

in college if you just try, a lot of them do that. When we tell them that abstinence works, it does work and they see the proof in the pudding. But if we tell them nothing, then they have no standards, no goals to reach.

So I suggest it is working not just because of statistics I see on paper, but looking into eyes of students I get to talk to, and they tell me it is working.

Mr. UPTON. I appreciate the gentleman's leadership. In the days past, and, obviously, in the days ahead, we have some big votes next week if we take this welfare reform bill up. This is an important component of that. I am delighted we passed it out of my committee, the Committee on Energy and Commerce, on a strong vote of 35 to 17, and we have to make sure we carry the day when we take this issue to the House floor for debate next week.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, Heritage Community Services was formed as a coalition of community-based abstinence educators from across South Carolina with combined experience in the field totaling nearly 75 years. It was awarded a Title V abstinence education grant for implementing a state-wide program in 1998. Schools and communities have responded enthusiastically.

The Heritage programs are community-wide, serving more than 29,000 adolescents. The program's founder and CEO, Mrs. Anne Badgley, has been invited to address a number of Title V training programs across the country, as well as brief Pentagon undersecretaries of defense, the Army and Navy, and has testified before Congress.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on the subject of my special order just given.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Michigan?

There was no objection.

THE ABCs OF SECURING THE FUTURE OF OUR CHILDREN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BOYD) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. BOYD. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to address the House and Nation tonight for a few minutes. The Blue Dog Coalition is going to use this hour to talk a little bit about ABCs.

Mr. Speaker, some may wonder, well, that is unusual for the Blue Dogs to be talking about the ABCs, but let me tell you a little bit about the Blue Dogs. We are a group of 33 Members of Congress, men and women, from all around the Nation that spends a great deal of our focus and efforts and time and resources here in Congress asking the Congress to act responsibly in its fiscal and budgeting matters.

We believe that this Congress and this Nation in the last year-plus has moved away from fiscal responsibility, and, as a result, we are endangering our children's future. So what we want to do tonight, Mr. Speaker, is talk about the ABCs of securing our children's future.

When Congress considered the budget last year, Mr. Speaker, the Blue Dogs warned about the danger of making long-term commitments for tax cuts or new spending programs based on projected surpluses. In less than a year's time, we have seen a dramatic reversal of the once promising budgetary outlook. We now face projections of deficits and increasing debt for the rest of the decade that go far beyond the temporary impact of the economic downturn or cost of the war on terrorism.

Congress and the President need to sit down, we need to roll up our sleeves, and we need to have an honest and open discussion about what we need to do as a Nation, as a Congress, to put the budget back in order, starting with the ABCs of fiscal discipline.

The Blue Dogs have outlined four solutions to avoid leaving our children and our grandchildren with the consequences of today's irresponsible budgeting decisions. The members of the Blue Dogs who are here tonight to address this House are going to talk about those four solutions. I want to outline them very briefly.

Number one is assuring honesty and accountability. We believe that the Budget Act of 1990, which expires later this year, should be reinstituted by this Congress. Unless we renew our budget discipline, Congress will continue to find ways to break its own rules and pass more legislation that puts more red ink on the national ledger.

The Budget Enforcement Act, of course, has two major provisions. One, it sets in place discretionary spending limits for 5 years; secondly, it extends and expands pay-go rules. The pay-go rule is simply legislation that says that mandatory spending or revenues that increase the deficit must be offset.

Secondly, the "B" of the ABCs is balancing the budget without raiding Social Security. We believe that this Congress should pass a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution which makes it a violation of the Constitution to deficit spend, unless there is an extraordinary vote of the Congress or an extraordinary reason to do so.

Thirdly, we believe that the third point that we would advance is what we call climbing out of the deficit ditch. That is, there should be a plan to restore balance to our Federal books, and that, of course, is going to be an issue that we get to talk about a lot in the near future because of the need to raise the Federal debt ceiling.

Fourthly, the fourth part of our ABCs is Defending Our Children From Paying Our Bills Act. This would require a supermajority to borrow money by the U.S. Congress. Many in this

Chamber have, over the years, proposed that we would require a three-fifths vote to consider legislation that would raise taxes or some other sort of supermajority. Many of the Members of Congress support this notion, and we think that there ought to be also legislation which would require a three-fifths vote to borrow money.

I would like at this time to call on Members of the Blue Dogs, Mr. Speaker, that are in the Chamber. I would like to yield first to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. PHELPS).

