

The Foundation's community enterprise investments are supporting grassroots solutions to local problems and empowering communities to take control of their own development.

For example, over the past several years, ADF has empowered rural communities in Guinea to plan and undertake the construction of scores of health clinics, primary schools and wells.

In Jigawa State, in northern Nigeria, ADF supported community construction of 400 low cost homes for families who had lost their traditional structures in floods.

Mr. Speaker, I am personally impressed and inspired by the African Development Foundation's work with those living with HIV/AIDS.

For example:

In Swaziland, where almost 40 percent of adults are infected with the AIDS virus, ADF is improving nutrition and providing income-generating opportunities for widows and orphans affected by helping them produce and market vegetables.

In Ghana, ADF funded the training of almost 1,500 youth who conducted peer counseling on HIV/AIDS to more than 200,000 young people.

In Plateau State, Nigeria, ADF funded a pilot program to adapt and extend a faith-based life skills training program in the public secondary schools. About 500 teachers were trained in the new curriculum and more than 25,000 students received year-long training.

In Tanzania, ADF has experimented with supporting schemes that extend micro-credit to people living with HIV/AIDS and enabling them to start informal businesses and undertake income-generating activities.

Mr. Speaker, there is a very high demand for the African Development Foundation to expand their work. A dozen African governments and two private corporations are actually matching the U.S. Government's funding, dollar-for-dollar, for ADF to undertake projects in their countries. Demand for its services greatly exceeds resources. Currently, ADF has a total of \$22.0 million in annual cash commitments and specific requests.

Newly elected President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf has requested USADF to help in rebuilding Liberia and restoring hope through creating small businesses and community enterprises that can provide meaningful jobs to ex-combatants, women and youth.

Additionally, the Governments of Burundi and the Democratic Republic of the Congo have also requested USADF to assist in their post-crisis transition and development. Also, the Government of Burkina Faso has requested ADF assistance in community and enterprise development and is committed to matching USG funding with funds from the Islamic Development Bank.

Mr. Speaker, the work of the African Development Foundation is a powerful example of the goodwill of the American people, and it is one of the most effective foreign assistance programs we have.

I ask that my colleagues join me in supporting their efforts and co-sponsor the African Development Foundation Act of 2006.

THE DEFICIT REDUCTION AND EFFECTIVE LEGISLATIVE LINE ITEM VETO ACT OF 2006

**HON. JOHN M. SPRATT, JR.**

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, June 21, 2006*

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased today to introduce the Deficit Reduction and Effective Legislative Line Item Veto Act of 2006. The United States is facing structural deficits of \$300 billion to \$400 billion; a rising mountain of debt, held increasingly by foreign interests; and a \$3 trillion tax-cut agenda of measures yet to be renewed or enacted. We have all of this and more, but no effective tools to deal with any of these problems. In fact, this year, for the fourth time since the Budget Act was passed, and for the third time in the last 5 years, Congress has failed to pass a concurrent budget resolution, much less a 5-year plan.

That's why today I am introducing this bill. It contains a package of tools to get the budget crisis under control and help get the budget back in balance.

My legislation reinstates the two-sided Pay-As-You-Go (PAYGO) rules. It allows reconciliation to be used only to reduce the deficit. My bill provides members with the information they need to review legislation before voting on it. Finally, a well-crafted expedited rescission authority could be a useful budget tool—and I have brought to the floor and voted for versions of that authority in the past when there were other budget enforcement tools in place, as well. That's why my bill includes expedited rescission authority, but addresses the broader budget control issues as well.

Let me review some of the details of my bill. If we are in earnest about bringing down the deficit, we need rules designed to reduce the deficit. Congress created the reconciliation process to make it easier to reduce the deficit by setting up special procedures for hard-to-pass budget cuts, yet this Congress now uses reconciliation to pass legislation that enlarges the deficit. The Republican bill granting the president expedited rescission authority, H.R. 4890, could become an accessory to that outcome. A President with expedited rescission powers could push a big spending bill, call members of Congress when a vote was coming up, solicit their support, and if it was not forthcoming, back up his request with a thinly veiled threat—the rescission of something that members dearly wanted for their districts.

My bill addresses these concerns in several ways. First, it prohibits reconciliation procedures from being used to increase the deficit. Second, it prohibits the President or anyone in the executive branch from wielding rescission threats as a bargaining tool on other legislation.

If we are serious about rooting out wasteful spending—and I think we should be—we need to provide members with adequate time to look over legislation before voting on it. The Republican Rules Committee routinely waives

the rules to rush bills to the floor hours or even minutes after bills providing for billions of dollars are finalized. My bill requires that members have copies of a bill to review at least 24 hours prior to a vote, and a full three days for a bill with earmarks, unless two-thirds of the House votes to waive that rule. In addition, my bill contains earmark reform provisions from H. Res. 659, Representative OBEY's bill, that will make publicly available relevant details about any earmarks contained in a bill, including who sponsored the provision and who benefits from it.

I am convinced that we can reduce the deficit while protecting vital entitlement programs from expedited rescission authority and the sort of summary changes that fast-track provisions would permit. H.R. 4890 allows the President to propose line-item rescissions even to entitlement programs such as Social Security, veterans' benefits, and Medicare. My bill would protect these programs.

The Deficit Reduction and Effective Legislative Line Item Veto Act of 2006 will put in place these measures we need to address our budget crisis. Merely granting the President expedited rescission authority alone, as H.R. 4890 provides, will do little to require that Congress set budget priorities, put the budget on the path back to balance, and stick to its budget promises.

VOTING RIGHTS  
REAUTHORIZATION ACT

**HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN**

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, June 21, 2006*

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I am disappointed by the Republican leadership's decision to pull this important bipartisan legislation from Floor debate this week. The Voting Rights Act has made a significant difference in ensuring the full inclusion of minorities in the American political process. The legislation pulled today will extend for 25 years key provisions that are set to expire in 2007. While this country has a rich history of valuing the right to vote, it, unfortunately, has a checkered past in ensuring the full access that the Constitution guarantees.

The Voting Rights Act was signed into law 5 months after voting rights protesters were beaten as they walked from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama on what became known as "Bloody Sunday." Earlier this week, I held a forum on the need to extend the Voting Rights Act. I heard personal stories from my colleagues in Congress and members of the civil rights community that illustrate the need to extend this legislation. I commend Congressmen JOHN CONYERS, MEL WATT and other members of the Judiciary Committee for their hard work on this bill. I hope that the Republican Leadership can resolve its issues with this landmark legislation and bring it to the House floor as soon as possible.