

CONSEQUENCES OF FEDERAL SPENDING CUTS BROUGHT ABOUT BY REPUBLICAN CONTRACT WITH AMERICA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. DURBIN] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. Speaker, 2 weeks ago the Republican majority leader, DICK ARMEY of Texas, was asked on one of the Sunday morning talk shows why the Republicans would not disclose to the American people what kind of cuts in Federal spending would come with the Republican Contract With America. The gentleman from Texas [Mr. ARMEY], who has a tendency to be very candid, to a fault at times, said he felt that the knees of the Members of Congress would buckle if they learned what kind of cuts are in store for us if we follow the Republican Contract With America.

Mr. ARMEY'S candor was criticized by some of his fellow Republicans, but frankly I think he was right on the mark. My office has just completed an analysis of the Republican Contract With America and the impact which it will have on my home State of Illinois. I would like those from this State to listen, but from other States to consider there will be similar impacts on their own home State if the Republican Contract With America is in fact enacted.

We took a look at just four or five areas that I think are critically important. First is in the area of health services for children and seniors. To reach the necessary 30-percent cut in Federal spending required by the Republican contract, Medicare and Medicaid funding in Illinois and across the Nation would be slashed in Illinois by \$27 billion over 7 years. What it means is that literally thousands of poor families in my home State now under Medicaid, the government health insurance program for poor people, would become uninsured, and it means that many hospitals, particularly smaller and rural hospitals, which are greatly dependent on Medicare patients, would be forced to close their doors.

I have spoken to some of the hospital administrators. What I have just said is not an exaggeration. A 30-percent cut in Medicare would hurt seniors, it would close hospital doors in many of our rural areas and in many of our inner city areas.

The second area of real concern to me is in the area of education. My home State of Illinois would take a big hit from the Republican Contract With America. Under this contract, programs for disadvantaged students would take a 30-percent cut. Some may ask why kind of program is that. It is a program like chapter I, a special tutorial program that takes a child about to drop out or fall behind and puts them through special training to catch up with the class and stay in school.

These programs work. In my county of Sangamon County, IL and downstate

Illinois we would lose with the Republican Contract With America \$900,000 a year in Federal aid to education. Madison County nearby would lose \$1.9 million. It would mean school administrators would have to either eliminate or cut back the programs or ask for increases in local property taxes, something I am sure we all agree is not popular and something we would not want to encourage.

Take a look at highway construction. A lot of States and localities are used to the Federal Government building highways and building bridges and rebuilding and repairing them and think nothing of it.

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If the Republican Contract With America goes through and we see a 30-percent cut, we will see a dramatic downturn in the amount of money available for Illinois and other States for highway construction. Mass transit is the same. In the city of Chicago, the Republican Contract With America will raise the fares for Chicago workers using mass transit every day 15 cents a day. You say, "Well, 15 cents a day is not much, two people working in a household. Add it up and then put it against the supposed tax break the Republicans are offering. There is not much there to show for it."

When it comes to nutrition services, we can expect cuts in the WIC program, a program which serves 40 percent of the infants in America, brings the mothers in during their pregnancy, gives them nutrition information and good guidance for a healthy baby, then brings the mother and baby in after birth and says here is the way to get that baby off on the right foot, with immunizations, good nutrition, a healthy baby, something I think every American wants to see.

The Republican Contract With America will cut that program, will basically eliminate mothers and infants from the program. It follows as night follows day.

The same thing is true for Meals on Wheels. How many senior citizens do we know whose only contact with the outside world is Meals on Wheels? It drops by once a day to say hello, how are you doing, how are you feeling, do you need a helping hand. Those start to go away with this Republican vision of a new America.

In my area of the world, a lot of our farmers depend on Federal spending, not just for their feed grains programs but also for soil and water conservation. These programs help farmers to avoid runoff which can contaminate our water supplies and lead to real problems downstream.

As the Republicans' Contract for America cuts back on this kind of spending, we are literally taking a gamble and a chance with our own health in the future.

These are but four or five examples of what happens in the State of Illinois. This story is repeated many times.

So when Members of the Republicans majority come to the floor and glibly tell us unfunded mandates and balanced-budget amendments do not mean much but a brighter future, ask them for the details.

Our knees are not going to buckle, but we deserve the facts.

