

basic benefits under those programs and still find ways to make them stronger and longer.

Social Security, untouched, will make every promised payment, with cost-of-living adjustments, for the next 25 years. You can't say that about much in Washington. You can't say that about any program other than Social Security. We can do better by making minor, small changes in Social Security today and putting the savings back into Social Security, and then we can say it will last 75 years, which means everybody going into the workplace, starting their work career in America, will know they can count on Social Security to be there when they need it. That is an attainable goal, and if we face it honestly, we can do it.

When I was elected in 1982 and came to office in 1983, we were facing bankruptcy in Social Security. We came together with a bipartisan approach and passed it. We bought literally 52 years of solvency for Social Security, and not a single Member lost the next election because we did it in a bipartisan fashion, determined to make Social Security stronger. We can do it again.

Medicare—same story. Medicare, of course, provides health care for the elderly and disabled in America. It is extremely expensive because health care costs keep going up. Are there ways to reduce the costs of Medicare so that the people who are deserving of care—seniors and the disabled—will have it available to them?

On January 1 of this year, 9,000 Americans turned the age of 65; on January 2, another 9,000; and then every day since—every day for the next 19 years. The boomers have arrived. They have paid into Medicare and Social Security their entire lives, and they expect America to keep its promise. And we will. But we can look at Medicare and find ways to make that program more cost-efficient. There are certainly ways that are obvious.

Under the Medicare prescription drug program, we currently don't have a Medicare option. All we have is private health insurance company options. Let Medicare bargain with pharmaceutical companies to buy in bulk and bring down the cost of drugs for seniors, thus reducing their out-of-pocket costs and our costs as taxpayers. The pharmaceutical industry hates that the way the Devil hates holy water. The fact is that when you put Medicare in there, like the Veterans' Administration is in there, it can make a difference.

We need to include spending, entitlements, and revenue. I hope we can do it on a bipartisan basis.

#### CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

#### MILITARY CONSTRUCTION AND VETERANS AFFAIRS AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2012

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to the consideration of H.R. 2055, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 2055) making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2012, and for other purposes.

The Senate proceeded to consider the bill, which had been reported from the Committee on Appropriations, with an amendment to strike all after the enacting clause and insert in lieu thereof the following:

*That the following sums are appropriated, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2012, and for other purposes, namely:*

##### TITLE I

##### DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, ARMY

*For acquisition, construction, installation, and equipment of temporary or permanent public works, military installations, facilities, and real property for the Army as currently authorized by law, including personnel in the Army Corps of Engineers and other personal services necessary for the purposes of this appropriation, and for construction and operation of facilities in support of the functions of the Commander in Chief, \$3,066,891,000, to remain available until September 30, 2016: Provided, That of this amount, not to exceed \$255,241,000 shall be available for study, planning, design, architect and engineer services, and host nation support, as authorized by law, unless the Secretary of Defense determines that additional obligations are necessary for such purposes and notifies the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress of the determination and the reasons therefor.*

##### MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, NAVY AND MARINE CORPS

*For acquisition, construction, installation, and equipment of temporary or permanent public works, naval installations, facilities, and real property for the Navy and Marine Corps as currently authorized by law, including personnel in the Naval Facilities Engineering Command and other personal services necessary for the purposes of this appropriation, \$2,187,622,000, to remain available until September 30, 2016: Provided, That of this amount, not to exceed \$84,362,000 shall be available for study, planning, design, and architect and engineer services, as authorized by law, unless the Secretary of Defense determines that additional obligations are necessary for such purposes and notifies the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress of the determination and the reasons therefor.*

##### MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, AIR FORCE

*For acquisition, construction, installation, and equipment of temporary or permanent public works, military installations, facilities, and real property for the Air Force as currently authorized by law, \$1,227,058,000, to remain available until September 30, 2016: Provided, That of this amount, not to exceed \$81,913,000 shall be available for study, planning, design, and architect and engineer services, as authorized by law, unless the Secretary of Defense determines that additional obligations are necessary for such purposes and notifies the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress of the determination and the reasons therefor.*

##### MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, DEFENSE-WIDE (INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

*For acquisition, construction, installation, and equipment of temporary or permanent public works, installations, facilities, and real property for activities and agencies of the Department of Defense (other than the military departments), as currently authorized by law, \$3,380,917,000, to remain available until September 30, 2016: Provided, That such amounts of this appropriation as may be determined by the Secretary of Defense may be transferred to such appropriations of the Department of Defense available for military construction or family housing as the Secretary may designate, to be merged with and to be available for the same purposes, and for the same time period, as the appropriation or fund to which transferred: Provided further, That of the amount appropriated, not to exceed \$439,602,000 shall be available for study, planning, design, and architect and engineer services, as authorized by law, unless the Secretary of Defense determines that additional obligations are necessary for such purposes and notifies the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress of the determination and the reasons therefor: Provided further, That of the amount appropriated, notwithstanding any other provision of law, \$24,118,000 shall be available for payments to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization for the planning, design, and construction of a new North Atlantic Treaty Organization headquarters.*

##### MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, ARMY NATIONAL GUARD

*For construction, acquisition, expansion, rehabilitation, and conversion of facilities for the training and administration of the Army National Guard, and contributions therefor, as authorized by chapter 1803 of title 10, United States Code, and Military Construction Authorization Acts, \$773,592,000, to remain available until September 30, 2016: Provided, That of the amount appropriated, not to exceed \$20,671,000 shall be available for study, planning, design, and architect and engineer services, as authorized by law, unless the Director of the Army National Guard determines that additional obligations are necessary for such purposes and notifies the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress of the determination and the reasons therefor.*

##### MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, AIR NATIONAL GUARD

*For construction, acquisition, expansion, rehabilitation, and conversion of facilities for the training and administration of the Air National Guard, and contributions therefor, as authorized by chapter 1803 of title 10, United States Code, and Military Construction Authorization Acts, \$116,246,000, to remain available until September 30, 2016: Provided, That of the amount appropriated, not to exceed \$9,000,000 shall be available for study, planning, design, and architect and engineer services, as authorized by law, unless the Director of the Air National Guard determines that additional obligations are necessary for such purposes and notifies the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress of the determination and the reasons therefor.*

##### MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, ARMY RESERVE

*For construction, acquisition, expansion, rehabilitation, and conversion of facilities for the training and administration of the Army Reserve as authorized by chapter 1803 of title 10, United States Code, and Military Construction Authorization Acts, \$280,549,000, to remain available until September 30, 2016: Provided, That of the amount appropriated, not to exceed \$28,924,000 shall be available for study, planning, design, and architect and engineer services, as authorized by law, unless the Secretary of the Army determines that additional obligations are necessary for such purposes and notifies the Committees on Appropriations of both*