Mr. PHELPS. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my friend and colleague, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BOYD) for yielding. Let me first express my sincere appreciation for his leadership. He has been a consistent Member of Congress, not only of our Blue Dog Coalition, that has been steady at the helm in trying to bring attention to a problem with deficit spending and the need for balancing the budget and staying within our means. I appreciate coming on after his leadership being here before I entered Congress and helping us steer this direction. So I thank all my fellow Blue Dogs for giving me the opportunity to speak about a very important issue.

This is not our first and only time of trying to make this issue more paramount and put emphasis on what really needs to be done as we get through this session in terms of the money that is available and what we have hanging over our heads as debt in this country and the priority of our spending needs and how we should look at balancing the budget.

So tonight I just want to focus my time on discussing the Blue Dog plan for putting the budget back in order, starting with fiscal discipline. The Blue Dogs have consistently focused on fiscal discipline, having advocated honesty and responsibility in the budgeting process.

When Congress considered the budget last year, the Blue Dogs warned then about the danger of making long-term commitments for tax cuts or new spending programs based on projected surpluses. The projected surpluses were based on the very best of the situation that we were realizing through the high peaks of the economy in the last several years. That is not good, sound fiscal policy, to base anything on the very best. I believe we should look at the more reasonable moderate projections.

We did not. So, in less than a year's time, we have seen a dramatic reversal of the once promising budgetary outlook. We now face projections of deficits and increasing debt for the rest of the decade that go far beyond the temporary impact of the economic downturn or cost of the war on terrorism.

Congress and the President need to sit down, roll up our sleeves and have an honest discussion about what we need to put the budget back in order, starting with the ABCs of the fiscal situation we bring to your attention tonight.

The Blue Dogs have outlined four solutions, as the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BOYD) opened up our session tonight to say, to avoid leaving our children and our grandchildren with the consequences of today's irresponsible budgeting solutions.

The reason we keep drilling that point home about our children and our grandchildren is because we try to focus on what all of us hold sacred and dear, and that very much is an emotional tie back home to the real world. Sometimes the disconnect out here makes I think a lot of times people feel like we are not real people with real families, with real needs, and that we are somehow someone different.

We are just like any of you out there, and that is why we are trying to say we should treat this budget, which you have sent us here to lead the country with, as we would treat our own, that affects our own household, our children and our grandchildren.

So, we have outlined four solutions to avoid this particular problem. We want to assure honesty and accountability, and budget enforcement. Unless we renew our budget discipline, Congress will continue to find ways to break its own rules and pass more legislation that puts still more red ink on the national ledger. Enforceable budget restraints will shine a light on deceptive practices and construct a fiscal guardrail, keeping our spending within the Nation's fiscal means.

We are a unique body here. We can break the rules. We do, too often. And, guess what? We do not get caught at it often enough. That is what is happening here right now as this session unfolds. We are not dealing with the real numbers. The American people are not being told the true story, and yet they are being led to believe we can do all the good things that we asked and requested and promised we would do in our campaigns to get here to do what once we get here? To continue the deception? Or to lay it out in real terms, as we should, in honest measures. So budget enforcement is a real item.

□ 2100

Balancing the budget without raiding Social Security. There is not one politician, not one campaigner, who said anything about getting into the Social Security trust funds or the surpluses. In fact, we said we have them locked away, right? Well, someone found the key. And when we open that door, there is an IOU there adding on to the other IOUs that we put on the American people for the past several decades. So this is adding on to the deficit that we already have in the Social Security and Medicare trust funds.

So we want to balance the budget without raiding Social Security. Well, how do we do that? Well, we need a constitutional amendment. We must vote on a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution that requires the President to submit, and Congress to enact, a budget that is in balance with-

out using the Social Security surplus. Now, that takes courageous leaders. Every one of us claimed that we would be and that we were in order to be elected. Now we are here. Let us produce it. Let us not lend rhetoric; let us prove that we are those leaders that can make the tough decisions.

The amendment, to my way of thinking, could be waived in times of war or disaster, military conflict, or other threats to our national security. That does not mean that the present war on terrorism that we are in dictates the need for us to get into the Social Security and Medicare trust funds; it does not. Without the tax cuts that were imposed and the surpluses that were eroded and squandered because of that and other reasons, because of things that we did not look at last year or anticipate or ignored, whichever word we want to use to serve our purposes better, that is why we are where we are now. But we are talking about a military conflict or national security being compromised that is beyond our control, not because of what we added to the mistakes to get us to where we are now.

So I believe that a constitutional amendment is very much needed, and I am prepared to support it.

This would also include excluding the Social Security trust funds. Balancing the budget is meaningless if we borrow from our children and our grandchildren, as we said, to do it. This bill improves on other balanced budget amendments by excluding the Social Security trust funds from receipts. It is more of a crutch to lean on if we still depend on the Social Security trust funds to say we are going to have a constitutional amendment, not to get into the Social Security trust funds. So excluding those trust funds from the receipts would, I think, serve the purpose to keep us fiscally restrained and on the right path.

