

those quotes. I will do that the next time I take the floor. When the Bush budget came down and we saw what happened with the Bush budgets, they were adopted by Republicans, and they received lots of votes from their side, unanimous. All we had out of that was unemployment and deficits. They said: Oh, this is going to be a great budget. They are wrong. They have been wrong—wrong on the Clinton budget, wrong on the Bush budget, and now they are wrong on the Obama budget.

As one Senator, I wish to say this: I never forget. I forgive all the time, but I never forget. I have these quotes. They are real. They are in the RECORD. I am going to bring them out constantly.

Remember, when you hear these Republicans come out and trash Barack Obama's budget, it is the same thing they did to the Clinton budget and they were wrong—wrong then and they are wrong now.

We have to give this President the support he needs. Not that we are going to give every line—I don't agree with every line in it—but basically the thrust of what he wants, the investments and the deficit reduction.

Mr. President, I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

APPROPRIATIONS PROCESS

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, I rise today to talk about the appropriations process we conduct here in the Senate, and have come here, as you have, in the not too distant past and been absolutely amazed by the lack of fiscal discipline that exists here in Washington. I know the Presiding Officer probably shares some of my views about the way we go through the appropriations process and the fact that at the end of the year, on many occasions, we end up with a large omnibus bill that does not give the American public, certainly not Senators and House Members, the ability to actually go through this process in a thoughtful way that respects the fact that these are our citizens' resources which we tend to bulk together in a way that it is not transparent.

Our President, on March 11—and I agree with him very much on this—said that future spending bills should be debated and voted on in an orderly way and sent to his desk without delay or obstruction so we don't face another massive last-minute omnibus bill like this one—and he was talking about the bill that we passed. I could not agree more with the President in that regard. I think what we have seen is that we have not had the ability to examine

the thousands of earmarks that are placed in these bills. We have not had a process that is transparent. In an effort to aid this process in such a manner that we do have some degree of fiscal discipline in this body, 41 Republican Senators have signed a letter which states that we believe that by the August recess at least eight appropriations bills should be voted on in singular fashion—eight single bills by the August recess.

This body has on many occasions taken up each appropriations bill by itself, fully debated it, discussed the earmarks, discussed the things that cause these bills not to be appropriate, had amendments, and passed these bills out of the Senate. So these 41 Republicans stand together urging the leader of the Senate, urging the Appropriations Committee to follow this best way of doing business, and that is to vote on these bills individually. Obviously, we hope this occurs. And certainly as part of the Senate process, in the event that we are not able to meet those objectives, we will avail ourselves of all appropriate procedural methods to ensure that is the case.

Mr. President, I thank you for the time this morning, and I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the letter signed by all 41 Republican Senators.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

U.S. SENATE,

Washington, DC, March 24, 2009.

Hon. HARRY REID,
Majority Leader, U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MAJORITY LEADER REID: As you develop the legislative calendar for the rest of this fiscal year we believe it is critical to allocate an appropriate amount of time for the Senate to consider, vote and initiate the conference process on each of the twelve appropriations bills independently through a deliberative and transparent process on the Senate floor.

For a variety of reasons, over the past several years, the Senate has failed to debate, amend and pass each of the bills separately prior to the end of the fiscal year. Far too often this has resulted in the creation of omnibus appropriations bills that have been brought to the floor so late in the fiscal year that Senators have been forced to either pass a continuing resolution, shut down government or consider an omnibus bill. These omnibus bills have not allowed for adequate public review and have clouded what should otherwise be a transparent process. As our President said on March 11, 2009, he expects future spending bills to be, "... debated and voted on in an orderly way and sent to (his) desk without delay or obstruction so that we don't face another massive, last minute omnibus bill like this one."

The Senate should begin floor consideration of the appropriations bills during the early summer months to ensure that an appropriate amount of time is available to examine, debate and vote on amendments to the bills. We believe the Senate should pass at least eight of the appropriations bills by the August recess. In order to press for a more transparent process, we will consider using all available procedural tools to guarantee regular order for appropriations bills.

