

an enforcement mechanism, a voluntary scheduling production process cannot work in the future. Time is of the essence. We must give this issue the attention it needs and deserves and work to prevent the millions of passengers who pass through O'Hare Airport from being delayed.

EXCHANGE OF SPECIAL ORDER
TIME

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to claim the time of the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Indiana?

There was no objection.

CONGRATULATING J. BARNETT
WOODRUFF FOR BEING AWARDED
THE CLIFF O. LIVINGSTON
AWARD

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGREY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I make my way to the floor this evening to congratulate a distinguished citizen from Columbus, Georgia, J. Barnett Woodruff, for being the 2004 recipient of the Cliff O. Livingston award. For those not familiar with its significance, the Cliff O. Livingston Award was created in 1984 to honor individuals who excel above and beyond normal standards of generosity and commitment and advance in the Civilian-Military Council. The honor of this award is to recognize outstanding citizen soldiers.

J. Barnett Woodruff was born October 18, 1923, in Columbus, Georgia, where he attended public school prior to his acceptance to Auburn University in 1942. He later joined the Navy and completed officer training at Georgia Tech. He served our country in the Pacific theatre as a minesweeper during World War II and was recalled in 1952 to serve in the Atlantic and Mediterranean.

After his service in the Navy, Mr. Woodruff embarked on his career in the business community, where he pursued family interests in radio, television, timber, and real estate. He has served on the board of directors for the First National Bank of Columbus, director of the Columbus branches of the First Union Bank, director of Lummus Industries in Columbus, and director of the Woodruff Foundation. At age 80, Mr. Woodruff is currently president of Woodcrest Enterprises, Incorporated, where he does not miss a beat despite a busy schedule serving the greater Columbus community.

Mr. Woodruff has served on the national board of the Boys' and Girls' Clubs, on the board of St. Francis Hospital and its foundation. He is a trustee of Presbyterian College, a Phi Delta Theta Trustee at Auburn University and a member of the Navy League.

With such an illustrious record of service, it should be no surprise that the Cliff O. Livingston award is just the most recent of many accolades awarded to J. Barnett Woodruff. It should be noted that he was chosen the Jaycees Young Man of the Year in 1958.

Despite his vast interest in the community, Barnett Woodruff still devotes his life to God and country as an active member of the First Presbyterian Church and the Columbus Naval Museum.

On behalf of the constituents of Georgia's 11th Congressional District, I appreciate Mr. Woodruff's service to our community. I congratulate him on this great honor, and I wish him continued years of happiness in his service to family, friends and neighbors.

DEFENDING AMERICA WITH
SMART SECURITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, when the Soviet Union collapsed in the fall of 1991, the chief threat to the United States, the possibility of a massive nuclear exchange, ceased to be. Now the biggest threat posed by the Soviet Union is the massive quantity of nuclear materials that still exists within its former borders.

In 1991, an estimated 30,000 nuclear weapons existed throughout the former Soviet Union. These conditions raised a serious concern that nuclear materials could be smuggled beyond the borders of the former Soviet Union or the Soviet nuclear scientists might be able to export their expertise or actual nuclear materials to rogue nations or terrorist groups.

Congress responded in November of 1991 by initiating the Nunn-Lugar program, which is commonly referred to as the Cooperative Threat Reduction Program, CTR. CTR enlists the Department of Defense with the task of dismantling nuclear warheads, reducing nuclear stockpiles, and securing nuclear weapons and materials in the former Soviet Union.

Under CTR, more than 20,000 Russian scientists, formerly tasked to create nuclear weapons, are now working to dismantle them. Since 1991, CTR has dismantled nearly 6,000 nuclear warheads, 479 ballistic missiles, 435 ballistic missile silos, 97 bombers, 336 submarine launched missiles, 396 submarine missile launchers, and 24 strategic missile submarines.

This program clearly works. That is why I have introduced the SMART Security Platform for the 21st Century. SMART stands for Sensible Multilateral American Response to Terrorism. Instead of aggressive posturing, SMART security calls for aggressive diplomacy, a commitment to nuclear nonproliferation, strong regional security arrangements, and vigorous inspection regimes.

