

State senate, with dedication and devotion, and his constituents returned him to office at every election since he was first elected in 1972. At the time of his death, John had the fourth longest tenure among lawmakers currently serving in the Wisconsin Legislature.

John was a lifelong resident of Milwaukee, graduating from Don Bosco High School in 1963. He earned a bachelor of education degree in 1968 at the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater, and following that, taught history and social studies at Milwaukee Area Technical College prior to his service in the legislature.

A committed and passionate advocate for Wisconsin's families, John may be best remembered as the father of Wisconsin's family and medical leave law, which allows people to take time off from their job to provide assistance to a family member needing care, from newborns to an elderly relative—a law that helped pave the way for the Federal family leave law that was enacted in 1993.

His commitment to families in need went well beyond the family leave law. John was vice chair of the Senate Aging Committee when I chaired that body, and I saw first-hand his steadfast and effective support of long-term care reforms that help people with disabilities of all ages remain in their own homes with their families.

John was also vitally concerned with housing policy, serving on the board of Wisconsin's Housing and Economic Development Authority for 10 years. I had the pleasure of working with John in this area as well when we coauthored Wisconsin's Housing Trust Fund, to provide flexible help to families in need of decent, affordable housing.

John would have been 50 years old this Friday. But even though he did not live to celebrate that anniversary, he left Wisconsin an impressive legacy.

Today, thousands are able to take time from work to care for a family member without the fear of losing that job. Other families are finally able to afford a decent home. Wisconsin families, who otherwise might be forced apart because of a long-term disability, are able to remain together, and individuals needing long-term care, who otherwise might be forced to seek services in an institution, are able to remain in their homes. All because of John Plewa. Wisconsin families have lost one of their foremost champions, and I know they join in offering their sympathy to the friends and colleagues John leaves behind, to his staff, and most especially to John's wife Susan and their two sons.

We will miss him.

THE BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, the skyrocketing Federal debt, now soaring toward \$5 trillion, has been fueled for a generation now by bureaucratic hot air—and it is sort of like the weather—everybody talks about it but almost

nobody did much about it until immediately after the elections in November 1994.

But when the new 104th Congress convened this past January, the U.S. House of Representatives quickly approved a balanced budget amendment to the U.S. Constitution. On the Senate side, all but one of the 54 Republicans supported the balanced budget amendment—that was the good news.

The bad news was that only 13 Democrats supported it—which killed hopes for a balanced budget amendment for the time being. Since a two-thirds vote—67 Senators, if all Senator's are present—is necessary to approve a constitutional amendment, the proposed Senate amendment failed by one vote. There will be another vote either this year or in 1996.

Here is today's bad debt boxscore:

As of the close of business Monday, September 18, the Federal debt—down to the penny—stood at exactly \$4,963,468,747,991.22 or \$18,841.41 for every man, woman, and child on a per capita basis.

Mr. DORGAN addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. HUTCHISON). The Senator from North Dakota is recognized.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. At 9:30, the Senate is to go to the previous order. There is at least one other speaker, possibly two, so could we have a division of time so that everyone will have an opportunity to speak.

Mr. DORGAN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to speak for 4 minutes; I believe the Senator from Connecticut would like to speak for 4 minutes, and the Senator from Wyoming would like to speak for 4 minutes, and have the time adjusted at 9:30 to accommodate this request.

Mr. COCHRAN. Reserving the right to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. COCHRAN. Reserving the right to object, Madam President, I was unable to hear the entire consent request. Could the Senator restate it?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. It would extend morning business beyond 9:30.

Mr. COCHRAN. Madam President, I am constrained to object to that. We made it very clear last night what the times were. We have Senators who have rearranged schedules to be here.

Mr. DORGAN. I withdraw my request, Madam President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Would it be possible to give 2 minutes to each of the three speakers?

Mr. DORGAN. Madam President, I request each of the three be allocated 2 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection? The Chair hears none, and it is so ordered.

WELFARE REFORM

Mr. DORGAN. Madam President, I intend to vote for the welfare reform bill

today. It is not a perfect piece of legislation, but it does advance some of the issues that I think need to be advanced and begin some new directions that I think are necessary.

There is no disagreement in this Chamber about the proposition that the current welfare system does not work very well. There ought not be any disagreement in this Chamber either about the fact that when we change our welfare system, we ought to make sure we protect America's children.

There is a stereotype about welfare that is fundamentally inaccurate, that welfare is a woman who has 16 kids because it is profitable to have children; that welfare is some able-bodied person lying in a Lazy Boy recliner drinking beer, watching color television, and who is essentially slothful, indolent, and unwilling to work.

The fact is, that is not the statistical welfare recipient. The size of the average welfare family is almost identical to the size of the average American family.

Two-thirds of the people on welfare are kids under 16 years of age. As we go about trying to figure out how to change the system, we have to understand our obligation to protect children. We also need to provide the right incentives and to provide some hope to those who are hopeless, to extend a hand of help to those who are helpless, but also to say to them that welfare is temporary. We extend the hand of help because you need it, and it is to help you get up and out, to go get a job and be productive and be able to care for yourself.

These are the kinds of incentives we want to be included in this welfare reform bill. We have accomplished some of those goals, some of those goals we have not.

The Senator from Connecticut, who is going to speak for a couple of minutes, put a very important provision in this bill dealing with child care. That is enormously important and will allow a number of us to vote for this legislation. As I said, this bill is not perfect. I am concerned about the notion of block granting money, of wrapping up money and sending it to the States and saying, "By the way, here is some money you didn't collect. Go ahead and spend it."

I am concerned about a number of other things in the bill, but I do think it advances the welfare reform debate as it leaves the Senate. I do not know whether I will vote for it when it comes back from conference. I hope it will come out of conference as a good welfare reform bill, as well.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who seeks recognition?

Mr. THOMAS. Madam President, I rise in support of the welfare proposal that will be before us today. We have talked about it a very long time. Obviously, there are different views about how it should be implemented but, most of all, it is the first opportunity