

It is not fair, really, for us, our generation, to do that to the next generation. That is why we suggested—OK, we will accept the fact that in the short run, over the next 2 years, there is going to have to be a spike in Federal spending and in the debt. But after that occurs, let's get back to what is an orderly process. Let's get back to numbers which are acceptable and responsible. Let's bring the public debt down from 80 percent of GDP, which is where it is when we get out here in 2016, 2011, and that period—not too far away—down to 40 percent of GDP, where it has historically been, down here. Let's take the deficit down from 4 and 5 percent down to 2 percent, which is where it historically has been. Let's put in place responsible policies, not take the spending up to such levels that they simply cannot be afforded because of the amount of debt that goes on the backs of the American people that becomes grossly excessive and unaffordable. This is not an unreasonable request. We are not suggesting that the administration trim its sails this year. We are suggesting that in the outyears there be a responsible budgeting process around here that leads to a fiscally sound policy.

Why do the Chinese not have confidence in our currency? Why are they talking about changing from our currency? Why are they asking whether they should continue to invest in our debt? Because they don't see any policies coming down the pike from this administration which discipline in any way or limit in any way the spending of the Federal Government. Just the opposite—it is an explosion of spending on the entitlement side by over \$1.2 trillion and an explosion of spending on the discretionary side by almost \$1 trillion.

If we did something constructive around here such as set up the process—which I proposed along with Senator CONRAD, and many people in this Chamber support—which would put in place a disciplining event on our entitlement spending, then these different nations would look at us—and our people could say: Listen, Congress is serious about getting this under control in the outyears. They are not going to pass this massive debt on to our kids. They are actually going to try to put in place some systems to try to address this.

But nothing like this is happening. This budget has none of that in it. Instead, this budget simply expands the costs of the Government and the borrowing of the Government, and then it raises taxes and spends it instead of using it to reduce the size of the debt. It is a policy which is not sustainable.

The term “not sustainable” is used around here occasionally. What does it mean? Basically it means that when this policy comes to its fruition, after this budget is passed—and it will pass. The simple fact is, it needs 51 votes and there are 58 Members on the other side. It is going to pass. After it passes and

the policies underneath it come in place, the term “not sustainable” means we are going to pass on to our kids a government they cannot afford and which will reduce the quality of their life and which may put at risk the value of our dollar and the ability to sell debt, according to the people who are buying it right now, the Government of China.

This is serious. This is very serious. We need to take another look. We need to reorient. We need to sit down and say: How can we do this better? How can we make this work better? How in the outyears—and it is not that hard in the outyears—so we start to close these numbers on the deficit and bring down this rate of growth in debt so that it flattens out? How can we do that?

We are ready to do that on our side of the aisle in a bipartisan way, whether it is something like the Conrad-Gregg bill or something in the area of entitlement reform or whether it is a freeze on discretionary spending as we move into the outyears; whether it is, if you are going to raise taxes, using those taxes to reduce the debt rather than expand programs; living within our means in the area of health care. We are willing to look at all those ideas because if we do not, basically we are going to pass on to our kids a government that will fail them and a government that will obviously not give them the lifestyle that they deserve and that one generation should pass on to the next generation.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Virginia is recognized.

FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I rise today to state a principle that is known well by those of us who have served in the private sector, and that principle is simply this: What gets measured gets done.

This week, as my colleague from New Hampshire has already stated, we begin work on the Federal budget even as we are implementing the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act.

Both of these actions can either confirm the claims of critics, the skeptics who always say that Washington simply is not capable of managing the taxpayer's money responsibly or it could present us with a tailor-made opportunity to demonstrate that we can combine bold action with innovation and transparency as we work to get our economy and our country back on the right track.

In the near term, the targeted investments included in the Recovery Act are designed to create millions of new jobs.

The President's budget proposals, if they are enacted, will allow us to make longer term investments through the expanded use of electronic health records, the build-out of the smart grid, and through energy-saving im-

provements to millions of homes and businesses.

Now, I do not think the American people expect miracles—but they can, and they should, expect competence.

So we must put in place the people with the right skills, insist on appropriate measurements, and then demand transparency and accountability.

When I became Virginia's Governor at the peak of an earlier recession, back in 2002, I inherited a \$6 billion revenue shortfall in Virginia's \$34 billion annual budget.

Our administration made the painful spending cuts, but then we did something else: we used that opportunity to enact long-term budget reforms that continue to save taxpayer money today.

For instance, we renegotiated a number of our State contracts and leveraged our purchasing power. We reduced the cost of light bulbs from 32 cents to 23 cents. Now, saving nine-cents per bulb will not close a \$6 billion shortfall, but the State buys an awful lot of light bulbs.

We found similar savings in procurement across much of State government, bundling our purchasing power the same way many major businesses do.

We examined and then eliminated outdated boards and commissions. We consolidated our State information technology activities. We took a whole new portfolio approach to managing our real estate holdings and our vehicle fleet, just as any business would.

These business-like reforms produced almost immediate taxpayer savings. And it accomplished something else as well: it created an expectation of transparency and accountability that resulted in Virginia being independently designated as the Nation's best managed State, and the best State for business investment.

I do not rise today to brag on the Commonwealth of Virginia well, perhaps a little bit. Instead, I rise today to suggest that this same approach—straight talk, tough choices, and an insistence on commonsense reform and accountability—is critically important here and now in Washington, DC.

President Obama has made it clear to Governors and mayors across the country that we need their help for this Recovery and Reinvestment Act to succeed. I commend the administration for insisting that accountability does not simply stop at the State capital, once a Governor releases funds to localities. We must have the same high standards of accountability at the local level as well.

I also am pleased that the administration's recovery.gov Web site conveys a lot of useful information to the taxpayers in a clear and user-friendly way. And by midweek, all but a handful of States are expected to launch similar Web sites of their own.