The Defense Authorization Act for the year 2004 specifically authorized \$50 million for proliferation threat reduction projects outside of the former Soviet Union. Along the same lines, SMART security would replicate CTR in possible future nuclear states like Iran and North Korea. SMART security would respond to the threat of a nuclear Iran and North Korea, not with threats of warfare, but rather through a peaceful negotiated program, similar to the one that has been successful in the states of the former Soviet Union, in which the U.S. works with these countries toward the common goal of reducing the world's supply of nuclear weapons.

We need to engage burgeoning nuclear powers on a nation-to-nation level for the purposes of nonproliferation, and we need to take the initial steps towards demolishing their nuclear weapons and infrastructure. In the long run, negotiating with other countries will keep us much safer than scaring them into submission.

If we are going to throw our weight around the world demanding that other nations cease their weapons programs, we must make sure that we are setting an example for the rest of the world by renouncing the first use of nuclear weapons and the development of new nuclear weapons. We must maintain our commitment to existing international treaties, like the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, the Biological Weapons Convention, and the Chemical Weapons Convention.

The Bush doctrine of arrogant nuclear proliferation has been tried, and it has failed. It is time for a new national security strategy. SMART security defends America by relying on the very best of America, not our nuclear capabilities, but our commitment to peace and freedom and our capacity for multilateral leadership.

SMART security is tough, SMART security is pragmatic and patriotic; SMART security is smart and will keep America safe.

GETTING SERIOUS ABOUT BALANCING THE FEDERAL BUDGET

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. GUTKNECHT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GUTKNECHT. Mr. Speaker, first I would like to submit a statement for the RECORD concerning a tremendous accomplishment announced today by the Department of Agriculture. For the first time now in 20 years, all paper food stamps are being replaced with electronic benefits.

Mr. Speaker, today, I joined Secretary Veneman at a ceremony to announce the completion of a decades-old project. Thanks to the commitment of Congress, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service, financial institutions, retail outlets, and State and local agencies, our Nation's Food

Stamp Program now issues benefits completely electronically. Through Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT), the program moves into the 21st century, allowing over 20 million food stamp recipients to shop at over 145,000 businesses more efficiently than ever.

The Food Stamp Program now runs completely on an electronic-based system. Using the same technology as most debit card systems, recipients carry a plastic card secured with a Personal Identification Number. Service is improved for clients and accountability for purchases is ensured. In addition, it reduces administrative costs allowing more funds to be channeled into food purchases rather than printing, shipping, counting, endorsing, and destroying coupons.

EBT began as a demonstration project in 1984 in Reading, PA. However, it wasn't until the early 90s that the project expanded into Maryland, Ohio, New Mexico, and my home State of Minnesota. Due to high demand by the States, an EBT Task Force was established in 1993 and published an article in 1994 demonstrating the cost-effectiveness of the program modification. This article proved pivotal, and in 1996 Congress passed the Personal Responsibility Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act, which mandated that all States implement EBT by October of 2002.

This month marks a tremendous achievement. As of June 15, every State in the Nation has finally implemented EBT. It took the work of thousands of Federal, State, and local staff along with numerous contractors, financial institutions, retailers, and the advocacy community.

Thanks to the new electronic system, the Food Stamp Program error rate is the lowest in the history of the program. It has already helped to eliminate much of the theft, fraud and abuse related to paper coupons. EBT brings the program into the 21st century with new mainstream technology. Now, eligible recipients can readily patronize authorized stores for nutritional purposes.

None of this could have been done without teamwork and the genuine care of so many individual and organizations. Today our Nation's hungry can more efficiently receive the nutrition assistance. I am proud to recognize and congratulate not only the USDA and Food and Nutrition Service, but all of the people, agencies, and businesses as well that have brought the Food Stamp Program into a new era.

Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to talk about the Federal budget and what has happened over the last several years in terms of Federal spending.

I know that there are others of my colleagues that are here tonight that came in the election of 1994. When we first came here, we were told by the Congressional Budget Office and others that if we did not get serious about balancing this Federal budget that by the time my children got to be my age, my children could be facing a Federal tax rate of over 80 percent just to pay the interest on the national debt.

