

How many? What is three-fifths? Sixty percent. How many Members of Congress voted for that omnibus bill 4 legislative days ago? 60.5 percent in the House. How many in the Senate? More than that.

□ 1100

This balanced budget amendment wouldn't have stopped the omnibus bill. There is something worse in this balanced budget amendment. Any year that we are at war, it does not apply. Let's think about that.

The first day of Congress, we elect the Speaker. We are going to elect a new one this time. We elect the Speaker. We adopt the rules. The third order of business will be to declare war so we don't have to follow the balanced budget amendment. That is a loophole right there, but it is a dangerous one.

Some people say: Well, at least we will start declaring wars. We haven't declared a war since World War II. Maybe it will get Congress to do its job, its constitutional duty.

Well, I don't think so. We have been at war in Afghanistan for 17 years, and this article in the balanced budget amendment says: Well, you don't have to be at war as long as there is a conflict with our national security at stake. Oh, you can forget the balanced budget amendment.

What does that mean? For the last 17 years, this balanced budget amendment wouldn't apply to the war in Afghanistan or Iraq, where we have racked up trillions of dollars of debt. The balanced budget amendment would do nothing to stop that.

Look, I am not against the concept of an amendment to the Constitution that limits the growth of government. This government is so much bigger than it was when our Founders started this country, and for many years thereafter, but that is not what this balanced budget amendment does. It is not carefully crafted.

The thought that our Founders put into the Constitution has not been put into this document. It has not even been debated in a committee. Yet, today, we are going to vote on it. How ridiculous is that?

So here is what I think we need to do. Instead of having a balanced budget amendment that encourages you to go to war, that is toothless, that encourages you to raise taxes instead of cut spending, we need a balanced budget amendment that somehow limits the growth of government. Frankly, what we need are people here that are serious about balancing the budget, not another document, not an unserious proposal.

So I would just say this. I know this is a popular concept to have a balanced budget amendment. I am not going to urge a "yes" vote or a "no" vote or a "present" vote. I am going to vote "no" because it is an unserious approach to a serious topic, and it should be called "the CYA," not "the BBA," but I just want my colleagues to think deeply and long about this amendment.

Please read it. Please read it before you vote on it. It is right here. It is only three pages. Please read it. Think deeply before you cast your vote to alter this sacred document.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 11 o'clock and 2 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer: Gracious and merciful God, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

You bring forth blessings from just deeds. Listen to our prayers for the Members of this people's House. Give them the wisdom to meditate upon Your revelation, Your law. Help them find confidence in Your love, especially in times of difficulty.

May their efforts reflect the mindset and gracious manner revealed in Your loving commands, and may their work contain the depth of justice and the expansive embrace of human goodness that You reveal to Your people.

May all that is done this day be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 1, rule I, I demand a vote on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The SPEAKER. The question is on the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The question was taken; and the Speaker announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER. Pursuant to clause 8, rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentlewoman from Alabama (Mrs. ROBY)

come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mrs. ROBY 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.

MOMENT OF SILENCE HONORING THOSE KILLED OR WOUNDED IN SERVICE TO OUR COUNTRY

The SPEAKER. The Chair asks that the House now observe a moment of silence in honor of those who have been killed or wounded in service to our country and all those who serve and their families.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain up to 15 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

DAIRY FARMERS ARE FACING A CRISIS

(Ms. STEFANIK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. STEFANIK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring attention to the urgent crisis facing dairy farmers across my district.

The low price of milk, labor shortages, and dwindling access to new markets are just some of the many challenges faced by the hardworking family farms in my district. Additionally, the Margin Protection Program has failed North Country dairy farmers by providing little to no return on our farmers' buy-in.

Recently, I was pleased to support the Bipartisan Budget Act, which contained many urgent reforms to this program, such as raising catastrophic coverage for the first tier of covered production for all farmers, reducing premium rates to help farmers buy coverage, and waiving costly administrative fees for underserved farms.

Agriculture is truly the backbone of our North Country economy, and generations of farmers have helped make dairy production a way of life for many families that I represent.

In Congress, I will keep fighting every day to strengthen our family farms for future generations.

CONGRESS DOES NOT NEED A CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT TO DO ITS JOB HONORABLY

(Mr. HIGGINS of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HIGGINS of New York. Mr. Speaker, House Republicans recently voted to add \$2.5 trillion to the national debt over the next decade. That is more debt in the shortest period of time by any one political party, the