

A public opinion survey of 7,200 registered voters show that when Americans are given the truth, they overwhelmingly favor the Republican proposal to balance the budget in 7 years.

Eighty-six percent believe "The President and Congress should deal with the budget issue now" compared to 9 percent who feel the issue should be put off until after next year's election.

Seventy-one percent believe that the President and Congress should submit a 7-year balanced budget scored by the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office.

The Congress did this long ago.

Mr. Speaker, the Congress and the American people are eager to see the President's plan to balance the budget in 7 years. How else can we negotiate?

It's been 15 days since the President agreed to do this. The deadline is next Friday. Where's the President's 7 year balanced budget?

#### THE TRUTH ABOUT THE BUDGET

(Mr. TAYLOR of Mississippi asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. TAYLOR of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, the previous speaker, my friend from Maryland, said the American people want to know the truth about the Balanced Budget Act of 1995. I think they deserve it.

The Balanced Budget Act of 1995 will borrow \$296 billion for the next fiscal year budget. It will borrow \$118 billion from trust funds such as the Social Security trust fund that is supposed to be set aside to protect senior citizens Social Security payments in the future.

The Balanced Budget Act of 1995 will go on to borrow \$75 billion and give most of that money away in tax breaks for America's wealthiest 12 percent.

I am glad my friend from Maryland wants to know the truth, and I have just given it to him. I hope the gentleman from Ohio [Mr. KASICH], and I hope all the Members of this body will correct the things that I just brought to our attention, because that is certainly not a balanced budget by anyone's scoring.

#### WAITING FOR THE PRESIDENT'S BUDGET

(Mr. RIGGS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. RIGGS. Mr. Speaker, I draw your attention to this particular chart here. As of today, it has been 1,280 days since candidate Clinton promised a national audience on "Larry King Live," "I would present a 5-year plan if elected President to balance the budget." It has been 17 days, not 16, 17 days since the President promised in writing to sign a bill by the end of this year that balances the budget in 7 years using honest numbers.

We Republicans have done our job. We have sent the President a detailed

fair budget plan to do just that. However, the President says he does not like our plan. Well, if that is the case, where is his plan? Let him put his plan on the bargaining table. That is negotiating in good faith.

Let me repeat that. If the President does not like our plan to balance the budget, then he should produce his own plan to balance the budget, not this. His budget has deficits in the range of \$200 billion well into the next century. The American people are tired of all the cheap political talk coming out of the White House, the political posturing, the demagoguery. They want to see action. They want to see how the President proposes to balance the budget.

Mr. Speaker, it has been 17 days so far. We are still waiting for the President's balanced budget plan. How many more days will we have to wait until he keeps his promise and signs a budget?

#### USING HONEST NUMBERS

(Mr. NORWOOD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. NORWOOD. Mr. Speaker, we have passed a budget that will be in balance in 7 years using honest numbers. Medicare spending will increase by 62 percent. Medicaid spending will increase by 43 percent. Student loan spending will increase by 48.5 percent. School lunch spending will increase by 37 percent. Mr. Speaker, we are \$5 trillion in debt. We are allowing programs to continue to grow. We are making a responsible effort to balance our budget for the sake of our children and grandchildren's future.

What do we have from the President and other liberal Democrats? Nothing. Distortions. Misrepresentations. We have a plan to balance the budget; all they have is talk.

Mr. Speaker, some people would rather talk about balancing the budget. Some people don't want to make the hard choices. Some people just don't want to balance the budget. Meanwhile, we are working to protect the future for our children, to give them a chance for the American dream. That is what we were elected to do.

#### HELP THE PRESIDENT KEEP HIS WORD

(Mr. SMITH of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, perhaps the current budget negotiations should be terminated. They undermine the President's ability to keep his word to the American people.

In June 1992, then candidate Bill Clinton said he would balance the budget in 5 years. "I would present a 5-year plan to balance the budget," he pledged to the voters. That means he will have to balance the budget by 1997, 2 years from now.

Maybe Republican leaders should not be negotiating with the administration to balance the budget in 7 years. Let President Clinton keep his contract with the American people and show us how he would balance the budget in 2 years.

