priorities.

Mr. President, I believe that a statement I made in my 1991 Inaugural Address as Governor of Ohio is relevant today:

Gone are the days when public officials are measured by how much they spend on a problem. The new realities dictate that public officials are now judged on whether they can work harder and smarter, and do more with less.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

Mr. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I commend my good friend and colleague, Senator VOINOVICH from Ohio, who I think has brought to the attention of this body in a timely manner a very appropriate and important issue; that is, the realization that the President is going to reject any proposal for a tax cut—and bring to the attention of this body the realization that, indeed, that accumulated debt of \$5.6 trillion, which the Senator from Ohio referred to, is costing us interest.

As the Senator from Ohio is well aware, I was in the banking business for about 25 years. People do not recognize the carrying charge. I think the figure that was used was \$600 million per day.

Interest is like the old saying of having a horse that eats while you sleep. It is ongoing. It doesn't take Saturdays or Sundays off.

If one considers the significance of, I think the figure was 14 cents out of every dollar going for interest, one can quickly comprehend what we could do if we were free of that heavy obligation.

I commend the Senator for bringing this matter to the attention of this body and assure him of my eagerness to work with him to bring about and resolve in a responsible manner a program to address the accumulated debt.

As he has pointed out, there is an awful lot of procedure around here relative to the bookkeeping method of the Federal Government, which few people understand.

Nevertheless, there is a harsh reality that we have a hard debt of \$5.6 billion. We have an opportunity now with the Social Security surplus to address that debt. I agree with the Senator and his efforts to try to bring a consensus on this issue. I commend him highly. Let me assure the Senator of my willingness to work in that regard.

(The remarks of Mr. MURKOWSKI pertaining to the introduction of S. 1591

are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. SHELBY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to a period of morning business with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

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

POWDER RIVER BASIN COAL INITIATIVE

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, yesterday my colleagues, Senator ENZI and Senator GORTON, discussed the importance of a proposed new clean coal initiative that offers the opportunity to create a new type of cleaner-burning coal that will help to meet our nation's energy needs and the requirements of the Clean Air Act. I want to lend my strong support to this initiative, and express my hope that the Department of Energy and Congress can work together to find a way to fund this important project.

Under this initiative, the Black Hills Corporation of Rapid City, South Dakota, would work with the Department of Energy to test a new method of processing sub-bituminous coal to remove its moisture content and increase its heat-value. This new technology is much less capital intensive than any other coal enhancement technology known to exist today and has the real potential of becoming the first such process to be commercially feasible. It is my understanding that the upgraded coal which would be produced by this new process would be environmentally superior to current sub-bituminous coal and less expensive to ship, allowing coal users across the country to benefit from it.

There are extensive reserves of sub-bituminous coal in the Powder River basin, and particularly on the reservation of the Crow Indian Tribe. By expanding the market for coal from this area, we can help to promote economic development across the west. At the same time, we can provide coal users throughout the United States with cleaner-burning coal, and help to improve our air quality.

It is my hope that we can move forward with this project as quickly as possible. I urge my colleagues to give it their strong support.

WEATHERIZATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President, I rise to thank Senator SLADE GORTON, Chairman of the Interior Appropriations Subcommittee, for his, as well as his staff's, efforts to work with me and my staff to address concerns regarding

a potential funding freeze for the Weatherization Assistance Program. I am very pleased that the Chairman was able to obtain an additional \$2 million, at my urging, for the Weatherization Assistance Program, increasing the FY 2000 funding level to \$135 million.

Weatherization is an especially critical program to the Northeast-Midwest region. It increases energy efficiency in low-income homes, reducing energy use by up to one-third. More than four and a half million households have been weatherized through this program over the past twenty years. Weatherization returns \$1.80 in energy savings for every dollar spent; and provides an additional \$0.60 in employment and environmental benefits.

This year, 31 Senators voiced support for an increase in weatherization funding. In light of recent forecasts of rising fuel costs, weatherization funding has never been more critical. By providing targeted support in anticipation of extreme weather conditions, we can ensure the health, safety, and well-being of millions of low-income families, including the especially vulnerable populations of low-income children and elderly.

BRYAN AMENDMENT OF THE INTERIOR APPROPRIATIONS BILL

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, I have sought recognition to state my views on the Bryan amendment regarding the Timber Sales Management program within the National Forest Service. I am concerned about environmental protection and safeguarding our Nation's Forests, providing that there is an appropriate balance for economic development and job opportunities.

My state of Pennsylvania has one of the best run National Forests in the country. The Allegheny National Forest has some of the most valuable timber in the world, particularly its black cherry, which is used internationally for fine furniture and veneers. As an above cost forest, the Allegheny returns approximately \$10 million to the Treasury annually and generates \$44 million in total income and an estimated 732 jobs. The rural Pennsylvania counties that surround the Allegheny National Forest substantially rely on these revenues to fund their local school systems.

