

Mr. GORTON. I share the Senator's concerns and I am certain we will deal with those questions and ideas in the context of reauthorization legislation.

Mrs. MURRAY. I thank the Senator.

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, I rise today to comment on an aspect of the Transportation appropriations bill that I think deserves mention during this debate. It's a factor that influences legislative debate, but one that we consistently sidestep in our discussions on this floor—money in politics.

Well, Mr. President, I'm trying to change that with what I call the Calling of the Bankroll. When I Call the Bankroll on this floor, I describe how much money the various interests that lobby us on a particular bill have spent on campaign contributions to influence our decisions here in this chamber. I have already Called the Bankroll on several bills; for instance, when I discussed the contributions of the high tech industry and the trial lawyers during debate on the Y2K bill, and, more recently, when I pointed out the contributions of the managed care companies and the pharmaceutical industry, among others, during the debate on the Patients' Bill of Rights.

And now, we come to the fiscal year 2000 Transportation appropriations bill, as it relates to the airline industry, which has been battling against another bill of rights. While in June the airline industry unveiled its own Passengers' Bill of Rights, it falls far short of what was outlined in other pending Senate legislation, including the Airline Passenger Fairness Act, of which I am a proud cosponsor. I want to take this opportunity to thank my colleague, Senator WYDEN, for his leadership on this issue, and his commitment to giving airline passengers across the country a real bill of rights. I am proud to be a co-sponsor of both amendments offered by my friend from Oregon.

The Airline Passenger Fairness Act establishes a national policy to provide consumers with a basic expectation of fair treatment by airlines and to encourage airlines to provide better customer service by outlining minimum standards. The Airline Passenger Fairness Act would ensure that passengers have the information that they need to make informed choices in their air travel plans.

But, Mr. President, there is a serious obstacle facing supporters of a comprehensive Passengers' Bill of Rights—the PAC and soft money contributions of the airline industry.

The six largest airlines in the United States—American, Continental, Delta, Northwest, United and US Airways—and their lobbying association, the Air Transport Association of America, gave a total of more than \$2 million dollars in soft money and more than \$1 million dollars in PAC money in the last election cycle alone.

Northwest was the largest soft money giver among these donors, giv-

ing well over half a million dollars to the political parties in 1997 and 1998. Mr. President, you may remember that Northwest Airlines made headlines across the country earlier this year when they left thousands of passengers stranded on snow-clogged runways in Detroit, leaving some of their customers without food, water or working toilets for more than eight hours.

Mr. President, according to the Department of Transportation, consumer complaints about air travel shot up by more than 25 percent last year. Those complaints run the gamut from erratic and unfair ticket pricing; being sold a ticket on already oversold flights; lost luggage; and flight delays, changes, and cancellations.

We can and should address these problems, Mr. President. The American people are demanding change; as legislators, we should respond.

But we have yet to do anything concrete in this Congress to guarantee airline passengers the rights they deserve.

The American people can't help wondering why, Mr. President, so today I offer this campaign finance information to my colleagues and the public to help to present a clearer picture of the influences surrounding this aspect of the Transportation appropriations bill, and the influence of those with a stake in the debate on a comprehensive Passengers' Bill of Rights.

I yield the floor.

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

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

Mr. VOINOVICH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to be allowed to proceed as in morning business.

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

THE TRUTH ABOUT BUDGET SURPLUSES

Mr. VOINOVICH. Mr. President, now that the tax cut bill will assuredly be vetoed, it is time to turn our attention to passing a budget that will respond to the needs of our citizens, keep our spending under control, maintain the integrity of the Social Security trust funds, and not increase our terrible national debt.

When I was back in Ohio during the August break, almost everybody I talked to said they were glad that I opposed the tax cut that was based on the 10-year rosy projections, which I referred to as a mirage. Every expert in America said that to base tax cuts or new spending on such projections was fiscally irresponsible.

The people who I spoke with told me that if it was not a mirage, then Congress should use the money to pay down the \$5.6 trillion national debt and get out of dealing with the problems of Social Security and Medicare.

They also said if we got to a point down the road where we got real money for a tax cut, we should do it when the economy needs stimulation and not right now.

Quite a few of these same Ohioans said to me: For goodness sakes, Congress should not sit down with President Clinton and negotiate a tax reduction for spending increases—just pass an honest budget.

As my colleagues know, the President has hinted that he may be willing to strike a deal for small tax cuts in exchange for a few spending increases. That would be an absolute disaster for our country's financial health, and I am pleased the majority leader has firmly rejected this approach.

