

year 2000 to the year 2013—\$5.686 trillion to \$6.815 trillion, an increase of \$1.129 trillion.

They are all talking about paying off the debt by 2013, and the actual document they submit shows the debt increasing each year, and over that period an increase of over \$1 trillion.

Each year, Congress spends more than the President's budgets. There is no chance of a surplus with both sides proposing to reduce revenues with a tax cut. But we have a sweetheart deal: The Republicans will call a deficit a surplus, so they can buy the vote with tax cuts; the Democrats will call the deficit a surplus, so they can buy the vote with increased spending. The worst abuse of campaign finance is using the Federal budget to buy votes.

Alan Greenspan could stop this. He could call a deficit a deficit. Instead, appearing before Congress in his confirmation hearing, Greenspan, talking of the Federal budget, stated: "I would fear very much that these huge surpluses . . ." and on and on. We are in real trouble when Greenspan calls huge deficits "huge surpluses." Greenspan thinks his sole role is to protect the financial markets. He does not want the U.S. Government coming into the market borrowing billions to pay its deficit, crowding out private capital, and running up interest costs.

But Congress' job is to not only protect the financial markets but the overall economy. Our job, as the board of directors for the Federal Government, is to make sure the Government pays its bills. In short, our responsibility is to eliminate waste.

The biggest waste of all is to continue to run up the debt with devastating interest costs for nothing. In good times, the least we can do is put this Government on a pay-as-you-go basis. Greenspan's limp admonition to "pay down the debt" is just to cover his backside. He knows better. He should issue a clarion call to stop increasing the debt. While he is raising interest rates to cool the economy, he should categorically oppose tax cuts to stimulate it.

Our only hope is the free press. In the earliest days, Thomas Jefferson observed, given a choice between a free government and a free press, he would choose the latter. Jefferson believed strongly that with the press reporting the truth to the American people, the Government would stay free.

Our problem is that the press and media have joined the conspiracy to defraud. They complain lamely that the Federal budget process is too complicated, so they report "surplus." Complicated it is. But as to being a deficit or a surplus is clear cut; it is not complicated at all. All you need to do is go to the Department of the Treasury's report on public debt. They report the growth in the national debt every day, every minute, on the Internet at www.publicdebt.treas.gov.

In fact, there is a big illuminated billboard on Sixth Avenue in New York

that reports the increase in the debt by the minute. At present, it shows that we are increasing the debt every minute by \$894,000. Think of that—\$894,000 a minute. Of course, increase the debt, and interest costs rise. Already, interest costs exceed the defense budget. Interest costs, like taxes, must be paid. Worse, while regular taxes support defense, and other programs, interest taxes support waste. Running a deficit of over \$100 billion today, any tax cut amounts to an interest tax increase—an increase in waste.

If the American people realized what was going on, they would run us all out of town.

Mr. President, I thank the distinguished Chair and 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. BAUCUS. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

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

UNIVERSAL ACCESS TO TECHNOLOGY

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, I wish to spend a few minutes addressing a matter that is very important to the people of my home State of Montana but also to about 50 million other Americans. Universal access to technology and services all across our country is a very important principle in American history. From the Postal Service to electricity to phone service, we have all made sure, as a national policy, that all Americans have access to the basic services they need.

Now we need to make sure all Americans also receive universal access to another major service; that is, TV service, weather reports, emergency broadcasts, local news. All Americans should be able to get local news on their television set, to get information about their local communities. That is not available today for about 50 million Americans. In my State alone, 120,000 people, about 35 percent of the homes in Montana, receive video programming via satellite because there is simply no way else to get it. That is the highest per capita rate in the Nation.

We have more satellite dishes per capita than any other State in the Nation. We jokingly call the satellite dish our new State flower. It used to be the bitterroot; now it is the satellite dish.

The problem is, we in Montana have to watch the news from New York City or Denver or Seattle. We can't get local news from our local stations from our satellites. The technology isn't there. The satellite companies don't provide the service. Montana is not alone. In

nine other States, at least 20 percent of the households depend on satellite broadcasts for TV reception. They can't get it with an antenna. They can't get it from cable. They have to get it off the satellite. And in places such as Montana, with mountains, buttes, ravines, and gullies, all the different geographic conditions that occur in our State, there are many people who live on the outskirts of major towns who can't get local television signals with antenna, no matter how hard they try. They can't get any television. There are many communities and homes that are much too remote to receive news or TV coverage by cable. They are just too remote.

