

and Social Security double. That is what is going to happen. We know it. It is not a projection. The people are alive. They have been born. They are living today. They are going to retire, and they are going to be eligible. And it is going to cost the Government a lot of money, much more than we are currently having to pay out.

So let's be cautious. Yes, let's be conservative. The conservative thing to do is emphasize more debt reduction and to curtail our appetite to spend and curtail our appetite to have tax cuts, which are both living for the moment. It is fun to live for the moment; especially if you are a politician, there is nothing better than to have tax cuts and spending. That is the best of all worlds. The problem with that is that we have a need to be responsible to future generations. Our generation ran up this debt. We have the obligation to pay it down and to do it before we start to retire. Goodness, the last thing we ought to be doing is shoving this debt on to our kids. We ran it up. We ought to retire it.

Mr. President, with that, I yield the floor.

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I have nothing further to say. I do not think there is anyone on our side who wishes to speak. If the Senator is ready, we can yield back our time.

Mr. CONRAD. Yes. We are prepared to yield back our time on our side.

Mr. DOMENICI. I yield back any time we have reserved under the previous order.

Mr. CONRAD. I do as well.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motions are agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. NELSON of Florida) appointed Mr. DOMENICI, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. NICKLES, Mr. GRAMM, Mr. BOND, Mr. CONRAD, Mr. HOLLINGS, Mr. SARBANES, and Mrs. MURRAY conferees on the part of the Senate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Mexico.

Mr. DOMENICI. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. VOINOVICH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. VOINOVICH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that there now be a period of morning business with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

APPRECIATION OF SERVICE BY THE DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION, UNITED STATES CUSTOMS SERVICE, UNITED STATES COAST GUARD, AND THE NATIONAL GUARD

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, as chairman of the Senate Caucus on International Narcotics Control, I rise to highlight some of the recent interdiction and investigative successes by the men and women of the Drug Enforcement Administration, DEA, the United States Customs Service, the United States Coast Guard, and the National Guard.

These men and women, and their agencies, are dedicated professionals committed to protecting our great nation from the devastating affects of the illegal drug trade. They are frequently called to place their lives in harm's way in an effort to keep our national secure.

As announced by the Attorney General in January 2001, DEA successfully concluded a 10-month narcotics trafficking investigation named Operation White Horse, that involved the movement of heroin by "swallowers" from Colombia to the United States via the cities of Philadelphia and New York. Sixty-five members of the organization, from the Colombia headquarters of the street-level dealers, were arrested in what was described as a "wholesale dismantling" of the smuggling organization.

The United States Customs Service also had an impressive spring 2001, including a recent week on the Southwest border that netted 61 drug seizures, yielding 5,449 pounds of marijuana and 82 pounds of cocaine, as well as 16 export violations, 6 seizures of prohibited medications, and additional seizures of undeclared merchandise, stolen vehicles, counterfeit credit cards, and illegal fireworks. The Customs Service is rapidly distinguishing itself with the front-line use of X-ray, Gamma-ray, and other non-intrusive technologies at their inspection stations and ports of entry. Customs also completed major domestic and international child pornography cases involving Germany and Russia, as well as continued interdiction of large amounts of the drug Ecstasy.

Coast Guard successes, supported by the Department of Defense, include a 6-day period in February 2001 when it seized 28,845 pounds of cocaine and arrested 24 smugglers, on numerous vessels in both the Caribbean and Eastern Pacific. To date, the Coast Guard has seized 60,636 pounds of cocaine, 20,194 pounds of marijuana, as well as interdicted 1,681 illegal migrants at sea, all in a period of 10-percent operational reductions due to budget constraints.

Finally, I appreciate the superb job the National Guard does in operating the four domestic counterdrug training schools, and hopefully soon a fifth one in Iowa, throughout the country that provide much needed training of Federal, State, local, and community personnel in various counterdrug topics.

I am extremely proud of these successes and the personnel involved. As we consider the budgets for these agencies in the weeks ahead, we need to remind ourselves from time to time that it is real, flesh-and-blood individuals out there on the front lines and not bland numbers on spreadsheets and in our briefing books. Their commitment does us all proud.

NURSING SERVICES QUALITY IMPROVEMENT ACT

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, on April 6 my colleagues and I introduced the Medicare and Medicaid Nursing Services Quality Improvement Act of 2001. This legislation is intended to help address a problem currently facing nursing homes in North Dakota and Wisconsin and potentially other nursing homes across the country.

We all know that nursing homes nationwide are facing a looming staffing crisis that is expected to worsen as the baby boomers reach retirement. An American Health Care Association report, entitled "Staffing of Nursing Services in Long Term Care," estimates that the need for registered nurses will grow 66 percent between 1991 and 2020 and the number of licensed practical nurses needed will grow by nearly 72 percent over the same time. Likewise, the number of nurse aides who will be necessary is projected to grow by 69 percent.

In my State, nursing home administrators have a thousand open nurse aide positions that they have been unable to fill. A number of nursing home administrators in North Dakota have told me that they have had to refuse patients because they do not have adequate staff to care for them.

Unfortunately, a problem has arisen in my State that will exacerbate this staffing shortage. By way of background, North Dakota nursing homes have been using trained resident assistants—called feeding assistants in North Dakota,—to help feed nursing home patients. This has been the practice for the last decade with positive results. The data in North Dakota indicates that our nursing home patients experience less weight loss and dehydration than patients nationally, and nursing home officials in North Dakota attribute this to the use of resident assistants.

The problem, however, is that the Health Care Financing Administration has told North Dakota and other nursing homes that they can no longer continue to use these trained resident assistants because they lack certification. In North Dakota, this means that hundreds of resident assistants may need to be laid off later this year, even while my State's nursing homes are experiencing difficulty finding certified staff.

The bill that I introduced along with Senators KOHL and CONRAD would allow