



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 106th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 146

WASHINGTON, FRIDAY, APRIL 7, 2000

No. 43

House of Representatives

The House was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Monday, April 10, 2000, at 12:30 p.m.

Senate

FRIDAY, APRIL 7, 2000

The Senate met at 9:02 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore [Mr. THURMOND].

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Lloyd John Ogilvie, offered the following prayer:

Father, help us to accept our humanity. Life is a struggle when we pretend to have it all together. We end this week in honest confession of the times that we forgot You, went for hours, even days, without asking for Your help, and endured life's pressures as if we could be our own source of strength. In the quiet of this moment, we invite You to fill our depleted resources with Your spirit. We want to let You love us, forgive us, renew us, and grant us fresh strength. To this end, we admit our needs and accept Your power. You are our Lord and Saviour. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable WAYNE ALLARD, a Senator from the State of Colorado, led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RECOGNITION OF THE ACTING MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The acting majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, today the Senate will continue to vote on the

remaining amendments to S. Con. Res. 101. Needless to say, votes are expected to occur throughout the morning with an expectation of voting this afternoon and perhaps into the evening, if we are not able to resolve some of the pending sense-of-the-Senate amendments and other amendments.

There are 2 minutes of explanation on amendments prior to each vote. To make this process as smooth as possible, I ask that Senators remain in the Chamber between votes. I thank my colleagues for their cooperation.

We will be talking with various Senators about amendments. So that everybody will know, there are 75 amendments filed by Republicans and 36 by Democrats. We are going to work with our Democratic minority whip and the ranking member of the Budget Committee to see if we can encourage a number of Senators to accept sense-of-the-Senate proposals and let us accept them on both sides. We will be working diligently at that. If we don't have success, then looking at this, I say that probably we would not finish before 6 o'clock tonight, or even later. We will work very hard. If Members will help us, we can do better than that.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. L. CHAFEE). The Senator from Nevada.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, we have lined up five votes on each side. I say, however, to my friend, the manager of the bill, there is a tremendous amount of staff time that is still going to be required. Each side has not been able to review each other's amendments. I respectfully suggest to the majority that the minority doesn't think we have done anything untoward in offering

amendments. We have offered half as many as the majority. This doesn't mean they should have twice as many cleared as we have cleared. If both sides can work out the clearance, that is fine.

The point I am trying to make is that we are trying to work our way through this amendment process. If there is some effort, in effect, to try to punish us by staying here late to work through these amendments, we are willing to do that. I think the more logical way to go would be to work our way through the amendments.

I say to the distinguished Senator from New Mexico, we would be much better off if we gave the staff a matter of hours, perhaps days, to work their way through these amendments. These are very difficult subjects. As to the sense-of-the-Senate aspect, most of those have been resolved. There are some that are very substantive in nature, and we need to work our way through them.

I personally think it is going to be impossible to finish this bill today. If we have to vote on all these amendments, we are not talking about 6 o'clock tonight; we are talking about 6 o'clock Monday morning. It is up to the majority whether they want to put us through this. I think the more logical way to do it would be to have our very proficient staffs work on these amendments over the weekend and get it down to a reasonable number so we can complete this bill next week.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Mexico.

Mr. DOMENICI. We will carry the Senator's message to the majority

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



Printed on recycled paper.

S2383

leader. Right now, we have 10 votes that we are willing to proceed with, 5 on each side. The first one is the Santorum amendment on military benefits; followed by Conrad on lockbox; Abraham on Social Security lockbox; Johnson on veterans; Ashcroft on Social Security investment; Mikulski on digital divide; Senator Bob Smith on prescription drugs; Graham of Florida on education; Voinovich on reconciliation instruction and taxes; and Kennedy on Pell grants.

I yield the floor.

**FISCAL YEAR 2001 BUDGET—
Resumed**

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will now resume consideration of S. Con. Res. 101, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 101) setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal years 2001 through 2005 and revising the budgetary levels for fiscal year 2000.

AMENDMENT NO. 3058

(Purpose: To express the sense of the Senate supporting additional funding for fiscal year 2001 for medical care for our nation's veterans)

Mr. SANTORUM. Mr. President, I understand my amendment is next in the queue. I ask the amendment be called up.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Pennsylvania [Mr. SANTORUM] proposes an amendment numbered 3058.

The amendment is as follows:

On page 23, line 7, strike "47,568,000,000" and insert "48,068,000,000".

On page 23, line 8, strike "47,141,000,000" and insert "47,641,000,000".

On page 27, line 7, strike "--59,931,000,000" and insert "--60,431,000,000".

On page 27, line 8, strike "--48,031,000,000" and insert "--48,531,000,000".

At the appropriate place insert the following:

"(A) It is the sense of the Senate that the provisions in this resolution assume that if CBO determines there is an on-budget surplus for FY 2001, \$500 million of that surplus will be restored to the programs cut in this amendment.

