We believe the Social Security system represents a solemn promise to our seniors, and we will propose an amendment that protects Social Security for generations to come.

Second, we will offer an amendment to help end the jobs crisis and get more Americans back to work. On average, more than 80,000 private sector jobs have been lost each and every month since this President took office. The manufacturing sector alone has lost 2.8 million jobs. We will offer an amendment that encourages the creation of American jobs, discourages shipping American jobs overseas, and provides dislocated workers the assistance they need.

Third, we will offer an amendment to provide the resources necessary to ensure that our veterans receive the care and treatment they deserve. According to CBO, the President's request is $257 billion below last year's level when adjusted for inflation. With 60,000 veterans already on waiting lists for health care and tens of thousands of military personnel scheduled to return home from Iraq and Afghanistan as the newest generation of veterans, this underfunding will only increase an already unacceptable backlog.

Moreover, just as the administration last year, the budget also contains policies—higher fees and copayments—that will drive 800,000 individuals out of the system and make those who choose to stay pay more. When our soldiers in uniform come home from Iraq and Afghanistan, they will deserve a parade, and they will get it. But our obligation to our veterans does not end with the parade. Our amendment will give all Members of the Senate an opportunity to demonstrate their recognition of and appreciation for all these veterans have done for our country.

Fourth, Democrats will offer an amendment to fully fund the Leave No Child Behind law. This law offered schools a deal. It said, if you hold your students to higher standards, we will guarantee you the funding to meet those standards. Schools are holding up their end of the bargain, but the President has reneged.

In the years since the bill was passed, President Bush has failed to request the funding he committed in this legislation. This year, the President's budget request is $9.4 billion short. The Democratic amendment will keep the promise we made to our children. This budget is a portrait of broken promises, bad choices, and misplaced priorities.

At a time when it is critical that we begin to regain a firm fiscal footing, this budget drives us even deeper in the hole. The White House and Republican leadership have chosen to continue their reckless fiscal policy all in the name of providing massive tax breaks to the privileged few and giveaways to special interests. As a result, their budget fails our veterans, our seniors, our children, and millions of Americans who are looking for work. We could do better. We must.

Our Nation has the resources to fulfill our promises to seniors, our veterans, and our schools. We need to make responsible choices. We need to honor the promises we have made. Our budget should reflect the priorities and choices of the American people. Democrats are ready to make sure it does.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. NICKLES. Mr. President, I think we are coming closer to concluding the debate tonight. I urge our colleagues to be aware of the fact that this is going to be a busy week. I want to make a couple of comments. I have heard two or three of our speakers say this budget shortchanges veterans and education.

I will throw out a few facts about what this resolution does. Sometimes people say they are referring to the President's budget, or they are referring to something they read in the paper. I will just throw out a few facts. The total amount of money we anticipate spending in education, mandatory and discretionary, is $68 billion. That is a 9-percent increase over last year, mandatory and discretionary combined. People are acting as if there were significant cuts.

I also refer back to what we were spending in the year 2000. Today, it is at $97 billion. So it has almost doubled since the year 2000, and yet we hear a lot of people saying we are cutting education like crazy. Education has grown, and grown dramatically in the last few years. Those are just a couple of the facts. That includes mandatory and discretionary.

On the discretionary side, we are anticipating a little over $3 billion increase between 2004 and 2005. That is in the resolution, and people should know that.

I have also heard some comments on veterans. I will restate the facts. What we are assuming in our resolution is an increase of 14.3 percent for veterans, mandatory and discretionary, between 2004 and 2005. That is a big increase. Keep in mind, both in education and nondefense we are assuming very close to a freeze, but we are assuming a big increase for veterans, primarily on the mandatory side.

Congress did a lot of things last year to increase payments to veterans, including current receipts. So when we add all of these things together on the discretionary side, we are assuming over a $1.4 billion increase, most all of that for medical care. Again, medical care has risen dramatically over the last several years. We are looking at programs that have been expanding dramatically. Let me mention a few figures.

