

resolution of disapproval to the Senate by a vote of 22-0.

Now the Senate has to vote because there are expedited procedures that bring these provisions to the floor. We will vote at 5 o'clock. The vote will be: Do we set aside the budget points of order that allow us to maintain fiscal discipline? Do we set those aside for the next 2 years? The Budget Committee has said no. I hope the Senate in a resounding way says no this afternoon at 5 o'clock. That is what we have done in the past.

In 1991, when we had a similar circumstance, the Senate Budget Committee rejected the idea and reported unfavorably abandoning fiscal discipline 21-0. The Senate vote was 97-2 against giving up those budget points of order and those protections for fiscal discipline.

Later that year, a second low-growth resolution came before the Senate Budget Committee. It was rejected 21-0. The Senate rejected it 92-5.

In September, again, there was a low-growth resolution. The Senate Budget Committee rejected abandoning fiscal discipline on a vote of 19-2. The Senate rejected it on a vote of 88-8.

Once again, because the economy has been growing at less than 1 percent, this automatic resolution has come before the Budget Committee and has come before the Senate. The question is, Do we eliminate all of those budget points of order that help us to maintain fiscal discipline? The Senate Budget Committee has acted saying no on a vote of 22-0. They voted out a disapproval resolution. Now the full Senate is going to have its chance to register its opinion at 5 o'clock this evening.

I hope that we reject it unanimously and send a clear message to the country and to the market that we intend at the same time we provide fiscal stimulus and a short-term lift for this economy to also maintain long-term fiscal discipline and the integrity of our trust funds.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time under the control of the majority has expired.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that between now and 12:30 the Senate go into a period of morning business with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

THE BUDGET SURPLUS

Mr. NELSON of Florida. I compliment our chairman of the Budget Committee for the leadership he has given us and how steadfast he has been to be conservative in his outlook and his projections on what we should do with the projected budgetary surplus. It was the Senator from North Dakota,

our chairman, who kept saying earlier this year: Watch out. These budget projections are too rosy. The budget, as projected over the next 10 years, is going to be considerably less.

Isn't it astounding that before September 11 the debate was over the use of the surplus and whether to pay down or pay off the national debt over a 10-year period. Now we find ourselves in a shrunken surplus with a wartime condition.

I also extend my compliments to the ranking member, our dear friend, the Senator from New Mexico.

The point I want to make is how quickly the landscape shifts—that before September 11, if the Senate had taken the advice of the chairman of the Budget Committee, what we would have done would have been very conservative in our approach as to how we were going to use the projected surplus. We wouldn't have frittered a lot of it away.

As the Senator from North Dakota has pointed out, that surplus was very likely to, if not disappear, be reduced. With the events of September 11, which put us on a wartime footing with new expenditures we had not planned on, combined with the diminished surplus—we were planning back in the summer to use the surplus to pay off the national debt. That is not even in the cards. Indeed, what is happening is the surplus that is left—the surplus in the Social Security trust fund—is going to be used up for other things to the point that we are facing the prospects of deficit financing, which is spending more than we have coming in in tax revenue in any one given year. That, of course, adds to the national debt.

How sad it is that we did not take the advice of the chairman and be conservative in the way that we were going to plan our spending and our tax cuts for the next decade so that we would have a greater cushion when the emergency came, as surely as it was going to come, only it came sooner than we thought; it came on September 11.

I thank the chairman for his leadership and for his knowledge about what this Nation is facing fiscally.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. CONRAD. I thank the Senator from Florida, who is a very valued member of the Senate Budget Committee and also throughout his career has been dedicated to fiscal discipline.

We did make some mistakes earlier this year, unfortunately, collectively, in going too far, I believe, on the tax cut package in the face of a very optimistic set of forecasts but a set of forecasts over a 10-year period that I think almost anybody could have anticipated was unlikely to ever come true. We tried to warn our colleagues repeatedly that it was unlikely to come true; that you could not trust a 10-year forecast, that it was filled with risks, that it was filled with uncertainty, and we ought to be cautious.