"(B) It is the sense of the Senate that the assumptions underlying this budget resolution assume that none of these offsets will come from defense or veterans, and to the extent possible should come from administrative functions."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania.

Mr. SANTORUM. Mr. President, my amendment increases veterans' health care benefits by \$500 million, which is what the Independent Budget, which is supported by a variety of veterans organizations, has come forward and said they need to provide adequate health care for our Nation's veterans.

I commend the chairman of the Budget Committee for increasing veterans' health care benefits by \$1.4 billion, but that isn't enough to provide

for the needs of our veterans population.

This is an important issue to keep the promise that we made to our veterans to provide adequate health care. It is also important for our military. What we need to do is to show the people in the service right now, who want to stay in the service and make careers out of the service, that we are going to keep our promises to them when they leave the service. This is an important amendment to provide adequate health care benefits for our veterans as well as to show our people in the current military that we are going to keep our promises.

I ask unanimous consent that Senator ABRAHAM be added as a cosponsor of the amendment.

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

The Senator from South Dakota is recognized.

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, I applaud anybody who attempts to address issues of veterans' health care. However, I think it is regrettable that the Senator from Pennsylvania chose not to work in a bipartisan fashion with Senators CRAIG, WELLSTONE, myself, and other veterans organizations across the country with our amendment that we will be offering very shortly, which has a longer-term, 5-year fix for the veterans' health care funding shortfall.

Our amendment will far more significantly address the problems with veterans' health care in this Nation. The one offered by Senator SANTORUM is a fine step, in a small sense. I have no problems supporting it. I think the body needs to understand that we will come to a far more significant amendment shortly. The amendment this morning will deal with a 5-year approach to veterans' health care.

I yield to Senator WELLSTONE.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, I think the Independent Budget is very important. We have been out here working on it. This amendment follows the amendment we introduced. One year is fine, but we need 5 years. Let's vote for this amendment as well.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the amendment.

The amendment (No. 3058) was agreed to.

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, I move to reconsider the vote.

Mr. SANTORUM. I move to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota is recognized.

AMENDMENT NO. 3016

(Purpose: To protect Social Security surpluses and reserve a portion of on-budget surpluses for Medicare and debt reduction)

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I send an amendment to the desk and ask for its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from North Dakota [Mr. CONRAD] proposes an amendment numbered 3016.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, 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:

At the end of title III, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . SAVE SOCIAL SECURITY AND MEDICARE LOCKBOX.

(a) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term "Social Security and Medicare lockbox" includes—

(1) the amount of the Social Security surplus (as defined in section 311(b)(1) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974), with respect to any fiscal year; and

(2) the amount of the "Medicare surplus reserve" defined as a minimum of one-third of the on-budget surplus as estimated by the Congressional Budget Office for each of the 3 applicable time periods, which are—

(A) the budget year;

(B) the budget year plus the subsequent 4 years; and

(C) the budget year plus the subsequent 9 years.

(b) BUDGET RESOLUTION POINT OF ORDER.—It shall not be in order in the Senate to consider any concurrent resolution on the budget (or amendment, motion, or conference report on the resolution) that would decrease the on-budget surplus below the levels of the Medicare surplus reserve, except for legislation that reforms the Medicare program and provides coverage for prescription drugs.

(c) SUBSEQUENT LEGISLATION POINT OF ORDER.—It shall not be in order in the Senate to consider any bill, joint resolution, amendment, motion, or conference report that together with associated interest costs would decrease the on-budget surplus below the level of the Medicare surplus reserve, except for legislation that reforms the Medicare program and provides coverage for prescription drugs.

(d) SOCIAL SECURITY OFF-BUDGET POINT OF ORDER.—It shall not be in order in the House of Representatives or the Senate to consider a concurrent resolution on the budget (or any amendment thereto or conference report thereon) or any bill, joint resolution, amendment, motion, or conference report that would violate section 13301 of the Budget Enforcement Act of 1990.

(e) STRENGTHENING SOCIAL SECURITY POINTS OF ORDER.—It shall not be in order in the Senate to consider a concurrent resolution on the budget (or any amendment thereto or conference report thereon) or any bill, joint resolution, amendment, motion, or conference report that would—

(1) decrease Social Security surpluses in any year covered by this resolution below the levels established in this resolution; or

(2) amend section 301(i) or 311(a)(3) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 to allow Social Security surpluses to be decreased below the levels established in this resolution.

(f) SUPERMAJORITY WAIVER.—

(1) WAIVER.—This section may be waived or suspended only by the affirmative vote of three-fifths of the Members, duly chosen and sworn.

(2) APPEALS.—An affirmative vote of three-fifths of the Members, duly chosen and sworn, shall be required to sustain an appeal of the ruling of the Chair on a point of order raised pursuant to this section.

(g) SENATE PAY-AS-YOU-GO RULE EXTENDED THROUGH 2010.—Section 207(g) of H.