In the year 1990, on the discretionary side for veterans, we spent $13 billion. In the year 2000, 10 years later, we spent $20 billion. Today we are forecasting $30.5 billion. So it took 10 years, from 1990 to the year 2000, for discretionary spending for veterans to go up $7.9 billion. Now, from the year 2000 to the year 2005, 5 years, it has gone up another 50 percent.

People say you are shortchanging veterans. Maybe no matter what figure we had in the budget there would be those same complaints. Veterans, if you add discretionary and mandatory, we have a 14.3-percent increase, if you add the two. Combined, discretionary and mandatory, $61.45 billion to $70.2 billion, there is a 14.3-percent increase. Yet I have heard three or four speakers saying we are shortchanging veterans.

I heard one speaker a moment ago say, yes, there are going to be new fees. The budget we have before us did not assume there will be new fees. The President did recommend a proposal increasing the prescription drug copay on priority levels 7 and 8, from $7 to $15. Those are mostly nonservice-connected disabled and high-income veterans. I think a very good argument can be made they should have a higher copay. That is not assumed in our budget.

We also did not include the proposal to establish a $250 deductible, again on levels 7 and 8 nonservice-connected disabled and high-income veterans.

Those two proposals were not included; yet I have heard two or three speakers already allude to them, so I thought we should point that out.

We have significant increases for both education and for veterans. I urge our colleagues to become aware of that before they say they are going to offer amendments to increase funding because we are shortchanging education or shortchanging veterans. I think we are fair. Given the amount of deficit we have, I think we have very generous increases in both functions, and I urge our colleagues to look at that before they say, no matter what that figure is, they are going to be voting for more money. I think that would be a mistake.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

TRIBUTE TO BRAD SEELY

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, Brad Seely is a South Dakota native who was a standout player at my alma mater, South Dakota State University. He has since developed into one of the best special-teams coaches in the National Football League. When another South Dakota native, Adam Vinatieri,

kicked the Super Bowl-winning field goal, it was the culmination of a lot of great coaching and coordination under the leadership of Brad Seely.

Brad has long been an outstanding coach, serving with the Indianapolis Colts, New York Jets, and Carolina Panthers. Since 1999, Brad has been a member of the New England Patriots coaching staff and has played an integral role in the organization's two titles in the past 3 years. Prior to his career in the NFL, Brad coached throughout the college ranks at Colorado State, Southern Methodist, North Carolina State, Pacific, and Oklahoma State.

It is my great pleasure to honor Brad today. He has been a key part of the New England Patriot's success and has made his home State proud.

TRIBUTE TO LARRY JOHNSON

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I rise today to comment on a prestigious conservation award that will be bestowed upon Larry Johnson of Reno, NV later this week.

Larry is an environmentalist in the most positive sense of the word. He is a sportsman in the most positive sense of the word. He tirelessly invests his time, energy, money and passion in the protecting, restoring and enhancing Nevada's environment. He knows that the environment is synonymous with wildlife habitat, and that natural ecosystems support the fish and game he values so dearly.

As a trustee of the Eastern Nevada Landscape Coalition, Larry has worked to restore the native habitats of the Great Basin. This involvement also reflects his understanding that Nevadans can work together, through collaboration and innovative partnerships, to make our public lands better for wildlife, better for fish, and better for people.

Larry Johnson is a conservationist. He works hard to ensure that we actively manage Nevada's landscape. He holds public land managers and State wildlife officials accountable, but he also views them as allies. For example, he builds ''guzzlers'' where big game can find water in the desert, and he serves on resource advisory counsels for the Bureau of Land Management.

Indeed, Larry is famous throughout Nevada for his tireless work on behalf of our desert bighorn sheep. He is a trustee and longtime member of the board of directors of Nevada Bighorns Unlimited. He raises money, he donates money, and he donates his valuable time and expertise to the noble goal of enhancing bighorn sheep habitat, and preserving the wonderful heritage of the American West.

Larry is a man of principle, a man of ideas, a man of action, and a man exceptionally worthy of the Wayne E. Kirch Nevada Wildlife Conservation Award.

He is a great citizen, a great Nevadan, and a great American.

