

110TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 2063

To establish a Bipartisan Task Force for Responsible Fiscal Action, to assure the economic security of the United States, and to expand future prosperity and growth for all Americans.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

SEPTEMBER 18, 2007

Mr. CONRAD (for himself and Mr. GREGG) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on the Budget

A BILL

To establish a Bipartisan Task Force for Responsible Fiscal Action, to assure the economic security of the United States, and to expand future prosperity and growth for all Americans.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Bipartisan Task Force
5 for Responsible Fiscal Action Act of 2007”.

1 **SEC. 2. ESTABLISHMENT OF TASK FORCE.**

2 Title III of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974
3 (2 U.S.C. 631 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end
4 the following new section:

5 “ESTABLISHMENT OF TASK FORCE FOR RESPONSIBLE
6 FISCAL ACTION

7 “SEC. 316. (a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

8 “(1) TASK FORCE.—The term ‘Task Force’
9 means the Bipartisan Task Force for Responsible
10 Fiscal Action established under subsection (b)(1).

11 “(2) TASK FORCE BILL.—The term ‘Task
12 Force bill’ means a bill consisting of the proposed
13 legislative language of the Task Force introduced
14 under subsection (c)(1).

15 “(3) FISCAL IMBALANCE.—The term ‘fiscal im-
16 balance’ means the gap between the projected reve-
17 nues and expenditures of the Federal Government.

18 “(4) MEDICARE.—The term ‘Medicare’ means
19 the program established under title XVIII of the So-
20 cial Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395 et seq.).

21 “(5) SOCIAL SECURITY.—The term ‘Social Se-
22 curity’ means the program of old-age, survivors, and
23 disability insurance benefits established under title
24 II of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 401 et
25 seq.).

26 “(b) ESTABLISHMENT OF TASK FORCE.—

1 “(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established a
2 task force to be known as the ‘Bipartisan Task
3 Force for Responsible Fiscal Action’.

4 “(2) PURPOSES.—

5 “(A) REVIEW.—The Task Force shall re-
6 view—

7 “(i) analyses of the current and long-
8 term actuarial financial condition of the
9 Federal Government, including the Social
10 Security and Medicare programs; and

11 “(ii) the gap between the projected
12 revenues and expenditures of the Federal
13 Government, including the revenues and
14 expenditures attributable to the Social Se-
15 curity and Medicare programs.

16 “(B) IDENTIFY FACTORS.—The Task
17 Force shall identify factors that affect the long-
18 term fiscal balance of the Federal Government,
19 including the fiscal balance of the Social Secu-
20 rity and Medicare programs.

21 “(C) ANALYZE POTENTIAL COURSES OF
22 ACTION.—The Task Force shall analyze poten-
23 tial courses of action to address factors that af-
24 fect the long-term fiscal balance of the Federal

1 Government, including the fiscal balance of the
2 Social Security and Medicare programs.

3 “(D) PROVIDE RECOMMENDATIONS AND
4 LEGISLATIVE LANGUAGE.—The Task Force
5 shall provide recommendations and legislative
6 language that will significantly improve the
7 long-term fiscal balance of the Federal Govern-
8 ment, including the fiscal balance of the Social
9 Security and Medicare programs.

10 “(3) DUTIES.—

11 “(A) IN GENERAL.—The Task Force shall
12 address the Nation’s long-term fiscal imbal-
13 ances, including such imbalances attributable to
14 the Medicare and Social Security programs and
15 the gap between projected revenues and expend-
16 itures under such programs, consistent with the
17 purposes described in paragraph (2) and shall
18 submit the report and recommendations re-
19 quired under subparagraph (B).

20 “(B) REPORT, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND
21 LEGISLATIVE LANGUAGE.—

22 “(i) IN GENERAL.—On December 9,
23 2008, the Task Force shall submit to the
24 President and Congress a report on the
25 long-term fiscal imbalances of the Federal

1 Government, including such imbalances at-
2 tributable to the Social Security and Medi-
3 care programs, that contains—

4 “(I) a detailed statement of the
5 findings, conclusions, and rec-
6 ommendations of the Task Force (in-
7 cluding proposed legislative language
8 to carry out such recommendations);
9 and

10 “(II) the assumptions, scenarios,
11 and alternatives considered in reach-
12 ing such findings, conclusions, and
13 recommendations.

14 “(ii) APPROVAL OF REPORT.—The re-
15 port of the Task Force submitted under
16 clause (i) shall require the approval of not
17 less than $\frac{3}{4}$ of the 16 members of the
18 Task Force.

19 “(4) MEMBERSHIP.—

20 “(A) IN GENERAL.—The Task Force shall
21 be composed of 16 members designated pursu-
22 ant to subparagraph (B).