It also provides that when the trust funds begin to run a deficit, then Social Security would be placed back on budget, requiring that the government account for deficits elsewhere in the budget. See, that is what we do not embrace too often. We divert the attention away from those other things that sort of creep up in the budget, but we do not want seemingly the American people to discover what those are, so we divert it to the other priorities and things that we know that are popular. At least some want to do that.

Climbing out of the deficit ditch. Debt limit with a plan. Now, I have heard people on this floor of the opposite party say, show us your plan. Well, the plans that we have had cannot even get out of the Committee on Rules for a debate on the floor or to be voted on. Do we know why? Because they are afraid it would pass. It makes too much sense. It would put too much marginal people running in an election year on a compromising path. That is too uncomfortable. Let us deal with that later. That is the common cry we

hear. Later, later, and the next thing we know, we are in our grandchildren's generation.

Blue Dogs believe that Congress has a responsibility to cover obligations through the end of the fiscal year, September 30, 2002, but that raising the debt limit by \$750 billion as requested by the President is risky business, folks. First, the President and Congress must create a plan to put our fiscal house back in order, just as a family facing financial problems must work with a bank to establish a financial plan in order to get approval to refinance their debt, all their debts. That is all we are asking. It makes sense.

Defending our children from paying our bills. A supermajority, a three-fifths vote, would be required to borrow money. That is what I feel would be one of the four points of our plan that should be followed. All too often, we as Congress people and the President have been unwilling to make the tough choices to balance our priorities and have chosen to leave future generations, as I said and emphasized, to pay the bill for policies which benefit the current generation by increasing the borrowing. Making it harder for Congress to borrow money, just as we should make it harder to increase taxes, by requiring a supermajority, will protect the rights of future generations who are not represented in our political system, but will bear the burden of our decisions today.

Finally, just let me leave my colleagues with a personal situation. Being from Illinois, having served 14 years in the Illinois House, I have a little bit of knowledge of what goes on there with the budgetary policies in Illinois. Illinois, like probably all of the State legislatures across our land, shared the same maybe artificial enthusiasm, maybe overexaggerated the good times of our economic peaks as we have had in the last few years and said everything is hunky-dory, no problems. What that meant is, Members, bring your projects, bring everything to the forefront here and smooth sailing, because we are rolling high.

Well, in Illinois, just as here in Congress, a year ago, or even before that, Illinois was in good shape, fiscally in good shape. But because of misguided management from the top in Illinois, and too many that took advantage of an artificial, overpromoted situation, guess what now? We have prisons in my district, and we have unemployment rates exceeding 12 to 15 percent down State, southern-most Illinois. We are good neighbors in saying, we will take in the prisons in our communities where other parts of the State said, no, we do not want those kind of jobs here in our community. But we were hurting enough with the coal mine shutting down and a lot of other depressed, deprived situations in our economy, we said, we will be a good neighbor.

So I have one of every kind of penal institution the State has to offer in my district, even in my old State district,

and we are proud to promote those economic jobs, economic builders. But now, now the Governor of Illinois and leaders of the State are saying, we have to close some of these prisons because we are broke. Somebody was asleep at the switch, and our own comptroller of the State over a year ago said, you better have a rainy-day fund, just like you do in your household when that roof might leak. Instead of just continuing to mop it up and treating the effect; you have to get the source of the problem where the hole in the roof is. That is what we have ignored in Illinois, even though there are a lot of good leaders who sounded the alarm, both in the legislature and constitutional officers, but not enough of the authority at the top.

So now we even have threatened Medicaid patients that will not get their due service, many that are the most vulnerable of our society, senior citizens. This is terrible. It could have been avoided. That is why we are stressing this four-point plan. Let us do what is responsible. Let us get to the source; and the source is recognizing that there should be honesty in budgeting, recognizing the true source of funds that we have that the Congressional Budget Office is reporting, instead of turning our heads the other way, hoping that the economy is going to get better and maybe make us right at some point down the road. That may be too late. Let us embrace what reality obviously is serving us now.

Mr. BOYD. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Illinois. It is obvious to me, as he described his experience in the State legislature, that his State, like mine, is prohibited from borrowing money and must balance its budget. I believe that is the way that the Federal Government should do; and certainly one of the shortcomings in the way our Constitution is drafted is that we are allowed to borrow money in ordinary circumstances and, actually, we did run deficits from the late 1960s until about the year 2000, primarily in peace times. So we had a wonderful opportunity here in the 1990s, or here in the year 2000, 2001, now that we have worked so hard to get back into balance to do some really good things and pay down the Federal debt. We seem to have passed, or missed, that opportunity.