Noting our intentions, we hope you will plan accordingly as you work with the lead-

ership of the House to develop the legislative calendar for the rest of this fiscal year. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Bob Corker; Thad Cochran; John McCain; Judd Gregg; Roger F. Wicker; Jeff Sessions; David Vitter; Jim DeMint; John Thune; Lindsey Graham; Lamar Alexander; John Ensign; Saxby Chambliss; James M. Inhofe; Tom Coburn; Robert F. Bennett; Jon Kyl; Richard Burr; Mel Martinez; James E. Risch; John Barrasso; Michael B. Enzi; Christopher S. Bond; Pat Roberts; George V. Voinovich; Chuck Grassley; Mike Johanns; Arien Specter; Richard C. Shelby; Mike Crapo; John Cornyn; Orrin G. Hatch; Olympia J. Snowe; Susan M. Collins; Richard G. Lugar; Johnny Isakson; Kay Bailey Hutchison; Lisa Murkowski; Jim Bunning; Sam Brownback; Mitch McConnell.

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, I yield the floor, and I 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.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Would the Chair please advise me when I have used 10 minutes.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair will do so.

THE BUDGET

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, one of the encouraging things that happened in Washington this year is that the President sent us a budget that was more transparent and more open than previous budgets. It was a 10-year budget instead of 5 years. It gave us a blueprint for the future in that way, the way we ought to be thinking about things. It included some things that had not been included before: the cost of the war; the so-called AMT fix—to address the millionaire's tax the Congress passed in the 1960s designed to catch 155 people who were not paying any taxes, but today will catch 28 million people, mostly middle-class Americans, unless we fix it; and what around here is irreverently called the "doc fix," to deal with the mandated 20-percent cut in what Medicare pays its physicians. That cut in physician payments is not going to happen, we know that, so the President included that in the budget. There was money for helping to fix the banks, to get the toxic assets out of the banks and get credit flowing again, get the economy moving again, and that was in the budget.

On big issues like health care, the President said: Let's work in a bipartisan way. I invite the Congress to come up with a bill. Many Members of Congress said the same thing. The President held a health care summit earlier this month. I agree with the President we should try to reform

health care this year. Most Republicans agree with that, that we need to make it possible for every single family to afford health insurance. People who are losing their jobs today or were between jobs ever understand what difficulty this causes families. So that was encouraging.

Now, I hear some very different sounds coming from around the Congress. It makes me wonder who is in charge here. I hear that instead of a 10-year budget, we may have a 5-year budget. The problem with the 5-year budget is most of the problems in the 10-year budget are in the second 5 years. This budget spends too much, taxes too much, borrows too much. It doubles the debt in 5 years, the national debt, and it nearly triples the national debt in the 10-year period. So we need to know where we are headed with this budget, and we will not know if we just talk about the next 5 years.

I hear that we are going to act like the so-called millionaire's tax, the AMT, is fixed. That is not fixed; we have to deal with it. The "doc fix" to avoid cuts in physician payments? We are just not going to include that in the budget, so I hear. We are going to have to deal with that. We all know we are going to have to deal with that. We ought to put that in the budget. The cost of the war should be there. We need to recognize the first order of business in this country is to fix the banks and get credit flowing again.

Secretary Geithner came forward with a plan on Monday that I hope works. At least for the first time we are beginning to address the central problem of what we do about the toxic assets in the banks that are causing the banks to freeze up and not loan, bringing everything to a halt. Get the toxic assets out and lending increases, houses begin to sell, jobs begin to be created again, people go back to work, the economy improves.

So it was a very prudent thing for the President to put in his budget a \$250 billion placeholder for the banks. He may need to ask us for that. In my view, I thought he should have asked us for it in January.

I thought, instead of passing a \$1 trillion stimulus bill, borrowing and spending money we don't have, that it would have been better for President Obama to do now as President Eisenhower did in 1952 when he said: I shall go to Korea. And he went to Korea. That was the issue then. It was not the only issue then, just like today there are lots of different things Presidents need to do. But Eisenhower said: I will go to Korea. He arrived there just a few days after Thanksgiving. He said: I will honorably focus my attention on the war until it is ended. The people elected him for that and he did that and he gained the confidence of the American people.

I and most Americans have great confidence in this President. If President Obama, in the same way that President Eisenhower said he would go

to Korea, says he will fix the banks and he will get credit flowing and he will honorably concentrate his focus on that until the job is done—I think we believe he can do that. So he was right to put the money in the budget, which I understand now may be coming out.

