

But abandoning the principle of majority rule on final passage of a bill is not something the House should do lightly—or rest on a questionable precedent. If the three-fifths rule is intended as a safeguard against rash tax-raising by this incoming Congress, it seems unnecessary. Republicans will have a 25-seat majority in January and they have promised tax cuts, not increases. The president has joined them and so has the leader of House Democrats, Rep. Richard Gephardt (Mo.). So where is the threat?

Fiddling with the rules always arouses suspicion. Two years ago, when the majority Democrats changed the rules to allow the delegates from the District of Columbia, American Samoa, Guam and the Virgin Islands and the resident commissioner from Puerto Rico (all Democrats) to vote on the House floor on everything but final passage of bills, I said they were tampering with the game. Such criticism forced the Democrats to agree that there would be another vote—without the five delegates—on any issue where their votes decided the outcome. The federal courts upheld that version of their rule, saying that the change the Democrats had made was merely “symbolic” and essentially “meaningless.”

That cannot be said of the proposed three-fifths rule. It is consequential—and unprincipled. The Republicans themselves juggled the wording to create loopholes for shifting other tax rates by simple majority.

The precedent they will set is one they will come to regret. If this Congress puts a rules roadblock around changes in income rates, nothing will prevent future Congresses with different majorities from erecting similar barriers to protect labor laws, civil rights laws, environmental laws—or whatever else the party in power wants to put off-limits for political purposes.

There is something fundamentally disquieting and even dishonorable about the majority of the moment rewriting the rules to allow a minority to control the House's decisionmaking. You can easily imagine future campaigns in which politicians will promise that if they gain power, they will abolish majority rule on this issue or that—a whole new venue for pandering to constituencies that can be mobilized around a single issue.

This is a dangerous game the Republicans are beginning. And it raises questions about their values. Let them answer this question: Why should it be harder for Congress to raise taxes than declare war? Does this proud new Republican majority wish to say on its first day in office: We value money more than lives?

Mr. PELL. I yield the floor.

Mrs. MURRAY addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By a previous order of the Senate, the Senator from Washington is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

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

**DR. HENRY FOSTER, SURGEON  
GENERAL NOMINEE**

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, Dr. Henry Foster has been nominated by President Clinton to be the U.S. Surgeon General. I rise today to express my support for Dr. Foster, and to urge my colleagues to give him a full and fair hearing.

Yesterday, I had the pleasure of meeting with Dr. Foster, and I am very impressed.

Dr. Foster is a physician with vast experience who has dedicated his life to maternal and child health. He is a man who speaks from the heart, a person who cares deeply about the health of families across this Nation.

Dr. Foster is one of the country's leading experts on preventing teen pregnancy and drug abuse, as well as reducing infant mortality. He is a public health professional with vision.

I urge my colleagues to meet with Dr. Foster, to talk with him, to ask him tough questions. I have. I believe they too will be very impressed.

Dr. Foster has tested his ideas about public health interventions that can greatly benefit this Nation. He wants to continue his career-long focus on maternal and child health, on adolescents, and the on prevention of teen pregnancy. He wants to fight AIDS, and combat the epidemic of violence that has taken hold across our Nation.

I also want to stress the importance and relevance of Dr. Foster's practice area. For far too long, women's health concerns have been neglected by this Nation. I am heartened that our next Surgeon General can be a physician who has dedicated his life to women's health—an obstetrician/gynecologist.

Women's health is critical to every family—every man, woman, and child—in this Nation. As a woman, and a mother with a son and daughter, I find the selection of Dr. Foster reassuring. I urge my colleagues to stop and think about the importance of women's health to families everywhere.

I look forward to working with my colleagues on the Labor Committee as they prepare hearings for Dr. Foster. I believe when my colleagues and the American public get to know Dr. Foster, they will be as excited as I am to have him as our Nation's next Surgeon General. You, too, will recognize his honesty, his passion, and his commitment to children and families.

I thank you and yield back the remainder of my time.

**BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT  
TO THE CONSTITUTION**

The Senate continued with the consideration of the joint resolution.

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, we are now in our 14th day of debate. I was very interested in the chart of the distinguished Senator from New Hampshire, “Statutes Don't Work.”

I hear people on the other side constantly saying we ought to just do it; we ought to just balance the budget; we ought to have the guts to do it. Almost invariably they are the people who are the biggest spenders around here. Almost invariably.

It is the biggest joke on Earth, after 26 straight years of not balancing the budget, to have these people tell us, we just have to do it ourselves. That is the biggest joke around here to everybody

who knows anything about budgetary policy in the Federal Government.

Do not think the people are stupid out there. They know what is going on. They know doggone well that if we do not have this balanced budget amendment, we will never get fiscal control of this country, we will never make priority choices among competing programs, and we will just keep spending and taxing like never before.

I have heard Senators on the other side of this issue, and some who even support us, beat their breast on how they voted for that large tax increase last year, and that deficit spending thing they did. Anytime you increase taxes, if you can hold on to spending at all, you are going to bring down the budget deficit. The problem is that at best, their approach starts up dramatically in 1996 and really dramatically at the turn of the century to a \$400 billion annual deficit.

These people are always saying we just have to do it. They are the same people who say we could do it with the Budget and Accounting Act of 1921, the Revenue Act of 1964, the Revenue Act of 1968, Humphrey-Hawkins in 1978, the Byrd amendment in 1978. I was here for most of those. From 1978 on, I was certainly here, and I have to tell you, I voted for that Byrd amendment and I was really thrilled. Here is the U.S. Senate, this august body of people who mean so much to this country, voting to say that in 1980, we are going to balance this budget.

Back then, we probably could have if we had really gotten serious about it. But it was almost the next bill that came up that a 51 percent majority vote changed that. The distinguished Senator from New Hampshire really makes a great point here.

The debt limit increase, why, I was here for that, too. We promised, “Boy, we're going to balance the budget.”

The Bretton Woods agreement; again, Byrd II; recodification of title 31; Byrd III; Gramm-Rudman-Hollings, I remember what a fight that was to get that through. My gosh, at last we are going to do something for this country; we are going to get spending under control; we are going to help our country. It helped a little bit, darn little.

We had to go to Gramm-Rudman-Hollings II, II because the little it did help was just too much for these people around here, just too much for these budget balancers who say we simply ought to do it.

Let me tell you, I am tired of saying we simply ought to do it. I heard it from the White House. What do we get from the White House? A budget for the next 5 years that will put us over \$6 trillion; that the annual deficits for the next 12 years are \$190 billion a year plus.

Now tell me they mean business. No way in this world. This game is up. Those who vote for this are people who are serious about doing something for our country, about getting spending and taxing policies under control. I