EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

THE BALANCED BUDGET CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT

HON. BILL ARCHER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 7, 1997

Mr. ARCHER. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing a joint resolution to amend the Constitution in order to mandate the U.S. Congress to commit to balancing the Federal budget and remove the burdens of large Federal deficits off of the American people. This legislation is essential to the future of our Nation as we stand on the threshold of the 21st century. The costs of maintaining our national debt have absorbed increasing proportions of national savings that would otherwise have been available to finance investment, either public or private. Today, interest payments alone on the debt are the largest item in the budget, comprising over 20 percent of all Federal spending.

This type or irresponsible spending and management must end. Now the 105th Congress has the opportunity to do just that. My balanced budget amendment is very similar to the language that passed the House of Representatives in 1995 by a vote of 300 to 132. However, the most important distinction of my amendment from the 1995 language is the provision specifying the vote margin needed to waive the balanced budget requirement. Under the previously passed bill, three-fifths of the whole House and Senate were required to waive the balanced budget requirements. My amendment sets a more stringent and imperative requirement of two-thirds of those present and voting—the same margin necessary to pass a constitutional amendment.

I hope that my colleagues, on both sides of the aisle, agree that actions speak louder than words. We've talked about our commitment to balancing the budget for long enough, it's time to do it.

INTRODUCTION OF GUNS AND DRUNKS LEGISLATION

HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 7, 1997

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I wouldn't have thought it was necessary to introduce a bill prohibiting gun sellers from selling guns to obviously intoxicated individuals, but it is.

as the law stands, you can't sell alcohol to someone who is clearly drunk because that person might hurt himself or others, but you can sell a drunk a dangerous firearm. Even without a law, common sense might dictate that you don't sell a gun to a drunk, but unfortunately, not everyone uses their common sense.

Deborah Kitchen, a mother of five, was shot by her ex-boyfriend and left paralyzed from the neck down a mere half an hour after the man bought a $100 rifle at a K–Mart in Tampa, FL. The man had consumed a case of beer and nearly a fifth of whiskey before he bought the gun. He was so incapacitated at the time of the purchase that the store clerk had to fill out the Federal firearm registration form.

Ms. Kitchen successfully sued K–Mart for negligence, but the retail chain has appealed, denying any liability. K–Mart doesn't think it did anything wrong in selling the drunk the gun that paralyzed Ms. Kitchen. If gun sellers cannot act responsibly on their own, it is up to us to force them to act responsibly. No one should sell a gun to a drunk, period. My bill would make it a Federal crime to sell a gun to a drunk in an effort to ensure that there won't be any more Deborah Kitchens in the future.

RECOGNIZING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF MINNESOTAN HUMAN RIGHTS ADVOCATE BARBARA FREY

HON. BRUCE F. VENTO

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 7, 1997

Mr. VENTO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of an extraordinary Minnesotan, Barbara Frey. For 11 years as executive director of Minnesota Advocates, an internationally recognized human rights organization which has played an instrumental part in human rights work, Ms. Frey has poured her tireless energy and efforts into the establishment of the cause of fighting human rights abuses on a worldwide basis. While Barbara Frey will be relinquishing that role, I can safely predict as her Representative and friend that she will continue to make a major contribution to our community and society. Ms. Frey's accomplishments will provide a sound basis and status for her future work in Minnesota and internationally.

Some people have one job; Barbara Frey has several. In addition to her work at Minnesota Advocates, Ms. Frey may add to her resume work as an adjunct professor of human rights at the University of Minnesota Law School In addition, every Sunday she delivers food-shelf donations to the needy from St. Francis Cabrini Catholic Church. She also coaches girls' basketball and teaches a weekly course at St. Paul's Expo Magnet School, where her daughter, Maddie, is a student. Ms. Frey recently paid a visit to the White House on International Human Rights Day to be honored by President Clinton for her efforts to promote women's rights.

Whether educating Minnesota's students or reprimanding military leaders about human rights violations, Barbara Frey has approached her valuable work with the same passion of conviction, courage, and purpose of mission. St. Paul, MN, is fortunate to be home to this most talented and dedicated individual, whose work provides important lessons for us and for our children. I'm sure my colleagues will join me in paying tribute to Ms. Frey, and I join in applauding her numerous local and international contributions. Her important work signifies a task well done on a subject that must remain in our consciousness, both today and tomorrow.

INTRODUCTION OF THE RECONSTRUCTIVE BREAST SURGERY BENEFITS ACT OF 1997

HON. ANNA G. ESHOO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 7, 1997

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Reconstructive Breast Surgery Benefits Act of 1997 to guarantee that insurance companies cover the cost of reconstructive breast surgery that results from mastectomies for which coverage is already provided. In addition, the legislation would secure insurance coverage for all stages of reconstructive breast surgery performed on a nondiseased breast to establish symmetry with the diseased one when reconstructive surgery on the diseased breast is performed.

In 1995, an estimated 182,000 American women were diagnosed with breast cancer, and 85,000 of them underwent a mastectomy as part of their treatment. Reconstructive breast surgery often is an integral part of the mental and physical recovery of women who undergo this traumatic, disfiguring procedure. Unfortunately, insurance companies don't always see it that way. Even though many of them are willing to pay for mastectomies, they sometimes balk at covering breast reconstruction. This legislation would put an end to this shortsighted practice and guarantee that women with breast cancer are not victimized twice—first by the disease, then by their insurance companies.

According to the American Society of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgeons [ASPRS], a significant number of women with breast cancer must undergo mastectomy or amputation of a breast in order to treat their disease appropriately. The two most common types of reconstruction—tissue expansion followed by an implant insertion and flap surgery—can restore the breast mound to a natural shape. Most breast reconstruction requires a series of procedures that may include an operation on the opposite breast for symmetry.

Even though studies show that fear of losing a breast is a leading reason why many women do not participate in early breast cancer detection programs, many general surgeons don't even present reconstruction as an option for mastectomy candidates. Unfortunately, many women are unaware that reconstruction is an option following mastectomy, and they put off testing and/or treatment for breast cancer until it is too late.

A recent ASPRS survey—with an error range of ±1.9 percent—indicates that 84