So we have a budget that is not really a budget anymore. It is not a clear picture. While I have been very complimentary of the President for his straightforwardness in the budget, that does not mean I have to like what is in the budget because I do not. But before I get to that part of it, let me talk about the two things that concern me most about what may be coming down the road and which I hope do not come. One of them is the idea that we would use the budget to pass a health care bill to transform the health care system and the American economy. The second is the idea that we would use the budget to impose a national sales tax on electric bills, gasoline prices, and all energy—in other words, to impose a cap-and-trade system on virtually the whole economy.

We need to reform health care. We need to debate climate change and cap and trade. But we need to do it in the way the Congress is supposed to do it, not by slipping it through with 51 votes when we are supposed to be making a budget, just because we can do that.

Think about that for a moment. The President has created this tremendously good environment for dealing with health care. He ran on a campaign: I am going to change the way things are done in Washington. People need to work across party lines to get things done on big issues that affect the country.

That is what the President said. He is right about that. There are a lot of new Senators who were elected saying the same thing. There are a lot of Senators who have been here before, like me, who said exactly this—I am here to try to work across party lines to get results on big issues. There is not a bigger issue than health care, after we get through fixing the banks.

The President had, as I mentioned, the health care summit at the White House—off to a much better start, this President, than President Clinton was when he tried to deal with the same issue early in his administration. The President also had a fiscal responsibility summit in February that I attended where health care was a major topic. We were all there, and various people got up and said: We need to work on this, do this together. The President wisely said: I am not going to send a proposal. I am going to let the Congress develop a proposal. We will work with you on these things.

Well, all of a sudden, we hear that the health care plan might be coming through on the budget. How can we possibly do that? If the President and Senate Democrats try to use this arcane budget procedure to reform health care, it will be the Parliamentarian and his wonderful staff who will end up writing the health care bill.

Health care is 17 percent of the American gross domestic product. These are big issues. Are we going to have a single-payer system? Is everybody going to have Medicare? Is anybody going to have a choice of a doctor? Is anyone going to have a choice of an insurance policy? What about the guaranteed costs? Will all Americans have the same kind of health coverage that Federal employees, including Senators, have? Is that a good idea? Will we give more permission to large employers to connect behavior to health care premiums so that we can have more prevention of disease? How much do we spend on people who are older and where we are spending more time?

Mr. President, I do not believe there is another Republican speaker. I ask unanimous consent to speak another 5 minutes.

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

Mr. ALEXANDER. The health care bill ought to be written by, as Senators BAUCUS and GRASSLEY have said, the Health and Finance Committees, by the full Senate, with full participation. I mean, technically, you know, the Democratic majority can say: We won the election, we will write the bill. President Bush was Commander in Chief, and technically he could wage war in Iraq without the bipartisan support of Congress. But that helped him lose the support of the country. It damaged his Presidency. And it will do the same for President Obama if he is not allowed to continue on the path he began on, which is a bipartisan effort in the Congress to bring a health care bill this year.

I mean, the Republican leader of the Senate, in his first speech, went to the National Press Club here in Washington and he said: Mr. President, I am ready to work with you across party lines on entitlements. The most explosive, runaway cost in Government is Medicare and Medicaid. And it is better to reform health care before we put reduced costs on Medicaid. If we just put caps on the existing system, it would blow up.

So we are ready to do that. I don't know what more the Republicans could say to send this clear message: We are ready to work across party lines. And the President has said it himself. So why are we having this debate about whether to pass a health care bill as part of the budget. That is not right for the country, and it needs to stop today.

The idea of passing a so-called cap-and-trade energy tax in the middle of a recession as part of the budget—that is equally unwise. This is a major new idea and proposal, to impose this national tax on the country that produces 25 percent of all of the money in the world and 25 percent of all of the energy in the world. And we have no idea what it would do. We do know one thing it would do: it would raise prices a lot. It would raise the price of your electric bill by a lot, and it would raise

the price of your gasoline at the pump by a lot. That may not be as much of a problem today as it was a year ago. When gas goes back up to \$3 or \$3.50, you can be sure there will be plenty of people worrying about it. And when they hear that a national energy tax applied to gasoline, to fuel, has the effect in the first several years of raising the price of gasoline but not reducing the carbon that causes climate change, they are going to be really mad about that because they will say: Then why did you do that? I care about climate change, they may say, but why would you impose a remedy on me that raises my price but doesn't do anything about the carbon I am worried about?

