

Union, and eventually became a journeyman printer. From that position, he advanced to become a chief steward in the plant and a member of the Local 27 executive board. His fellow workers noticed his dedication to the cause of organized labor, and in January 1961, they elected George as secretary-treasurer of the local which represented all print shops in western New York. In this post, he again served with distinction until January 1, 1969, when he was elected to succeed Judge James L. Kane as president of the Buffalo AFL-CIO Council.

As President, George Wessel has enjoyed great popularity as a leader of labor and as a leader in civic life. Elected to nine 3-year terms as president of the Buffalo AFL-CIO Council, George has been a tremendous influence on the labor movement in the past quarter century. In the early 1980's, the Buffalo AFL-CIO Council was in the forefront of efforts to organize Solidarity Day in Washington, DC. Since then, thousands of union activists have converged at the Nation's Capital each year to call attention to issues affecting working men and women. George has also overseen council activities, negotiated with business leaders, mobilized affiliated locals for public demonstrations, and been the official spokesman for organized labor in Erie County. He also started the grand tradition of the Labor Day parade through the streets of Buffalo. It was several times my honor to march through the streets with George during the parade, and I was always the better for having done so.

George Wessel has also been a sterling member of the community as he has constantly worked to improve the physical, social, and cultural environment of Buffalo. Whether as a member of the United Way, or as a member of the labor advisory board at Cornell University, George Wessel has strived to make Buffalo a better place to live and work.

Though labor has faced many setbacks in western New York and throughout much of the country in recent years, George Wessel has fought to stem that tide. Due to his great efforts, organized labor still remains at the forefront of commercial activity and is a much respected movement in the Buffalo community.

We shall all be sorry to see George step down as president of the council, but organized labor will still remain a force in Erie County. Like the Workers Memorial in Chestnut Ridge, this is a testament to George Wessel's half century of involvement with the union movement in Buffalo.

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, parliamentary inquiry. Are we operating as if we were in morning business?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Yes, with a time limit of 10 minutes per speaker.

BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that current

letters from the Governors of California, Illinois, Kansas, Louisiana, Michigan, New Hampshire, New Mexico, New York, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Virginia, and Wyoming on the need for the balanced budget amendment to the Constitution be—I would use the word memorialized—in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the letters were ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

STATE CAPITOL,
Sacramento, CA, June 4, 1996.

The PRESIDENT,
The White House, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: This week, the 104th Congress will make a final attempt to pass the Balanced Budget Amendment. The amendment has already been approved overwhelmingly by the House of Representatives, and it is within two votes of passage in the Senate. I urge you to take this opportunity to endorse the Balanced Budget Amendment and help secure the Democratic votes needed to ensure its passage.

To Californians alone, certainty of a balanced federal budget is literally worth billions upon billions of dollars. The lower interest rates that would accompany reduced federal borrowing would save our state government more than \$3 billion per year, enough to provide a \$262 tax cut for every household in California. More importantly, balancing the budget by 2002 would prevent each and every citizen in California from assuming more than \$4,000 worth of additional federal debt.

Comparison of federal spending and California state spending over the past five years shows that if Washington had practiced a level of fiscal discipline similar to that we have exercised in Sacramento, the federal government would now be running a surplus rather than a deficit. There is no question that California's constitutional mandate for a balanced budget has provided an essential incentive for achieving this performance.

Now, California is reaping the benefits of tightly controlled spending, with a resurgent economy driving up state tax revenues. This has set the stage for tax cuts that will let people keep more of their own money, and increased funding for education and other investments in California's future.

Mr. President, you, more than anyone else, should be supporting the Balanced Budget Amendment to show your honest commitment to reforming federal spending and sparing future generations from a crushing burden of debt. The Balanced Budget Amendment is a promise that transcends elections; a promise that cannot be simply revoked on November 6.

I challenge you to make public your support for the Balanced Budget Amendment and help secure the two Democratic votes needed to pass it.

Sincerely,

PETE WILSON.

STATE OF ILLINOIS,
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR,
Springfield, IL, June 4, 1996.

Hon. WILLIAM J. CLINTON,
President of the United States,
The White House, Washington, DC.

DEAR PRESIDENT CLINTON: In the next week, the Senate will be voting on the Balanced Budget Amendment. I urge you to contact Senators from your party and ask them to vote for this critical measure. We must change the direction our country is going financially, and this is the first step.

