

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

WE OWE OUR VETERANS A LIFE-TIME OF GRATITUDE AND RESPECT

HON. BOB FILNER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, November 13, 1995

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker and colleagues, I rise today in honor of our Nation's veterans.

Once again, we celebrate Veterans' Day. Once again, we have a day off from work. Once again, we may attend ceremonies to honor our veterans. Once again, we will remember briefly the contributions made by so many so that our Nation can remain strong, proud, and free.

The year goes by so fast—and so before we know it, once again, it is Veterans' Day.

This year, let it not slip past us. Let us take this opportunity to honor our veterans by passing along to our children and grandchildren some of our experiences, thoughts, and appreciation for our veterans.

Do our children and grandchildren even know what a veteran is? Do they understand why we honor our veterans? Our kids may play war games, but do they comprehend the incredible sacrifices made by our veterans and their families?

Do they know the stories of their own family members who served, and perhaps were wounded or killed, in the two World Wars, in Korea, Vietnam, the Persian Gulf, and many other conflicts?

Because this year is the 50th anniversary of the end of World War II, many of the commemorations will honor veterans of that war. Last weekend, churches and synagogues across the Nation held a National Day of Prayer remembering World War II veterans and their families. If your house of worship participated, be sure to talk to your children about the meaning of this ceremony.

Schools are being urged to participate in National World War II Educational Day, scheduled for November 8. Teachers will be preparing displays and talks centering around the history of World War II and its lessons for today's world. Perhaps a World War II veteran will be visiting your children's school. Ask your children to tell you about the activities at their school. Talk about them over the dinner table.

We can also take our children and grandchildren to one of the many Veterans' Day ceremonies being held throughout the country. This year, ceremonies include the site dedication of the World War II Memorial in Washington, DC. Do your children know that this memorial will soon be built? Do they know that last July a Korean War Veterans Memorial was dedicated in Washington, DC? Perhaps your family could plan a trip to Washington to view this new and powerful memorial—which stands proudly adjacent to the Lincoln Memorial and the Vietnam Veterans Memorial—and honors the men and women who served so courageously in Korea.

Many cities across the country will be ringing the Bells of Peace and Freedom 50 times

at 11 a.m. on Saturday, November 11. Let us tell our children that the ringing of the bells signifies 50 years without a world war and our hope that World War II will be the final worldwide conflict.

Veterans Day provides us with a unique opportunity to remember and acknowledge that the freedom we enjoy today is due to the sacrifices made by the American soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines who were willing to fight and die for freedom. We owe our veterans a lifetime of gratitude and respect.

Veterans Day provides us with an opportunity to ensure our democratic way of life by passing along the valuable lessons our veterans have learned to future generations.

It will be time well spent.

LEGISLATION TO HELP KEEP THE TRAINS ON TRACK

HON. BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, November 13, 1995

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing legislation that would convert the budget resolution from a concurrent resolution of the Congress into a joint resolution that would require the President's signature and have the force of law.

For the past several months, news reports have been full of discussion about the possibility of a fiscal train wreck. Tomorrow, due to the failure of Congress to pass appropriations bills and a reconciliation bill, 800,000 Federal employees will be sent home and Federal agencies will shut down. Millions of Americans will be without the services of those agencies and will again have to contemplate the absurd process that brought us to this situation.

At the root of the crisis is disagreement between the Congress and the President over big-ticket items in the budget. The congressional leadership is attempting to gain leverage over the President in the budget debate by attaching extraneous, irrelevant, and controversial provisions to such must-pass legislation as the continuing resolution and the debt-ceiling bill. The resulting disruption of Federal services would be a major inconvenience for millions of Americans, and a financial catastrophe for thousands of American families which depend on Federal paychecks.

The legislation I am introducing today is designed to prevent future threats of train wrecks by bringing the President into the congressional budget process at an earlier point. Currently, the President is required to submit a budget at the start of the calendar year. Congress then spends the next few months working on its own budget resolution. The congressional budget resolution is a concurrent resolution of the Congress, which does not have the force of law.

This year, Congress spent the first 100 days of this session working on the Contract With America legislation. As a result, the work on

the budget resolution was delayed. Instead of complying with the April 15 deadline established in the Budget Act, the House did not complete its work on the budget until May 18, and the final budget was not approved until June 29, 2½ months late.

The delay in passing a budget put Congress way behind schedule on the appropriations bills. In addition to putting Congress behind schedule, the budget resolution, passed without Presidential involvement or approval, also put Congress and the President on a collision course on policy. By calling for \$270 billion in Medicare cuts, and \$245 billion in tax breaks, mostly directed to the wealthiest Americans, the budget also created the likelihood of the crisis we face now.

Now, 6 weeks after the start of the new fiscal year, we have still not passed reconciliation legislation, only 3 of the 13 regular appropriations bills have been sent to the President, and the President and the congressional leadership remain sharply at odds over these major issues.

The shame is that this situation could have been prevented. Had the Congress been required to pass a budget resolution that must be signed into law by the President, these issues would have been resolved months ago. Instead of having a legislative showdown that threatens the delivery of Federal services to millions of Americans and the paychecks of thousands of American families, we should have resolved the issues during the spring and summer.

The budget resolution can never be more than a blueprint for Federal spending. The thousands of individual programmatic decisions on spending must be handled in the appropriations process. By making the budget resolution a joint resolution, and giving the President the power to sign it or veto it, we would force the tough decisions between the two branches of Government to be resolved before we reach crisis stage. The result would produce a Government that functioned more efficiently.

In addition to requiring the President to sign the budget resolution, the bill I introduce today would also address the issue of increasing the debt ceiling. In addition to the crisis of shutting down Federal agencies, we also face a potentially far more serious crisis regarding the creditworthiness of the Federal Government.

It is an outrage that the congressional Republican leadership is willing to risk the full faith and credit of the Federal Government in order to achieve its political objectives. Yet that is the situation we face today. Never in the history of our country has the Federal Government defaulted on its financial obligations.

This legislation would automatically increase the debt ceiling with adoption of the budget resolution. Once a budget has been approved, and signed by the President, the amount of debt that will be incurred has been established. It makes no sense to require a separate vote to raise the debt ceiling. Passage of the budget sets the deficit or surplus, and the

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