Mr. Speaker, I yield now to the gentleman from Utah (Mr. MATHESON), a member of our Blue Dog team who is actually a rising star in this Congress, I believe; and he is an excellent blue puppy.

Mr. MATHESON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his leadership. As one of the cochairs of the Blue Dog group, I just appreciate all he does. I am real proud to be a part of the Blue Dog Coalition, a group of 33 fiscally-conservative Democrats who like to talk about being fiscally responsible. We have been coming out here many times, Tuesday night. Every week we have been coming out here for the last

few weeks, and we have been talking about issues of fiscal responsibility; and in particular, we have focused on what we see as a growing concern about increasing the debt that we incur in this country.

Now, we have just been talking about this four-point plan; and I want to talk about one of those points, which is the notion that we need to climb out of this deficit ditch that we have gotten ourselves into in this country.

The Secretary of the Treasury has come to Congress three different times now and said, we are really up against our debt limit; we need Congress to raise our debt limit, and we need Congress to raise it by \$750 billion. Now, that is a lot of money. We talk about numbers and throw out figures in Congress a lot, but \$750 billion is a lot of money. What is unfortunate is that that request comes in with no plan, no suggestion of how we are going to get out of this pattern of deficit spending. I just do not think it is appropriate, and the Blue Dogs do not think it is appropriate for us to just give a blank check to both Congress and the administration to run up another three-quarters of a trillion dollars in debt.

We have been talking about this issue for the last few weeks. Some people say, why do you keep talking about it? Because this issue has not gone away and, no matter what we do in the short term, this issue is still not going away. It is not going to go away until we figure out a way to behave in a responsible way.

What the Blue Dogs are suggesting is this, for the short term. We recognize that this country faces some short-term deficit pressures. We understand we have a war on terrorism and homeland security concerns that are taking more resources than we thought would be needed when we passed a budget a year ago. We recognize the economy is in a recession. We do not want to force the government to have to take extraordinary actions because it is bumping up against the debt limit. So as a short-term proposal, our suggestion is that we do increase the debt limit by \$150 billion, not \$750 billion, but by \$150 billion, which is still a lot of money; but that is the circumstance we are in right now. We think that will take us through the obligations of our current fiscal year, September 30 of this year.

Now, as part of this plan, what we are suggesting is that we offer this increase in the debt limit of \$150 billion, but that it comes with a couple of other provisions. First is that we are going to prohibit any increase in debt limit beyond September 30 without a defined plan to balance the budget. It requires the President to submit to Congress, and for us to enact, a plan to balance the budget without using the Social Security surplus.

Now, we do not have to pass exactly what the President submits; but he has to submit something, and we have to pass something that is going to show that we get our budget in balance by

the year 2007. So we are not talking about something radical that has to be done instantaneously as of October 1 of this year; we are allowing some time to get on the path to a balanced budget. But we are not going to offer too much time, because if we do not show some discipline around here, we are just going to keep running up more debt.

We also in this legislation, in offering to raise the debt limit by \$150 billion, we require that the President conduct an annual threat vulnerability assessment, so that we can develop a coherent homeland security strategy. How life has changed since September 11. These were not issues that we were facing as a country, and these are critical issues; and Blue Dogs support the efforts of this country to address terrorist threats and provide homeland security.

□ 2115

We are adamant that it is important. We support those efforts, and it is going to take resources to conduct those efforts. We understand that.

But we need to address that new challenge in a rational way, and that means it is important that we have a defined homeland security strategy so that we as Congress can behave responsibly and fund in an appropriate way what it is going to take to provide reasonable homeland defense.

I think that this is a reasonable proposal. I think the Blue Dogs as a group feel real strongly about doing this. We may not be right on everything. We are open to suggestion. I call on other Members of Congress from both sides of the aisle, please discuss this plan we are promoting tonight. We are very open to suggestion. That is one of the hallmarks of the Blue Dogs is that we are happy to talk with anybody and put the numbers out on the table and have a frank discussion. It is too important for this country not to do this.

So we are going to keep coming back here and we are going to keep talking about this issue until Congress behaves in a responsible way. We are not going to just go off and agree to raise the debt limit by \$750 billion with no plan, no sense of how we are going to get out of this, and dump it on the next generation. That is just not what we should be doing here. Our constituents did not elect us to avoid the tough decisions; they elected us to take on the tough issues. That is what the Blue Dogs are trying to do tonight. We are trying to start this dialogue with this four-point plan.

I encourage all of our colleagues to take a look at it, and let us let the dialogue begin.

