

there is no compensation in dollar amounts we can give these men and women for their heroism and sacrifice, but I think it is important that we step forward with this increase so that combat pay is \$500 a month.

There is a second part to the amendment. We also say when we activate someone into a war theater that we help their family at home. That is known as family separation allowance. How much do we give the family of these service men and women back home during the period of time their loved ones are in combat? The family separation allowance is \$100 a month. I met with some of those families at the Rock Island Arsenal in my State last Saturday. They are facing extraordinary challenges for child care, for the expenses of their families they had not anticipated. We should do better for them. I am suggesting as part of my amendment that \$500 should be the monthly compensation for the family separation allowance. That is the nature of my amendment.

I ask all my colleagues in the Senate who stood shoulder to shoulder, 99 to nothing behind the men and women in uniform, to do the same now when we raise combat pay to \$500 a month and the family separation allowance to \$500 a month as well. That will be a clear demonstration that our commitment to these troops goes beyond words and goes to the budget, so we can provide them and their families the resources they need to not only come home safely but without the hardships that would be part of this service if we did not do our part to help them.

I hope my colleagues on a bipartisan basis will join as we did on the resolution.

I might add, there are some procedural hurdles being thrown in my path. People are saying the procedures may not allow you to offer this amendment. I beg my colleagues on both sides, as our men and women in uniform cannot hide in the deserts of Iraq, we should not hide on the floor of the Senate behind procedural niceties when it comes to fair compensation for our men and women in uniform and their families waiting dutifully at home.

I urge my colleagues to reconsider their opposition to this amendment. This is the right thing to do, and we should do it today.

I yield the floor.

THE GUARD AND RESERVE

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, in just a few moments as we get underway to debate a series of amendments to the budget bill, I am going to be offering an amendment. Under the rules, I will have just a minute to speak on it, so I thought I would take this time while we are getting organized to describe a little more detail about the Landrieu amendment regarding the Guard and Reserve.

There have been any number of articles—I see the chairman of the Armed

Services Committee here, and he is well aware of this—there have been any number of articles written as of late about the tremendous weight the National Guard and Reserve are carrying in our current war against terror, whether it be the campaign underway in Iraq, the supporting of a civilian government in Afghanistan, the carrying out of our missions in Bosnia and Kosovo, or guarding the homefront right here; whether it is in New Orleans or Baton Rouge or sites in Maryland or Virginia or your home State, Mr. President, or overseas.

The Guard and Reserve are doing a magnificent job. These are men and women who maybe served part of their time in the military for a few years and then, because of other family commitments or other calls on their talents, went into the private sector. Some of them started their own businesses. They come from a wide range of backgrounds. You yourself, Mr. President, served in the National Guard and Reserve. There are several Members of Congress who have not only carried out their job here, serving as Member of Congress, but also serve in this capacity.

You are to be commended. I know you have spoken out, Mr. President, on many instances about the problems that are arising in the sense that we are calling on the National Guard and Reserve over and over again. Their deployments are longer and our compensation to them, our benefit package to them, the way we supply them equipment, in my opinion—and an opinion that I think you share and is shared on both the Republican and Democratic sides—is not supportive to the degree that they, basically, are supporting us. I guess I could put it that way.

We ask these men and women to go for longer deployments, more frequent deployments, and not only put their life on the line but their livelihood on the line. We need to keep up our commitment on the benefit compensation end, on the financing side. In a moment—I know I only have a minute or so—whenever the leadership feels it appropriate for my amendment to be taken up, I am going to suggest we make a very modest change in the budget submitted to us by the President. Of course, there are parts of that budget I support. There are some parts that I think could be improved. That is what the amendment process is all about.

This is one of those areas that I think can be improved, to take \$10 billion out of the tax cut portion that is not the stimulative part but the unreconciled portion of the tax cut, and add basically \$1 billion a year over 10 years to provide critically needed equipment for our Guard and Reserve units.

There are two units now that are being forward deployed to Iraq that, under the President's budget as submitted—and I believe one unit is from

Georgia and one unit, I say to the chairman of the Armed Services Committee, is from Virginia—those units will be decommissioned. There is not even enough money in the current budget we are debating to keep those units fighting and forward.

That is what my amendment attempts to do. It adds money. I would like to get more, but we are trying to be reasonable in this request because the Guard is really carrying a tremendous weight. They are happy to do it. They are proud to serve. They are not whining and complaining. But we should be supporting them. I think that is what we should be about today.

I thank you for letting me explain the Landrieu amendment. At the appropriate time, it will come up in the list of amendments. But now, more than ever, we are depending on them. Let us let them know they can depend on us.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET FOR THE U.S. GOVERNMENT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2004

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will now resume consideration of S. Con. Res. 23, which the clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 23) setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2004 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal year 2003 and for fiscal years 2005 through 2013.

Mr. REID. 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. REID. Mr. President, the managers of the bill are working with Senators DURBIN and LANDRIEU to try to get something resolved there.

We know Senator WARNER wants to speak. He should be given whatever time he needs to respond to the Senator from Louisiana. But I would indicate that as soon as we get this resolved, and Senator WARNER has a chance to talk, rather than going directly to the Landrieu amendment, I think we should go to Dayton and get that out of the way.

In the meantime, I ask unanimous consent that the Senator from Virginia be recognized to speak for up to 6 minutes to speak on the Landrieu amendment, which will be offered.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I commend our distinguished colleague from