I am happy to report that during the first 5 years of the Republican-led Congress, we dramatically reduced the rate of growth of spending here in Washington. From 1995 until the year 2000, overall spending here at the Federal level increased at an average rate of

only 3.2 percent. That is at a time when the average family budget was going up about 3.5 percent. So the good news is we literally controlled the Federal budget so it was growing at a slower rate than the average family budget. The net result is we went from roughly \$250 billion deficits to \$250 billion surpluses.

That is the good news. Starting in about the year 2000, and certainly accelerating in 2001, for a whole lot of reasons, and I will talk about those in a minute, Federal spending began to explode. We started to return to some of the old bad habits. I think in some respects it happened in part because we had the surpluses.

It is much easier to say "no" to new spending when you have a deficit. When you have extra money in the bank, everybody comes in and says, now we can finally afford to pay for this program or to fully fund that program. So spending began to increase.

As I mentioned, from 1995 until 2000, Federal spending grew at a rate of about 3.2 percent. Since 2001, as you can see in this chart, things began to accelerate. Assuming that we can live with the budget numbers that we have passed here in the House with our blueprint, Federal spending between 2001 and today will grow at a rate of 6.4 percent: 3.2 percent, 6.4 percent.

I do not want to bore people with statistics; but in simple terms, we have allowed Federal spending to grow at double the rate it grew through much of the 1990s, and it really is time for us to get serious; to get back on a plan not only to balance the budget, but ultimately to pay down additional parts of that huge Federal debt.

Back in the Midwest, we know that, generally speaking, there is almost an ethic among farmers that you pay off the mortgage and you leave the kids the farm. Well, unfortunately, we are back to the business of selling the farm and leaving our kids the mortgage.

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One of the answers is to go back to what we did back in the 1990s, and that is something we call PAYGO and spending caps. A lot of people were skeptical in terms of whether they would work. Even Chairman Alan Greenspan was skeptical in terms of whether or not long-term spending caps and PAYGO would work. But I would like to read some quotes from Chairman Greenspan, the first of which was from the House Committee on the Budget testimony, September of 2002. He said, "Restoring fiscal discipline must be a high priority. The progress of the 1990s in reducing budget deficits might have been elusive were it not for the budget rules that worked far better than many skeptics, myself included, had expected.

"Now is not the time to abandon the discipline and the structure that worked so well for so long. The framework enacted in the Budget Enforcement Act of 1990 must be preserved."

Those are pretty strong words for Chairman Greenspan.

He went on to say even more. In fact, in response to a question that I made in the House Committee on the Budget about spending caps and PAYGO, he said, specifically in July of 2003, "I would like to see the restoration of PAYGO and the discretionary caps which essentially will restrain the expansion of the deficit and, indeed, ultimately contain it. It did that back in the early 1990s, and I thought it was quite surprisingly successful in restraining what had been a budget which had gotten out of kilter. I would like to see those restraints reimposed; and by their very nature, they will bring back fiscal balance."

Mr. Speaker, it is time that we bring back fiscal balance. Chairman Greenspan is exactly right. We thought that we could allow spending caps and PAYGO to expire, and it would have no consequence. We were wrong.

We will get a chance later this week to vote on spending caps and PAYGO. I hope all Members on both sides of the aisle will join me in supporting that measure.

BUSH ADMINISTRATION CONTINUES TO SHORT-CHANGE VETERANS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CHOCOLA). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, as a new generation is being created in Iraq and Afghanistan, Republicans are underfunding programs that are vital to our Nation's veterans.

The Bush administration has tried to increase the cost of health care for veterans which would have forced 1 million veterans from the system. Their budget slashed funding for staff needed to process disability claims and cut funding for prosthetic research and long-term care.

House Republicans passed a budget that underfunds veterans health care by \$1 billion, and they rejected efforts by House Democrats to fully fund VA health care.

Their budget cuts do not stop there.

The Bush administration, in order to make room for tax cuts for the wealthiest 5 percent in our Nation, their plan for the 2006 budget includes a \$900 million cut in funding for veterans health care. That would be catastrophic for the VA and for our Nation's veterans.

Last month, Secretary Principi and President Bush announced they had closed three VA hospitals, one in Mississippi, one in Pittsburgh, and one in my district in northeast Ohio in Brecksville. The Ohio facility serves 48,000 veterans and is a national leader in programs that treat substance abuse and mental illness. The Brecksville VA hospital is critical for ensuring the health and well-being of the thousands