But as they launch these Web sites, we must make sure that they have standard metrics so we can actually

compare progress from one State to another.

It is also imperative that we keep the pressure on officials at every level of Government to continue to aggressively look for even more creative ways to make these sites more useful.

In recent weeks, I have spoken to key administration officials about what other steps we might take to promote transparency and accountability in implementing the Recovery Act.

If we do this right, it could build a solid foundation to promote longer term fiscal responsibility as we move forward in the Federal budget process.

For instance, I believe we should drill-down and reach consensus on commonsense definitions and metrics. Let me give you an example.

When I chaired the National Governors Association in 2005, we launched a major effort to reform our high schools. I was astonished to learn there was no common definition across the States of ‘high school graduate.’

So we spent months working with educators, academics and policymakers to reach a common definition so we could determine whether a high school graduate in Alaska or in New Mexico was meeting the same kind of qualifications as a high school graduate in Virginia.

That now allows us to look at those programs that work—and those that don’t—across all of the States.

I believe that experience provides a useful model as we work to develop a common set of metrics that allows us to honestly and effectively track Federal spending, especially with the stimulus dollars where we are ramping up so many new initiatives in such a short time-frame.

To do this, we will need to work through existing organizations, such as the National Governors Association, the Conference of Mayors, the National Association of Counties, and others, as we work to design effective measurement tools.

For example, most of us agree that expanding high speed Internet broadband to rural communities will create jobs. It will allow folks in every region of our Nation to have an opportunity to compete and win in the global economy.

Obviously, as we roll out broadband, we will track our progress by noting how many communities are served and the number of Internet connections that are added.

But what if we also came up with a way to capture information about how many rural businesses were able to launch or grow because of this expanded access to broadband? That information would allow us to measure the true value of broadband to the longer term economic viability of our rural communities.

Or consider our commitment to dramatically expand weatherization improvements to the homes of lower-income Americans. Now, certainly we will tally the number of structures

that undergo these energy-saving upgrades, and it should be relatively easy to document the number of workers in the weatherization program.

But couldn’t we also come up with some way to measure what one would reasonably expect to be a reduction in the annual demand for Government-funded heating and cooling assistance? And wouldn’t that information be helpful as we consider funding levels for LIHEAP and similar assistance in the years to come?

In short, I believe every level of Government should go the extra mile in laying out exactly how the Federal dollars are being spent, and we should honestly measure and disclose program outcomes.

I also think, as we roll out these major expenditures, it is a good idea to link disbursements with predetermined timelines and checkpoints to better track our progress. Let’s not wait until all of the money is spent before we determine whether the program works or not.

Consequently, if we do not see appropriate progress, we could delay or defer future payments.

In addition, Federal and State governments also should be encouraged to reach outside their comfort zones and challenge individuals in the private sector to step-up and provide specialized expertise.

Again, within the Recovery and Reinvestment Act, we are going to be ramping up a series of important new initiatives on a very short timeline.

How do we get the expertise from the private sector to engage in this effort? For example, this could be part of the Serve America Act, which we will consider and vote on this week, which will promote and expand public service opportunities for our citizens.

We must try to draw upon the best and brightest to bring them into Government service, even if it is on a part-time basis, as we ramp up these new initiatives.

I am talking about men and women with proven management capabilities, individuals who can move with the speed of venture capitalists to embrace new ideas, or recently retired military leaders who have successfully overseen relief efforts.

This is the type of expertise we need to draw upon if we are going to ramp-up these programs successfully. And as we do this, we must also have the courage to cut back or eliminate programs that cannot prove their worth.

As a former Governor who enjoyed line-item veto authority, I wholeheartedly support President Obama’s pledge to conduct a line-by-line review of the federal budget to identify waste and fraud.

I also encourage the administration to conduct a broad-based review of Governmental programs—a review that is horizontal, not just vertical.

Based upon my experience as Governor, and the experiences of countless Fortune 500 companies, I know that an

enterprise-wide review could reveal additional opportunities to wring-out significant budget savings.

Typically, one can find sustainable savings in three areas: procurement, technology, and human resources.

That is why it is vitally important that the administration move quickly to appoint its chief performance officer, and that CPO must have the authority to act quickly, along with the chief information officer and chief technology officer. These individuals must have a mandate to work across multiple Federal agencies, and I hope they ruffle a few feathers.

Mr. President, I will say it again: what gets measured gets done.

In the short term, creating an expectation of transparency and accountability will maximize our ‘bang for the buck’ as we continue to implement the Recovery Act.

And over the longer-term, this focus and genuine commitment to fiscal responsibility will demonstrate that Washington can, in fact, act with both confidence and restraint when it comes to spending the taxpayer’s money.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. MIKULSKI. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. GILLIBRAND). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Ms. MIKULSKI. I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

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

TRIBUTE TO CHRISTINE SARBANES

Ms. MIKULSKI. Madam President, I rise to pay tribute to the spouse of one of our colleagues. The entire Senate has now been notified that Mrs. Christine Sarbanes, the beloved wife of Senator Sarbanes, has passed away. I come to the floor with a heavy heart and with fond memories of, indeed, a remarkable person.

Christine Sarbanes was quite a woman in her own right. She was a woman of keen intellect, warm heart, and a compassion for the underdog. She was a woman who was a force in her own very quiet, understated way. If you really liked and admired Paul Sarbanes, which all of Maryland did, you also really loved Christine Sarbanes. Senator Sarbanes often joked that whenever he would come to an event, they would say: Where is Chris? Or they would say: Where is Christine? She often represented him in and around our State.

She had a unique way of talking that brought immeasurable commonsense and practicality but yet a connection to people and their day-to-day needs.