

MEASURE PLACED ON
CALENDAR—S. 1254

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, I understand there is a bill that is due for its second reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1254) to disapprove of amendments to the Federal Sentencing Guidelines related to lowering of crack sentences and sentences for money laundering and transactions in property derived from unlawful activity.

Mr. CRAIG. I would object to further consideration of the bill at this time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The bill will be placed on the calendar.

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to proceed as if in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection? The Chair hears none, and it is so ordered.

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, I thank the Chair.

(The remarks of Mr. CRAIG pertaining to the introduction of S. 1271 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

THE BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, the skyrocketing Federal debt, now soaring toward \$5 trillion, has been fueled for a generation now by bureaucratic hot air—and it is sort of like the weather—everybody talks about it but almost nobody did much about it until immediately after the elections in November 1994.

But when the new 104th Congress convened this past January, the U.S. House of Representatives quickly approved a balanced budget amendment to the U.S. Constitution. On the Senate side, all but 1 of the 54 Republicans supported the balanced budget amendment—that was the good news.

The bad news was that only 13 Democrats supported it—which killed hopes for a balanced budget amendment for the time being. Since a two-thirds vote—67 Senators, if all Senator's are present—is necessary to approve a constitutional amendment, the proposed Senate amendment failed by one vote. There will be another vote either this year or in 1996.

Here is today's bad debt boxscore:

As of the close of business Friday, September 22, the Federal debt—down to the penny—stood at exactly \$4,949,192,404,249.15 or \$18,787.22 for every man, woman, and child on a per capita basis.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING
BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. STEVENS). Morning business is now closed.

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, AND INDEPENDENT AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1996

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will turn to the pending business.

The clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 2099) making appropriations for the Departments of Veterans Affairs and Housing and Urban Development, and for sundry independent agencies, boards, commissions, corporations, and offices for fiscal year ending September 30, 1996, and for other purposes.

The Senate proceeded to consider the bill, which had been reported from the Committee on Appropriations, with amendments; as follows:

(The parts of the bill intended to be stricken are shown in boldface brackets and the parts of the bill intended to be inserted are shown in italic.)

H.R. 2099

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the following sums are appropriated, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, for the Departments of Veterans Affairs and Housing and Urban Development, and for sundry independent agencies, boards, commissions, corporations, and offices for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1996, and for other purposes, namely:

TITLE I

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

VETERANS BENEFITS ADMINISTRATION

COMPENSATION AND PENSIONS

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

For the payment of compensation benefits to or on behalf of veterans as authorized by law (38 U.S.C. 107, chapters 11, 13, 51, 53, 55, and 61); pension benefits to or on behalf of veterans as authorized by law (38 U.S.C. chapters 15, 51, 53, 55, and 61; 92 Stat. 2508); and burial benefits, emergency and other officers' retirement pay, adjusted-service credits and certificates, payment of premiums due on commercial life insurance policies guaranteed under the provisions of Article IV of the Soldiers' and Sailors' Civil Relief Act of 1940, as amended, and for other benefits as authorized by law (38 U.S.C. 107, 1312, 1977, and 2106, chapters 23, 51, 53, 55, and 61; 50 U.S.C. App. 540-548; 43 Stat. 122, 123; 45 Stat. 735; 76 Stat. 1198); \$17,649,972,000, to remain available until expended: *Provided*, That not to exceed ~~[\$25,180,000]~~ \$27,431,000 of the amount appropriated shall be reimbursed to "General operating expenses" and "Medical care" for necessary expenses in implementing those provisions authorized in the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1990, and in the Veterans' Benefits Act of 1992 (38 U.S.C. chapters 51, 53, and 55), the funding source for which is specifically provided as the "Compensation and pensions" appropriation: *Provided further*, That such sums as may be earned on an actual qualifying patient basis, shall be reimbursed to "Medical facilities revolving fund" to augment the funding of individual medical facilities for nursing home care provided to pensioners as authorized by the Veterans' Benefits Act of 1992 (38 U.S.C. chapter 55): *Provided further*, That \$12,000,000 previously transferred from "Compensation and pensions" to "Medical facilities revolving fund" shall be transferred to this heading.

READJUSTMENT BENEFITS

For the payment of readjustment and rehabilitation benefits to or on behalf of veterans as authorized by law (38 U.S.C. chapters 21, 30, 31, 34, 35, 36, 39, 51, 53, 55, and 61), \$1,345,300,000, to remain available until expended: *Provided*, That funds shall be available to pay any court order, court award or any compromise settlement arising from litigation involving the vocational training program authorized by section 18 of Public Law 98-77, as amended.

VETERANS INSURANCE AND INDEMNITIES

For military and naval insurance, national service life insurance, servicemen's indemnities, service-disabled veterans insurance, and veterans mortgage life insurance as authorized by law (38 U.S.C. chapter 19; 70 Stat. 887; 72 Stat. 487) \$24,890,000, to remain available until expended.

GUARANTY AND INDEMNITY PROGRAM ACCOUNT

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

For the cost of direct and guaranteed loans, such sums as may be necessary to carry out the purpose of the program, as authorized by 38 U.S.C. chapter 37, as amended: *Provided*, That such costs, including the cost of modifying such loans, shall be as defined in section 502 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, as amended.

In addition, for administrative expenses to carry out the direct and guaranteed loan programs, \$65,226,000, which may be transferred to and merged with the appropriation for "General operating expenses".

LOAN GUARANTY PROGRAM ACCOUNT

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

For the cost of direct and guaranteed loans, such sums as may be necessary to carry out the purpose of the program, as authorized by 38 U.S.C. chapter 37, as amended: *Provided*, That such costs, including the cost of modifying such loans, shall be as defined in section 502 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, as amended.

In addition, for administrative expenses to carry out the direct and guaranteed loan programs, \$52,138,000, which may be transferred to and merged with the appropriation for "General operating expenses".

DIRECT LOAN PROGRAM ACCOUNT

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

For the cost of direct loans, such sums as may be necessary to carry out the purpose of the program, as authorized by 38 U.S.C. chapter 37, as amended: *Provided*, That such costs, including the cost of modifying such loans, shall be as defined in section 502 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, as amended: *Provided further*, That during 1996, within the resources available, not to exceed \$300,000 in gross obligations for direct loans are authorized for specially adapted housing loans (38 U.S.C. chapter 37).

In addition, for administrative expenses to carry out the direct loan program, \$459,000, which may be transferred to and merged with the appropriation for "General operating expenses".

EDUCATION LOAN FUND PROGRAM ACCOUNT

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

For the cost of direct loans, \$1,000, as authorized by 38 U.S.C. 3698, as amended: *Provided*, That such costs, including the cost of modifying such loans, shall be as defined in section 502 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, as amended: *Provided further*, That these funds are available to subsidize gross obligations for the principal amount of direct loans not to exceed \$4,000.

In addition, for administrative expenses necessary to carry out the direct loan program, \$195,000, which may be transferred to and merged with the appropriation for "General operating expenses". VerDate 20-SEP-95 02:15 Oct 03, 1995