Why is it so many people can't get TV coverage that is important for ties to local communities? The major satellite companies have told us that the free market simply doesn't pay. It doesn't pay for the satellite companies to provide the signal to smaller communities. It does pay for the larger communities but not for the small. The satellite companies have told us they can only afford to market in the high-density urban areas. I understand that. All companies want to make as much money as they can. That is the American way. That is wonderful. But the difficulty is, as a consequence, there are many areas of our country that can't get TV coverage—that is, coverage at all—or cannot get local television, local news.

We can't rely solely on the profit motive. That drives America; it is wonderful. That is why American prosperity is doing so well and for so long. But we also have to be sure that it is not the only condition because otherwise we would still be cooking supper by candlelight in rural America. We would have to go down to the local telegraph office to communicate with friends. That is because without rural electric service or rural co-op service, that would be the case.

This map is very interesting, the one behind me to my immediate right. Under the most optimistic local-to-local plans—that is, where a satellite signal is sent down to communities so the communities can, from their satellite, get local television—only about 67 out of a total of 210 TV markets in the United States will get access to local channels via the satellite. The more realistic answer is probably about 40 markets will be served by satellite; that is, either by DirecTV or Echostar. Millions of households will get it in communities such as New York City and Los Angeles.

The red dots on the map are cities served, as of the end of last year, by satellite; that is, local service, local TV coverage, local news coverage served by satellite. As we can see, there are a lot of places in America without red dots. If you are in a city with a red dot, you can get local news by satellite. But if you live someplace else and not one of these red dots occurs, then you cannot get local news by

satellite. The orange-yellow dots are announced probable sites in the future. As I said, the most optimistic estimate is 67 markets served out of the 210; the most probable is about 40 markets served out of 210.

Let me tell my colleagues where my State ranks in terms of the probability of getting served with local coverage by satellite. I can assure you, we are not in the top 67. Our largest city in Montana is Billings. Billings ranks about 169 in the Nation out of 210. Butte, MT, is about 192. Glendive is up in the northeastern part of the market. That TV market is number 210; that is, out of 210 TV markets in the country, we are 210. So we have a ways to go if we are going to get satellite local news coverage.

This isn't a problem only in Montana. It is a problem in 16 States. Sixteen States have no single city among the top 70 markets, not one. They include half of the Nation's State capitals. A dozen cities with nearly 500,000 people each won't get service. From the Great Plains to Alaska and Maine to Mississippi, much of America is being left behind.

Why is this so important? Why is local-to-local broadcasting so important? Essentially because this is the heart of the community. One of the fibers that holds a community together is the ability to communicate within that community. The community is able to tune into a TV to hear about the local high school football team; how did they do? Did they win or lose? And local news, all the things that go on in a local community: what is happening in the neighborhood? Maybe there is a sale going on at a local store. There is a TV advertisement. You know what is going on in the community. There is a charity fundraiser.

Then look at some of the more dramatic reasons for local news accessibility: winter storm warnings, hurricanes, school closures, emergencies of one kind or another, floods, tornadoes.

There are a lot of reasons why we in all our communities want to know what is happening locally. As I said at the outset, there are about 15 million Americans who are not able to tune into their local TV stations, and we should find some way to solve that.

Last month, I heard from a good, solid Montanan, Gary Ardesson of Frenchtown, MT, which is about 20 miles outside of Missoula. Gary can't get any local channels—none whatsoever—either by antenna, or by cable, or by satellite. He wants to pay for it, but it isn't available. He just can't get it. So Gary asked why in the world should he be in this situation. What would Gary do if he wanted to get the latest storm warning? All he can do is stick his head out the window and put his finger up in the wind to find out what the weather is going to be. There is no other way except by radio.

He commented on the legislation we passed in the last session. He said: What is the point of legislation if they

only implement it in the areas that can already receive local channels? That is what we did last session, but we didn't provide full coverage.

This is a problem not only for viewers; it is a problem for local TV broadcasters. Local broadcasters are vital to local economies. They provide jobs and an avenue for local businesses to grow. How? Through advertising. It is very important that we can keep our local broadcasters thriving. I think there are four main issues we have to address to solve this problem.

First, we have to assure that every household in America has access to their local television station. That is a given. Every household in America must have access to their local television station.

This can be achieved, I submit, through a loan guarantee program that encourages investment in infrastructure, whether it be satellite, cable, or some other new emergency technology. Loan guarantees are going to be necessary for those less densely populated parts of our country that need assistance, such as REA, the rural electric co-ops of not too many years ago, and such as telephone co-ops. It is a guaranteed service to all Americans.

