

Mr. President, I rise today to discuss the state of current budget negotiations. First, I would like to thank Senator DOLE and Senator DOMENICI for their leadership and fortitude in pursuing a balanced budget in the next 7 years. They have been working hard during this past year at finding common ground with the President to reach a budget agreement.

Further, I am pleased that the President has recently agreed to balance the budget during the next 7 years using CBO scoring. I understand the importance that this step has in reaching a final agreement. With this in mind, I remain hopeful that an agreement can be reached quickly.

Mr. President, however, I look on with regret as the current negotiations are under suspension. It is vitally important that both sides quickly resume discussions.

Like many of my colleagues, I am committed to balancing the Federal budget. I have been working with several Senate Members for the past few weeks from both parties to forge a compromise budget that balances in 7 years and uses CBO for scoring. We have recently offered this bipartisan plan to our congressional leaders that is both reasonable and plausible. I was very pleased to see that the Republican budget negotiators have incorporated many of these suggestions from this bipartisan plan in their latest proposal to the President. With these latest proposals it now appears that Congress and the President are close on many items. In many cases the two sides are off by only 1 percent in nominative terms on many budgetary items.

Mr. President, I will continue to work with my colleagues to forge a compromise agreement in the near term. Finally, I believe that during this process of working on a budget agreement Congress and the President must keep the Federal Government fully operating. It is unnecessary and wrong to penalize Federal workers for the Congress' and White House's inability to reach agreement.

I want to again commend, as others have, the majority leader, Senator DOLE, for ensuring that we did not have a breakdown yesterday. There were rumors flying around this city that it was expected that one or the other side would just decide that we ought to end the negotiations.

I conversed with several of my moderate companions who have been moving and trying to get a moderate budget proposal there for others to look at, and I found that such a breakdown of the negotiations would have been a serious, serious mistake. There are issues on both sides from individuals that feel that it would be politically advantageous for each side to have the negotiations break down. I think that would be a horrible mistake. It is for the good of the country. And we are right now in the position that we can really have a breakthrough on what will make the future of this country

brighter, and we should work all we can. The same is true on welfare as well.

I also would say that in the negotiations one of the areas of major consideration is Medicare. I hope and urge that both Houses resume negotiations on health care reform because, if we can get the breakthroughs which I know are there in health care reform—to get the cost of Medicare under control so that we do not get all the cost shifting with the fee-for-services system—we can make that almost a nonissue in the near future. If that becomes a nonissue in the sense that it is under control, then the budget reconciliation, budget problems, diminish very substantially.

#### THE DEATH OF MIKE SYNAR

Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President, I would also like to add my comments on the death of Mike Synar, who was a good friend of mine in the House at the time I served there. He and I worked on many controversial projects and programs.

I believe very strongly that there have been few people who have been as dedicated in handling and facing difficult and tough issues as Mike Synar.

I was saddened by his death at a very premature age, and wish to express my condolences to his family.

Mr. HEFLIN addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

#### THE DEATH OF JUDGE JAMES A. TOMPKINS

Mr. HEFLIN. Mr. President, I want to mention the death of a dear friend of mine, Judge James A. Tompkins. He was known nationally, and attended many national Democratic conventions. He served as probate judge of my home county, Colbert County, and his father before him served as probate judge of Colbert County.

After Judge Tompkins left that office, his wife served as probate judge of our county, and his son is now a circuit judge in Colbert County. I will have more remarks about that later.

#### MIKE SYNAR

Mr. HEFLIN. Mr. President, I would like to also add my words about Mike Synar. He and I worked together on bankruptcy legislation as well as farm legislation. He was a great Congressman and will be truly missed.

#### TRIBUTE TO THE SUPREME COURT

Mr. HEFLIN. I want to commend the Supreme Court for its activities during this storm. Monday it met and heard oral arguments. Yesterday, Tuesday, it met and heard oral arguments. It is meeting today. It perhaps has a smaller group of people who would have to gather to meet, but nevertheless they

are to be commended for their activity in all of this snowstorm.

I will say that on Monday I was in my office at 3 o'clock when the Senate met. The Presiding Officer now, Senator WARNER, was here, and the Senator from Vermont, Senator JEFFORDS, was here, and one two others. Senator DOLE, of course, was here. I commend them for coming and making the effort. It reminded me of the effort on President's Day in 1979 when we had 24 inches of snow, more snow than we have today.

As has been the custom and the tradition of the Senate, the farewell address of George Washington was delivered. On that occasion the Presiding Officer, Senator WARNER, delivered that address, read it. I happened to have presided. There may have been one other Member of the Senate that was here. Senator WARNER made a real effort, walked some several miles in order to come and finally got here. I remember that quite well, that particular time.

So the Supreme Court of the United States is meeting. They are to be commended for their effort at this time.

I would like to—

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, would the distinguished Senator from Alabama yield for one comment?

Mr. HEFLIN. I say yes to the Senator.

Mr. LOTT. I just want to commend the Senator for his comments. Being from a neighboring State, Mississippi, I have talked to constituents there this morning. It is 65 and the sun is shining there. They feel like it is a little cool. They do not quite understand what all the fuss is. Their needs go on.

I have been working on a veterans' case and a post office matter. I just want to commend the Senator from Alabama and note that the Senator from Mississippi and southern Senators are here, and I just do not quite understand what all the fuss is about with the snow.

Would the Senator from Alabama share that feeling?

Mr. HEFLIN. Yes, I say to the Senator. I am not saying that I endorse snow. I do not like too much of it. I see my friend from Alaska and Vermont and others who endorse snow. I am not a snow endorser.

But people in various places where the weather is not too bad, they have phoned in; and sometimes their phones are not being answered, and that is because of the problems here.

#### THE BUDGET NEGOTIATIONS

Mr. HEFLIN. I would like to mention the situation concerning the budget negotiations. As Senator SPECTER said, they are really eight-tenths of 1 percent from reaching agreement in dollars and cents. It constitutes more than \$12 trillion over a 7-year period. There is \$100 billion in difference now, which is eight-tenths of 1 percent.

There are policy differences involved in this. But many of us have been striving to have a balanced budget for a