

to meet with Secretary Christopher. I think we will watch the events in the Middle East very, very closely, and I am glad that peace seems to be moving forward.

#### SUCCESSFUL END TO 1996 FISCAL YEAR

The Speaker pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California [Mr. RIGGS] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. RIGGS. Mr. Speaker, I simply want to stand before the House and point out that we are on the verge of a truly historic vote here over the next couple of hours. I believe that this body, in a bipartisan manner, will vote later this afternoon to approve House Resolution 3019, which is the omnibus appropriations spending bill, and that that legislation will mark the end, the successful end to the 1996 Federal fiscal year.

What makes this such a signal event and such a historic occasion is the fact that this bill, coupled with the spending cuts that were made last year in fiscal year 1995 combined, will equal savings to the taxpayer of \$32 billion, resulting in the lowest projected deficit in 14 years and the single largest cut in Government spending since World War II. So I think it is safe to say that this legislation reverses decades before of runaway Federal Government spending.

I want to point out that this legislation follows what we could have considered to be setbacks last year, the defeat in the other body, the U.S. Senate, by one vote of the constitutional balanced budget amendment; the President's veto last year of the House-Senate passed 7-year balanced budget plan. But we did not let those temporary setbacks deter from us our primary goal, which was to put the country on the path to a balanced budget in 7 years or less.

As I look down at my fellow appropriator, the gentleman from New York [Mr. FORBES], I recall that going into these budget negotiations last year we really said a couple things. One, we said the Social Security trust fund would be off-budget, now and forever. No more borrowing from the Social Security trust fund to pay for other Federal spending or to mask the true size of the Federal budget deficit.

Secondly, we said in the negotiations themselves, between the principles, we would have two conditions and two conditions only: first, the budget would have to be balanced in 7 years; and, second, we would have to balance the budget using honest numbers provided by the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office. No more budget gimmicks or smoke and mirrors.

So we have done that. In this legislation that we will be taking up within a matter of minutes now, we will have achieved and then some the first-year spending reduction targets, the first-year deficit reduction targets to put

the country on a path to a balanced budget in 7 years.

But remember, colleagues, that that only deals with the one-third side of the Federal budget which is discretionary spending. We have this other two-thirds over here which is called mandatory spending, and it is the entitlement programs which have been on automatic pilot for years and growing as a result at an unsustainable rate.

Mr. Speaker, I simply want to conclude my remarks by saying that the problem with the Medicare trust funds is not going to go away. I introduce for the RECORD today two editorials that have appeared in northern California newspapers, one appearing in The New York Times' own Santa Rosa Press Democrat saying, "Politics As Usual Won't Save Medicare," and the second appearing on the more liberal editorial page of the San Francisco Chronicle, "Medicare Trust Fund Needs Swift Attention," with the excerpt, "Medicare's Hospital Trust Fund is in even worse shape than officials projected last year."

It is very clear from these editorials, from The New York Times article on February 5 of this year and then just earlier this week, April 23, that the Medicare trust fund is losing money at an alarming rate. There is clearly a trend developing here. We know from the media really, not from the Clinton administration but the media, that the Medicare trust fund lost \$35.7 million last year and so far this year, in fiscal year 1996, has lost \$4.2 billion.

So the point and the message here to my colleagues and to the American people is that Medicare is going broke faster than expected. The President did the wrong thing when he vetoed last year the only serious plan to reform Medicare. That is the plan that we put forward in this body and in the Senate which would have increased Medicare spending per Medicare recipient from \$4,800 today to \$7,300 7 years from now, increased Medicare spending, increased Medicare health care choices for Medicare recipients, and save the program from bankruptcy.

So this is a problem that is not going to go away. The program is continuing to head towards bankruptcy because the congressional Democrats and the President himself are choosing politics or playing politics instead of joining with us in a bipartisan fashion to address this very real problem.

The President should not have vetoed the Medicare Preservation Act. He should have in fact signed it. I dare say that if BOB DOLE was President, he would sign this very important legislation.

#### CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 3019, BALANCED BUDGET DOWN PAYMENT ACT, II

Mr. LIVINGSTON submitted the following conference report and statement on the bill (H.R. 3019) making appropriations for fiscal year 1996 to

make a further downpayment toward a balanced budget, and for other purposes:

#### CONFERENCE REPORT (H. REPT. 104-537)

The committee of conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 3019) "making appropriations for fiscal year 1996 to make a further downpayment toward a balanced budget, and for other purposes," having met, after full and free conference, have agreed to recommend and do recommend to their respective Houses as follows:

That the House recede from its disagreement to the amendment of the Senate, and agree to the same with an amendment, as follows:

In lieu of the matter stricken and inserted, insert:

*That the following sums are appropriated, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, and out of applicable corporate or other revenues, receipts, and funds, for the several departments, agencies, corporations, and other organizational units of the Government for the fiscal year 1996, and for other purposes, namely:*

#### TITLE I—OMNIBUS APPROPRIATIONS

SEC. 101. (a) For programs, projects or activities in the Departments of Commerce, Justice, and State, the Judiciary, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 1996, provided as follows, to be effective as if it had been enacted into law as the regular appropriations Act:

#### AN ACT

*Making appropriations for the Departments of Commerce, Justice, and State, the Judiciary, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1996, and for other purposes.*

#### TITLE I—DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

##### GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

##### SALARIES AND EXPENSES

*For expenses necessary for the administration of the Department of Justice, \$74,282,000; including not to exceed \$3,317,000 for the Facilities Program 2000, and including \$5,000,000 for management and oversight of Immigration and Naturalization Service activities, both sums to remain available until expended: Provided, That not to exceed 48 permanent positions and 55 full-time equivalent workyears and \$7,477,000 shall be expended for the Department Leadership Program, exclusive of augmentation that occurred in these offices in fiscal year 1995: Provided further, That not to exceed 76 permanent positions and 90 full-time equivalent workyears and \$9,487,000 shall be expended for the Offices of Legislative Affairs, Public Affairs and Policy Development: Provided further, That the latter three aforementioned offices shall not be augmented by personnel details, temporary transfers of personnel on either a reimbursable or non-reimbursable basis or any other type of formal or informal transfer or reimbursement of personnel or funds on either a temporary or long-term basis.*

##### COUNTERTERRORISM FUND

*For necessary expenses, as determined by the Attorney General, \$16,898,000, to remain available until expended, to reimburse any Department of Justice organization for (1) the costs incurred in reestablishing the operational capability of an office or facility which has been damaged or destroyed as a result of the bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City or any domestic or international terrorist incident, (2) the costs of providing support to counter, investigate or prosecute domestic or international terrorism, including payment of rewards in connection with these activities, and (3) the costs of conducting a terrorism threat assessment of Federal agencies and their facilities: Provided, That funds provided under this section shall be available only after the Attorney*