

this spirit using the Independent Commission headed by General de Chastelain. The paramilitaries must put weapons beyond use and make progress on the decommissioning issue.

The British Government must reasonably scale down its military presence in the North. We also give particular importance to the timely implementation of the Patten Report, including the urgent appointment of an Oversight Commissioner and assistants, the early publication of a detailed implementation plan, and the speedy passage of legislation. We believe the publication of the Criminal Justice Review should begin a program of significant reforms. We support changes that ensure a police force with representation from both communities and a criminal justice system which will command loyalty from all people living in Northern Ireland. These are the essential ingredients necessary in the creation of a just and peaceful society.

We also note the importance of moving forward on human rights and equality issues under the Agreement. This includes the creation of a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland and the obligation to promote equal opportunity. We emphasize the continuing need to demonstrate public commitment to human rights and accountability through the establishment of independent inquiries into the Finucane, Nelson and Hamill cases.

We support the initiative taken by the Irish and British Prime Ministers at the beginning of this month to launch a round of intensive consultations to restore the institutions of the Good Friday Agreement and deal with the arms issues as quickly as possible.

Over this St. Patrick's Day period, we will be urging all the leaders from Northern Ireland to recognize the importance of what is at stake, the danger of delay, and the need for a genuine and sincere collective effort to overcome these last remaining obstacles to the full implementation of the Good Friday Agreement. All Friends of Ireland in the United States stand ready to help in any possible way.

FRIENDS OF IRELAND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

House

Dennis J. Hastert
Richard A. Gephardt
James T. Walsh

Senate

Edward M. Kennedy
Daniel Patrick Moynihan
Christopher J. Dodd
Connie Mack

CBO COST ESTIMATE—H.R. 150

Mr. MURKOWSKI. Madam President, at the time Senate Report No. 150 was filed, the Congressional Budget Office report was not available. I ask unanimous consent that the report which is now available be printed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD for the information of the Senate.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

U.S. CONGRESS,

CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE,

Washington, DC, March 15, 2000.

Hon. FRANK H. MURKOWSKI,

Chairman, Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: The Congressional Budget Office has prepared the enclosed cost estimate for H.R. 150, the National Forest Education and Community Purpose Lands Act.

If you wish further details on this estimate, we will be pleased to provide them. The CBO staff contact is John R. Righter, who can be reached at 226-2860.

Sincerely,

BARRY B. ANDERSON

(For Dan L. Crippen, Director).

Enclosure.

CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE COST
ESTIMATE, MARCH 15, 2000

H.R. 150.—NATIONAL FOREST EDUCATION AND
COMMUNITY PURPOSE LANDS ACT

(As reported by the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources on March 9, 2000)

CBO estimates that enacting H.R. 150 would have no significant impact on the federal budget. Because the legislation would affect offsetting receipts (a form of direct spending), pay-as-you-go procedures would apply; however, CBO estimates that any such effects would total less than \$500,000 each year. H.R. 150 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act and would impose no costs on state, local, or tribal governments. H.R. 150 would benefit some local governments by giving them the opportunity to acquire National Forest land for public schools at a nominal cost.

H.R. 150 would authorize the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to lease or convey land in the National Forest System (NFS) to state and local governments for educational, recreational, and other public purpose uses. State and local governments would pay USDA a nominal amount for use of the land, with the federal government retaining any mineral rights. Under the legislation, USDA could transfer only parcels of land where the value to the state or local government of the proposed use exceeds that of continued federal ownership. If used for any unauthorized purpose, the land would revert to the federal government. The legislation generally would require USDA to notify an applicant within 120 days of receiving an application as to whether the land will be leased or conveyed, or provide a written explanation as to why such a determination has not been made.

CBO estimates that enacting H.R. 150 could result in forgone offsetting receipts if USDA would have sold one or more of the leased or transferred parcels at fair market value under current law. CBO estimates that any such loss of receipts from land sales would total less than \$500,000 each year. Even through we expect state and local governments would desire the opportunity to lease or acquire valuable NFS land at substantially discounted rates, such land is rarely sold under current law. As a result, we estimate that enacting the bill would not result in any significant loss of federal receipts. Additionally, CBO estimates that any increase in receipts from leasing or transferring NFS land under H.R. 150 would also total less than \$500,000 a year.

On May 5, 1999, CBO prepared a cost estimate for H.R. 150, a bill to authorize the Secretary of Agriculture to convey National Forest System lands for educational purposes, and for other purposes, as ordered reported by the House Committee on Resources on April 28, 1999. These two versions of the legislation are similar and the estimated costs are the same.

The CBO staff contact is John R. Righter, who can be reached at 226-2860. This estimate was approved by Peter H. Fontaine, Deputy Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.

DCA PERIMETER RULE

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the DCA Perim-

eter Rule and its impact on the West. This is very important to me because it affects western States, like Montana.

I support the recent conference provisions that allow exemptions to the current perimeter rule at Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport. The Conference should be commended for working to create a process that balances interests of Senators from states inside the perimeter and those of us who are from western states that do not have convenient access to National Airport.

Right now passengers from small and medium-sized communities in the West are forced to make double and sometime even triple connections to fly to National Airport, or any other Washington airport. Let me talk for a minute about my home state of Montana. It takes an entire day to get from Washington to Montana or visa versa. In order to fly into Montana you need to fly in to Salt Lake, or Denver, or one of the other western hubs and wait for one of the two or three 60 passenger flights that flies into Montana that day.

This is true for small communities throughout the West, especially in the Northwest corner that use hubs like Salt Lake City.

The conference report has the potential to improve access throughout the West. I believe it is important that the Department of Transportation ensure that this benefit is not limited to a few large cities which already have a variety of options for flying to Washington.

By enforcing this rule we are making access to DC easier for western states. The nation's Capital should be accessible without hassle to the entire country. I do not like the fact that if someone from my home state of Montana wants to come here to talk to their nations representative that they need to spend an entire day traveling, and waiting in airports for a connection.

My support for this effort dates back to when this legislation was first introduced. I want to ensure that these limited exemptions benefit the people of the West. I want to make it very clear that the limited number of exemptions should not be awarded to any one airport or airline. I hope, and expect that the Department of Transportation will ensure that the 12 slots granted by the conference are distributed proportionally, so that as many cities in the West, and especially the Northwest can benefit.

THE VERY BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, at the close of business yesterday, Monday, March 20, 2000, the Federal debt stood at \$5,728,253,942,273.38 (Five trillion, seven hundred twenty-eight billion, two hundred fifty-three million, nine hundred forty-two thousand, two hundred seventy-three dollars and thirty-eight cents).

Five years ago, March 20, 1995, the Federal debt stood at \$4,842,720,000,000 (Four trillion, eight hundred forty-two billion, seven hundred twenty million).