This is a very bi-partisan issue, as Senator Simon from the State of Illinois has proven.

Members from both sides of the aisle have recognized the importance of passing a bill mandating to Congress that this country operates under a balanced budget. The longer we wait to balance the budget, the more we leave a legacy of debt for our children and grandchildren and take away from our ability to address pressing national priorities.

In the United States, we currently spend 11 times more money on interest on the national debt than we do on education, and twice as much on interest than on all of our poverty programs. We have come to realize in Illinois the importance of a balanced budget and the sacrifices that are needed to achieve that goal. A balanced budget requirement has been part of our state constitution since 1970, and members of both parties have worked hard at maintaining that requirement.

Mr. President, I can not stress enough the importance of passing the Balanced Budget Amendment. In order to achieve the balanced budgets that you and the Republican leadership have proposed, we need the discipline of a constitutional amendment. Again, I urge you to contact members of your party in the Senate, and request that they vote for the Balanced Budget Amendment. I thank you, in advance, for your consideration on this matter.

Sincerely,

JIM EDGAR,
Governor.

STATE OF KANSAS,
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR,
Topeka, KS, June 5, 1996.

Hon. WILLIAM J. CLINTON,
President of the United States,
The White House, Washington, DC.

DEAR PRESIDENT CLINTON: The next few days will be historic. The announcement by United States Senator Bob Dole to resign from his position as Majority Leader and U.S. Senator is of great historical significance. Before the distinguished Senator departs, you and the members of Congress will have the opportunity to perform a legislative act equally historic—approving legislation to balance the federal budget. As Senator Dole concludes his terms in the United States Senate, this week has been proclaimed *Balanced Budget Week* in recognition of Senator Dole's efforts to set America back on track toward economic vitality. I encourage you to do everything in your power to promote a balanced budget amendment.

Since 1932, Kansas has been a cash basis state, which means that pursuant to State law, Kansas cannot debt spend. We are forced to project revenues and balance our budgets accordingly. Sometimes we must reevaluate our priorities and tighten our belts. Other times we must reevaluate the relationship between the State and its citizens by determining in what programs the people of Kansas want their government to engage, and which programs are no longer worthy of the people's financial resources. That kind of common sense approach to budgeting has served Kansas well, and it can go a long way toward resolving the deficit at the federal level. If Kansas can balance its budget each and every year, as do the people of America, so too can the federal government.

In Kansas, we directed an Administration that has taken the initiative to provide Kansas children with the same opportunities for a sound fiscal future with which we were blessed. The budget we submitted to the state Legislature this year is the first in a generation that spends less than the year before. We have been able to pass along the savings to Kansas taxpayers in the form of meaningful tax relief—in excess of \$1.4 billion over five years. We accomplished significant tax relief—reducing the burden on Kansas taxpayers—without neglecting those in

need of our help and support. Although this was a daunting and challenging task, the people of Kansas expected nothing less than courageous leadership from their elected officials. Similarly, the people of America expect nothing less from their President.

The future of America's children depends on your support of a balanced budget amendment. Please do not fail to make the most of the historic possibilities presented in the days ahead.

Sincerely,

BILL GRAVES,
Governor.
SHEILA FRAHM,
Lt. Governor, U.S.
Senator Designate.

STATE OF LOUISIANA,
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR,
Baton Rouge, June 4, 1996.

Hon. WILLIAM J. CLINTON,
President of the United States,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: As I mentioned when you were here last week, Louisiana is a conservative state. That Louisiana's State Constitution requires the Legislature to pass and the Governor to sign a balanced budget is a strong reflection of these conservative values.

I would like to take this opportunity to request that you join me, a majority of our nation's governors, and eighty-three percent of all Americans in supporting a balanced budget amendment to the United States Constitution. A balanced budget requirement has been good for Louisiana, it has been good for your home state of Arkansas, and it would be good for the United States of America.

It is time for our elected officials in Washington to exercise the same degree of fiscal discipline that their colleagues in statehouses across the country do. I'm afraid that past history makes it all too clear that we will not get a balanced federal budget unless we require one constitutionally.

For the sake of our children and their children, to put their needs above those of the federal government in Washington, I urge you to announce your support for a balanced budget amendment today.

Sincerely,

M.J. "MIKE" FOSTER, JR.,
Governor.

STATE OF MICHIGAN,
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR,
Lansing, MI, June 5, 1996.

