



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 104th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 141

WASHINGTON, MONDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 1995

No. 23

House of Representatives

The House met at 12:30 p.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore [Mr. NUSSLE].

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
February 6, 1995.

I hereby designate the Honorable JIM NUSSLE to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

NEWT GINGRICH,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING BUSINESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 4, 1995, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning hour debates. The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to not to exceed 30 minutes, and each Member except the majority and minority leaders limited to not to exceed 5 minutes.

LINE-ITEM VETO

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Indiana [Mr. HOSTETTLER] for 2 minutes.

Mr. HOSTETTLER. Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor today for a number of reasons. It is my hope and expectation that later this evening, this Chamber will pass H.R. 2 and give the President a much overdue line-item veto. I commend my colleagues for this effort and look forward to casting my vote in support of this very useful tool as it will be a good first step in eliminating unnecessary Federal spending and put a bit of balance into the Federal budget process. However, I think the words

that I should most emphasize here would be "first step." Giving the President the power and authority to rescind spending that is viewed as wasteful or excessive is only the first step in the long and arduous journey toward fiscal responsibility. However, given the fact that President's Clinton's budget, which was just released today, contains an annual budget deficit of over \$190 billion for the next 5 years, Congress is obviously going to have to take the lead in instilling some kind of fiscal control in the Federal budget process.

Line-item veto or no-line-item veto, from the looks of the red ink in this President's budget, it is readily apparent that if anything is going to be done about this country's fiscal crisis, it is going to be done by us. And at the risk of sounding cynical or pessimistic, we have not even begun to make the difficult decisions that we will undoubtedly have to make to put the Federal budget process and Federal spending back on the path toward fiscal health. It is because I am ready, even anxious, to make these decisions that I decided to run for Congress last year at this time. I looked around me, at what was happening to the priorities our Federal Government had established when doling out Federal tax dollars, my tax dollars, and I became concerned, actually frightened, and I thought about the future of my children. I began to seriously worry about the burden that trillions of dollars in debt will place on my children and on the children of all Americans. Each year, lawmakers seem to ignore what is fiscally sound economic advice from their constituents and endlessly deficit spend the hard working citizens' tax dollars. And every year that this happens, the financial security of our children, and our children's children is jeopardized. I am no longer willing to take this kind of chance with the future of our country. Today we celebrate the birthday of

former President Ronald Reagan, a man whose commitment to fiscal responsibility was acknowledged and respected far and wide. Today I celebrate the birthday of another gentleman who taught me about fiscal accountability. My father turns 72 today, and it is from him that I learned about the duty, responsibility, and obligation for family that I try to incorporate into my life every day. It is because of this overwhelming sense of commitment to my family that I stand before you today. As we undertake this enormous task in front of us, I urge us not to lose sight of the fact that it will be our children that will actually suffer from our lack of dedication to true fiscal responsibility.

WELFARE REFORM AND INCREASING THE MINIMUM WAGE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 1995, the gentlewoman from Colorado [Mrs. SCHROEDER] is recognized during morning business for 5 minutes.

Mrs. SCHROEDER. Mr. Speaker, as the prior gentleman in the well was talking about, this is a week where we are really going to be focusing on the budget. But I think there is an awful lot of other issues as we all sit down as Americans around the budget table and try and figure out how we get our budget under control.

The first thing that strikes me is that tomorrow night, February 7, there is going to be a dinner in this town, and they are going to charge \$50,000 a plate for the Speaker. That is an awful lot of money.

While that dinner is going on, many of us are trying to increase the minimum wage. But let us think about how many minimum wage people are going to be at that dinner. I do not think

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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there is going to be any there eating the dinner. There may be some serving the dinner because a minimum wage employee, if they work full time an 8-hour day throughout the year would make \$10,500. And that would not get them even to the hors d'oeuvre course if they took their whole year's salary and put it there.

A \$50,000-a-plate dinner and the minimum wage and the Federal budget, how do we bring all of that together, because the issue in the budget is what we spend our money on, and who we think has the greatest claim to getting Federal attention.

My guess is most of the people who buy those dinners have something they want. It just does not pass the straight face test to say, oh no, they paid \$50,000 for dinner because they believe in good government or they wanted a decent meal. No, no, I think they want something. And I think we know what they want. They probably want some little tax benefit.

One of the things that we have done over and over again is we talk about spending programs, but we never talk about the fact that special tax benefits to individuals are also spending much, because we are taking money away that would be coming in.

We had last week on this floor a very important amendment pointing to that when we talked about the line-item veto. We said not only should the President be able to line item veto spending that looked like pork, but the President should be able to line item veto any special tax privileges.

Guess what? That lost. So I guess the dinner is going on because people still figure that is a possibility if they go to their dinner.

