

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

WORLD AIDS DAY

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, every December first since 1988, World AIDS Day has been a day dedicated to sending messages of compassion, hope, solidarity, and understanding.

Commemorating this day is a small but important gesture, and it is the least we can do in the face of the worst pandemic mankind has ever known. Yesterday, UNAIDS and the World Health Organization released a joint report that illustrates the enormity of the AIDS pandemic. The numbers are so staggering that they are almost incomprehensible. There are now 40 million people living with AIDS. Two point seven million of them are children. In the past year, there have been 5 million new HIV infections and 3 million AIDS deaths.

Many countries are seeing their future—embodied in their young people—ravaged by this disease. People under the age of 25 represent half of all new HIV infection cases, and there are now 10 million people between the ages of 15 and 24 living with HIV/AIDS. Every minute, five more young people are infected with HIV. As I have argued before, this is not just a humanitarian issue, it is also an economic and national security issue.

The International Labor Organization reports that by 2020, AIDS will reduce national workforces so much that countries with the highest rates of prevalence will see their GDPs drop by as much as 20 percent in the next 20 years. How can companies in these nations afford the increased costs for insurance, benefits, training, and illness in his environment?

The Food and Agriculture Organization reports that 7 million farm workers have died from AIDS-related causes since 1985, and 16 million more are expected to die in the next 20 years. How can these countries maintain—let alone increase—agricultural output under these circumstances?

The United Nations reports that in 1999, 860,000 students in sub-Saharan Africa lost their teachers to AIDS. How can countries educate their children with these losses? These numbers are a disturbing snapshot of the epidemic today. Tragically, they may only be the tip of the iceberg.

Experts tell us that the epidemic in many parts of the world is still in its early stages. Globally, most people infected are unaware they carry the virus. Many millions more know nothing about HIV and how to protect themselves against it. If we are ever to staunch the AIDS epidemic, we must continue—and increase—our efforts at prevention.

Since the 1980s, the United States has found prevention efforts such as school-based education, perinatal prevention programs, and screening the blood supply, to prove effective. As a member of the family of nations, we have to do a better job of promoting and supporting international prevention and education programs. We were able to take a positive step in the foreign operations appropriations bill, where the Senate added significant funds to invest in prevention programs around the globe.

I am hopeful the final bill will include those funds, but prevention and treatment must go hand in hand, because without treatment options, at-risk individuals have no incentive to submit to testing or to practice prevention. We have taken some positive steps in treating HIV/AIDS, but much more needs to be done. We have worked hard to invest \$300 million for the U.N. Global Trust Fund on AIDS, TB, and Malaria. While it is not nearly enough for this challenge, it is a significant first step.

As that fund is developed, we have to make sure that its resources are dedicated to fighting this disease on all fronts—including treatment. While there is pressure to limit the focus of the fund to prevention alone, that would be a mistake—and it would limit our ability to develop a comprehensive agenda to confront this pandemic.

The theme designated for this year's World AIDS Day is simply: "I care. Do you?" While our words today are important, it is our action every day—on all fronts, in all nations—that are the true measure of our caring. On this day, let us recommit ourselves to fighting, and ultimately defeating, this scourge.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Mexico.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be permitted to speak for 4 minutes as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I say to my two friends I have certainly no problem with the Senator from New Mexico speaking for 4 minutes, and I understand my friend from Oklahoma wants to speak for 10. When we came in this morning, we made an announcement we would try to wrap up by 1:15 p.m. today. We would have tried to do it sooner, but with the cloture petitions pending Senators had until 1 p.m. today to file their amendments. We wanted to really wrap this up. The Dirksen Building is going to be closed off. In fact, the process is beginning now. By 4 p.m., it will be wrapped up.

I have a few things to do when the two Senators complete their statements, and then we will close the Senate. We did not ask for a unanimous consent this morning, thinking some-

thing such as this might happen, but we appreciate the cooperation and look forward to the statements of the two Senators.

I ask unanimous consent that the Senator from New Mexico be recognized for 5 minutes, the Senator from Oklahoma for 12 minutes, and that I be recognized to close the Senate following those statements.