Some might say: Well, what we should have done is have a low-carbon fuel standard that would gradually kick in, give the economy a chance to adjust, so that we can, for example, be driving electric cars which we can plug in at night using power generated by existing nuclear plants and coal plants. We don't have to build one new power plant, not one new coal plant, not one new windmill for the purpose of charging these new electric cars. So we could have a low carbon fuel standard, plug our plug-in cars in at night, and that would be a better result than putting a big, new national sales tax on the economy in the middle of a recession.

There are a lot of questions about this proposal even if we weren't in a recession. Creating a big slush fund here in Washington—nothing more dangerous than that. You saw that with the stimulus bill. Put a trillion dollars out here, and Congress goes crazy. Everybody has an idea about what to do. We can all spend money. And if we bring all of this money in here, Congress will find a way to spend it. And I guarantee, it is a lot of money. This tax would raise \$60, \$80, \$100 billion a year and bring it to Washington. The President says: Well, we ought to give most of it back to the people. Well, which people? In what way? Why not all of it? That should be a debate.

Should this tax be economy-wide, if we ever have it? Why not do as I have suggested and just put a cap and trade on power plants—that is 40 percent of carbon—and a low-carbon fuel standard on fuel—that is another 30 percent. So why do you need an economy-wide cap and trade to affect small business and farms and manufacturing?

And then who gets all of the money raised from this energy tax? A lot of the big companies came up to Capitol Hill when they first heard about this cap and trade proposal. They saw a lot of money coming into Washington and they thought they might get free allowances to produce carbon. But now the President wants to spend all of that money, and the companies are not so sure they like the idea anymore.

What about offsets? Offsets are a racket. You know, they have become a racket. Somebody saves a little carbon in Madagascar. Well, you get credit for it in the United States. There is not

much of a way to police that, and it is not a very good idea.

This carbon tax, this national sales tax, goes all the way to 2050. So it takes \$60, \$80 \$120, \$150 billion a year out of the economy—maybe not doing everything it's expected to do—in the name of dealing with climate change.

Well, the first thing is, imposing this new tax in the middle of a recession is a supremely bad idea.

Second, that doesn't mean we have to stop our efforts to deal with climate change and clean air. In fact, we can accelerate our clean energy efforts. They begin with the 2005 Energy bill. I see the ranking member of the Energy Committee on the floor, Senator MURKOWSKI. She was a major part of that, and she will be a major part of this debate as we go along. But we can promote conservation and efficiency without having a national tax on every electric bill.

As Al Gore has said, buildings are 40 percent of carbon. So let's go to work on that. I know that in Tennessee we waste more energy than any other State. We have the highest use per capita of electricity. If we just changed 12 lightbulbs in each house, we could save the equivalent of a nuclear power plant. That would be a smart thing to do. Let's start with conservation and efficiency. Let's electrify half of our cars and trucks. We can do that because the automobile companies are building the cars and trucks. Let's plug them in at night when the electricity is cheap. We don't have to build one new power plant, the Brookings Institute says.

Three, let's make solar power cost competitive with power from fossil fuels. We have been really miserly about energy research and development, and we ought to be bending over backward to put money wisely to make solar costs competitive, as the National Academy of Engineering says, to find a way to capture carbon from existing coal plants, to find ways to reprocess nuclear waste.

While we are worrying about carbon, why don't we set as a goal to build 100 new nuclear power plants. Nuclear power is 20 percent of our electricity, but it is 70 percent of our carbon-free, nitrogen-free, sulfur-free, and mercury-free electricity. Why are we going slow on it?

So we would say no to higher taxes, higher prices, and more subsidies—certainly not in the middle of a recession—and yes to more conservation, more efficiency, more nuclear power, more electric cars, and more research and development on solar, advanced biofuels, nuclear, and carbon capture. That is a pretty good agenda for dealing with clear air and climate change, and it doesn't impose an unwise, multi-billion dollar national tax on electric bills in the middle of a recession, which would hurt the economy.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD a couple of letters. One is a letter from a

number of Senators—looks like more than two dozen—opposing using the budget reconciliation process to expedite passage of climate legislation. A second letter comes from the Republican members of the Committee on Environment and Public Works. It objects to collecting \$646 billion in new climate revenues from the American people in the middle of a recession.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

U.S. SENATE,

Washington, DC, March 12, 2009.