Unfortunately, caution was thrown to the wind, and as a result we now face a circumstance where we will have budget deficits in this fiscal year, and perhaps for several years thereafter, and for the next 10 years we will see all of the Medicare trust fund money being used to fund the other operations of Government and a very substantial portion of the Social Security trust fund being used to fund the other operations of Government. That should not be done. That is a mistake.

We will regret it when the baby boomers start retiring in 10 years because, unfortunately, we had a budget in place before September 11 that did not add up, and now it is even further off in the red because of the tragic events of September 11 and the aftermath.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. CLINTON). The Senator from Florida.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Madam President, I would like to address the Senate on another subject in addition to the budget. It is my understanding we are in a period of morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is correct.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Madam President, may I be recognized?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida is recognized.

AIRLINE SECURITY

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Madam President, I call to the Senate's attention the fact that the travel and tourism industry is a most important industry to all of our States but especially to 30 of our States. The travel and tourism industry is one of the top three industries in those States. As a result, we see that the reluctance of people to travel, particularly on airliners, is having a devastating economic effect upon areas of the country that are magnets for travel and tourism.

Clearly, two such areas are in my State: Orlando, which is the No. 1 tourist destination in the world, and Miami, a central hub of travel and tourism throughout the Americas and of a huge cruise ship business to which passengers come by airliner. But you can look at other cities in the country—Atlanta, New York, Las Vegas—you could go to any number of the cities where travel and tourism is a major economic component, and they are devastated.

For example, in Orlando it is very interesting; you see the dramatic effects of people afraid to be on airplanes and thus the reduced airliner traffic. You can go into downtown Orlando, in hotels that are more accommodating to business travel, and you will find that they are doing fairly well. But if you go out on International Drive, outside of Orlando, toward the tourist destinations, you will find hotels that have less than 50-percent occupancy.

Indeed, I talked to the owner of one hotel—it is a hotel with 800 rooms—and

they have closed up 600 of the 800 rooms. It does not take too long to understand, with that kind of reduced revenue, suddenly, the owners of those hotels are not going to be able to pay their mortgages, their taxes.

Look at the devastating effects upon employment in the areas where they have laid off so many workers because they do not have the traffic to support all of the employees, and you see how that diminished economic activity ripples through the economy and starts to devastate not only a community but devastates a State. And when you look at the reduction in the sales tax in so many of our States, and the crisis State governments are now facing in their budgets, indeed, you see that it starts to economically devastate the Nation.

Why am I saying all this? I am saying it because we have something we can do about it in this Chamber and in the other Chamber at the other end of the Capitol, because we have in front of us a bill for establishing airline security, with all of these items on which we have generally gotten consensus such as sky marshals, such as reinforced cockpit doors, such as hijack training for airline employees. But we come to this difference of opinion on the screeners, the airport security personnel: Should they be privately contracted or should they be federalized law enforcement officers?

The reason I rise to make these remarks is because I just heard a riveting story by Senator DEBBIE STABENOW of Michigan. On a flight inbound to Reagan National Airport last night, a passenger, perhaps intoxicated, stood up and started walking toward the cockpit.

Now, mind you, the FAA has a regulation that for the last 30 minutes of a flight inbound into Reagan National Airport every passenger must remain seated. It is for the obvious reasons, with Reagan National Airport being so close to the centers of Government—10 seconds from the Pentagon, 20 seconds from the White House, and 30 seconds of a diverted flight path to the U.S. Capitol—that this was one of the safety precautions the FAA required on inbound and outbound aircraft at Reagan National Airport.

As relayed by Senator STABENOW, they were inbound, and suddenly this rather large gentleman got up and started walking toward the cockpit. What she shared with us was, she was so proud of the professionalism that then occurred, with two sky marshals sitting in first class who immediately got up, without any fuss, and got this passenger on to the floor. Apparently, there was a third Federal law enforcement officer on the plane as well, toward the back of the plane. Everyone was instructed to get their heads down, that they were diverting immediately to Dulles Airport.