I have no doubt that the President will promise future tax cuts while insisting on immediate spending. The problem will be, I fear, that the tax cuts will never materialize, and the spending will fund programs that will become entrenched. And what's worse, he will use the so-called surplus to pay for this new spending.

Let's get back to basics: There is no surplus. I have said it before and I will say it again: The only surplus we have is made up of Social Security funds.

Let me just say right here that I really wish the President, the Congress, and the media would start giving an accurate portrayal of the surplus and call it what it is—either the "Social Security" surplus or the "on-budget" surplus. And right now, the only surplus we have is a Social Security surplus.

I want to show a chart I have used in other speeches on the floor. It basically shows that even in 1999, when we are talking about a surplus, we are actually running a budget deficit of some \$4 billion. The first time we are going to have the real on-budget surplus in approximately 30 years is next year, as projected by CBO. We have not yet accumulated, this year, all of the tax revenues necessary to meet and exceed our spending in fiscal year 1999.

The only way we can claim a budget surplus today is by taking the surplus that is accumulating in the Social Security trust fund and using it to mask the deficit, just as has been done in previous years. The \$14 billion projected "on-budget" surplus for next year—which would be the first on-budget surplus, as I said, in over 30 years—is by no means secure.

In fact, CBO Director Dan Crippen has already warned us that if we stay on the current path with the appropriations bills, we could turn the \$14 billion projected "on-budget" surplus into an \$11 billion deficit. And by doing so, we would be breaking our word with the American people to never again raid the Social Security trust funds. That would be outrageous given all the promises we have made to them and given all the debate I have heard on the

Senate floor over Social Security lockbox legislation.

Right now, our primary responsibility is to be as conscientious as possible and come up with the best budget plan for fiscal year 2000.

We also need to resist the President's push to expand current programs and to create new entitlements. The President has consistently been bringing his case directly to the American people, proposing new spending programs wherever he goes.

At the same time, he says he is for debt reduction and saving Social Security. That is plain hogwash. What most people don't know is the President's latest budget proposal would boost spending in 81 Government programs, create budget deficits, and as a result, raid billions of dollars from the Social Security trust funds over the next 10 years.

This year, in accordance with the 1997 Balanced Budget Act, which Congress passed and President Clinton signed, we are supposed to spend \$27 billion less than last year. In other words, when the budget agreement was put together by Congress, they anticipated we would spend \$27 billion less this year than last year.

Let's face the facts. The only way we are going to deal with the budget and handle all of these items that need to be addressed is one of four ways:

One, we can tighten our belts by finding places to cut spending in current Federal programs and reallocate those resources; two, we can raise taxes in order to provide services—a course of action I don't favor; three, we can use whatever on-budget surplus we may have next year, although in all likelihood it has already been spoken for; four, we can use the Social Security surpluses by raiding the trust funds.

Those are the alternatives. All in all, these are four difficult choices, but I think most Americans would agree that the most responsible choice is to cut unnecessary spending.

For example, we could start by eliminating the Welfare-to-Work Program. This program, which was initiated by the President, has had a total of \$3 billion appropriated to it over the last 2 years. However, in the same period, the States and territories that chose to participate—and not all of them did—have only spent \$182 million of those funds. That's because the money comes with too many strings attached for States and because it is a complete duplication of the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program, or, TANF.

Last year when I was governor, Ohio and five other States didn't even apply for the money under Welfare-to-Work. In Ohio, we rejected \$88 million. I believed that Ohio and the Federal Government had made a deal; that we were going to take care of our responsibilities under the new welfare law with the money that Congress allocated to us in the welfare reform legislation.

After Welfare-to-Work, we should take the time, do the hard work and make the tough choices by determining what other Federal programs and pork-barrel spending we can trim in order to find the money necessary to meet our Nation's priorities.

We should be just as enthusiastic, in my opinion, in terms of reducing taxes as we are just as conscientious in terms of finding ways we can cut funding.

Most importantly, we need to instill truth-in-budgeting. The last thing we want to do is ruin our credibility by being dishonest. We need to end all the accounting gimmicks, such as extending the calendar to 13 months in order to accommodate excess spending, or "forward funding" certain programs to avoid having to pay for them this year. In fact, as I understand from Senator DOMENICI, Chairman of the Senate Budget Committee, the President has \$19 billion in his budget that encompasses forward funding.

