

Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn having voted in the affirmative, the motion is agreed to.

Mr. COCHRAN addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The distinguished Senator from Mississippi is recognized.

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, on behalf of the leader, I will propound the following unanimous consent request which has been cleared, I am told, on both sides of the aisle. It relates to the further handling of the Agriculture conference report.

I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding rule XXII, at 9:30 a.m. on Wednesday there be up to 5 hours equally divided for debate between Senator COCHRAN and the minority manager or his designee, with an additional hour under the control of Senator WELLSTONE, on the Agriculture appropriations conference report, and that following the use or yielding back of time, the Senate proceed to vote on adoption of the conference report without any intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, I have been authorized, on behalf of the leader, to announce, for the information of all Senators, there will be no more votes tonight.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BROWNBACK). Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

THE VERY BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, at the close of business Friday, October 8, 1999, the Federal debt stood at \$5,660,032,556,386.77 (Five trillion, six hundred sixty billion, thirty-two million, five hundred fifty-six thousand, three hundred eighty-six dollars and seventy-seven cents).

One year ago, October 8, 1998, the Federal debt stood at \$5,534,496,000,000 (Five trillion, five hundred thirty-four billion, four hundred ninety-six million).

Fifteen years ago, October 8, 1984, the Federal debt stood at \$1,572,268,000,000 (One trillion, five hundred seventy-two billion, two hundred sixty-eight million).

Twenty-five years ago, October 8, 1974, the Federal debt stood at \$477,151,000,000 (Four hundred seventy-seven billion, one hundred fifty-one million) which reflects a debt increase of more than \$5 trillion—\$5,182,881,556,386.77 (Five trillion, one hundred eighty-two billion, eight hundred eighty-one million, five hundred fifty-six thousand, three hundred eighty-six dollars and seventy-seven cents) during the past 25 years.

TITLE XX SOCIAL SERVICES BLOCK GRANTS

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, I rise to speak about some grave concerns I have regarding the dramatic and unprecedented cuts to Title XX, the Social Services Block Grant, in S. 1650, the Labor-Health and Human Services Appropriations bill.

As I am sure many of my colleagues are aware, the Social Services Block Grant is currently authorized at \$2.38 billion, but the Senate bill provides for only \$1.05 billion, a reduction of more than 50%, for Fiscal Year 2000. In addition, it appears that the bill would also accelerate the reduction in transferability of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families—or TANF—from 10% to 4.25%. In other words, not only has the appropriation been slashed in half, the ability of the states and counties to transfer other dollars into SSBG is also sharply reduced.

My immediate reaction when I learned about these cuts to SSBG was enormous disappointment. When I travel through each of Wisconsin's 72 counties each year holding town-meeting style listening sessions, many of my constituents have discussed with me the value and importance of SSBG funds in enabling the provision of vitally-needed services for some of our most vulnerable citizens. I have the benefit of a very engaged and active Counties Association to keep me informed about the importance of assuring SSBG funding.

But perhaps not all of my colleagues share my good fortune in this respect, perhaps some of our colleagues are not aware of the value of SSBG funds in their own states and communities—that is the only reason I can think of why these cuts are included in the bill. In the event that that is the case, please allow me a few moments to elaborate on the important services that SSBG dollars fund in my home state of Wisconsin:

Wisconsin counties received more than \$42 million in SSBG dollars in FY 1997, the most recent year for which data is available. Those dollars provided services to Wisconsin's Seniors such as home meal delivery programs like meals-on-wheels, day programs for seniors, and supportive home care. SSBG dollars also help to provide crucial services to protect children, such as investigating potential child abuse cases and providing protective services for children who ARE being abused,

and providing for after school programs so that children have a safe place to go in the afternoon. Throughout Wisconsin, SSBG dollars have enabled Wisconsin's counties to provide these services to 283,964 Wisconsinites—many of whom will lose access to these services if SSBG is further cut.

Lastly, let me illustrate what the impact of SSBG cuts means for some communities in Wisconsin: the Rainbow Center for Prevention of Child Abuse in Dane County, Wisconsin, will have to cut services for 130 families. In Milwaukee County, 428 patients will not receive outpatient mental health care, and 550 adults seeking drug and alcohol abuse treatment will be turned away. Milwaukee County will also lose funding for more than 2,000 shelter nights for the homeless and victims of domestic violence.

Mr. President, I hope that this short description of the many ways SSBG supports and strengthens counties and local communities helps to illustrate why a 50% reduction in funds will be so devastating. I hope that House and Senate conferees will restore SSBG to its authorized amount for Fiscal Year 2000 so that the counties who so rely on these funds will be able to provide the services our constituents need, services that are vital to supporting and strengthening our communities.

I thank the Chair.

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.)

REPORT ON THE OPERATION OF THE CARIBBEAN BASIN ECONOMIC RECOVERY ACT—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT— PM 63

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was referred to the Committee on Finance.

To the Congress of the United States:

As required by section 214 of the Caribbean Basin Economic Recovery Expansion Act of 1990 (19 U.S.C. 2702(f)), I transmit herewith to the Congress the Third Report on the Operation of the Caribbean Basin Economic Recovery Act.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON.

THE WHITE HOUSE, October 12, 1999.