Chief Seattle once said: ''we do not inherit the Earth from our parents, we borrow it from our children.'' Larry Johnson fulfills our responsibility to be good stewards of the planet we will pass along to future generations.

Because of his dedication to conservation, our children will enjoy a richer legacy of wildlife and recreational opportunities.

Today I congratulate Larry Johnson for this much-deserved recognition of his work to preserve Nevada's natural heritage.

UNITED STATES-JAPAN TAX TREATY

Mr. LUGAR. Mr. President, I rise today in strong support of ratification of the United States-Japan Tax Treaty. As chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, I held a hearing on this treaty on February 25, where the committee heard testimony on the treaty's benefits from the Treasury Department, the National Foreign Trade Council, and the United States-Japan Business Council. Our committee voted to approve the treaty, along with several other items, by a vote of 19 to 0 at a business meeting last week.

The Japan Tax Treaty is particularly significant due to our expansive trade and investment relationship with Japan. The United States and Japan are the two largest economies in the world, and account for approximately 40 percent of the world's gross domestic product. Japan is the fourth largest source of imports to the United States and the third largest export market for United States goods. The treaty, signed on November 6, 2003, by Treasury Secretary Snow and Japanese Ambassador Kato, will improve the ability of United States businesses to expand and prosper in Japan. It also will continue to encourage Japanese investment in the United States that contributes to the growth of our economy.

The original Japan Tax Treaty was signed in March 1971 and went into force in January 1973. Since then, both United States and Japanese domestic tax laws have changed dramatically. Until now, the 1971 treaty has not been amended to reflect those changes or the monumental expansion of the United States-Japanese commercial relationship.

American companies doing business with Japan are eager for this update of the bilateral tax treaty. It will guarantee more equitable treatment for United States corporate investors and relief from double taxation; it will strengthen dispute resolution mechanisms related to tax issues between our countries; and it will eliminate withholding taxes on all royalty income, certain interest income, and dividend income paid to parent companies.

The overall benefit of the treaty is that our companies will become more competitive in the Japanese market. Japan is currently a party to tax agreements with several other nations that reduce double taxation for companies from those nations doing business in Japan. Consequently, without this treaty, United States businesses will continue to face a competitive disadvantage in the area of taxation.

Following transmittal to the Senate this past December, the Foreign Relations Committee engaged in a thorough review and analysis of the treaty. Officials from the Department of Treasury briefed the committee extensively on the impact of the treaty on business relations between the United States and Japan. The committee also consulted with numerous commercial entities with operations in Japan. These entities all have indicated that the treaty will make them even more competitive in a market where they already are successful. In addition, the committee has had meetings with commercial officers from the Japanese Embassy to discuss ratification and implementation of the treaty.

I understand that the timing of enactment of the Japan Tax Treaty is critical. Therefore, I have prioritized it on the Foreign Relations Committee's agenda, and I am grateful to the majority leader for bringing it quickly to the Senate floor. I also have written to the Japanese Finance Minister and leaders of the Diet to encourage them to join us in acting swiftly to bring the treaty into force.

I want to take this opportunity to thank the Treasury Department and its International Tax Counsel Barbara Angus both for their work in producing this agreement and for their cooperation with the Foreign Relations Committee during the treaty's consideration. I would also like to salute the business community, and in particular the National Foreign Trade Council and the United States-Japan Business Council for their leadership and advocacy on behalf of this treaty.

Mr. President, this treaty is good for the United States and good for our relationship with Japan. I urge my colleagues to vote to ratify it.

CIVIL COPYRIGHT ENFORCEMENT

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, with the advent of the digital age, we had great hopes that the possibility of distributing music, films, books, and software on the Internet would bring us an unprecedented variety of content online with ever-increasing ease. Unfortunately, those hopes have not yet been realized. The very ease of duplication and distribution that is the hallmark of digital content has meant that piracy of that content is just as easy. The very real—and often realized—threat that creative works will simply be duplicated and distributed freely online has restricted, rather than enhanced, the amount and variety of creative works one can receive over the Internet. Part of combating piracy includes offering a legal alternative to it. Another important part is enforcing the rights of copyright owners. Senator