Hon. KENT CONRAD,
Chairman, Committee on Budget, U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

Hon. JUDD GREGG,
Ranking Member, Committee on Budget, U.S.
Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN CONRAD AND RANKING MEMBER GREGG: We oppose using the budget reconciliation process to expedite passage of climate legislation.

Enactment of a cap-and-trade regime is likely to influence nearly every feature of the U.S. economy. Legislation so far-reaching should be fully vetted and given appropriate time for debate, something the budget reconciliation process does not allow. Using this procedure would circumvent normal Senate practice and would be inconsistent with the Administration's stated goals of bipartisanship, cooperation, and openness.

We commend you for holding the recent hearing, entitled "Procedures for Consideration of the Budget Resolution/Reconciliation," which discussed important recommendations for the upcoming budget debate. Maintaining integrity in the budget process is critical to safeguarding the fiscal health of the United States in these challenging times.

Sincerely,

Mike Johanns; Robert C. Byrd; David Vitter; Blanche L. Lincoln; George V. Voinovich; Carl Levin; Johnny Isakson; Evan Bayh; Christopher S. Bond; Mary Landrieu; James E. Risch; E. Benjamin Nelson; Lamar Alexander; Robert P. Casey, Jr.; Michael B. Enzi; John McCain; Tom Coburn; Jim Bunning; John Barrasso; John Ensign; Bob Corker; James M. Inhofe; Chuck Grassley; Roger F. Wicker; Mike Crapo; Susan M. Collins; Thad Cochran; Kay Bailey Hutchison; Mark L. Pryor; Lisa Murkowski; Pat Roberts; Saxby Chambliss; Sam Brownback.

U.S. SENATE, COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS,

Washington, DC, March 19, 2009.

DEAR COLLEAGUE: The President's 2010 Budget proposal contains a risky, ill defined new energy tax that has the potential to continue the economic recession for many years to come. We are writing this letter to alert you to this situation and ask that you join us in a budget resolution amendment to strike any such provision.

Specifically, the President's 2010 Budget proposal asks to collect \$646 billion dollars in new "Climate Revenues" from the American people. The government will collect these new revenues through a cap and trade scheme in which "allowances" are sold to the highest bidder. The government won't tax consumers directly, but it will impose new costs on energy producers and users who will in turn pass those higher costs on to consumers, which will result in higher electricity bills, gasoline prices, grocery bills, and anything else made from conventional energy sources. In short, consumers will feel as if they are paying a new tax on energy.

The stated price tag for this new energy tax is \$646 billion, yet recent news reports indicate that administration officials are privately admitting their program will actually generate between “two and three times” this amount of revenue, or between \$1.3 trillion and \$1.9 trillion. However, these numbers represent only the cost from 2012 through 2019. The budget summary describes the energy tax extending at least through 2050. At the 2012 through 2019 average annual rate, families and workers would face through 2050 between \$6.3 trillion and \$9.3 trillion in higher energy taxes.

On the Environment and Public Works (EPW) Committee, we have had experience with these types of proposals. We, and the full Senate, debated a proposal by Senators Boxer, Lieberman and Warner that the sponsors themselves indicated would generate \$6.7 trillion from consumers. As you may recall, the Senate defeated this proposal, in part because the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) estimated that by 2050 it would annually cost the average family \$4,377 and raise gasoline prices \$1.40 per gallon. Experts estimated it would kill up to 4 million jobs by 2030. As you can see, a \$4,377 per family total cost or a lost job would greatly outweigh any \$800 per family payroll tax break offered by the administration.

The budget resolution is not the right place for the careful bipartisan dialogue we need to get these issues straight, or to fully account for the legitimate concerns of energy consumers, economists, and industry. While the budget resolution the Senate will debate is not yet available, we will offer an amendment to strip any climate revenue provision it contains. We urge you to be ready to join our efforts to resist the erosion of proper democratic principles.

Sincerely,

SENATOR JAMES M. INHOFE,
Ranking Member.
JOHN BARRASSO,
U.S. Senator.
DAVID VITTER,
U.S. Senator.
MIKE CRAPO,
U.S. Senator.
CHRISTOPHER S. BOND,
U.S. Senator.
GEORGE V. VOINOVICH,
U.S. Senator.
ARLEN SPECTER,
U.S. Senator.
LAMAR ALEXANDER,
U.S. Senator.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Senator BYRD, our senior Member of this body, wrote the budget legislation that created the reconciliation process. He has told us that. He has reminded us of that. He talked about how he sat in his office for 10 days and did it to get it right. This is what he said:

I was one of the authors of the legislation that created the budget reconciliation process in 1974. I am certain that putting health care reform and climate change legislation on a freight train through Congress is an outrage that must be resisted.