INTRODUCTION OF LEGISLATION TO REQUIRE THE PRESIDENT TO SUBMIT A BALANCED BUDGET

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GOODLATTE). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas [Mr. BENTSEN] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BENTSEN. Mr. Speaker, many have argued that we must amend our Constitution to stop us from spending more than we take in. But few, if any, have actually submitted a balanced budget.

I believe in a balanced budget, but I also believe in full and fair disclosure.

Today I am introducing a bill, H.R. 567, which would require the President to submit, and the Congress to consider, a balanced budget. Unlike bills which will be considered by the House next week, my bill would actually mandate the submission and the consideration of a balanced budget. The so-called balanced-budget amendment to the Constitution would not mandate such consideration and, in fact, provide a loophole that you could drive a beer truck through.

Both the Barton and Stenholm amendments would allow the Congress to waive the amendment in order to either raise taxes or sell debt to fund the deficit.

Neither amendment would take effect until 2002.

My bill would go into effect immediately for the next budget for fiscal year 1997.

How many billions might we save if we could achieve a balanced budget by fiscal year 1997 instead of 2002?

Finally, and most importantly, my bill would allow for the American people to enter into the debate on a balanced budget. Unlike others, my bill would provide for the presentation to the American people of the actual numbers, the cuts, to a balanced budget. The other bills only tell us to balance the budget and give us a waiver to avoid it. It does not tell us what an actual balanced budget looks like, and I do not believe that is prudent.

When the proponents of a balanced-budget amendment state the cuts necessary would "make your knees buckle," then the people deserve to know what they are.

The President should submit a balanced budget. The American people should examine that budget, and the Congress should debate and vote on it.

Mr. Speaker, I am including at this point in the RECORD a copy of the bill which I am introducing, as follows:

H.R. —

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

TITLE I—AMENDMENT TO TITLE 31,
UNITED STATES CODE

SEC. 101. SUBMISSION OF BALANCED BUDGET BY THE PRESIDENT.

Section 1105 of title 31, United States Code, is amended by inserting at the end the following new subsection:

“(g)(1) Except as provided by paragraph (2), any budget submitted to Congress pursuant to subsection (a) for the ensuing fiscal year shall not be in deficit.

“(2) For any fiscal year with respect to which the President determines that it is infeasible to submit a budget in compliance with paragraph (1), the President shall submit on the same day two budgets, one of which shall be in compliance with paragraph (1), together with written reasons in support of that determination.”.

TITLE II—AMENDMENT TO
CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET ACT OF 1974

SEC. 201. REPORTING OF BALANCED BUDGET BY COMMITTEES ON THE BUDGET OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES AND SENATE.

Section 301 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 is amended by inserting at the end the following new subsection:

“(j) REPORTING OF BALANCED BUDGETS.—

“(1) Except as provided by paragraph (2), the concurrent resolution on the budget for a fiscal year referred to in subsection (a) as reported by the Committee on the Budget of each House shall not be in deficit.

“(2) For any fiscal year with respect to which the Committee on the Budget of either House determines that it is infeasible to report a concurrent resolution on the budget in compliance with paragraph (1) and includes written reasons in support of that determination in its report accompanying a concurrent resolution on the budget, the committee shall report two concurrent resolutions on the budget, one of which shall be in compliance with paragraph (1).

“(3) Each concurrent resolution on the budget reported by the Committee on the Budget of either House shall contain reconciliation directives described in section 310 necessary to effectuate the provisions and requirements of such resolution.”.

SEC. 202. PROCEDURE IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

Section 305(a) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 is amended by inserting at the end the following:

“(8)(A) If the Committee on Rules of the House of Representatives reports any rule or order providing for the consideration of any concurrent resolution on the budget for a fiscal year, then it shall also, within the same rule or order, provide for—

“(i) the consideration of the text of any concurrent resolution on the budget for that fiscal year reported by the Committee on the Budget of the House of Representatives pursuant to section 301(j); and

“(ii) the consideration of the text of each concurrent resolution on the budget as introduced by the Majority Leader pursuant to subparagraph (B);

and such rule or order shall assure that a separate vote occurs on each such budget.

“(B) The Majority Leader of the House of Representatives shall introduce a concurrent resolution on the budget reflecting, without substantive revision, each budget submitted by the President pursuant to section 1105(g) of title 31, United States Code, as soon as practical after its submission.”.

