

Columbia. And he is right. Colleagues, I ask you to avoid that veto, and to send this report back to the conference committee so this intrusion can be eliminated. Please join me and vote "no" on this conference report as it now reads.

#### EMPOWERMENT ZONES AND ENTERPRISE COMMUNITIES ACT

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I rise today to let my colleagues know that I am a cosponsor of S. 1473, the Empowerment Zones and Enterprise Communities Act. I believe this bill is an important step in the right direction, though I still have serious concerns about the discrepancy of funding levels between rural and urban Empowerment Zones.

First, let me say I strongly support the Empowerment Zones/Enterprise Community concept. Areas that are designated as Empowerment Zones and Enterprise Communities combine tax credits and social service grants to promote long-term economic revitalization. These communities take a grassroots approach to revitalization by building partnerships with local government, non-profit groups and the private sector—thus allowing the federal government to support the work done on a local level.

The problem, Mr. President, is that Round II Empowerment Zones are not fully funded and are not receiving the same tax benefits as Round I Empowerment Zones. Will Rogers once said, "I don't make jokes. I just watch the government and report the facts." I'm afraid this holds all too true for those who have struggled to see the Round II Empowerment Zones live up to their expectation. When the Griggs/Steele Empowerment Zone in eastern North Dakota was designated a Round II Empowerment Zone last year, the federal government made a commitment to help leaders in these communities create jobs and economic opportunity. Unfortunately, however, this Empowerment Zone still hasn't received one dime of federal funding. Those who live in the Griggs/Steele Empowerment Zone are now beginning to question the commitment of the federal government to make good on its promises.

I am co-sponsoring this bill because I think Congress has a responsibility to do the right thing and fully fund Round II Empowerment Zones and Enterprise Communities throughout this country. Having said that, I am very concerned about the discrepancy in funding between rural and urban areas. Like far too many proposals we debate here in Congress, this bill disproportionately grants much more funding for urban areas than rural areas. Of the \$1.75 billion this legislation would provide over 9 years, urban areas receive almost 86% of the total funding. Although I recognize that we've made some progress and narrowed the gap that existed between rural and urban areas in the original proposal, I hope we can do

more to help rural areas of this country currently facing so many challenges to economic prosperity.

Despite my concerns about the bill on these grounds, I am cosponsoring this legislation because I recognize that Empowerment Zones and Enterprise Communities need this funding in a timely manner to accomplish the economic revitalization the federal government promised. I will continue to work to ensure that rural Round II EZ/ECs receive the full funding and tax benefits they deserve.

#### THE VERY BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, at the close of business yesterday, Tuesday, September 21, 1999, the Federal debt stood at \$5,634,836,758,964.63 (Five trillion, six hundred thirty-four billion, eight hundred thirty-six million, seven hundred fifty-eight thousand, nine hundred sixty-four dollars and sixty-three cents).

One year ago, September 21, 1998, the Federal debt stood at \$5,510,750,000,000 (Five trillion, five hundred ten billion, seven hundred fifty million).

Five years ago, September 21, 1994, the Federal debt stood at \$4,685,969,000,000 (Four trillion, six hundred eighty-five billion, nine hundred sixty-nine million).

Fifteen years ago, September 21, 1984, the Federal debt stood at \$1,566,880,000,000 (One trillion, five hundred sixty-six billion, eight hundred eighty million) which reflects a debt increase of more than \$4 trillion—\$4,067,956,758,964.63 (Four trillion, sixty-seven billion, nine hundred fifty-six million, seven hundred fifty-eight thousand, nine hundred sixty-four dollars and sixty-three cents) during the past 15 years.

#### MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Williams, one of his secretaries.

##### EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The nominations received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

#### MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 11:40 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Hanrahan, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills and joint resolutions in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 468. An act to establish the Saint Helena Island National Scenic Area.

H.R. 834. An act to extend the authorization for the National Historic Preservation fund, and for other purposes.

H.R. 1231. An act to direct the Secretary of Agriculture to convey certain national forest lands to Elko County, Nevada, for continued use as a cemetery.

H.R. 1243. An act to reauthorize the National Marine Sanctuaries Act.

H.R. 1431. An act to reauthorize and amend the Coastal Barrier Resources Act.

H.R. 2079. An act to provide for the conveyance of certain National Forest System lands in the State of South Dakota.

H.R. 2116. An act to amend title 38, United States Code, to establish a program of extended care services for veterans and to make other improvements in health care programs of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

H.R. 2367. An act to reauthorize a comprehensive program of support for victims of torture.

H.J. Res. 54. An act to extend the authorization for the Upper Delaware Citizens Advisory Council.

H.J. Res. 62. An act to provide that the provisions of Executive Order 13107, relating to the implementation of certain human rights treaties, shall not have any legal effect.

The message also announced that the House disagrees to the amendment of the Senate to the bill, H.R. 2084, making appropriations for the Department of Transportation and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2000, and for other purposes, and agrees to the conference asked by the Senate on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses thereon; and appoints Mr. WOLF, Mr. DELAY, Mr. REGULA, Mr. ROGERS, Mr. PACKARD, Mr. CALLAHAN, Mr. TIAHRT, Mr. ADERHOLT, Ms. GRANGER, Mr. YOUNG of Florida, Mr. SABO, Mr. OLVER, Mr. PASTOR, Ms. KILPATRICK, Mr. SERRANO, Mr. FORBES, and Mr. OBEY as the managers of the conference on the part of the House.

##### ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

At 4:42 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Ms. Niland, one of its reading clerks, announced that the Speaker has signed the following enrolled bill:

S. 1059. An act to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2000 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe personnel strengths for such fiscal year for the Armed forces, and for other purposes.

The enrolled bill was signed subsequently by the President pro tempore (Mr. THURMOND).

#### MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills and joint resolutions were read the first and second times by unanimous consent and referred as indicated:

H.R. 468. An act to establish the Saint Helena Island National Scenic Area; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

H.R. 834. An act to extend the authorization for the National Historic Preservation Fund, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

H.R. 1231. An act to direct the Secretary of Agriculture to convey certain National Forest lands to Elko County, Nevada, for continued use as a cemetery; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

H.R. 1243. An act to reauthorize the National Marine Sanctuaries Act; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.