23 “(B) DESIGNATION.—Members of the
24 Task Force shall be designated as follows:

1 “(i) The President shall designate 2
2 members, one of whom shall be the Sec-
3 retary of the Treasury, who shall be the
4 Chairperson of the Task Force, and the
5 other of whom shall be an officer or em-
6 ployee of the executive branch.

7 “(ii) The Majority Leader of the Sen-
8 ate shall designate 4 members from among
9 Members of the Senate.

10 “(iii) The Minority Leader of the Sen-
11 ate shall designate 3 members from among
12 Members of the Senate.

13 “(iv) The Speaker of the House of
14 Representatives shall designate 4 members
15 from among Members of the House of
16 Representatives.

17 “(v) The Minority Leader of the
18 House of Representatives shall designate 3
19 members from among Members of the
20 House of Representatives.

21 “(C) DATE.—Members of the Task Force
22 shall be designated by not later than 30 days
23 after the date of enactment of this section.

24 “(D) PERIOD OF DESIGNATION.—Members
25 shall be designated for the life of the Task

1 Force. Any vacancy in the Task Force shall not
2 affect its powers, but shall be filled not later
3 than 14 days after the date on which the va-
4 cancy occurs in the same manner as the origi-
5 nal designation.

6 “(E) TERMINATION.—The Task Force
7 shall terminate on the date that is 90 days
8 after the Task Force submits the report re-
9 quired under paragraph (3)(B).

10 “(5) ADMINISTRATION.—

11 “(A) QUORUM.—Twelve members of the
12 Task Force shall constitute a quorum for pur-
13 poses of voting, but a lesser number may meet
14 and hold hearings.

15 “(B) VOTING.—

16 “(i) PROXY VOTING.—No proxy voting
17 shall be allowed on behalf of members of
18 the Task Force.

19 “(ii) POLICY MATTERS.—The Task
20 Force may not vote on policy matters until
21 after November 4, 2008.

22 “(C) MEETINGS.—

23 “(i) INITIAL MEETING.—Not later
24 than 30 days after the date on which all
25 members of the Task Force have been des-

1 ignated, the Task Force shall hold its first
2 meeting.

3 “(ii) MEETINGS.—The Task Force
4 shall meet at the call of the Chairperson or
5 a majority of its members.

6 “(D) HEARINGS.—Subject to subpara-
7 graph (G), the Task Force may, for the purpose
8 of carrying out this section, hold such hearings,
9 sit and act at such times and places, take such
10 testimony, receive such evidence, and admin-
11 ister such oaths the Task Force considers advis-
12 able.

13 “(E) COMPENSATION.—Members of the
14 Task Force shall serve without any additional
15 compensation for their work on the Task Force.
16 However, members may be allowed travel ex-
17 penses, including per diem in lieu of subsist-
18 ence, in accordance with sections 5702 and
19 5703 of title 5, United States Code, while away
20 from their homes or regular places of business
21 in performance of services for the Task Force.

22 “(F) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—Upon the
23 request of any member of the Task Force, a
24 Federal agency shall provide technical assist-

1 ance to all members of the Task Force in order
2 for the Task Force to carry out its duties.

3 “(G) INFORMATION.—

4 “(i) RESOURCES.—Any member of the
5 Task Force shall have authority to access
6 materials, resources, statistical data, and
7 other information the Task Force deter-
8 mines to be necessary to carry out its du-
9 ties from the Library of Congress, the
10 Chief Actuary of the Social Security Ad-
11 ministration, the Chief Actuary of the Cen-
12 ters for Medicare & Medicaid Services, the
13 Congressional Budget Office, and other
14 agencies and instrumentalities of the exec-
15 utive and legislative branches of the Fed-
16 eral Government (including the Depart-
17 ment of the Treasury, the Department of
18 Health and Human Services, the Office of
19 Management and Budget, the Government
20 Accountability Office, and the Joint Com-
21 mittee on Taxation). Each agency or in-
22 strumentality shall, to the extent permitted
23 by law, furnish such information to the
24 Task Force upon written request by a
25 member of the Task Force.

1 “(ii) RECEIPT, HANDLING, STORAGE,
2 AND DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION.—
3 Information shall only be received, han-
4 dled, stored, and disseminated by members
5 of the Task Force and its staff consistent
6 with all applicable statutes, regulations,
7 and Executive orders.

8 “(iii) LIMITATION OF ACCESS TO TAX
9 INFORMATION.—Information accessed
10 under this subparagraph shall not include
11 tax data from the United States Internal
12 Revenue Service, the release of which
13 would otherwise be in violation of law.