The plane landed safely. All of the law enforcement personnel came out to the plane. It was handled very professionally. It was handled very safely.

I tell you this riveting story, just told to me by Senator STABENOW, to make the point that the American public desperately wants to feel safe when they get on an airplane. They want to know that the most highly qualified, highly trained personnel are the ones who are not only on that aircraft, as was just demonstrated by the sky marshals' professional behavior, but they want to know that the most highly trained, qualified law enforcement personnel are the ones who are doing law enforcement checks of the hand-carried baggage and the profiling to try to avoid any kind of incidents in the future that would jeopardize the safety of the American flying public.

Now, it just seems to me that with so much at stake, not only for the safety of people in airplanes but for the economic engine of this country, which is being so devastatingly affected in places such as my State and 30 other States where travel and tourism are one of the top three industries, it would seem to me that we ought to be able to have a meeting of the minds, enact this legislation, and get it to the President, who has said he will sign what the Congress produces, and get on about restoring the confidence of the American public in the safety of flying.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut is recognized.

AIRPORT SECURITY

Mr. DODD. Madam President, I commend my colleague from Florida for a very excellent statement regarding airport security. As many colleagues here, over the weekend, I, too, traveled and met with some airport administrators and officials. Regardless of where you are in the country, the message is the same. These are people who don't particularly wear any labels of Democrat or Republican, Conservative or Liberal, whatever those labels may mean to some, but to most Americans out there, the issue of being more secure on something as fundamental as air travel is basic.

They don't understand why the Republican House leadership has refused to join the 100 Members of this body and the overwhelming majority of people involved in the airline industry in getting federalization of these workers and making airports as secure as possible.

I served in the Peace Corps in the Dominican Republic and many people were going back home there on that flight yesterday. One young man served in the Navy, and he just received his leave and was going back to visit his parents from the Dominican Republic. Another woman who escaped the World Trade Center tragedy lost her life on the flight yesterday.

Obviously, we don't make any equation of terrorist acts to what happened yesterday upon the preliminary information. But it heightens the security that people want to have in air travel.

We call, again today, on the Republican leadership in the House to change their minds and adopt the bill embraced to this body 100-0 and offer the public the security they deserve.

The Senator from Florida made an excellent point.

THE ECONOMIC RECOVERY PACKAGE

Mr. DODD. Madam President, I want to take a minute and talk about the matter before the Senate, which is the economic recovery package, the stimulus package. I say to my colleagues here, and to others, that, again, this is one where the President—I know he is meeting with President Putin, and the subject matter is obviously the war against terrorism in central Asia. But it is also going to be very important in the prosecution of that war that we convey to the American public our deep concern about the present condition of our economy, and that there is clearly a recession.

The unemployment numbers are getting worse. Last month we had the highest increase in unemployment in 20 years. There is every indication that this economic downturn will be with us for some time. We have seen a staggering number of people lose their jobs, particularly at the lower end of the economic spectrum. I hope the President will be asking us to extend unemployment benefits for these people who have lost their jobs. First of all, it is a wonderful way to provide some stimulation because these are dollars that must be spent. The people on unemployment don't have the luxury, having lost their jobs, of opening up a savings account. They are trying to provide for their needs on a daily basis. Those extended unemployment benefits are dollars that end up in the marketplace. If demand is one of the issues—and I believe it is, based on the economists who have shared their thoughts with us—then clearly those who would receive these unemployment benefits are going to contribute to stimulating the economy.

Providing health care benefits—again, none of us subscribes to the notion that people who are unemployed or lose their jobs are anywhere near as much a victim as those victims on September 11, at the World Trade Center, or the Pentagon, or aboard that airplane in Pennsylvania. But they are all victims.

We know that what happened on September 11 contributed to the economic difficulties that existed on September 10. We know, for instance, that airline travel is down some 20, 30 percent. We know, as a result of that, the hotel industry and the restaurant industry—which, by the way, are the largest employers in America; some 17 million people work in the service industries these are the ones who have been hit immediately. And the people who set tables, who wash dishes, wait on tables, who clean hotel rooms, who work in