Hon. WILLIAM J. CLINTON,
President, The White House,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: This week Congress has the opportunity to pass a Balanced Budget Amendment that will truly change the way Washington does business.

Large deficits and public indebtedness undermine the growth of the economy and impose unnecessary and unfair burdens on our future generations. This may explain why the American people overwhelmingly support a Balanced Budget Amendment. Recent surveys indicate over 80% of those individuals polled support a Constitutional amendment to require a balanced budget, while only 16% said that they oppose this measure.

The Balanced Budget Amendment will force the federal government to take appropriate action to live within its means just as 49 of the 50 states must do. This action is necessary to prevent further burdens on our children and succeeding generations. A balanced budget plan would add \$32 billion in disposable income to the U.S. economy, \$88 billion in new investment and would yield up to 6.1 million new job opportunities with the confidence and assurance that real work and real wages bring.

Mr. President, I strongly urge you to join the majority of the nation's Governors and the nation's citizens in supporting the Balanced Budget Amendment. I encourage you to request Members of the Senate to support this measure when it comes up for a vote this week.

Thank you for your consideration on this matter.

Sincerely,

JOHN ENGLER,
Governor.

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE,
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR,
Concord, NH, June 4, 1996.

Hon. WILLIAM CLINTON,
The White House,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: As Governor of New Hampshire, I write to you today in support of the Balanced Budget Amendment to the United States Constitution.

The time has come to deal with the greatest threat to the well-being of Americans, the ability of our federal government to balance its budget without raising taxes and without sending unfunded mandates to be paid for by the citizens of our State. It must be done and I believe it is of tremendous importance that we do it now.

As a former Attorney General, one who has studied our nation's Constitution and loves it, I recommend amending it only after considerable reflection. I simply know of no other way to restore belief in our citizens that government can be responsive to the principles and values that made this country great. It is unfortunate that such an amendment is required, but it is clear that it is required.

New Hampshire does not have a balanced budget amendment, but no Governor has ever submitted an unbalanced budget. In New Hampshire, it is illegal for a department head to deficit spend.

New Hampshire has balanced budgets for 200 years without an income or sales tax. All governors share common problems and seek common solutions. In New Hampshire, however, balanced budgets are the norm, as they should be in Washington.

The Balanced Budget Amendment is a bold step, but the American people are ready for bold change. They have grown frustrated with excuses as to why the federal budget cannot be balanced. They have rejected the attitude that our children will somehow be able to pay for financial mismanagement.

This moment in history can return the United States to a policy of fiscal sanity. I respectfully urge you to move forward and support the Balanced Budget Amendment.

The American people will be with you.

Very truly yours,

STEPHEN MERRILL,
Governor.

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR,
STATE CAPITOL,
Santa Fe, NM, June 4, 1996.

President WILLIAM J. CLINTON,
The White House,
Washington, DC.

DEAR PRESIDENT CLINTON: I am writing to request your support of a balanced budget amendment in 1996. This would initiate an era of sound fiscal policy for the federal government and serve to make our nation stronger and our children's future more secure. To take a stand on this issue and work with Congress is to offer the American people a reason to again believe in the decision making ability of government.

The national debt, though often discussed in the abstract, is a very real danger. If you do not take measures to ensure a balanced budget amendment, this insidious threat to

our nation's future will continue to grow without impediment. We must not let this opportunity go unanswered and I implore you to lead this country into a future secured by solid government policy. We cannot go forward without a balanced budget amendment.

Sincerely,

GARY E. JOHNSON,
Governor.

STATE OF NEW YORK,
EXECUTIVE CHAMBER,
Albany, NY, June 5, 1996.

Hon. WILLIAM JEFFERSON CLINTON,
President of the United States,
The White House,
Washington, DC.

DEAR PRESIDENT CLINTON: I urge you, Mr. President, to support and actively work to pass the Balanced Budget Amendment to the Constitution offered by Senator Dole. This amendment calls for a balanced federal budget by the year 2002.

Passing a Balanced Budget Amendment is critical to America's strength as a world leader. Moreover, as elected officials, we have a special obligation to free our children and grandchildren from the mountains of government debt which are mortgaging their future. Approving a Balanced Budget Amendment would not only instill long-needed fiscal discipline in Washington, but also would lower interest rates, increase real disposable income for working families, and help create millions of new jobs.