Mr. BOYD. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Utah. He makes a good point. I think any prudent family or business or local government in Utah or in Florida that suddenly found themselves in a situation where their spending obligations were greater than the revenue they were taking in would sit down with their

family or business partners and maybe their banker and develop a plan in a hurry to figure out how to get out of that situation, to get back into black and out of red ink.

So I want to commend the gentleman from Utah for his very thoughtful presentation and his involvement in this process of helping us develop this four-point plan.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BERRY).

Mr. BERRY. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Florida for yielding to me and for his outstanding leadership, not only for the Blue Dog Coalition, but for this Congress and what I think are the next generations.

Mr. Speaker, this is not rocket science. Anybody that can add and subtract can figure this out. We know what we need to do. A year ago at this time, the Blue Dog Coalition met with the director of the Office of Management and Budget, Mr. Daniels. He made a presentation to us at that time.

He said this, and I will never forget it. He said, our greatest fear is that we are going to have so much money we are going to pay off all of the debt, and no one will have a safe place to invest their money because there will not be a U.S. Treasury bond.

When we hear that said now, it seems absolutely and utterly ridiculous. To the Blue Dogs at that time, it seemed a bit risky and foolish to even think that way, but the fact is, we have squandered the surplus. We have squandered a great opportunity in this country. One thing that we know we must get under control is the spending. We know that we cannot continue to borrow and spend and pass the debt on to our children and grandchildren.

The Blue Dogs have a four-point plan. We have worked diligently to come up with an honest assessment and an honest plan for what we need to do in this country to protect our children and grandchildren.

We come to this floor almost on a weekly basis, and have a great debate about protecting the unborn. I personally believe that we should, and I always vote to protect the unborn. And yet, we will come here and vote for a policy that will allow us to pass massive debt on to the unborn. We vote for a policy that allows our fighting men and women to go overseas and serve this country with great distinction, and then we ask them, now, after the war is over, after their fighting is done, come back to this country and go to work, because we borrowed the money from them to pay for it.

That is not right. It is immoral for us to continue to do that. Our plan would provide for the Budget Enforcement Act of 1990 to be enhanced and reauthorized. It would provide that if we are going to spend additional money or we are going to reduce the amount of money coming in to the government, that we would reduce spending in a way to go along with that so we maintain a balanced budget.

We provide a constitutional amendment that would allow this country to have a balanced budget without using the Social Security trust fund money to do it. It is not a balanced budget if we have to borrow the money from the Social Security trust fund to pay the bills. It is not a balanced budget if we just imagine that it is going to be balanced some day, like we have done in the past year. We cannot continue to do that.

The Social Security taxes that are paid in by the senior citizens, that have been paid in by the senior citizens, and that are paid in today by the working men and women of this country are supposed to be used and set aside in a trust fund to pay the Social Security benefits when those people come of age.

But right now, it amounts to only another income tax that is paid by the working men and women of this country, because we are spending every dime of it. We are not making any provisions to preserve the trust fund. We are not making any provisions to see that these obligations that we have when these people come of age to draw that money, that they are going to be able to receive it. It is irresponsible, and we should not continue to let this happen.

It is amazing to me that we can have a budget this year that does not provide for medicine for our senior citizens in this country. We are going to spend money on a lot of things in this budget. We are going to appropriate money for a lot of things. Some of them are absolutely critical, but very few are more important than the good health of our senior citizens.

It is amazing to me that we should allow one more year to pass in this Congress and not have a prescription drug benefit for our seniors because we have squandered the opportunity. The Blue Dogs have a plan to get out of the deficit ditch. We have a plan to prevent our children from having to pay the debts that we run up.

I think it is time for the Congress and the administration to sit down, be honest, look at the real numbers, look at what we know we have to do, and not continue to pass the burden on to our children and grandchildren.

One of the things I am proudest of in the time that I have served and represented the First Congressional District in the United States Congress is being a member of the Blue Dog Coalition. I think it is one of the most honest, determined groups that exist in this Congress. I think that their integrity is held together because they believe this is the right thing to do.

I want to say once again how proud I am of their plan, and that I think that the Congress should take a serious look at this plan and pass these bills that we are proposing, and do something real for the future of our children.

Mr. BOYD. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Arkansas for his leadership. He has been a leader,

especially on the health care issues, as a member of the Blue Dogs, and has worked diligently on the Patients' Bill of Rights, a prescription drug plan, and others, in addition to the fiscal and budget issues. So I thank the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BERRY) for being here tonight.

Next, Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. ROSS), his delegation mate, the blue puppy.

Mr. ROSS. Mr. Speaker, I thank my good friend, the gentleman from Florida, for yielding to me, one of the co-chairs of the Democratic Blue Dog Coalition.