Of course, we'd have more confidence that the President meant what he said if he had any plan to balance the budget.

The Federal Government should not spend more than it collects, for two reasons: First, it will help the economy and the American people. Second, it will help President Clinton keep his word.

#### BALANCING THE BUDGET

(Mr. CHRYSLER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CHRYSLER. Mr. Speaker, Congress and the President are now in the midst of a great debate about balancing the budget. The President has at one time or another promised to implement many of the items contained in Congress' Balanced Budget Act that is now on his desk.

He said he wanted serious welfare reform. He said he wanted to balance the budget in 7 years. And he also said that he wanted to give tax relief to working, middle-class American families.

But yet he persists in saying that the Republicans only want to give tax breaks to the rich. This is pure fantasy.

This chart clearly shows that the vast overwhelming majority of our \$500 per-child tax credit goes to those making less than \$75,000. In fact, 89 percent of this tax break goes to the middle class.

Mr. Speaker, the President should end the scare tactics, sign the Balanced Budget Act, and give tax relief to working families.

#### PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT

(Mr. RICHARDSON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. RICHARDSON. Mr. Speaker, we should make sure that we reach agreement on the Interior bill, the environmental bill. The House has rejected this extremist measure and, now that the American people have spoken, that we want to have mining reform, that we want to stop logging in the Tongass, that we want to deal with our parks in a sensible way, that it makes sense to come back with a moderate bill that the President can sign. Many times the House has said to those that want to gut the environment, we do not want that. We want you to reach agreement on this issue.

We are making progress on this, but let us put this appropriation bill to bed. There are so many appropriations bills that have not been dealt with that are still in controversy, that at least

this one, where the American people are behind bipartisan efforts of our side and moderate Republicans to reach agreement, let us proceed with this bill at least as a start. The American people want to protect the environment.

**PERMISSION FOR SUNDRY COMMITTEES AND THEIR SUBCOMMITTEES TO SIT TODAY DURING 5-MINUTE RULE**

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the following committees and their subcommittees be permitted to sit today while the House is meeting in the Committee of the Whole House under the 5-minute rule.

Committee on Banking and Financial Services, Committee on Commerce, Committee on Economic and Educational Opportunities, Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, and Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence.

It is my understanding that the minority has been consulted and that there is no objection to these requests.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. EVERETT). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

**ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE**

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the provisions of clause 5 of rule I, the Chair announces that he will postpone further proceedings today on each motion to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered or on which the vote is objected to under clause 4 of rule XV.

Such rollcall votes, if postponed, will be taken after the debate has concluded on all motions to suspend the rules.

**BIG THICKET NATIONAL PRESERVE LAND EXCHANGE**

Mr. HANSEN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 826) to extend the deadline for the completion of certain land exchanges involving the Big Thicket National Preserve in Texas, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 826

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

**SECTION 1. FINDINGS.**

The Congress finds that—

(1) under the Big Thicket National Preserve Addition Act of 1993 (Public Law 103-46), Congress increased the size of the Big Thicket National Preserve through authorized land exchanges;

(2) such land exchanges were not consummated by July 1, 1995, as required by Public Law 103-46; and

(3) failure to consummate such land exchanges by the end of the three-year extension provided by this Act will necessitate further intervention and direction from Congress concerning such land exchanges.

**SEC. 2. TIME PERIOD FOR LAND EXCHANGE.**

(a) EXTENSION.—The last sentence of subsection (d) of the first section of the Act entitled “An Act to authorize the establishment of the Big Thicket National Preserve in the State of Texas, and for other purposes”, approved October 11, 1974 (16 U.S.C. 698(d)), is amended by striking out “two years after date of enactment” and inserting “five years after the date of enactment”.

(b) INDEPENDENT APPRAISAL.—Subsection (d) of the first section of such Act (16 U.S.C. 698(d)) is further amended by adding at the end the following: “The Secretary, in considering the values of the private lands to be exchanged under this subsection, shall consider independent appraisals submitted by the owners of the private lands.”

