

of 2-year appropriations bills by providing a new majority point of order against consideration of an appropriations bill that fails to cover 2 years. The second session of a Congress would then be devoted to the consideration of authorization bills and oversight of Federal programs. The result is enhanced oversight that will provide greater accountability of government programs and a superior budget process.

Each year, approximately 40 percent of Congress's debating time is spent on appropriations, on the resolution and on the reconciliation process. In some years, that number is as high as 60 percent, not even reflecting the time that the budget process consumes the entire Federal bureaucracy. Moreover through February 18 of this year, House lawmakers spent 61 hours over 4 days debating 162 of the nearly 600 amendments filed on the 359-page measure to fund government until September. And after all the debate and consideration last year, Congress failed to adopt the budget or pass any of the 13 appropriations bills for the first time since the landmark Budget Act of 1974.

It is no wonder that the American people are dismayed because all they have seen is the chaotic nature of the budgetary process and the failure of Congress time and time again to meet statutory deadlines.

It is important to have a biennial budget because it will allow the President—as well as Congress—in the second year to fine-tune the budget, revisit issues, improve oversight activities, and—if necessary—respond to a downturn in the economy, such as a recession. And it would also immeasurably add to accountability to the American taxpayer. If you ask the American taxpayer, “Do you think your Federal dollars are being spent wisely and efficiently?”—the response is a resounding “no” as reflected in many polls and public opinion surveys. Only if we improve oversight activities and examine every program and agency, will we restore the confidence of the American taxpayer in how government spends hard-earned tax dollars.

Unfortunately, the battle to get the biennial budget passed is not new. I have been advocating for budget reform for years and have pursued shifting the federal budgeting process to a biennial system throughout my tenure in the Senate. In 1997—the year that led to record surpluses—I cosponsored the Biennial Budgeting and Appropriations Act, S. 261, to amend the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 to revise the Federal and congressional budget processes by establishing a two-year budgeting and appropriations cycle and timetable. That bill sat dormant in a Senate committee—as did the next four bills of this kind that I have cosponsored since.

So we find ourselves with record deficits, a complicated and time consuming budget process that gives

Americans little confidence in their government, lack of congressional oversight over the many programs and agencies that dispense taxpayer's funds, and the surpluses of the 1998–2001 nowhere to be found. If that does not tell us that the system is broken, I do not know what does.

The biennial budget would free up Senate floor time for other matters, help us avoid having to consider an end-of-year omnibus bill, and provide authorizing committees more time to carry out their oversight responsibilities. Biennial budgeting would make us more effective legislators and enable us to make more informed choices on behalf of our constituents.

Biennial budgeting is necessary to return us to the path of fiscal sustainability and to allow Congress time to engage in meaningful oversight of government spending. As such, this legislation is long overdue and it is my hope that Congress will finally institute this much needed reform.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

REMEMBERING C. RAY BAKER

• Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, today I honor the life of C. Ray Baker, a devoted champion of Fort Smith, AR.

Ray Baker was a lifelong cheerleader of Fort Smith, proving his love for the community through serving its citizens for 20 years as mayor.

Dedicating countless hours volunteering for civic service organizations, he brought an unmatched, contagious energy to ribbon cuttings, groundbreaking, awards ceremonies and special community events. His commitment to Fort Smith inspired the “Ray Baker Lifetime Achievement Award.”

He shared his enthusiasm for the community with the generations of students he taught over his 46 years as an educator. His legacy is far reaching beyond the halls of Southside High School where he taught for 44 years.

He received numerous awards and commendations for his years in the classroom including being named Arkansas PTA Teacher of the Year, a Milken Family National Educator, Arkansas Teacher of the Year and Daughters of the American Revolution National American History Teacher of the Year.

Ray is a true American hero who not only taught what it means to participate in the government, but also showed his students and the citizens by the example he set.

Ray Baker's legacy will live on for future generations to experience the projects he supported encouraged to the lives he touched in the classroom and civic outings all across the region.

His energetic spirit has given us all strength, and we are fortunate to have had his leadership. During the opportunities I had to share the stage with Mayor Baker, I often had to follow his

passionate and enthusiastic addresses. I would joke with the audience that I needed to spend a few days with the mayor so I could learn how to become as animated as he was.

We all came to know and say his famous words he would recite after his speeches and proclamations, “Life's worth living in Fort Smith, Arkansas.” I am confident this will always be a motto for the community, and thanks to Ray Baker's determination, perseverance and dedication, he certainly made Fort Smith a place worth living.●

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-825. A communication from the Chairman of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled “Commodity Futures Trading Commission Strategic Plan Fiscal Years 2011–2015”; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-826. A communication from the Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller), transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a violation of the Antideficiency Act that occurred within the Research, Development, Test and Evaluation account of the Department of the Army and was assigned case number 08-08; to the Committee on Appropriations.

EC-827. A communication from the Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller), transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a violation of the Antideficiency Act that occurred within the Operation and Maintenance account of the Department of the Army and was assigned case number 08-04; to the Committee on Appropriations.

EC-828. A communication from the Deputy Archivist, National Archives and Records Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Presidential Library Facilities; Correction” (RIN3095-AA82) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 4, 2011; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. LIEBERMAN (for himself and Mrs. HUTCHISON):

S. 494. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to establish a national screening program at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to provide States the option to increase screening in the United States population for the prevention, early detection, and timely treatment of colorectal cancer; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. CASEY:

S. 495. A bill to expend and enhance existing adult day programs for individuals with neurological diseases or conditions, including multiple sclerosis, Parkinson's disease, traumatic brain injury, and other similar diseases or conditions, to support and improve access to respite services for family