We should let the American people know that we're doing such things. It's their money; they have a right to know. But, we should strive at all times not to use "smoke and mirrors" to make the debt look smaller or the budget appear balanced on paper when in reality, it is not. They are onto it.

We shouldn't be "mixing and matching" to give us the numbers that will give us the best budget results. We need to agree on a set of numbers exclusively. If we're going to use CBO numbers, then we should consistently use CBO's numbers. Same thing with OMB. It is intellectually dishonest to constantly change numbers—picking and choosing as we go along.

Well, we will use CBO's numbers and next we will use OMB's figures.

When I was Governor of Ohio, the first thing we did was sit down with the legislature and we said let's agree on the numbers. We agreed on the numbers. That is what we dealt with.

In addition, if we want to avoid dipping into Social Security, then we should be prepared to make the hard choices and not declare everything an emergency. As every Member of this body knows, ever since the statutory spending caps were first enacted in 1990 to rein in runaway discretionary spending, Congress has used the "emergency" loophole to get around them.

Mr. President, we have to stop these gimmicks! It's game playing! It's smoke and mirrors! And our constituents know it and they want us to put an end to it.

It's high time we start to give serious consideration to a two year budget cycle like many states have, including Ohio. It doesn't make sense that we go through this budget exercise each year; a process that just exhausts this body and prevents us from being able to work towards down-sizing government and lowering our expenses.

If we had 2-year budgets, we could spend some time on the oversight that this body has a responsibility to be doing.

Until then, if something is truly an emergency, then Congress should be more than willing to come up with the money to pay for it. Only in times of war or severe economic crisis should we even be talking about dipping into Social Security. As I have said before, Social Security is the Nation's pension fund, and no responsible citizen would tap into their retirement fund unless it was an absolute last resort—and they would certainly look to pay it back. Congress must act accordingly.

Mr. President, all of us in Congress should take the equivalent of a blood oath that we are not going to touch Social Security. Period. It would be the most important thing we could possibly do to bring fiscal accountability to this country because we've been using the social security trust funds and public borrowing to fund tax reductions and spending for the last 30 years and in that same period of time, we've seen our national debt increase over 1,300 percent.

Think of that—1,300 percent.

We have to remember that there is no such thing as a free lunch, but there are such things as hard choices. That is what we should be about—making the hard choices.

I know that first hand because as Governor, I have been there; I had to make the \$750 million in spending cuts, but because of the fiscally responsible choices we made, we had the lowest growth in 30 years and had 17% fewer employees—excluding prison workers.

In addition, we ultimately gave Ohio a general revenue rainy day fund of over \$935 million—after it had been depleted to 14 cents.

Think of that. It was at 14 cents—a Medicaid rainy day fund of \$100 million and real tax cuts. I am talking about real tax cuts for the last 3 years, including last year for all Ohioans who had an across-the-board reduction in their State income tax of almost 10 percent.

That is why I came to Washington—to try and bring fiscal responsibility to our nation and this Congress so that my children and my grandchildren as well as all children and grandchildren are not saddled with the cost of those things that my generation did not want to pay for, and guarantee our covenant to the American people in regard to Social Security and Medicare.

I would like to remind my colleagues that with each passing day, we're paying \$600 million in interest payments just to service the national debt—a national debt that is \$5.6 trillion.

Most Americans do not realize that 14 percent of their tax dollar goes to pay off the interest on the debt. Fifteen percent goes for national defense. Seventeen percent goes to non-defense

discretionary spending. And 54 percent goes for entitlement spending.

So how much is our interest payment in comparison to other federal spending? It is more than we spend on Medicare. It's five times more than the federal dollars we spend on education. And it's 15 times more than we spend on medical research at NIH.

If we are fortunate enough that the projections of an on-budget surplus actually occurs—I would like to see that—the best possible course of action that we could take is to use those funds and pay down the debt. With debt reduction you get lower interest rates, a continued strong economy and lower government interest costs.

Indeed, as Federal Reserve Chairman Greenspan testified before the House Ways and Means Committee "(T)he advantages that I perceive that would accrue to this economy from a significant decline in the outstanding debt to the public and its virtuous cycle on the total budget process is a value which I think far exceeds anything else we could do with the money."

Mr. President, we must avoid using Social Security to meet our financial obligations. Instead, we should greet the millennium with a promise to our citizens that we will engage in truth-in-budgeting, not use gimmicks and reorder our spending to reflect our national priorities.