14 “(H) POSTAL SERVICES.—The Task Force
15 may use the United States mails in the same
16 manner and under the same conditions as other
17 departments and agencies of the Federal Gov-
18 ernment.

19 “(6) FUNDING.—There are authorized to be ap-
20 propriated such sums as are necessary to carry out
21 the purposes of the Task Force.

22 “(c) EXPEDITED CONSIDERATION OF TASK FORCE
23 RECOMMENDATIONS.—

24 “(1) INTRODUCTION.—

1 “(A) IN GENERAL.—The proposed legisla-
2 tive language contained in the report submitted
3 pursuant to subsection (b)(3)(B) shall be intro-
4 duced within the first 10 calendar days of the
5 111th Congress (or on the first session day
6 thereafter) in the House of Representatives and
7 in the Senate by the Majority Leader of each
8 House of Congress, for himself, the Minority
9 Leader of each House of Congress, for himself,
10 or any member of the House designated by the
11 Majority Leader or Minority Leader. If the
12 Task Force bill is not introduced in accordance
13 with the preceding sentence in either House of
14 Congress, then any Member of that House may
15 introduce the Task Force bill on any day there-
16 after. Upon introduction, the Task Force bill
17 shall be referred to the appropriate committees
18 under subparagraph (B).

19 “(B) COMMITTEE CONSIDERATION.—A
20 Task Force bill introduced in either House of
21 Congress shall be jointly referred to the com-
22 mittee or committees of jurisdiction and the
23 Committee on the Budget of that House, which
24 committees shall report the bill without any re-
25 vision and with a favorable recommendation, an

1 unfavorable recommendation, or without rec-
2 ommendation, not later than 10 calendar days
3 after the date of introduction of the bill in that
4 House. If any committee fails to report the bill
5 within that period, that committee shall be
6 automatically discharged from consideration of
7 the bill, and the bill shall be placed on the ap-
8 propriate calendar.

9 “(2) EXPEDITED PROCEDURE.—

10 “(A) IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTA-
11 TIVES.—

12 “(i) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 5
13 days of session after the date on which a
14 Task Force bill is reported or discharged
15 from all committees to which it was re-
16 ferred, the Majority Leader of the House
17 of Representatives or the Majority Lead-
18 er’s designee shall move to proceed to the
19 consideration of the Task Force bill. It
20 shall also be in order for any Member of
21 the House of Representatives to move to
22 proceed to the consideration of the Task
23 Force bill at any time after the conclusion
24 of such 5-day period.

1 “(ii) MOTION TO PROCEED.—A mo-
2 tion to proceed to the consideration of the
3 Task Force bill is highly privileged in the
4 House of Representatives and is not debat-
5 able. The motion is not subject to amend-
6 ment or to a motion to postpone consider-
7 ation of the Task Force bill. A motion to
8 proceed to the consideration of other busi-
9 ness shall not be in order. A motion to re-
10 consider the vote by which the motion to
11 proceed is agreed to or not agreed to shall
12 not be in order. If the motion to proceed
13 is agreed to, the House of Representatives
14 shall immediately proceed to consideration
15 of the Task Force bill without intervening
16 motion, order, or other business, and the
17 Task Force bill shall remain the unfinished
18 business of the House of Representatives
19 until disposed of.

20 “(iii) LIMITS ON DEBATE.—Debate in
21 the House of Representatives on a Task
22 Force bill under this paragraph shall not
23 exceed a total of 100 hours, which shall be
24 divided equally between those favoring and
25 those opposing the bill. A motion further

1 to limit debate is in order and shall not be
2 debatable. It shall not be in order to move
3 to recommit a Task Force bill under this
4 paragraph or to move to reconsider the
5 vote by which the bill is agreed to or dis-
6 agreed to.

7 “(iv) APPEALS.—Appeals from deci-
8 sions of the chair relating to the applica-
9 tion of the Rules of the House of Rep-
10 resentatives to the procedure relating to a
11 Task Force bill shall be decided without
12 debate.

13 “(v) APPLICATION OF HOUSE
14 RULES.—Except to the extent specifically
15 provided in this paragraph, consideration
16 of a Task Force bill shall be governed by
17 the Rules of the House of Representatives.
18 It shall not be in order in the House of
19 Representatives to consider any Task
20 Force bill introduced pursuant to the pro-
21 visions of this subsection under a suspen-
22 sion of the rules or under a special rule.

23 “(vi) NO AMENDMENTS.—No amend-
24 ment to the Task Force bill shall be in
25 order in the House of Representatives.

