

# RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican leader is recognized.

## PREVENTING FURTHER ECONOMIC DAMAGE

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, there is still time to prevent further damage to the economy and to stop the automatic tax hike on every American that's scheduled to go into effect at the beginning of the New Year. The President has a real opportunity, the second in 2 years, to do something significant about our debt crisis and jumpstart our economy. He has a real opportunity to show he can govern. He is letting that opportunity slip away.

Senate Democrats and the White House now say that a "balanced approach" is one that can pass both the House and Senate. But we know that neither the Democrat bill in the Senate, nor the President's plan for more than a trillion dollars in tax hikes meets their own new test of 'balance.'

Speaker BOEHNER, like me, would like to prevent a tax hike on everyone. But given the President's failure to act, the House will soon vote on legislation to prevent a tax hike on anyone making less than a million dollars a year—rather than letting taxes go up on every American taxpayer; in other words, a plan that 53 of our Democrat colleagues here in the Senate already voted to support. It is a plan that would ensure far more American families and small businesses are protected from tax hikes than anything our Democrat friends have proposed.

Democrats will have an opportunity to offer and vote on changes if they no longer agree with their previous positions. But what they cannot do is sit on their hands and let taxes go up on every American taxpayer. Senate Democrats have wasted precious time all year with show votes designed to fail. That has left us with little time to do the real work that needs to be done. But there is still enough time for us to finish all of our work before this weekend, if we are all willing to stay late and work hard. For the sake of the people who sent us here, it can and should be done.

## TRIBUTES TO DEPARTING SENATORS

JIM DEMINT

Madame President, I would like to speak this morning in tribute to an unexpected addition to the list of retirees on the Republican side of the Senate, Senator JIM DEMINT of South Carolina.

They say success has many fathers, but it is hard to think of anyone who has done more than JIM DEMINT to raise the public's awareness on spending and debt, and the threat that big government poses to our liberties.

JIM has been a powerful voice for conservatism during his time in the

House and the Senate. I have no doubt he will be extremely effective in his new post over at the Heritage Foundation. I wish him every success. Because the truth is, the Nation simply cannot continue on its current path, and if JIM can help more people understand that from his new perch on Massachusetts Avenue, then it will clearly have been worth it.

And so while JIM's voice will be missed here in the Senate, we are glad to see he will be putting his considerable talents to good use by helping to arm his former colleagues and many others with the arguments they will need to make the case for constitutional conservatism in the years ahead.

As a young boy, JIM developed a knack for sales by necessity. His mom ran a ballroom dancing school out of their home as a way to keep food on the table for her four children, and part of JIM's job was to recruit the students. He says he still runs into people who attended the DeMint Academy of Dance and Decorum. "Our home sometimes seemed like boot camp," JIM once said, because to survive as a single parent his mom enlisted all four kids for daily duties starting at 6 a.m. It was "the closest I would come to basic training." Interestingly, part of JIM's responsibilities involved filling in for folks who did not have a dance partner.

When JIM wasn't busy in the ballroom, he was working his two paper routes or bagging groceries at the grocery store. On weekends, he fed his love of music as the drummer for a band called "Salt and Pepper." He was best known for his vocals on the song "Wipe-out" and the song's distinctive opening cackle. JIM says he could have been a rock star, if it weren't for the fact that he had no voice or musical talent. So as an adult, he stuck with sales, and it was from there that he launched his political career.

It has not been easy. JIM has always worked hard to ensure that Debbie and the kids remained at the center of his life. I know how much he admires Debbie for keeping her focus on their kids over the years. Theirs has been a true partnership almost since the day they first met all the way back in the seventh grade.

JIM was not always all that political. In fact, those who know him best say that one of the most surprising things about his career is how such a shy and gentle spirit could be viewed by so many as a take-no-prisoners firebrand. As a young marketing executive, he recalls thinking that he had a wife, kids and a business—and that was basically his universe. He did not even know who his congressman was. To this day, one of the things JIM enjoys doing most is working on his lawn back in Greenville. And while he has gotten his share of awards in Washington over the years, I don't think any of them compare with the one his neighborhood association gave him a few years back for "best lawn." He is really proud of that one.