Look at this chart. This shows where the Rural Utilities Service—the organization in the USDA that administers the utility service programs in our country, whether it be electric power, telecommunications, or whatnot—currently provides service. All 50 States currently have service under the Rural Utilities Service. The yellow dots are water and wastewater guarantee programs, loan guarantee programs. The other is electrical distribution. That is the red. The dark blue is electrical generation and transmission. Look at the green; it is telecommunications. That is what we are talking about—administering a loan guarantee telecommunications program. The Rural Utility Service isn't doing that. Those are the green dots. If you stand close, you can see the green dots—mostly in the East, where you would expect, and also you will find a few in other parts of the country. We have to make sure the program is properly administered, once we guarantee access. Certainly, the Rural Utility Service is currently providing service in all 50 States and are more than qualified to provide that service.

The RUS currently manages a \$42 billion loan portfolio for rural America—\$42 billion—including investments in approximately 7,600 small community and rural water and wastewater systems, and about 1,500 electric and telecommunications systems servicing about 84 percent of America's counties. They have been very successful.

This map shows the vast area that is covered. RUS's success in developing infrastructure in rural America has led to the infusion of private capital in rural infrastructure. For every \$1 of capital that RUS provides to rural America, that leverages to \$2 or \$3 of

outside investment. The Rural Utility Service is the logical team to make sure this program is properly administered.

Perhaps the RUS could consult with other agencies—the National Telecommunications and Information Association, perhaps—and that makes sense. But I think the core of the administration should be in the RUS. Some colleagues have suggested maybe new legislation for a new oversight board, a new bureaucracy, similar to what was provided for in the Emergency Steel Loan Guarantee Act of 1999.

I have some concerns about that. My real question is, how can an agency successfully administer the loans when the guarantee decision is made independent of that agency? A critical step in implementing the loan is a clear understanding of the funded project. That is best achieved during the review of the applications, including the financial and technical feasibility analysis.

That brings the third issue. We must construct this program in a fiscally responsible manner, minimizing the cost and risk to the taxpayer. I think this goal can be achieved by utilizing an existing agency—one with a good track record.

RUS has done a good job. In 50 years, RUS has experienced not one loan loss in its telecommunications program. That is, to me, a very good record.

Finally, I think we need to make sure the guarantee program is utilized to provide local-to-local service to all of America. I have heard from colleagues that Congress should require some level of private capital investment in conjunction with the loan guarantee. Some have even suggested that the loan guarantee should be perhaps as low as 50 percent. That gives me some pause because I don't want to have something set up with too many hurdles and redtape, which has the effect of increasing interest rates necessarily and therefore diminishing the likelihood that all of America will be served.

In summary, these are my four main criteria: One, every household must be served; two, the program must be administered by an agency with the necessary expertise, somebody with a track record that knows what is going on; three, the program must be cost effective and low risk to taxpayers; four, the program should not be structured in a manner that is so cost prohibitive to the private sector that it sits on the shelf unused.

So I say, let's move ahead and let's also keep this nonpartisan. There are some in the Senate who have suggested that maybe this issue is driven by partisan politics. Mr. President, I totally reject that notion; indeed, I find it offensive.

This issue doesn't belong to one Senator or to one party. This issue belongs to the American people—people who need service, people who are demanding that we act to provide them with

comprehensive satellite coverage. That is all this is. I call on the Senate to do that. That is what the people want.

The loan guarantee program that I am talking about was regrettably stripped from the Satellite Home Viewer Act in the eleventh hour of the last session. I say, let's put it back in in a nonpartisan way. I say that because all Americans who do not get local service would be very grateful. Let's do this not only for Gary Ardeson in Frenchtown, MT. Let's do it for all of the Americans in rural America who deserve the same service that people in the big cities are getting.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BENNETT). Without objection, it is so ordered.

EUROPEAN UNION ANTITRUST INVESTIGATION

Mr. GORTON. Mr. President, it was just last week that I came to the floor of the Senate to share a legal brief outlining the weakness of the Department of Justice's case against Microsoft. But I repeated at that time a thought I have expressed several times on the floor of the Senate that perhaps the most long-lasting effect of this ill-begotten lawsuit would be on the U.S. international competitiveness and our place in the world that is changing so rapidly due to the development of both software and hardware in the computer industry and in the related high-tech fields. Yesterday, the other shoe dropped. The European Union announced an antitrust investigation against Microsoft, something, as I say, that I have been predicting for more than a year.

