both the House and the Senate to pass an unbalanced budget or to raise the debt limit. It would allow certain exemptions in time of war or national security threat. I voted for this amendment, and am disappointed that it failed in the Senate.

DOWNSIZING GOVERNMENT

With my support, Congress voted in 1994 to cut more than 270,000 federal positions by 1999. We are significantly ahead of schedule, with more than 160,000 positions eliminated, leaving the federal workforce smaller now than at any time since the mid-1960s. We should continue this course, focusing particularly on top-heavy bureaucracies that have the bulk of their employees in Washington, D.C. It has been my personal practice each year to reduce administrative spending for government programs and agencies to lessen the opportunity for waste. During the appropriations process for fiscal year 1996, I supported many amendments to reduce overhead in certain government agencies and programs.

REFORMING GOVERNMENT PURCHASING

Too often we hear about outrageous government purchases of $600 toilet seats or $100 screwdrivers. Centralized management is often inefficient. Last year, with my support, Congress passed legislation to streamline the wasteful government procurement process. The new law reduces paperwork burdens, streamlines acquisition procedures, and cuts government purchasing costs. It encourages federal employees to act like private businesses and purchase certain supplies at a local office supply store if it saves money. It also expands the bidding process to make it more competitive and efficient.

SIX-YEAR BALANCED BUDGET

I voted for a plan to balance the budget in six years. This conservative ''Coalition'' budget asks all Americans to do their fair share with equitably distributed savings. This plan would cut spending by more than $700 billion. It reforms welfare, protects Social Security, preserves Medicare and Medicaid for the future, maintains investments in education and job training, and cuts corporate subsidies. The Coalition budget would reduce the deficit by $9 billion in 1997, $25 billion in 1998, and continue on a glidepath to a balanced budget in 2002.

Unfortunately, the House defeated this budget and passed a version that would increase the deficit in 1997 and 1998. This is the plan that was supported by House Speaker Newt Gingrich. I voted against increasing the deficit. The main difference between this plan and the Coalition budget is that the Speaker's plan borrows an additional $150 billion to expand certain tax breaks. As a result, the national debt would be billions of dollars higher in 2002 than under the Coalition budget. The Coalition budget demonstrates that it is possible to make tough budget choices while reflecting the values American cherish: responsibility, honesty, fairness, and the promise that the future will be better for our children. The problem with the budget supported by Speaker Gingrich is that increasing the national debt would leave even more of a burden on our children.

It is correct that both the Speaker's plan and the Coalition plan balance the budget on paper, but the Speaker's plan postpones 82% of the deficit reduction until after the 1998 elections. In fact, the President's separate plan makes a similar mistake. History shows that such an approach is a recipe for failure. Time and time again Congress has passed ''deficit reduction'' plans that postpone serious spending cuts for several years. My position is that we should use the Coalition approach and pay our bills now, and not just promise to pay them later. We should continue reducing the deficit, year by year, in a disciplined, methodical manner.

Unless significant changes are made, the final budget plan is expected to be vetoed by the President. Although the differences between the sides are significant, I think the American people want Congress and the President to continue negotiating to reach agreement on the budget. It is the responsibility of leaders in both parties to put aside partisan differences for the common good of the nation.

Over the past year, both the President and the congressional leadership have moved towards the Coalition budget. There is still time to unite the American people behind a tough, honest, and fair balanced budget that reflects basic American values and invests in our future. It would be a tragedy if the progress that has been made since 1992 is reversed with a budget that increases the deficit in 1997 and 1998. I will continue to urge all of my colleagues to seek a final agreement.

TRIBUTE TO HUGH B. MITCHELL, FORMER MEMBER OF CONGRESS

HON. JIM McDERMOTT

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 19, 1996

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a former Member of both Houses of Congress, Hugh Burnton Mitchell. Mr. Mitchell died on June 10, at age 89, and his family and friends are gathering at Daybreak Star Center in Seattle to remember him today.

Hugh Mitchell was a true son of the Northwest, and true Democrat. His belief, that government could help people realize their dreams, was at the core of his public service. He was born in Great Falls, MT in 1907, grew up on a dairy farm, and attended public schools. After graduating from Dartmouth College, he engaged in editorial work at an Everett, WA newspaper. In 1933, he joined the congressional staff of U.S. Representative Monrad Wallgren, and extended his service on the Hill for 12 years, including Wallgren's term in the Senate.

When Wallgren was elected Governor of the State of Washington, he appointed Mitchell to serve the balance of his Senate term. Hugh Mitchell was just 37 years old when he was sworn on January 10, 1945—the second youngest U.S. Senator at the time. He was defeated for election in 1946, but was elected to the House in 1948 and served in the 81st and 82d Congresses. He was not a candidate for renomination in 1952, but mounted an unsuccessful bid for the governorship of Washington in 1952.

Mr. Speaker, our country has changed dramatically in the 40 years since Hugh Mitchell graced the floor of this Chamber, but the principle that animated his public service is timeless: that government could and should aid the people he represented. He listened to the people, and tried to put government to work for them.

Hugh Mitchell's congressional career began as World War II was ending; the country's agenda then was similar to that which faces it today in the post-cold war era. Mitchell urged conversion of America's war-related industries to peacetime infrastructure-building, both to put people to work, and to prevent a reversion to the hardships of the Depression.

America's hard-won superiority in science and technology, he believed, should be used to relieve the tensions and miseries of the war-torn world. He supported the Marshall plan for Europe, but also proposed a similar program of engagement in Asia. Had the Congress heeded his prophetic advice, we might have avoided the disastrous route that took our country into conflicts in Korea and Vietnam. ''We must make allies in Asia,'' he warned, ''or we are doomed to protracted, costly, and indecisive wars.''

His ideas about cultivating constructive cooperative relationships with Pacific Rim countries were part of the long tradition of trade and friendship among the people of the Northwest and their neighbors to the East. Our APEC program today is a culmination of the vision of Washington State advocates such as Warren Magnuson, Henry Jackson, and Hugh B. Mitchell.

Mitchell's legislative agenda also included the careful stewardship of the abundant natural resources of the Pacific Northwest. Adoption of his plan for comprehensive management of the Columbia River Valley by the Congress might have averted the ecological crisis we now struggle to overcome.

Hugh Mitchell's reputation as a far-sighted intellectual is complemented by his legendary attentiveness to the wisdom of his constituents. His civility of discourse and equanimity in the face of adversity sprang from his faith in the democratic process. His pragmatic vision of government of, by, and for the people is a legacy that enhances this body, Mr. Speaker, and I commend it to you.

AMERICA WANTS HEALTH CARE REFORM

HON. RON PACKARD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 19, 1996

Mr. PACKARD. Mr. Speaker, America's wait for health care reform is nearly over. My colleagues in both the House and the Senate have reached agreement on the Health Coverage Availability and Affordability Act of 1996. This is the health care bill the American people have wanted for years.

The Republican health care reform plan is portable and affordable. Despite the extremist efforts of the Clinton administration to nationalize this Nation's private health care system, the long wait for portable and affordable heath care is over, and, it took a Republican Congress to get it done. Our plan ensures portability, fights fraud and abuse, cuts red tape, increases access, and enhances affordability.

For the first time, working Americans will be able to leave their jobs without having to worry about losing their health care insurance due to preexisting conditions. Up to 25 million Americans per year will benefit from this agreement, which eliminates preexisting condition exclusions for persons with prior health insurance coverage. An additional 4 million job-locked Americans are freed to job hunt because insurance companies will be required by law, to accept persons who had prior health insurance coverage.

This agreement fights fraud and abuse by creating new penalties against those who engage in health care fraud. It creates a national