

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KOLBE). Will the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. LUTHER) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. LUTHER led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Mr. Lundregan, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate had passed with an amendment in which the concurrence of the House is requested, a bill of the House of the following title:

H.R. 2606. An act making appropriations for foreign operations, export financing, and related programs for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2000, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the Senate insists upon its amendment to the bill (H.R. 2606) "An Act making appropriations for foreign operations, export financing, and related programs for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2000, and for other purposes," requests a conference with the House on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses thereon, and appoints Mr. McCONNELL, Mr. SPECTER, Mr. GREGG, Mr. SHELBY, Mr. BENNETT, Mr. CAMPBELL, Mr. BOND, Mr. STEVENS, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. INOUE, Mr. LAUTENBERG, Mr. HARKIN, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mrs. MURRAY, and Mr. BYRD, to be the conferees on the part of the Senate.

The message also announced that the Senate agrees to the amendment of the House to the bill (S. 606) "An Act for the relief of Global Exploration and Development Corporation, Kerr-McGee Corporation, and Kerr-McGee Chemical, LLC (successor to Kerr-McGee Chemical Corporation), and for other purposes."

The message also announced that the Senate has passed a bill of the following title in which concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 695. An act to require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to establish a national cemetery for veterans in various locations in the United States, and for other purposes.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will entertain 1-minute requests at the end of the day.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 2488, TAXPAYER REFUND AND RELIEF ACT OF 1999

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 274 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 274

Resolved, That upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider the conference report to accompany the bill (H.R. 2488) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to reduce individual income tax rates, to provide marriage penalty relief, to reduce taxes on savings and investments, to provide estate and gift tax relief, to provide incentives for education savings and health care, and for other purposes. All points of order against the conference report and against its consideration are waived. The conference report shall be considered as read. The yeas and nays shall be considered as ordered on the question of adoption of the conference report and on any subsequent conference report or on any motion to dispose of an amendment between the houses on H.R. 2488. Clause 5(b) of rule XXI shall not apply to the question of adoption of the conference report and to any subsequent conference report or to any motion to dispose of an amendment between the houses on H.R. 2488.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LINDER) is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, for purposes of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MOAKLEY), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume.

During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for purposes of debate only.

Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 274 provides for the consideration of the conference report for H.R. 2488, the Taxpayer Refund and Relief Act of 1999. House Resolution 274 waives all points of order against the conference report and against its consideration, and provides that the conference report shall be considered as read.

The rule provides for 1 hour of general debate, divided equally between the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Ways and Means.

Finally, the rule provides that clause 5(b) of rule XXI, which requires a three-fifths vote on any amendment or measure containing a Federal income tax increase, shall not apply to the question of adoption of the conference report and to any subsequent conference report or to any motion to dispose of an amendment between the houses on the bill.

Mr. Speaker, the growth in Federal tax revenue has consistently outpaced the growth in income of the American people paying those taxes. For the first time in American history, taxes have reached war era levels during peacetime. Budget projections show taxes at above 20 percent of the gross domestic product for the next 10 years. Last year, and at least for the next few, this ratio exceeds the levels of taxation during 1945, when America was involved in every corner of the world during and after World War II.

In short, the American people are paying too much taxes. The American

people have given the Federal Government too much of their money, and we have to decide what to do with it. We committed ourselves to a certain cost of government in the 1997 balanced budget agreement. Since then, the American people have grown the economy so much they have paid too much for their government, and it is time to give it back.

That is exactly what the Taxpayer Refund and Relief Act proposes to do, make change for the American people on their tax bill.

On every other bill we get in the mail, for credit cards, the power bill, the phone bill, if we overpay, the company notes a little CR credit on the bill, crediting that amount for the next month. What would we think if businesses one day decided they could spend that overpayment better than we could, and just added it to their income statement at the end of the year? Why would we let the Federal Government do this to us?

That is what many of our colleagues in the House and the President are trying to do. Just a few months ago President Clinton said, we could give it all back to you, and hope you spend it right, but. But of course he believes that he knows how to spend our money better than we do, and he would rather let the Federal Government decide how to use our overpayment.

We in the majority believe our constituents have overpaid enough and are burdened every day by oppressive taxes. Let us think about what Americans must pay. First we are taxed on our income, then we are taxed on our savings and investments. Then we are taxed on our business, and irrationally, if we get married, we get a marriage penalty tax.

If that is not enough, there are death taxes levied on us after we have died. Our tax relief bill begins to change this pattern. This bill entirely eliminates the death tax, which has prevented thousands of Americans from keeping their family-owned businesses or family farms. It provides a 1 percent reduction in every American's tax rate, ensuring that every American who has been overcharged for their government will receive a refund. The bill seeks to expand on the investment that has helped to give us this surplus by cutting capital gains.

The Taxpayer Refund and Relief Act also provides \$100 billion in relief from the marriage tax penalty, a tangled web of tax provisions that have punished Americans for marrying for far too long.

H.R. 2488 expands opportunities for families to save for their children's education or their retirement, and it allows the self-employed to deduct the full cost of their health care.

In total, this bill provides \$792 billion in well-deserved tax relief for the American people. Tax relief is about