

Dakota has a statement to make that is not related to our bill. I think it is in order, if he wishes to do so, while we wait to see if Senators wish to bring amendments to discuss tonight.

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, as Chairman of the Budget Committee, I regularly comment on Appropriations bills that are brought to this Senate for consideration and present the financial comparisons and budgetary data. Today I am reporting on compliance with the Budget Act in the case of the pending measure, H.R. 5631, the Department of Defense Appropriations Act for fiscal year 2007.

As reported by the Senate Committee on Appropriations, H.R. 5631 provides \$456.805 billion in budget authority and \$496.082 billion in outlays in fiscal year 2007 for the Department of Defense and related agencies. Of these totals, \$251 million in budget authority and \$251 million in outlays are for mandatory programs in fiscal year 2007. I will note here that this bill is in compliance with the 2007 302(b) allocations, but there are other budgetary matters worthy of Senators' attention.

The bill provides discretionary budget authority in fiscal year 2007 of \$414.500 billion for DOD's regular appropriation. But it also includes \$50.0 billion for projected contingency operations overseas. Of that, \$42.054 billion is designated as an emergency. The rest—\$7.946 billion—is funds remaining in Defense's fiscal year 2006 allocation. We should be very clear on this point: putting those funds in the Defense Appropriations bill has the effect of reversing the across-the-board cut Congress passed at the end of last year.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that a table displaying the Budget Committee estimate of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

H.R. 5631, 2007 DEFENSE APPROPRIATIONS SPENDING COMPARISONS—SENATE-REPORTED BILL
(Fiscal Year 2007, \$ millions)

	General purpose	Mandatory	Total
Senate-reported bill:			
Budget authority	414,500	251	414,751
Outlays	434,955	251	435,206
Senate 302(b) allocation:			
Budget authority	414,500	251	414,751
Outlays	*	*	*
2006 Enacted:			
Budget authority	393,759	245	394,004
Outlays	406,276	245	406,521
President's request:			
Budget authority	423,554	251	423,805
Outlays	424,302	251	424,553
House-passed bill: ¹			
Budget authority	377,357	251	377,608
Outlays	393,550	251	393,801
Senate reported bill compared to:			
Senate 302(b) allocation:			
Budget authority	0	0	0
Outlays	na	na	na
2006 Enacted:			
Budget authority	20,741	6	20,747
Outlays	28,679	6	28,685
President's request:			
Budget authority	-9,054	0	-9,054
Outlays	10,653	0	10,653
House-passed bill:			
Budget authority	37,143	0	37,143
Outlays	41,405	0	41,405

¹ House and Senate bills having different jurisdictions.
* There is no outlay allocation in the Senate for 2007 appropriations bills. Note: Details may not add to totals due to rounding. Totals adjusted for consistency with scorekeeping conventions.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that there now be a period for the transaction of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein subject to some time limit agreed to by the leadership.

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

The Senator from South Dakota.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, my understanding is that we are in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. That is correct.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 15 minutes in morning business.

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

ISSUES RELATING TO SOUTH DAKOTA

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I rise today to address some issues that are pending before the Senate, and I also want to acknowledge what I hope will be action we will take somewhere down the road regarding a situation in South Dakota that we are experiencing this year.

We are experiencing what is, I would say, probably a 100-year drought. We are having extraordinarily high temperatures. We haven't had rain. In fact, the rain accumulations this year in South Dakota are less than the rain in many years throughout the Great Depression back in the 1930s, and it is having a devastating impact on our economy and the farmers and ranchers in South Dakota on which our economy relies.

In fact, if one looks at the small grain crop, the wheat crop in South Dakota was a complete bust, a 100-percent loss in many areas of South Dakota.

The row crops, corn and soybeans, are extremely stressed. Much of that crop will be lost this year as well. Cattle producers are selling their herds, liquidating their herds, creating all kinds of economic issues for my State of South Dakota.

What I hope is that as time goes on, we will have an opportunity to address in some fashion that crisis in South Dakota in the form of an emergency disaster relief package.

There is some money attached, currently, to the agriculture appropriations bill that passed at the committee level of the Senate—it hasn't seen floor action—about \$3.9 billion that would apply to 2005. Obviously, 2006 is much worse in many parts of the country and for sure in my State of South Dakota. So I am hopeful we will be able to amend that or perhaps move on to some other legislation. I am looking at introducing a piece of freestanding legislation, too, that would address this situation for 2006.

My point is this is something which is a dire emergency in my State of

South Dakota. It literally is burning up out there. We have had temperatures that have shattered State records, in the high hundreds—115, 118—temperatures like that for days and days at a time without any rain. In fact, in many cases, there was very little rain going back all the way to the very first of this year. It is a historic event. As I said, it is probably up to a 100-year type event in terms of the actual weather conditions we are experiencing in South Dakota. I hope we can draw attention to that issue and get the support of our colleagues here in the Senate to address it.

I also wish to speak to an issue which has some bearing on that in a lot of ways—trying to keep people on the family farm, on the ranch, keeping these small businesses active, and allowing the next generation to move in and assume those operations and continue to create jobs and keep the economy going in South Dakota. It is really important.

Many pieces of legislation with which we will be dealing this week bear on this. One, the Energy bill has huge economic consequences to farmers and ranchers and small businesses that have to get their products to the marketplace and rely heavily on transportation, that need the inputs to get the crop planted, and the fertilizer and everything with it—all those costs are going through the ceiling as a result of high energy costs. Increasing energy supplies is critical.

The bill we just moved is important. I have another piece of renewable fuel legislation which I hope we will be able to get agreement on and be able to move across the Senate floor, too, this week and get some relief and move the country in the direction that is expanding the use of renewable fuels and expanding the sources of energy and lessening our dependence on foreign sources of energy.

We will also be voting on a pension bill this week, which is important, but the piece of legislation I want to speak to now is the tax bill which will come before the Senate later this week.

There are several provisions in the bill. One on which I have been working for some time is to provide permanent death tax relief. If we want to keep farmers and ranchers on the farm, continuing to grow and contributing to our economy in this country, we need to do something to address what is a very real issue. If we do not take action, in a few years here the death tax will rise back up to 55 percent, the top rate, and the exemption will drop back to \$1 million. Anybody who knows agriculture knows that today, with land values being what they are and the capital costs associated with agriculture, we need to provide some additional relief.

The death tax reform bill which is going to be considered and voted on in the Senate would raise that exemption