We have heard a lot of talk tonight about the Democratic Blue Dog Coalition. We are a group of 33 fiscally conservative Democrats that believe we ought to get our government, its budget, and our debt under control.

We are a group that is sick and tired of all the partisan bickering that goes on at our Nation's Capitol. It should not be about what makes the Democrats look good or bad or the Republicans look good or bad; it ought to be about doing right by the people who sent us to the Nation's Capitol to be their voice in government.

About this time last year, there was a lot of debate going on in this very Chamber about a surplus, a surplus that was projected to exceed \$5 trillion over the next 10 years. Back last year when we stood here on the floor of the United States House of Representatives and talked about this projected \$5 trillion surplus, the Blue Dogs tried to bring some fiscal responsibility to this Chamber and to the floor of the United States House of Representatives.

As that debate was going on, I voted against the Democratic budget last year. I voted against the Republican budget. I am trying to be bipartisan here. The Blue Dogs developed their own budget, and back in the days when we thought we had a surplus, when we were told that we had a surplus of \$5 trillion over the next 10 years, here is what the Blue Dogs had to say about it 1 year ago.

We said that we ought to take that surplus and take 50 percent of it and pay down our Nation's debt, that we should take 25 percent of it and provide a tax cut for working families and those who need it the most, and take the remaining 25 percent and do things like truly modernize Medicare to include medicine for our seniors, strengthen our national defense, something we were talking about way before September 11 ever happened.

Of course, the Blue Dog budget failed. It did not pass. We passed a budget, or this Chamber passed a budget, without my vote, and now we have another budget before us this year which I voted against, a budget where in less than a year we went from talking about a \$5 trillion surplus over the next 10 years to a budget for fiscal year 2003 that some say will cause us to deficit spend \$80 billion, on the conservative side, and some say we will deficit spend to the tune of \$120 billion.

Throughout the debate last year, we were told we had a surplus but it will not materialize. Rather, for the first time since 1997, this year's budget, fiscal year 2003, will put us back in the days of deficit spending for the first time since 1997. But when they were talking about that supposed surplus last year, we did not hear a lot of talk about the debt, a 5.9 trillion national debt.

Some people think we spend too much money in this country on food stamps. That is a couple of billion dollars a month. Some people in this country think we spend too much on foreign aid. That is \$1 billion a month.

Mr. Speaker, we spend \$1 billion every single day in America simply paying interest, not principal but interest, on the national debt. How much is \$1 billion? I put that number in my calculator and I get that little "e" at the end.

What does it mean to us in our everyday lives? I will tell the Members what it means. One billion dollars can build 200 brand new elementary schools every single day in America. The \$1 billion we are paying every day in interest on the national debt can complete important infrastructure projects.

In my congressional district, in the southern half of Arkansas, I have three interstates pending right now. There is Interstate 49. Give me a day and a half of the interest that we are now paying on the national debt and I can complete Interstate 49. Give me about a week of it and I can complete Interstate 69. Give me a few hours of it and I can complete Interstate 530. These are projects that are vital to provide economic opportunities for people from all walks of life.

□ 2130

That is what this debt means to us in our every-day lives, and the drain it is having on being able to do things like truly modernize Medicare to include medicine for our seniors. Medicare is the only health insurance plan I know of that does not include medicine, yet it is the plan that nearly every single senior citizen relies on day in and day out to stay healthy and to get well.

My grandparents left this country just a little bit better off than they found it for my parents. And my parents have left this country just a little bit better off than they found it for my generation. But I wonder, is this Congress, is this Government, is our generation going to leave this country just a little bit better off than we found it for the next generation, our children and our grandchildren?

Social Security is another issue that involves the debt. We have borrowed, our Government has borrowed \$1 trillion from the Social Security trust fund with no provision on how it ever gets paid back. When you and I go to the bank to borrow money for a car or a home, what do the bankers ask you? They want to know how are you going to pay that money back. How much

can you pay a month? How many years will you take to pay it back? And yet our Government has raided Social Security trust funds to the tune of over \$1 trillion with no provision on how that gets paid back. And guess what? If we figure out how it does get paid back, Social Security as we know it today is still broke in 2041.

So our response to all this is simple. On Thursday, April 25, the Democratic Blue Dog coalition, 33 fiscally conservative Democrats, outlined four principles to prevent our children and grandchildren from being stuck with the burdens that our country is accumulating today because of our generation's budget decisions. We call these four principals the ABCs of fiscal discipline. A, assure honesty and accountability; B, balancing the budget without raiding Social Security; C, climbing out of the deficit ditch; and D, defending children from paying our bills.