That is Senator ROBERT BYRD, the senior Democrat, the senior Senator who wrote budget reconciliation.

Senator CONRAD, Senator BAUCUS, Senator DORGAN, Senator CARPER, and many others have said basically the same thing: We agree. Don't use the reconciliation to ram through health care reform.

So let's take the budget in the next 10 days, let's debate it, let's have our

differences of opinion, but then let's follow the President's wise beginning on health care and reform it this year in the way he has suggested and the way he campaigned on. And let's take the energy issue and the climate change issue and let's look carefully at how we have the right clean energy strategy, which some of us believe is different from just taxes and high prices and more subsidies.

As far as the budget in general, we believe it spends too much, it taxes too much, and it borrows too much. If I could conclude with only one example of how that excessive borrowing will hurt the economy and hurt the country—an example that helps to illustrate why this 10-year budget the President set is a blueprint for a different kind of country, one with less freedom, one with more Government, and one which our children cannot afford—if there were any one example of why that is true, this would be it: It would be the amount of interest on the debt we will be paying in the 10th year of the budget sent by President Obama.

In that year, interest on the debt will be \$806 billion. The amount of spending on defense by the Federal Government in that year is projected to be \$720 billion. So we will be spending more on interest than we do on defense.

Federal spending on education in that year would be \$95 billion. So we would be spending eight times as much on interest as we would on education.

In the 10th year of the budget, \$100 billion is allocated for transportation spending by the Federal Government on things like roads and bridges that need to be fixed—we agree on that, and we would like to have the money to do it. But we will be spending on interest alone eight times what we will be spending on transportation.

When I was Governor of Tennessee, we were a low-tax, low-debt State. The reason we did not have much debt is because for every penny we did not have to pay in interest, we could pay it for a teacher's salary, we could improve a prenatal health care clinic, we could build a road, we could have a center of excellence at the university. So low debt means more money for the things we really want to have to invest in this country to make it a better place.

The President's budget is straightforward. Give the President credit. The attempts by Congress to make it gimmicky and less transparent are deplorable. The idea of trying to pass a health care reform proposal that affects 17 percent of the economy and to impose a national sales tax on the entire energy system during a recession is a bad idea.

What we should do is take this 10-year budget, whittle it back to size so it doesn't spend so much, doesn't borrow so much and doesn't tax so much and move ahead with a blueprint that maintains our freedom, that limits our Government, that preserves choices and that our children and grandchildren can afford.

I yield the floor.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

NATIONAL SERVICE REAUTHORIZATION ACT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 1388, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 1388) to reauthorize and reform the national service laws.

Pending:

Mikulski amendment No. 687, in the nature of a substitute. Crapo-Corker amendment No. 688 (to amendment No. 687), to increase the borrowing authority of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation.

Johanns amendment No. 693 (to amendment No. 687), to ensure that organizations promoting competitive and non-competitive sporting events involving individuals with disabilities may receive direct and indirect assistance to carry out national service programs.

Baucus-Grassley amendment No. 692 (to amendment No. 687), to establish a Nonprofit Capacity Building Program.

AMENDMENT NO. 691 TO AMENDMENT NO. 687

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I understand that an amendment is pending; is that correct?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is correct.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. I ask unanimous consent to set aside the pending amendment for purposes of offering an amendment.

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

The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Alaska [Ms. MURKOWSKI], for herself, Mr. DORGAN, Mr. BINGAMAN, and Mr. BARRASSO, proposes an amendment numbered 691 to amendment No. 687.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. I ask unanimous consent that reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To modify certain provisions relating to Native Americans)

Section 129(d) of the National and Community Service Act of 1990 (as amended by section 1306) is amended by striking “and to nonprofit organizations seeking to operate a national service program in 2 or more of those States” and inserting “, to nonprofit organizations seeking to operate a national service program in 2 or more of those States, and to Indian tribes”.

Section 193A(b)(23) of the National and Community Service Act of 1990 (as amended by section 1704(1)) is amended by striking “and collect information on challenges facing Native American communities” and inserting “collect information on challenges facing Native American communities, and designate a Strategic Advisor for Native American Affairs to be responsible for the