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

STIMULATING THE ECONOMY

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, first I say to the occupant of the chair, the junior Senator from New Jersey, when he came to the Senate he brought with him a rather distinguished career in investment banking, as I understand it, with a specialization in bonds. Whatever the case may be, he brought with him a tremendous expertise with reference to the American economy. Therefore, it makes me doubly proud that the idea many people suggested to me, that ends up being called a Social Security withholding tax holiday for 1 month, is supported by the occupant of the chair, because I give a lot of credit to somebody who comes to the Senate from the business world, talks with the business world, talks with labor union people and comes up with an analysis of what will, indeed, be the best economic stimulus of those that have been presented that could be adopted before Christmas and be effective, regardless of the arguments, during the next 4 to 5 months. It clearly could be in full effect.

First, those who have supported me from the standpoint of business are in pretty good company. So whatever we hear from some, that this cannot be implemented and that maybe it is not a good idea, let me introduce a letter which I received on November 30. It is a very current letter. It is from the Business Roundtable. Now, the Business Roundtable has a lot of American business members. This letter comes from the president, John Castellani—good Italian American name. We had not spoken in advance of my amendment, but this letter, so everybody will know, is an unequivocal enforcement of the holiday as being the best economic stimulus and the best news to provide confidence in the American people and that will move the economy ahead in terms of what it needs to give it a jump start in these very difficult times.

We all know we ought to do two big things. One, we ought to pay for all the military needs of our country in a very good appropriations bill. The President has told us what he needs. We need to do that. I understand it will be done next week. That is good.

The other thing we have to do is pass a stimulus package. We do not have to pass a package that has a "stimulus" label on it. We have to pass one that could be sent out to the business community, to the others who know what is happening in the American marketplace, and ask them, will this actually

stimulate the economy? Then we could say "stimulus," and those who know say it will stimulate. It is not a bill to meet a commitment.

This letter ends up saying, because there are some who say it will take too long, I say to the occupant of the chair, to implement, that some express concern about the ability of companies as a practical matter to implement this on short notice. We have surveyed our companies to see how quickly the payroll reduction could be implemented. These companies, some of the Nation's largest employers, have said it would be implemented in a range of a couple of days to a maximum of 3 weeks if it is kept simple. We have some leeway as to how to implement that holiday.

I ask unanimous consent that the letter be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the letter was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

THE BUSINESS ROUNDTABLE,
Washington, DC, November 30, 2001.

Hon. PETE V. DOMENICI,
Ranking Member, Senate Budget Committee,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR DOMENICI: The Business Roundtable believes that an economic stimulus is needed, and needed now. Moreover, we believe the stimulus should focus on enhancing consumer confidence and spending; that broad-based and significant incentives are needed to spur business demand; and both should be of a size and duration to change spending behavior in the near term.

To that end, the members of The Business Roundtable believe two measures would work quickly and effectively to improve cash flow and stimulate demand and productivity. First, we recommend an immediate reduction in the payroll tax. This action, more than any other proposal, will put money into the hands of those who need it and will spend it. A payroll tax reduction diversifies the stimulus on both the demand and supply sides. It also focuses assistance on lower-income individuals. Reducing both the employee and employer portions will reduce pressure on labor costs, and give both employers and employees more cash as soon as the next payday, thus relieving financial pressures on both. Your proposal for a withholding tax "holiday" certainly meets these criteria.

We continue to believe that enhancing business demand is essential for achieving a quick recovery. Again, the business incentives should be broad-based and of such a magnitude that they change business behavior by accelerating spending that is now being deferred. We also believe that any business stimulus must deal with existing tax provisions, such as Alternative Minimum Tax, which would act to negate the impact of the stimulus.

We also understand there has been some concern expressed about the ability of companies, as a practical matter, to implement a payroll tax reduction on short notice. We have surveyed our companies to see how quickly a payroll tax reduction can be implemented. These companies, some of the nation's largest employers, have said it could be implemented in a range of a couple of days to a maximum of three weeks if it is kept simple, and we have some leeway how to implement the tax holiday.

If we can provide further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

JOHN J. CASTELLANI.

Mr. DOMENICI. I hope those talking will at least put this letter among the things they consider in terms of the reality of the impact on the American consumer, the American buyer and seller, the American worker, and the American employer. This says an awful lot about many employed people. I don't know how many million American employees are represented by this group, but it is an awful lot.