(c) LIMITATION.—Subsection (d) of the first section of such Act (16 U.S.C. 698(d)), as amended by subsection (b), is further amended by adding at the end the following: “The authority to exchange lands under this subsection shall expire on July 1, 1998.”

**SEC. 3. REPORTING REQUIREMENT.**

Not later than six months after the date of the enactment of this Act and every six months thereafter until the earlier of the consummation of the exchange or July 1, 1998, the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture shall each submit a report to the Committee on Resources of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate concerning the progress in consummating the land exchange authorized by the amendments made by Big Thicket National Preserve Addition Act of 1993 (Public Law 103-46).

**SEC. 4. LAND EXCHANGE IN LIBERTY COUNTY, TEXAS.**

If, within one year after the date of the enactment of this Act—

(1) the owners of the private lands described in subsection (b)(1) offer to transfer all their right, title, and interest in and to such lands to the Secretary of the Interior, and

(2) Liberty County, Texas, agrees to accept the transfer of the Federal lands described in subsection (b)(2),

the Secretary shall accept such offer of private lands and, in exchange and without additional consideration, transfer to Liberty County, Texas, all right, title, and interest of the United States in and to the Federal lands described in subsection (b)(2).

**(b) LANDS DESCRIBED.—**

(1) PRIVATE LANDS.—The private lands described in this paragraph are approximately 3.76 acres of lands located in Liberty County, Texas, as generally depicted on the map entitled “Big Thicket Lake Estates Access—Proposed”.

(2) FEDERAL LANDS.—The Federal lands described in this paragraph are approximately 2.38 acres of lands located in Menard Creek Corridor Unit of the Big Thicket National Preserve, as generally depicted on the map referred to in paragraph (1).

(c) ADMINISTRATION OF LANDS ACQUIRED BY THE UNITED STATES.—The lands acquired by the Secretary under this section shall be added to and administered as part of the Menard Creek Corridor Unit of the Big Thicket National Preserve.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Utah [Mr. HANSEN] and the gentleman from New Mexico [Mr. RICHARDSON] will each be recognized for 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Utah [Mr. HANSEN].

Mr. HANSEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 826, sponsored by Mr. WILSON of Texas, would extend the

authority previously granted to the Park Service to conduct land exchanges with private owners and the Forest Service at the Big Thicket National Preserve. These exchanges will add critical acreage to the park unit. Because of the lack of progress by the respective agencies, this legislation is necessary to facilitate expansion of the Big Thicket National Preserve as mandated by the 103d Congress.

Mr. WILSON has worked cooperatively with the committee and the agencies to find a way to promptly facilitate this noncontroversial land exchange. This legislation will extend the deadline for completion of these exchanges by 3 years or until July 1, 1998. Because we are interested in these exchanges occurring in a prompt manner, this bill will also terminate the authority of the Park Service to conduct this exchange if the new deadline is not met. Moreover, there is a requirement that the agencies report back to the committee every 6 months on the progress of the exchange. Last, included in the text is the authorization to complete a very minor exchange necessary to provide emergency access to an inholder in times of flooding. This will exchange 3.76 acres of private lands for 2.38 acres of park lands. This is a noncontroversial exchange supported by both the landowner and the Park Service.

I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 826 for the betterment of the Big Thicket National Preserve.

□ 1430

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. RICHARDSON. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Mr. RICHARDSON asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. RICHARDSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 826, introduced by my good friend and colleague, Representative CHARLIE WILSON. It is a disappointment that the Big Thicket National Preserve land exchanges that were previously authorized have not been completed. Representative WILSON introduced H.R. 826 to extend the deadline for completion of these exchanges. I am glad to see that the bill extends the time period. However, it appears that the gun is being put to the head of the National Park Service to get the land exchanges completed, when it does not appear that the National Park Service is the problem in getting the exchanges done. I hope that the committee amendment's triggering mechanism will not be necessary and that these exchanges can be completed quickly.

I would also note, Mr. Speaker, that the committee amendment includes an additional land exchange that had not been previously discussed. I understand that this small exchange is one the National Park Service supports and that