JIM's interest in politics came about when the government started to intrude more and more into his business, and when he started to notice how it unwittingly harmed others. "The more I learned about how things operated," he once said, "the more I understood how problems in our society such as broken homes, crime, and school dropout were a direct result of well-intended but misdirected government policies."

So he got involved.

In 1992, Bob Inglis walked into his office and asked for his help in running a race in South Carolina's 4th District. JIM took the job and for the first time began to think about running for political office himself. When Inglis retired, JIM decided to run as his replacement. He was 47 years old, he had never run for anything in his life, and Debbie thought he was crazy. But the voters liked what he was selling, and so did his colleagues in the House. They voted him President of their freshman class in 1999.

Six years later, JIM was elected to the Senate. And he has been a leader here as well, working to cut Federal spending and reform how we spend taxpayer dollars. A conservative stalwart, JIM leaves with a stellar 98.77 lifetime rating from the American Conservative Union. And, crucially, he has made a difference. One member of the press corps once referred to JIM as the patron saint of lost causes in the Senate. And, frankly, I don't think we will be abolishing the tax code anytime soon, as JIM has suggested, but that's to miss the point. Great causes almost always start out with a constituency of one, and JIM has never been afraid to take up important and unpopular causes early, and let the polls and punditry take care of themselves.

After becoming what he called a "recovering earmarker," he succeeded in convincing others to give up the practice. As a member of the Foreign Relations Committee, he was also instrumental in resolving a serious problem in Honduras a few years ago after the Obama Administration misconstrued the legal ouster of a president with a political coup. JIM enlisted Miguel Estrada to figure out what was really going on down there, and I was happy to help him travel to Honduras to investigate in person. JIM soon reported back that it was instantly obvious it was not a coup. The story eventually had a happy ending: the Honduran people held a new election and inaugurated a new president and the Obama administration grudgingly backed down. But none of this would have happened without the leadership of Senator DEMINT. "The senator kept the administration honest," Estrada later said. "He was invaluable."

Senator DEMINT and I share a profound commitment to free speech, and he has written eloquently on its importance for our Nation. "Good government," he has written, "is a result of freedom debated." He has called the

right to free speech the “most treasured benefit of living in a free and democratic nation.” And he has certainly exercised that right to the fullest both here in the Senate and across the country.

Throughout his political career, JIM has always been guided by an unwavering commitment to freedom, and I know it is that same commitment to defend and enlarge our freedom that led him into this next chapter in his life. It is this passion to defend freedom, both for Americans here at home and for our allies around the world, that has struck a chord with so many Americans and helped make JIM a national figure—not to mention a best-selling author.

In addition to the fact that he and his staff have helped address more than 30,000 constituent inquiries during his time here in the Senate, it is also why JIM has remained so popular with his constituents back home, and it is why his colleagues here in the Senate are so sad to see him go.

JIM leaves with a legacy. He has been a real champion for limited government and constitutional conservatism on the national stage. But what has always guided him most over the years is the conviction that most decisions are best made at the local level. And whether it is his work with veterans, in promoting adoption, or in reforming education, that is what he has always stressed.

So I want to thank the Senator from South Carolina for his sterling service to the Palmetto State and to our country. I wish him and Debbie and the entire DeMint family all the very best in the years ahead. Godspeed, Senator DEMINT.

I yield the floor.

#### RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

#### MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business for 1 hour with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, with the time equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees, with the Republicans controlling the first half.

The Senator from Utah is recognized.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Utah.

#### TRIBUTE TO DEPARTING SENATORS

JIM DEMINT

Mr. HATCH. Madam President, I wish to say a few words about my colleague JIM DEMINT. We have had a lot of really good people during my service here on both sides of the aisle. I have friends

who have passed on and who made such a difference around here. I have to say that JIM DEMINT has been a rock-ribbed conservative who I think has made a great difference in this body and for whom I have a lot of respect. I have profound gratitude that he has fought as hard as he has for the principles he believes in, most of which I believe in.