The ABCs of fiscal discipline say we need enforceable budget constraints that will expose deceptive budget practices and provide our guardrail to keep our spending within the government's means. It says we need a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution that requires us to balance that budget every single year, an amendment that could only be waived in extraordinary times such as a war or military conflict, and that takes Social Security completely off the table. It will stop the politicians in Washington from raiding the Social Security and Medicare trust fund.

I served for 10 years in the Arkansas State Senate. Our Constitution required us to have a balanced budget, and for my 10 years there I took my experience as a small business owner to our State capital, and for 10 years I helped balance that State budget. If we can do it at the State level, if we can do it at the small town family pharmacy that my wife and I own in Prescott, Arkansas, then, yes, the United States government can do it as well.

It says that if we have to raise the limits on our national debt that we do so with a plan that will put our fiscal house back in order, just like a family facing financial hardships works to get approval to refinance their debts. And, finally, it says that Congress must have a super majority, a three-fifths majority vote to approve additional government borrowing.

We believe following the ABCs of fiscal discipline is the right thing to do for this Congress, for our Nation, and for the future of our children and grandchildren.

Mr. BOYD. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. ROSS) for his thoughtful remarks. He has, I think, outlined it very well.

I, too, as I said earlier, come from a State legislature in which it was against the rules of Constitution to spend money you did not have, that is, to borrow money. And it meant, Mr. Speaker, that we had to make some tough decisions at times. We had to go

in and redo budgets at times. We had to go back and cut education and cut Medicaid, but at least we were not mortgaging the future of our children, and then we had to come back and figure out how we pay for those particular programs.

Mr. Speaker, it is just not right for us to, as American citizens today, to demand that we have these programs that are very costly and not be willing to step forward and pay for those and say to our children and grandchildren, we are going to have this program today for us, but we want you to pay the bill later down the road.

Now I think our business community is beginning to take a good, long, hard look also at what this extended deficit spending that we are looking at over the next decade is going to mean. Obviously, we know that we came through the decade of the 1970s and the 1980s with some huge deficits over the years. And who can ever forget in the 1970s where we had interest rates that went into the high teens and in some cases the low 20 percent interest rate? It made it very difficult. I was in business then, and I remember how difficult it was to continue to run my small business as I was leveraged pretty heavily. And so you had to take 20 cents out of the first dollar that you made and pay on the interest on your debt. I said that the business community is beginning to take a look at it.

I want to, Mr. Speaker, read from today's Wall Street Journal on the front page and the article is entitled "U.S. Debt Is Set to Rise Not Fall for Second Quarter." It is a very short article. I want to read it. It says the Treasury Department said it expected to borrow a net \$1 billion during the April-to-June quarter. That is three months. The Treasury Department said it expected to borrow \$1 billion, not repay a net \$89 billion as it said it would do earlier this year in January.

So in January the Treasury Department was predicting that it would repay \$89 billion of the Federal debt that we owed as a Government, but today they are saying no, we are not going to repay \$89 billion. We will not repay anything. We will have to borrow an additional \$1 billion during that quarter period.

The announcement, the department's first official acknowledgment of its dismal tax collections during the important April filing season, increases the likelihood that the Federal budget will linger in deficit for longer than the two years cited in congressional estimates. The government's troubled finances could even damp prospects for recovery by flooding debt markets and driving up interest rates.

I am sure that does concern the business community. "It is really a remarkably negative commentary on the government's financial fortunes," said John Youngdahl, an economist for Goldman Sachs. At a time when the

economy might be picking up momentum, increasing private sector borrowing, the government's increased demand for debt runs the risk of creating more friction and consequently spurring somewhat higher rates than otherwise would be the case, Mr. YOUNGDahl said. That is one thing to be concerned about.

I think it is something that we are all concerned about, not only the business community. But what you have is for the home owner who has got a home mortgage, if he has got a \$100,000 mortgage on his home and his interest rate goes up 200 points, that is \$2,000 a year. Car loans, business loans, personal loans, I think this thing could be very, very serious, and we only hope that it will turn around quickly.

We know how to turn it around. We have got to plan and we are willing and ready to sit down with the administration leaders, the leaders of President Bush's administration and the leader of the Congress, lay out a plan, get us back into balance. It can be done. We did it in 1997 and certainly we can do it again.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. ROSS) and the others who came to speak here tonight.

WATER SHORTAGE IN COLORADO

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. MCINNIS) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, this evening I want to talk about a number of different subjects, but primarily the subject is going to center around natural resources and water, especially water as it pertains to the West.

As many of you know, my district is the third Congressional district in the State of Colorado. The State of Colorado is the highest place, when you take the average elevation, it is the highest place on the North American continent. And as a result of that elevation and the mountainous terrain and the arid region that Colorado is kind of the apex of, there are a lot of different issues that deal with the West that you do not find in the East.