Having said that, I understand there is some concern about the Social Security recipients of our country. Nobody will disagree the best thing for the Social Security trust fund and the best thing for you, Social Security recipients of the future, is for this economy to get going sooner rather than later. If we had a little time, we could debate and show graphs about what will happen to Social Security if this American economy stays in the tank for another year or for 2 years and what will happen if it comes out in 6 months. If we can get it out quick and get it growing, every Social Security recipient of today and those planning on it in the future will know the best thing we can do is pass the stimulus package. That will start the economy. There is no harm to the Social Security trust fund.

We are already using it because we are in the red. All we are saying is, as soon as we take it out, we replenish it, day by day, hour by hour, and nothing can happen to the fund. If you want to talk about protecting it, that is all well and good, but the reality is the best way to protect it is to do it and pass this stimulus. That will help the Social Security recipients the most.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

RAILROAD RETIREMENT

Mr. NICKLES. Mr. President, I congratulate and compliment my friend and colleague, Senator DOMENICI, for his statement and also for his leadership and his innovation. He has come up with an idea to help stimulate the economy that is far superior than some of the proposals being discussed, one of which is to give \$300 per individual or \$600 per family if they did not get a check last year.

Last year, we gave checks to people who paid taxes. Some people were saying, "Give money to people that did not pay taxes," notwithstanding the fact they were eligible for the earned-income tax credit, which, in many cases, was worth 3 or 4 times whatever payroll taxes they might have paid. The position of the Senator from New Mexico is far superior.

I happen to be one concerned about deficits and I am concerned about runaway spending. I contacted some individuals and said, we have agreed to 13.3 percent spending growth for next year, but many others say that is not near enough; we need to do more. So I will state a few facts.

Last year's spending—the spending we completed in September of 2001,

total discretionary spending, the spending we control by appropriations, that fluctuates, whatever we appropriate—was \$640 billion, 9.6 percent more than the previous year, which was at \$584 billion.

The President's budget for 2002, which we have just started for the fiscal year, was to grow at 6.1 percent. He agreed in a bipartisan agreement to throw in a few billion more for education, and there was an agreement with the appropriators to increase that figure to \$686 billion. That calls for a growth rate of 7.1 percent. That was agreed to in October. Some of our colleagues almost insulted the President, saying they wanted it in writing. The President gave it in writing, in a letter in October, that all the appropriated accounts would be at \$686 billion, a growth rate of 7.1 percent.

With the tragedy of September the 11th, the President agreed we had a bipartisan agreement to increase that level. Originally, it was \$20 billion, and at the last day that was doubled, from \$20 billion to \$40 billion, due to requests in New York, New Jersey, and other places. There is, again, bipartisan agreement that was adopted unanimously in the Senate.

Adding the \$40 billion on top of the \$686 billion, it is \$726 billion, an increase of 13.3 percent. That is where we are now. That is a lot. It is several times the rate of growth of inflation. But the \$40 billion is extraordinary, so maybe we should not count that, but we have a lot of other things happening. We still need budgets. Senator DOMENICI, former chairman of the Budget Committee, used to hammer on fiscal discipline, and we are acting as if fiscal discipline does not matter.

A few other things have happened. We have passed an airline assistance or the airline bailout bill. The cost of that, most people believe, is \$15 billion. It is not really. There was a \$5 billion cash outlay and \$10 billion in loan guarantees. Hopefully, the \$10 billion in loan guarantees will not cost that much; it will be significant cost.

We have also passed a victim's compensation fund. I know the occupant of the care has to be familiar with this because he has constituents involved. There is a lot of liability dealing with the victim's compensation funds. We passed that as part of the airline bill. I opposed it because I didn't think we had enough time to consider how to compensate victims from the September 11 disaster. A lot of people were killed and a lot of people injured. How do we compensate them? We created a special master. The President appointed a special master. I compliment him. The special master has one of the toughest jobs anywhere. I compliment him. He is doing it pro bono. It is a big challenge. He will try to meet deadlines, in months, to come up with a fair and equitable compensation system for victims. It could cost the Government billions of dollars. No one has a clue how much that will cost. That is already the law of the land.