Last year, despite virtual unanimous Republican support, the Balanced Budget Amendment failed in the Senate because of overwhelming Democrat opposition. In addition, you vetoed the only balanced budget bill passed by Congress in the last 26 years. However, it's not too late to correct the mistakes of the past and put our nation on sounder financial footing.

Again, I urge you, Mr. President, to support Senator Dole's Balanced Budget Amendment and actively lobby your party members to secure its passage.

Very truly yours,

GEORGE E. PATAKI,
Governor.

STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA,
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR,
Bismarck, ND, June 5, 1996.

The PRESIDENT,
The White House,
Washington, DC.

MR. PRESIDENT, I am writing today to express my support for the Balanced Budget Amendment.

All but one state in our United States has a requirement to balance its budget. In my home state of North Dakota, the legislature has made tough, hard, and sometimes unpopular decisions to balance its budget every biennium since statehood. It is only proper that our federal government in Washington take on that same responsibility to protect the future generations of our country.

The passage of the Congressional balanced budget plan would add \$32 billion in real disposable income, \$66 billion in new purchases, \$88 billion in new investments, and over 100,000 new housing starts to the United States Economy while also providing up to 6.1 million new job opportunities.

In North Dakota the passage would mean a savings of \$2,388 a year on payments for a 30-year mortgage on a \$75,000 house; \$1,026 in savings over the life of a 4-year loan on a \$15,000 automobile; \$1,891 in savings over the life of a 10-year student loan of \$11,000—all totaled these savings would amount to \$74,381 over the duration of the loans.

All Americans must be assured that their future and the future of their children are secure and that their needs are foremost in the

minds of our leaders in Washington. There is no better way to guarantee the citizens of North Dakota the bright future they deserve than to pass the Balanced Budget Amendment.

Sincerely,

EDWARD T. SCHAFER,
Governor.

STATE OF OKLAHOMA,
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR,
Oklahoma City, OK, June 4, 1996.

Hon. BILL CLINTON,
The White House.

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: On Friday, May 31, at 4:59 p.m., the Legislature of the State of Oklahoma adjourned its 1996 session. Not once during that four-month session was there a moment of discussion about deficit spending. Not one penny was appropriated to pay interest on a state debt. No bill was passed that spent a cent in excess of actual state revenues—all because the Constitution of Oklahoma contains an amendment that requires a balanced budget.

The Balanced Budget Amendment to the United States Constitution will be considered in the Senate this week. I urge you to follow the examples of 49 of our 50 states—including Oklahoma and Arkansas—and support this effort to import common sense from the states to Washington.

Sincerely,

FRANK KEATING,
Governor.

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA,
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR,
Columbia, SC, June 5, 1996.

The PRESIDENT,
The White House, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: As the Senate prepares to reconsider the Balanced Budget Amendment, I write to express my strong support of this important legislation. The time has come for the federal government to abide by the same rules of fiscal responsibility that every family, business, and state government must follow.

The federal deficit imposes debilitating costs on both current and future generations. We must start setting priorities and make difficult decisions now for the sake of our children and our children's children. The longer that we avoid our responsibility to the American people, the more we put the prosperity of future generations at risk.

A balanced budget will result in lower interest rates, which will allow working families to keep more of their hard-earned money. With lower interest rates, more families will have the opportunity to own their own home, and businesses will be able to afford the capital investment to grow jobs.

Unfortunately, despite promises made in Washington, a balanced budget has not become law in decades. In fact, your veto of the first balanced budget in 26 years makes it imperative that the Congress pass a constitutional amendment to balance the federal budget. Your support for this amendment would give the citizens of South Carolina and across the nation the opportunity to vote on the nation's fiscal integrity and the future of our country. Only a constitutional amendment will provide the ironclad discipline needed to restore fiscal responsibility.

You have historically been in favor of a balanced budget, as evidenced by your recent budget proposal, and as a former governor, you had to balance your own state books every year. By expressing your public support for the Balanced Budget Amendment, you would prove your convictions to the American public, over eighty percent of whom strongly support such an amendment.

I respectfully ask you to urge the Senate to pass the Balanced Budget Amendment and

put America on the path of prosperity and growth for generations to come.

Sincerely,

DAVID M. BEASLEY,
Governor.

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA,
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR,
Richmond, VA, June 4, 1996.

Hon. WILLIAM J. CLINTON,
The White House, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: The United States Senate is preparing to consider again the Balanced Budget Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. Often in the past, you have voiced your commitment to balancing the federal budget, and I sincerely hope that you will couple your words with actions and publicly and energetically encourage the Senate to approve the Balanced Budget Amendment now.