But before I do this, I want to talk a little about this weekend. I read tonight, maybe you will read it here in the next couple of days in the paper, but I read where a celebrity here in the United States, a celebrity who has been the beneficiary of the great things that this country offers, a celebrity who, to the best of my knowledge, has never had to pick up a weapon to defend their country, a celebrity who has made the comments that are about to be established from his yacht, his 130-foot or 150-foot yacht.

And as I understand these comments, and, again, this is being credited to him or it is in this interview, as I understand these comments from this celebrity, this celebrity is criticizing the

Fox News station for being too patriotic, for being too patriotic. This celebrity has come out and said that the station had too much red, white and blue on their station, on their news network at September 11.

Can you envision that? Did you ever think that anyone in this country, that our forefathers would ever think that a celebrity who is the beneficiary of all the fruits that this country has provided to him, would have the audacity to say that our country is too patriotic?

I want to compare these short-sighted remarks, those selfish remarks, to what I experienced this weekend out in Colorado, and all of you have, I am sure, experienced the same things when you get out with the people that you represent.

I was in Pueblo, Colorado. I started out the day by going to a group of a number of probably about 200 young people, I would guess anywhere from 13 years old to 19 years old. These kids, they were trying to tell them to stay off of drugs. It was amazing. Drugs, alcohol, and drive with your seatbelts on. It was a great assembly that was put together. But I was surprised and, frankly, I was very encouraged and felt very positive by talking to these kids, how many of these young people wanted as a career to go in and serve our country in the military, how strongly these kids felt about the United States of America. And from this assembly I went on to a couple of town meetings.

Do you think in any of these town meetings I heard from constituents any indication at all that we should be less patriotic or our news networks are too patriotic? In fact, what you generally hear is just the opposite. How come they never tell the side of the greatest country in the history of the world? How come they always make us look like the bad guys? That is the kind of things you might hear.

Then that afternoon I have to go and I listen and I have an opportunity to participate in awarding the Korean medal for a former veteran. This veteran had received five bronze stars and this veteran had his entire family, 70, maybe 80 people at their function where we have presented the medal. And I tell you something, you talk about pride in this country and you talk about feeling good about the future of this country, the gentleman to whom I presented the medal served in the Korean War. He was in his 70s, maybe in his early 80s, so he had three generations, he had great-grandchildren there. And the red, white and blue around that yard, I wish I could have grabbed that celebrity and brought him to this yard, back yard in Pueblo, Colorado, and shown him what people in America feel about patriotism.

The United States of America has nothing to apologize about. What this celebrity ought to be doing is talking about what America has done for the rest of the world. There is no country

in the history of the world, no country in the history of the world that has given away more in charity to the rest of the world, that has educated more people for the world, that offers better health care than anywhere else in the world, that has provided more tractors and more agricultural resources so that people can grow food and be more efficient on the growth of food than any other country in the world. There is no other country in the world that has offered more freedoms than the United States of America. None, zero, zip. No other country in the history of the world that has offered the freedoms that the United States of America has.

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There is no other country in the history of the world that has stood up and put its young men and women, paying the ultimate sacrifice, at risk in other continents, to save those continents as we did in World War I, as we did in World War II, as we did to try in an attempt, a failed attempt, an attempt to stop communism from moving on to Vietnam, as we did in other places, as we are doing today.

The United States of America is a great country. It is a strong country; but it is a strong country that demands upon every generation, including our generation, and probably especially on those of us who were elected to serve the people, to represent the people, to pass on to the next generation that sense of patriotism, that sense of obligation, to make sure that the greatness of this country continues to the generation that follows them, that responsibility to be good Americans, to care about your family, to care about the defense of your country.

Bill Bennett wrote a book and says why do we fight. My colleagues will want to read that book. In fact, I think if I knew this celebrity would get the book I would buy a copy and send it to him. I was a little saddened by one of the people in our country, one of the people, this celebrity, the fruits he enjoys today would have been available to him probably anywhere else in the world, but in the country which gave it to him, he decides that maybe one of the news networks is too patriotic. Very short-sighted comment and a comment that I hope that individual at some point, at least in his own mind, retracts and begins to appreciate the sacrifice that a lot of people, generation after generation after generation in this country's history, the sacrifice that they have given so that people like him and other Americans can enjoy the fruits of our country.

What is most exciting to me is all of the things that go right. My colleagues do not hear some of these celebrities talking about what is going right in this country. It seems to many a lot of time what comes out of Hollywood is criticism of the President. We hear the movie actors that say, well, we are going to leave the country if George W. Bush becomes our President, and by