1 “(vii) VOTE ON FINAL PASSAGE.—In
2 the House of Representatives, immediately
3 following the conclusion of consideration of
4 the Task Force bill, the vote on final pas-
5 sage of the Task Force bill shall occur
6 without any intervening action or motion,
7 requiring an affirmative vote of $\frac{3}{5}$ of the
8 Members, duly chosen and sworn. If the
9 Task Force bill is passed, the Clerk of the
10 House of Representatives shall cause the
11 bill to be transmitted to the Senate before
12 the close of the next day of session of the
13 House.

14 “(B) IN THE SENATE.—

15 “(i) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 5
16 days of session after the date on which a
17 Task Force bill is reported or discharged
18 from all committees to which it was re-
19 ferred, the Majority Leader of the Senate
20 or the Majority Leader’s designee shall
21 move to proceed to the consideration of the
22 Task Force bill. It shall also be in order
23 for any Member of the Senate to move to
24 proceed to the consideration of the Task

1 at any time after the conclusion of such 5-
2 day period.

3 “(ii) MOTION TO PROCEED.—A mo-
4 tion to proceed to the consideration of the
5 Task Force bill is privileged in the Senate
6 and is not debatable. The motion is not
7 subject to amendment or to a motion to
8 postpone consideration of the Task Force
9 bill. A motion to proceed to consideration
10 of the Task Force bill may be made even
11 though a previous motion to the same ef-
12 fect has been disagreed to. A motion to
13 proceed to the consideration of other busi-
14 ness shall not be in order. A motion to re-
15 consider the vote by which the motion to
16 proceed is agreed to or not agreed to shall
17 not be in order. If the motion to proceed
18 is agreed to, the Senate shall immediately
19 proceed to consideration of the Task Force
20 bill without intervening motion, order, or
21 other business, and the Task Force bill
22 shall remain the unfinished business of the
23 Senate until disposed of.

24 “(iii) LIMITS ON DEBATE.—In the
25 Senate, consideration of the Task Force

1 bill and on all debatable motions and ap-
2 peals in connection therewith shall not ex-
3 ceed a total of 100 hours, which shall be
4 divided equally between those favoring and
5 those opposing the Task Force bill. A mo-
6 tion further to limit debate on the Task
7 Force bill is in order and is not debatable.
8 Any debatable motion or appeal is debat-
9 able for not to exceed 1 hour, to be divided
10 equally between those favoring and those
11 opposing the motion or appeal. All time
12 used for consideration of the Task Force
13 bill, including time used for quorum calls
14 and voting, shall be counted against the
15 total 100 hours of consideration.

16 “(iv) NO AMENDMENTS.—No amend-
17 ment to the Task Force bill shall be in
18 order in the Senate.

19 “(v) MOTION TO RECOMMIT.—A mo-
20 tion to recommit a Task Force bill shall
21 not be in order under this paragraph.

22 “(vi) VOTE ON FINAL PASSAGE.—In
23 the Senate, immediately following the con-
24 clusion of consideration of the Task Force
25 bill and a request to establish the presence

1 of a quorum, the vote on final passage of
2 the Task Force bill shall occur and shall
3 require an affirmative vote of $\frac{3}{5}$ of the
4 Members, duly chosen and sworn.

5 “(vii) OTHER MOTIONS NOT IN
6 ORDER.—A motion to postpone or a mo-
7 tion to proceed to the consideration of
8 other business is not in order in the Sen-
9 ate. A motion to reconsider the vote by
10 which the Task Force bill is agreed to or
11 not agreed to is not in order in the Senate.

12 “(viii) CONSIDERATION OF THE
13 HOUSE BILL.—

14 “(I) IN GENERAL.—If the Senate
15 has received the House companion bill
16 to the Task Force bill introduced in
17 the Senate prior to the vote required
18 under clause (vi) and the House com-
19 panion bill is identical to the Task
20 Force bill introduced in the Senate,
21 then the Senate shall consider, and
22 the vote under clause (vi) shall occur
23 on, the House companion bill.

24 “(II) PROCEDURE AFTER VOTE
25 ON SENATE BILL.—If the Senate

1 votes, pursuant to clause (vi), on the
2 bill introduced in the Senate, the Sen-
3 ate bill shall be held pending receipt
4 of the House message on the bill.
5 Upon receipt of the House companion
6 bill, if the House bill is identical to
7 the Senate bill, the House bill shall be
8 deemed to be considered, read for the
9 third time, and the vote on passage of
10 the Senate bill shall be considered to
11 be the vote on the bill received from
12 the House.

13 “(C) NO SUSPENSION.—No motion to sus-
14 pend the application of this paragraph shall be
15 in order in the Senate or in the House of Rep-
16 resentatives.”.

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