As an original sponsor of the Kyl-Allen Balanced Budget Amendment in the United States House of Representatives, I was most disappointed last year when the Senate failed by one vote to send this constitutional amendment to the States for ratification. The Balanced Budget Amendment is not a unique or unproven concept. As a former governor, you are no doubt aware that virtually every State operates under the discipline of a balanced budget requirement. The fact is, it works. With our requirement for a balanced budget, Virginia is one of only four States with a AAA Bond Rating for our careful and limited use of debt.

The people of the United States recognize that passage of the Balanced Budget Amendment is an essential discipline for getting the federal government on the path toward fiscal responsibility. It is also important to improving the quality of life for working families in Virginia and across America.

A family's cost of living is greatly affected by interest rates. The lower interest rates would accompany a balanced budget. Working Americans deserve to be able to keep more of their hard-earned money and put it to work for their families. As borrowing costs drop, housing becomes more affordable as well. A 2% drop in interest rates would save the average homeowner between \$1,600 and \$1,800 per year in mortgage payments. More affordable housing means more home ownership which is the American Dream. And a healthy housing industry increases job opportunities for electricians, plumbers, carpenters, excavators, forestry products, appliance manufacturers, Realtors, and many more that are associated with the housing industry.

Our government should be helping, not hindering, more individuals and families to realize the American dream of homeownership. We can begin to do so by making the balanced budget the law of the land in Washington, as it is in our States. Please put the force of your office behind a balanced budget for America—let us in Virginia vote on this important Amendment.

With kind personal regards, I remain,

Sincerely,

GEORGE ALLEN,
Governor.

STATE OF WYOMING,
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR,
Cheyenne, WY, June 5, 1996.

Hon. WILLIAM J. CLINTON,
President of the United States,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: Next week the 104th Congress will have its final opportunity this year to pass a Balanced Budget Amendment. Once allowed to become law, this Amendment will truly change the way our country does business.

It is time for our elected officials in Washington to exercise the same degree of fiscal

responsibility that state governments have adopted. I am concerned that if Washington continues with the current financial practices, future generations will have a financial burden beyond repair. History has made it all too clear that we will not balance the federal budget unless required by the constitution.

The United States spends 11 times more money to pay for interest accrued on the national debt than we do on education, and twice as much on interest than on all of our entitlement programs. In 1993 the state of Wyoming recognized a need for the Governor to submit the budget under estimated revenues. It is important to realize the need for a balanced budget, and to make the sacrifices necessary to achieve that goal. Now is the time for action!

In Wyoming, our constitution requires a balanced budget each biennium. The people of Wyoming cannot understand why such a requirement at the federal level is even questioned. Your support for the Balanced Budget Amendment would do much to bring accountability back to the federal government. I trust we in Wyoming can count on your support.

I can not stress enough the importance of passing the Balanced Budget Amendment. In order to achieve the balanced budget that you have proposed, the people of the United States deserve the discipline of a constitutional amendment. I urge you to contact members of your party in the Senate, and request that they vote for the Balanced Budget Amendment!

Sincerely,

JIM GERINGER,
Governor.

MEDICARE

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, the whole Nation is waking to yet another trustees' report that should paint a very bright, vivid red light to every American. We have gone past the yellow light. I would like to share with the Senate just a few facts that have recently been published by the Coalition To Save Medicare.

Fact: Medicare's hospital fund will be broke in less than 5 years.

Fact: Because Medicare reform was not enacted last year, \$133 billion more in savings is needed to meet the trustees' own minimum requirements.

In other words, when the President of the United States vetoed the attempt to keep Medicare solvent, to make it solvent for almost 20 years, to improve the options that seniors would have, to increase the investment in it 70 to 80 percent, the net effect is in 1 year we have made the job of solving and saving Medicare \$133 billion more difficult.

Fact: Each day, Medicare is spending \$25 million more than it takes in.

Fact: Without reform, a working American's annual payroll taxes will have to increase between \$1,880 and \$3,185 immediately to assure the long-term health of Medicare.

Fact: Maintaining the current system as it is for the long term without reform or tax increases will require immediately increasing the annual hospital deductible a senior pays to between \$5,380 and \$6,540.

Fact: Without reform, a working American's annual payroll taxes must