But I think when we look at America and when we look at our long historic tradition we have felt that there should be room in the budget for those who need the most help. That is how families do it. When American families sit around the table and they are in tough times they do not cut the kids out first, for heaven's sake, they do not say we will drop education first because they happen to think that is an investment. They tend to look at the parts of the budget that really are going to those who are best off in the family. And yet, somehow, because of how we collect revenues to run for office and everything else, we tend to distort our budget priorities.

Think how many people who get the minimum wage can make much of a campaign contribution. If you make \$10,500 a year, what kind of campaign contribution do you think you could make? How many fancy dinners do you think you can go to? What kind of clout do you think you are going to have in Washington trying to bring your case to the table? Does your case have to be traded off with balancing it for those who are the most well off?

We now understand there is a new deal on the table, and that is maybe people will go along with the minimum wage increase if we can have a capital

gains cut. I am not sure we are ever going to get to balancing the budget if we continue to do that, saying we just absolutely cannot do anything for those who are struggling along on the lowest rung unless we continue to do things for those who are on the upper rungs because otherwise I do not know what rich people will do. Maybe they will just get mad and not give money to campaigns anymore. Would that not be a terrible thing?

So, I think as we look at all of these issues that are floating around out there, I hope everybody listens to several very key things. No. 1, we have to stop kidding people we are going solve the deficit by finding some waste, fraud, and abuse. Anywhere we find waste, fraud, and abuse, sure, cut it, just cut out the tea tasters and those things, but we know that is not going to balance the budget. We have to do some other thing too and let us think about our very core priorities as we get to that.

SUPPORT FOR THE LINE-ITEM VETO

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of February 11, 1994, the gentleman from Georgia [Mr. NORWOOD] is recognized during morning business for 5 minutes.

Mr. NORWOOD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the line-item veto. This is an action we need to take to save this country from our runaway debt. It is an action we must take to end the irresponsible practices by this body. It is an action that is completely consistent with the wishes of our Founders.

Mr. Speaker, we are making significant changes in the way the Federal Government operates. I have listened to the arguments made by the other side against these changes, and I am struck by how little regard is shown for our Federal debt. Perhaps we do not understand the amount our debt costs us? Perhaps we think that these programs we are so afraid of cutting will survive even if we bankrupt the Nation. We owe \$4.8 trillion. I hear the other side talk about us hurting programs that benefit young people. They do not seem to understand that we are trying to save the future for young people all over America. We have no right to fund any program, no matter how well intentioned, at the expense of the children of the next generation.

I ran for this office because I have two little grandchildren. I saw the ever-rising debt and the dreadful impact it will have on their future. I am here to do something about the debt and free that burden from their future and from the future of young people throughout my district and throughout America. I support the line-item veto because the students in Sallie Bullock's calculus class at Madison County High in Danielsville, GA already owe \$310,760'. I support it because Mary Mills fifth grade class at Oconee

County Intermediate School in Watkinsville, GA already owes \$365,600. I support it because Martha Scroggs' kindergarten class at Episcopal Day School in Augusta already owes \$457,000. Mr. Speaker, the line-item veto is an important step for the future of these young people.

I have listened to the constitutional arguments against the line-item veto. To those people, I would share the words of Alexander Hamilton in Federalist No. 73. In response to those who stated that the veto would give the President too much power, Hamilton argued that the veto power was important because it limited the power of Congress.

The propriety of the thing does not turn upon the supposition of superior wisdom or virtue in the executive; but on the supposition that the legislative will not be infallible; That the love of power may sometimes betray it into a disposition to encroach upon the rights of the other members of the government; that a spirit of faction may sometimes pervert its deliberations; that the impressions of the moments may sometimes hurry it into measures which itself on maturer reflection condemn.

Mr. Speaker, if Alexander Hamilton only knew what we have come to in this body. When \$20 million for a fingerprint facility in West Virginia is inserted into an emergency assistance bill for Los Angeles earthquake victims, we prove that Hamilton was right. When \$11½ million are spent on powerplant modernization in a shipyard about to be closed, we prove that we need to give the President the line-item veto. If Hamilton could see what we do here today, he would certainly support it as well.

One other argument that we hear is that it will be used by the President as a political weapon. Mr. Speaker, 43 Governors have the line-item veto. If it was being used as this evil political weapon as our opponents would suggest that it is, you would certainly think that far fewer States would have them. If it were being used irresponsibly by those who have it, it would be taken away. I believe that our opponents greatly overstate the danger of the use of the line-item veto. The veto power possessed by the President today is a far more powerful tool, but it has been used wisely. We have no reason to expect otherwise with the line-item veto.

Mr. Speaker, we are making significant changes in the way business is conducted by the Federal Government. The line-item veto is one more way for us to show the American people that we are making their Government more responsible.

INCREASING THE MINIMUM WAGE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of February 11, 1994, the gentleman from California [Mr. MILLER] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, later in this session we will be