The Bryan amendment would provide the Timber Sales Management Program with the level of funding requested by the Administration. This is the program that funds the important work that is done to ensure that all timber cutting in our National Forests is done in an environmentally appropriate manner. The program is vital to restoring, improving and maintaining the health of our National Forests and it ensures that forests fully comply with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Further, the amendment would take the \$32 million dollars that was added to this program by the Senate Interior Appropriations Sub-

committee and would use the money to continue road maintenance and to conduct biological surveys of the National Forests.

I am convinced that we must continue to manage our National Forest system in a fiscal and environmental responsible manner. On final consideration, I believe this amendment strikes a fair balance between the efficient use of our National Forests and the funding of environmental programs that are vital to enhance the public's use and enjoyment of our national forests for many years to come.

COLD WATER FISH HABITAT

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, I thank Senators GORTON and BYRD for inclusion of an amendment to provide funding for a voluntary enrollment, cold water fish habitat conservation plan (HCP) in the States of Idaho and Montana. This project is already authorized under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). Habitat Conservation Plans (HCPs) were authorized in 1982 to allow private landowners where endangered species are found a chance to write site-specific management plans and, in some cases, allow other activity to continue on those lands. A project similar to this involving the Karner Blue Butterfly in Wisconsin is considered an HCP success story.

In Idaho alone, of the 2,639,633 acres of State-owned endowment land, over half is bull trout habitat. Wise and productive use of state endowment land is essential to the funding of education in Idaho and this use could be jeopardized should it be called into question as a "take" under Section 9 of the ESA. The large area comprising bull trout habitat complicates not only natural resource uses of the land, but the management strategy of involved agencies in addressing habitat for the bull trout. With the huge land area involved, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Idaho concurs that a cooperative effort will be necessary to effect management practices to benefit the bull trout. The States of Idaho and Montana have already been active in addressing bull trout habitat needs—last year, they spent nearly \$1 million collectively to promote bull trout recovery.

It is clear that a cooperative effort, involving the States of Idaho and Montana, the USFWS, and private forest owners will be necessary to address the challenge of providing clean, cold water for bull trout habitat. The formulation of a voluntary enrollment, state-wide HCP will provide the structure for this cooperation. HCPs have a proven record of creating tangible benefits that aid in species protection and this HCP would both protect bull trout habitat and responsible land use. For an HCP to be approved, the Secretary must find that those party to the agreement will "to the maximum extent possible, minimize and mitigate the impacts of * * * taking" of the species in question.

In recent hearings that I have held on HCPs in my subcommittee, numerous scientists have testified to the effectiveness of HCPs in furthering on the ground improvements to the habitat of threatened and endangered species. The funds provided for in this amendment will be used to fund data collection an organization for the States to come together and negotiate the HCP. The negotiated HCP would include state-owned endowment lands and private lands enrolled voluntarily by the landowner. To arrive at the specific terms of such an agreement, a concerted effort will be needed to accumulate data and facilitate discussions that can lead to a consensus-based solution supported by all interested parties.

The States of Idaho and Montana, nor the USFWS, cannot shoulder this funding burden alone. The funds provided for in this amendment are urgently needed. In addition to the overwhelming task of addressing bull trout habitat issues, the USFWS has been petitioned to list the west-slope cutthroat trout and the Yellowstone cutthroat trout. We seek, in partnership with the USFWS and the private sector, funding to develop an innovative HCP that can be a "win" for kids, for species, and for responsible land use.

OEHS WEEK

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, the first Occupational and Environmental Health and Safety, OEHS Week, August 30 through September 3, 1999, is a reminder that while workers are safer than they used to be, injury, illness—even death—in the workplace is still an unfortunate reality.

The American Industrial Hygiene Association, a not-for-profit society of professionals in the field of occupational and environmental health and safety, sponsors OEHS Week and plans for it to become an annual event. The goal is to bring a greater awareness of workplace and community health issues to the public. The theme, "Protecting Your Future . . . Today," highlights the far-reaching nature of occupational and environmental safety's impact on the public.

"We chose Labor Day weekend as the perfect time to remind workers, management and the community at large that workplace safety affects everyone. Even one fatality on the job is one fatality too much," says AIHA President James R. Thornton.

"But beyond that, we are concerned with overall safety. We want all employees to consider their workplace environment, even in offices that otherwise may seem extremely safe. For instance, is your workstation ergonomically sound? Is your chair comfortable? Do you take occasional breaks to stretch? Is your computer monitor at the proper angle? All of these things can add up to the difference between working safely and a work-related injury or illness.