

Mr. BARR of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. BLUNT. I yield to the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. BARR of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I thank the distinguished chief deputy majority whip for providing this time on the floor today as PAUL and his family are coping with a very serious medical illness that has befallen our colleague from Georgia on the other side of this great Capitol building.

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PAUL COVERDELL is a man of Georgia. He is a true patriot of this country, and he works tirelessly on behalf of the people of Georgia and the United States of America. But first and foremost, he is a man of God. We ask the Lord's blessing on him and his doctors today as they cope with this very serious illness, and we ask for the prayers of all of our colleagues and all of those many millions of Americans whose very kind and gentle work and lives PAUL has touched with his work over the years.

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL).

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I would like to join with my colleagues in praying for a speedy recovery of Senator COVERDELL. I have had many differences with the Senator on legislative issues, but I have not met anyone that has been more of a gentleman, more of someone that respects the other view, and someone that really respects the institution of the House and the other body.

It is times like this that we throw away the labels of Democrat and Republican and realize that God's hand is involved in everything that we do, and at a time like this, only our prayers can be of any assistance to our colleague.

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. CHAMBLISS).

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding to me.

I, too, would just like to echo the sentiment of all of my colleagues. PAUL COVERDELL is a great American. Nobody does more for his country or loves this country more than PAUL COVERDELL. He is simply a great American and great individual to work with us.

Our prayers go out to PAUL and Nancy as he goes through this very difficult time. We just look forward to a very speedy recovery for PAUL and return to the United States Senate.

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. COLLINS).

Mr. COLLINS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding to me. I thank him, too, for bringing this matter and this announcement before the House of Representatives.

PAUL COVERDELL is a colleague, but most of all he is a friend, a friend for

many years to many of us. In fact, PAUL COVERDELL has been a role model for many of us who followed him and served with him in the different bodies of the legislature.

When we received the call on Sunday afternoon that he had been admitted to Piedmont Hospital, our prayers began immediately, because we understood the severeness of his problem.

I hope and I pray that all of my colleagues would join us, join with the people of Georgia, the people of this Nation in praying for a speedy recovery and a full recovery of PAUL COVERDELL.

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. KINGSTON).

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding to me.

Mr. Speaker, it is times like this and many other times when one is dealing with PAUL COVERDELL that one no longer thinks of him as a United States Senator. One does not think of him as one of the most influential men in America. One thinks of him just as PAUL, PAUL and Nancy Coverdell, two friends whom we have all worked with over the years, whom we have all known and respected.

One thing about PAUL is one may agree or disagree with him, but one always respects his energy level, his knowledge of the issue, and the way he is so focused in attacking things. We are all his friends. He is a friend of the institution, and he is a friend of the governmental process, somebody who respects everyone and has that respect both ways.

Our prayers are with him, and that is the best that we can all do at this time.

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friends for participating today and the indulgence of the House as we talk about a person who is really of great value to the House.

About a year ago, I was given an assignment that allowed me to work with Senator COVERDELL every week. I told the person that gave me that assignment several months ago I would have done that job in retrospect if for no other reason than to get to work with PAUL COVERDELL.

He is truly, as the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL) said, one of the great gentlemen of this Congress. We need him to get our work done. We wish him well. Our prayers are with him and his family.

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ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). The Chair has, under today's unusual circumstances, allowed unusual latitude in references to a sitting member of the other body.

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ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair

announces that he will postpone further proceedings today on the remaining 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 6 of rule XX.

Any record vote on postponed questions will be taken later today.

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REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 1660

Mrs. MINK of Hawaii. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to withdraw my name as a cosponsor from H.R. 1660.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Hawaii?

There was no objection.

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DEBT RELIEF RECONCILIATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2001

Mr. NUSSLE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4866) to provide for reconciliation pursuant to section 103(b)(1) of the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2001 to reduce the public debt and to decrease the statutory limit on the public debt, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 4866

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Debt Relief Reconciliation Act for Fiscal Year 2001".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS AND PURPOSE.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Congress finds that—

(1) fiscal discipline, resulting from the Balanced Budget Act of 1997, and strong economic growth have ended decades of deficit spending and have produced budget surpluses without using the social security surplus;

(2) fiscal pressures will mount in the future as the aging of the population increases budget obligations;

(3) until Congress and the President agree to legislation that strengthens social security, the social security surplus should be used to reduce the debt held by the public;

(4) strengthening the Government's fiscal position through public debt reduction increases national savings, promotes economic growth, reduces interest costs, and is a constructive way to prepare for the Government's future budget obligations; and

(5) it is fiscally responsible and in the long-term national economic interest to use a portion of the nonsocial security surplus to reduce the debt held by the public.

(b) PURPOSE.—It is the purpose of this Act to—

(1) reduce the debt held by the public with the goal of eliminating this debt by 2013; and

(2) decrease the statutory limit on the public debt.

SEC. 3. ESTABLISHMENT OF PUBLIC DEBT REDUCTION PAYMENT ACCOUNT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter I of chapter 31 of title 31, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

"§3114. Public debt reduction payment account

"(a) There is established in the Treasury of the United States an account to be known as the Public Debt Reduction Payment Account