I wish him Godspeed as he works over at the Heritage Foundation. I can't imagine a better place for somebody who loves the issues, wants to play a role, has played a role, understands this body, understands the political nature of this country, and has been very active in trying to change this country for the better. JIM has those kinds of abilities. I wish him well, and I sure hope he will have a great time while he is over at the Heritage Foundation. I have great respect for him. I think most people who really know him have great respect for him. I always respect people who really do what they believe, and JIM DEMINT has exemplified that as well as anybody I know.

#### TANF

Mr. HATCH. Madam President, I rise today to speak about important issues facing us as we work to reauthorize the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program, the TANF Program. Poverty has risen to a crisis level in our country. In 2011 there were 16.1 million children in families with incomes below the poverty level.

The pernicious effects of poverty have implications for children's health, education, and well-being. Research has demonstrated that there are significant associations between poverty and problems with children's health, cognitive development, behavior, emotional well-being, and school achievement. These problems are exacerbated for families in extreme poverty, where the annual income is less than half of the poverty level. In 2011 there were over 7 million children in the United States living in extreme poverty.

Poverty is also a risk factor for child abuse and neglect. Data assembled by the Center for Law and Social Policy reveals that poverty is the single best predictor of child maltreatment. Children living in families with annual incomes below \$15,000 were 22 times more likely to be abused or neglected than those living in families with annual incomes of \$30,000 or more.

According to a report from the Children's Defense Fund, “Children of color continue to suffer disproportionately from poverty.” The Children's Defense Fund cites data showing that more than one in three African-American children and more than one in three Hispanic children were poor in 2011, compared to a 1-in-8 ratio among White non-Hispanic children.

These families face huge challenges navigating the bare necessities of daily life. Fresh healthy food can be rare. Unsafe housing contributes to chronic

child health issues such as asthma. Transportation to and from work, the grocery store, and the doctor can be infrequent and unreliable.

Programs funded through TANF—the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program—provide cash assistance to families struggling in deep and persistent poverty. TANF is a block grant to States for their use in ending dependence on government benefits and, more broadly, to promote child well-being. TANF Programs can also provide work support such as transportation assistance and childcare for families working to get themselves out of poverty and into decent-paying jobs. In addition to safety net and work support programs, TANF also funds a number of child welfare programs that, when effective, reduce the number of children in foster care and help keep families together.

When TANF was enacted, many States used the funding stream in an effort to move welfare recipients into work. However, over time the focus of TANF in many of these States has shifted from working with job-ready adults to a funding stream largely dedicated to funding purposes unconnected to job readiness.

For many years I have expressed concern that nationwide over 50 percent of able-bodied adults receiving cash assistance are reported to engage in zero hours of work-related activity. Additionally, I have raised concerns that most States are not able to meet the Federal work-participation rate. This work-participation rate requires that a State engage half of its cash assistance caseload in specified work-related activities for a certain number of hours each week.

If you ask the average middle-class American how many able-bodied adults receiving welfare should be engaged in work or work-related activities, my guess is the answer would be all of them. It should be shocking to the American people that most States are not able to engage half of their welfare caseloads in such activities.

Furthermore, I have raised concerns that there is a considerable amount of TANF spending on child welfare programs that goes unaccounted for and is not coordinated with possibly duplicative spending administered by State child welfare agencies.

Authority for TANF expired at the end of 2010. Unfortunately, although this is a matter of serious concern, the Obama administration has never proposed a 5-year reauthorization of the TANF Program. Instead, on July 12, 2012, the Department of Health and Human Services released a document, which they inaccurately described as an “Information Memorandum,” to the States claiming on behalf of the Obama administration unprecedented waiver authority over TANF work rules.

This action provoked a swift and strong condemnation from members of the legislative branch and rightly so.