

□ 1100

## RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GOODLATTE). Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 11 a.m.), the House stood in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

□ 1230

## AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. GILLMOR) at 12 o'clock and 30 minutes p.m.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H. CON. RES. 95, CONCURRENT RESOLUTION ON THE BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2004

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 151 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 151

*Resolved*, That at any time after the adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 95) establishing the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2004 and setting forth appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2003 and 2005 through 2013. The first reading of the concurrent resolution shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the concurrent resolution are waived. General debate shall not exceed three hours, with two hours of general debate confined to the congressional budget equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Budget, and one hour of general debate on the subject of economic goals and policies equally divided and controlled by Representative Saxton of New Jersey and Representative Stark of California or their designees. After general debate the concurrent resolution shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. The amendment in the nature of a substitute specified in part A of the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution shall be considered as adopted in the House and in the Committee of the Whole. The concurrent resolution, as amended, shall be considered as read. No further amendment shall be in order except those printed in part B of the report of the Committee on Rules. Each amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for one hour equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, and shall not be subject to amendment. All points of order against the amendments printed in the report are waived except that the adoption of a further amendment in the nature of a substitute shall constitute the conclusion of consideration of the concurrent resolution for amendment. After the

conclusion of consideration of the concurrent resolution for further amendment, and a final period of general debate, which shall not exceed 20 minutes equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Budget, the Committee shall rise and report the concurrent resolution, as amended, to the House with such further amendment as may have been adopted. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the concurrent resolution and amendments thereto to final adoption without intervening motion except amendments offered by the chairman of the Committee on the Budget pursuant to section 305(a)(5) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 to achieve mathematical consistency. The concurrent resolution shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question of its adoption.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS) is recognized for 1 hour.

(Mr. HASTINGS of Washington asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. FROST), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 151 is a structured rule providing 3 hours of general debate with 2 hours equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking member of the Committee on the Budget, and 1 hour on economic goals and policies equally divided and controlled by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SAXTON) and the gentleman from California (Mr. STARK).

The rule waives all points of order against consideration of the concurrent resolution. It further provides that the amendment in the nature of a substitute specified in Part A of the Committee on Rules report accompanying the resolution shall be considered as adopted in the House and in the Committee of the Whole.

The rule makes in order only those amendments printed in Part B of the Committee on Rules report which may be offered only in the order printed in the report. Said amendments may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered read, shall be debatable for 1 hour equally divided and controlled by an opponent and a proponent, and shall not be subject to amendment.

The rule waives all points of order against the amendments printed in the report, except that the adoption of a further amendment in the nature of a substitute shall constitute the conclusion of consideration of the concurrent resolution for amendment.

Resolution 151 also provides, upon the conclusion of consideration of the concurrent resolution for amendment, for a final period of general debate not to exceed 20 minutes equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Budget.

Finally, the rule permits the chairman of the Committee on the Budget to offer amendments in the House to achieve mathematical consistency and provides that the concurrent resolution shall not be subject to a demand for a division of the question of its adoption.

Mr. Speaker, as the House takes up the proposed Federal budget for fiscal year 2004, it does so with two overriding objectives in mind: to successfully complete the war we have just begun in Iraq, and to revitalize our Nation's economy today while building a firm foundation for long-term economic growth.

The budget resolution passed by the Committee on the Budget reflects these realities and does so in a time of extraordinary fiscal strain. The members of the Committee on the Budget are to be commended for completing their work in a timely manner.

This budget resolution, of course, is only the first step in the long process by which Congress sets the Nation's spending and revenue policies. Much hard work remains to be done by the various committees of jurisdiction, and the Committee on the Budget has, in large measure, left those committees the flexibility to make decisions on specific programs and priorities.

Mr. Speaker, make no mistake about it, the challenges before us in this area are great, and we are not alone. State and local governments all across the country are struggling to tighten their belts, and we must do the same thing here in Washington, D.C. Hard choices are inevitable, and no Member is likely to get everything he or she would like to see in this budget resolution, but we must act, and we must act now. All of us learned a painful lesson this last year about the consequences of allowing the budget process to break down.

Mr. Speaker, House Concurrent Resolution 95 provides for a Federal budget of \$2.22 trillion, an increase of 2.9 percent or \$62 billion over the current fiscal year. It puts the Nation back on a path to a balanced budget, which would be achieved by the year 2012, 9 years from now, with the projected budget surplus of \$21 billion that year.

Although there will be ample time during general debate to highlight key provisions of the resolution, I am particularly pleased to advise my colleagues that the proposed manager's amendment to the resolution reinstates the reserve fund for Medicare, which puts, in essence, a fence around the \$400 billion to fund Medicare modernization and prescription drug coverage for older Americans.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, let me remind Members that the budget resolution is only a blueprint in the broadest sense. The details will take shape in coming months, but the sooner we can complete this blueprint and move on to the hard work of enacting its various components, the better off we will be. Neither the war in Iraq nor the urgent work of economic recovery can afford to be hindered simply because the