Mr. President, I believe that a statement I made in my 1991 Inaugural Address as Governor of Ohio is relevant today:

Gone are the days when public officials are measured by how much they spend on a problem. The new realities dictate that public officials are now judged on whether they can work harder and smarter, and do more with less.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

Mr. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I commend my good friend and colleague, Senator VOINOVICH from Ohio, who I think has brought to the attention of this body in a timely manner a very appropriate and important issue; that is, the realization that the President is going to reject any proposal for a tax cut—and bring to the attention of this body the realization that, indeed, that accumulated debt of \$5.6 trillion, which the Senator from Ohio referred to, is costing us interest.

As the Senator from Ohio is well aware, I was in the banking business for about 25 years. People do not recognize the carrying charge. I think the figure that was used was \$600 million per day.

Interest is like the old saying of having a horse that eats while you sleep. It is ongoing. It doesn't take Saturdays or Sundays off.

If one considers the significance of, I think the figure was 14 cents out of every dollar going for interest, one can

quickly comprehend what we could do if we were free of that heavy obligation.

I commend the Senator for bringing this matter to the attention of this body and assure him of my eagerness to work with him to bring about and resolve in a responsible manner a program to address the accumulated debt.

As he has pointed out, there is an awful lot of procedure around here relative to the bookkeeping method of the Federal Government, which few people understand.

Nevertheless, there is a harsh reality that we have a hard debt of \$5.6 billion. We have an opportunity now with the Social Security surplus to address that debt. I agree with the Senator and his efforts to try to bring a consensus on this issue. I commend him highly. Let me assure the Senator of my willingness to work in that regard.

(The remarks of Mr. MURKOWSKI pertaining to the introduction of S. 1591 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. SHELBY. 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.

POWDER RIVER BASIN COAL INITIATIVE

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, yesterday my colleagues, Senator ENZI and Senator GORTON, discussed the importance of a proposed new clean coal initiative that offers the opportunity to create a new type of cleaner-burning coal that will help to meet our nation's energy needs and the requirements of the Clean Air Act. I want to lend my strong support to this initiative, and express my hope that the Department of Energy and Congress can work together to find a way to fund this important project.

Under this initiative, the Black Hills Corporation of Rapid City, South Dakota, would work with the Department of Energy to test a new method of processing sub-bituminous coal to remove its moisture content and increase its heat-value. This new technology is much less capital intensive than any other coal enhancement technology known to exist today and has the real potential of becoming the first such process to be commercially feasible. It is my understanding that the upgraded coal which would be produced by this new process would be environmentally superior to current sub-bituminous coal and less expensive to ship, allowing coal users across the country to benefit from it.

There are extensive reserves of sub-bituminous coal in the Powder River basin, and particularly on the reservation of the Crow Indian Tribe. By expanding the market for coal from this area, we can help to promote economic development across the west. At the same time, we can provide coal users throughout the United States with cleaner-burning coal, and help to improve our air quality.

It is my hope that we can move forward with this project as quickly as possible. I urge my colleagues to give it their strong support.

WEATHERIZATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President, I rise to thank Senator SLADE GORTON, Chairman of the Interior Appropriations Subcommittee, for his, as well as his staff's, efforts to work with me and my staff to address concerns regarding a potential funding freeze for the Weatherization Assistance Program. I am very pleased that the Chairman was able to obtain an additional \$2 million, at my urging, for the Weatherization Assistance Program, increasing the FY 2000 funding level to \$135 million.

Weatherization is an especially critical program to the Northeast-Midwest region. It increases energy efficiency in low-income homes, reducing energy use by up to one-third. More than four and a half million households have been weatherized through this program over the past twenty years. Weatherization returns \$1.80 in energy savings for every dollar spent; and provides an additional \$0.60 in employment and environmental benefits.

This year, 31 Senators voiced support for an increase in weatherization funding. In light of recent forecasts of rising fuel costs, weatherization funding has never been more critical. By providing targeted support in anticipation of extreme weather conditions, we can ensure the health, safety, and well-being of millions of low-income families, including the especially vulnerable populations of low-income children and elderly.

COLD WATER FISH HABITAT

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, I thank Senators GORTON and BYRD for inclusion of an amendment to provide funding for a voluntary enrollment, cold water fish habitat conservation plan (HCP) in the States of Idaho and Montana. This project is already authorized under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). Habitat Conservation Plans (HCPs) were authorized in 1982 to allow private landowners where endangered species are found a chance to write site-specific management plans and, in some cases, allow other activity to continue on those lands. A project similar to this involving the Karner