When the Department of Justice was asked about it, it said this action took them by surprise. I don't know why we should be surprised that the European Union is very much interested in restricting access of U.S. goods and services in Europe, whether they are software, airplanes, bananas, or a wide range of other goods and services, or why the Department of Justice should be surprised that the European Union investigates and reflects its own actions in a matter of this sort. In fact, the report of this lawsuit points out that it is easier to bring an antitrust case in Europe than it is in the United States.

We have simply opened up to European competitors the opportunity to cripple or destroy one of the most innovative and progressive of all U.S. corporations, one that bears a very significant share of the credit for the magnificent performance of our economy and for the changes in our lives.

Again, as is the case with the Microsoft action by the U.S. Department of Justice, this European investigation seems to have been sparked by an American competitor, even more perhaps than the European authorities themselves. But nothing but ill can come from investigations or actions of this sort.

This industry and our economy has grown because it is highly innovative, highly competitive, and very rapidly changing. Neither our antitrust laws nor European antitrust laws fit that very well—the Europeans probably less than our own, as they represent views in an economy that has been for generations far more stagnant than our own.

In any event, Mr. President, I regret to have to bring this matter to your attention and to the attention of my colleagues. But I have feared exactly this for more than a year. I fear that it will breed other copycat actions in other parts of the world that would also like to grab for free the innovations and progress that have meant so much to the United States and that are so important in reducing what is now the largest bilateral trade deficit in our history or in the world. This is bad news. But it is bad news that is brought upon us largely by the ill-advised and ill-founded actions against Microsoft by our own U.S. Department of Justice.

EDUCATION IN AMERICA

Mr. GORTON. Mr. President, I was sitting in the seat the Presiding Officer is occupying about an hour ago when the junior Senator from New York regaled the Senate with his views on education in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

He did me a great honor to denounce my proposal, Straight A's, rather specifically. But it did seem to me to be a strange and inverted world in which Straight A's, a proposal designed to empower education authorities such as parents, teachers, and superintendents—the very people who know our students by their first names—to say, somehow or another, this was an attack on local authority but that the issuance of thousands of pages of regulations, on hundreds of different individual categorical aid programs, at the Department of Education in Washington, DC, was somehow liberating.

The Senator from New York criticized our present education system as a failure, a statement with which I do not agree. I believe there are many improvements necessary, but my own experience, in literally dozens of schools over the last 2 or 3 years, has shown a tremendous dedication to better teaching methods, to the education of our children, to innovation, changes that I want to encourage.

In fact, if we look for something to criticize as a failure, we need look no further than the present Federal education system itself. Title I has now

been in effect for 35 years. The difference in achievement between the kids it is designed to help and the less underprivileged children is as great as it was when the program began. Yet what we have from the Senator from New York and the Senator from Massachusetts is to have more of exactly what has failed and that perhaps what is really lacking is sufficient direction from Washington, DC.

I do not claim to be an expert on what is needed for a higher and better education in the city of New York or in any other New York school district. However, I don't think the Senator from New York knows more about what the schools in my State need—I won't even say that I do—than the superintendents, principals, teachers, and parents of students in my own State.

What we seek—and this will be the great debate that will take place in this body in less than a month—will be: Do we trust the people who have dedicated their lives and careers to educating our children, to make the fundamental decisions about what they need in 17,000 school districts across the country and hundreds of thousands of individual schools or do we believe they need total supervision and control in Washington, DC, in the bureaucracy in the U.S. Department of Education?

We have increasingly followed that lateral line now for 35 years. It is a dead-end street. That is what has failed to work in connection with our education system.

For the first time, with the minor exception of the Ed-Flex bill we passed last year, we seek to restore some of that authority to our local school districts, to our teachers, and to our parents. That is what Straight A's is all about.

I suppose I should be honored to have my own program attacked specifically and by name because I think that means it is making very real progress. I know it is at home, whenever I go to a school or to a school administration building and discuss its ideas. Our teachers and our educators want more authority to make up their minds as to what their children need. Those needs are not the same in every school district. Not every school district has as its highest priority more teachers. Not every school district has as its highest priority more bricks and mortar. Not every school district has as its highest priority teacher education. Not every school district has as its highest priority more computers. But many school districts have any one of those as a highest priority, and many have some other. Each of them ought to be permitted, each of them ought to be encouraged, to make those decisions for the students.

A final point. The Senator from New York attacked this proposal as lacking accountability. We certainly have accountability now. The way our schools account for the spending of money under hundreds of present school programs is by filling out forms and by