SEC. 203. PROCEDURE IN THE SENATE.

Section 305(b) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 is amended by inserting at the end the following:

“(7) Notwithstanding any other rule, it shall always be in order in the Senate to consider an amendment to a concurrent resolution on the budget for a fiscal year comprising the text of any budget submitted by the President for that fiscal year as described in section 1105(g)(1) of title 31, United States Code, and, whenever applicable, an amendment comprising the text of any other budget submitted by the President for that fiscal year as described in section 1105(g)(2) of title 31, United States Code.”.

TITLE III—EFFECTIVE DATE

SEC. 301. EFFECTIVE DATE.

This Act and the amendments made by it shall become effective for fiscal year 1997 budget submitted by the President as required by section 1105(a) of title 31, United States Code.

CHANGING THE DIRECTION OF
GOVERNMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 1995, the gentleman from Florida [Mr. SCARBOROUGH] is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. SCARBOROUGH. Mr. Speaker, it is truly an honor to have been elected to this great institution with an opportunity to make real changes this year, because I believe, like so many other colleagues on both sides of the aisle, that the American hour is upon us, that now is the time for us to decide once and for all which direction we are going to take this Government, whether we are going to follow the same failed policies that have hurt this country over the past 30 years where we turned to Government to answer every single problem we have in our towns and in our counties and in our States, or whether we, instead, turn back to those simple, basic premises that our Founding Fathers laid as the foundation of this great Republic.

James Madison wrote over 200 years ago as he was framing the Constitution, “We have staked the very existence of the American civilization not upon the power of government but upon the capacity of each of us to govern ourselves, to control ourselves and sustain ourselves according to the Ten Commandments of God.”

And Thomas Jefferson wrote, “Government that governs least governs best.”

And what does our 10th amendment say? It says all powers not specifically given to the Federal government are reserved by the States and the citizens.

Well, what has happened? Where have we gone in the past 40 years? We keep turning back to government.

I could not help but hear one of the previous speakers talking about all the horrible things that would happen if we actually dared to try to balance our budget, like children would starve, grandparents would be kicked out in the streets, locusts would descend upon Washington.

Let me tell you something, this is not the type of government that Thomas Jefferson and James Madison and George Washington and Benjamin Franklin and our Founding Fathers intended for this country. It was about individualism. It was about the power of communities and families working together, not looking to Washington to try to figure out every single problem, but to band together as a community and as a family and as a State.

But that was the whole idea of States' rights. That is what the Federalist Papers were all about, about the power of States to conduct a type of welfare reform or conduct a type of health care reform that they wanted to conduct instead of having one highly centralized government unit.

Is that not what we were trying to get away from when we had a Revolution over 200 years ago, to get away from King George III, to allow families, individuals and communities to once again decide their own destiny, instead of having the Federal Government that tells us what doctor we want to choose, how we want to protect our family, and now, with these other reforms, how we want to take care of education? It just does not make sense.

And you know what? A year ago I was sitting on the couch, and as a citizen, I got fed up, Mr. Speaker, and said enough is enough, I want to take part in this process; I do not care whether I win or lose, I want my voice to be heard, and I thought it was a unique story. I did not have a lot of money. I did not have a lot of traditional support. I just had ideas.

And I thought they were my ideas and my ideas alone until I came here and found out that 85 others had similar type ideas.

And what had happened was everybody started talking, whether it was on C-SPAN or on talk radio or on E-mail or through faxes; citizens in this country became empowered, and because of it, we were able to speak as one voice without lobbyists in our camp, without the traditional party power brokers on the local level in our camps. We were able to do it on ideas and ideas alone, and because of that, we have an unparalleled opportunity in the 104th Congress to make real changes and make real reforms.

It starts by balancing the Federal budget. It starts by doing what middle class families have had to do for 40 years, and for what State legislators have had to do for 40 years, but what this Federal Government has failed to do since 1969.

It is a very simple premise, and yet if you hear supply-side economics professors talk on one hand, it can make your head swim. If you hear Keynesian economics professors talk on the other side of the matter, you say, well, how do those numbers add up. What we are trying to do is have a very simple economic theory, and it goes like this: You only spend as much money as you take in. What is so radical about that