

The President zeroed out impact aid. When one has a military family or Native Americans and one's district, that impacts the school. The President zeroed that. IDEA gave very little amount of money to it. We increase it up to 12 percent in the bill. We think it is important. I think it is important to show the differences in priorities.

Mrs. WILSON. Mr. Speaker, where does all of this leave us? Where are we now on the cusp of the final couple of weeks of this congressional session? We have set some parameters. We are going to keep the balanced budget. We made that commitment in 1997. We achieved it earlier than we thought we were going to. We are going to keep a balanced budget. We are going to stop using Social Security to pay for this year's government programs.

I have to say I read with interest the comment of the White House Chief of Staff in the Washington Post this morning. Even the White House Chief of Staff recognizes that the Republicans key goal is to not spend the Social Security surplus. That is our goal. The President has accepted that as the goal and one of the parameters within which we work. I commend him for that in recognizing that Social Security should be off limits.

We are not going to increase taxes. This House and the Senate have soundly rejected any increase in taxes. We should be having tax relief in a time of plenty, not increases in taxes. We are going to pay down the public debt next year by about \$150 billion, and I am very proud of that accomplishment and being part of that.

We are going to strengthen national defense. The President should sign the bill. It is on his desk for defense spending. It is a real increase in defense spending that will stop the erosion and the decline. If he is concerned about America's role in the world, if he is concerned about a new isolationism, it is not coming from this Congress. We are committed to maintaining a strong national defense and increasing defense spending.

We are going to improve education. I see for our children a very bright future. It is one that we are all trying to build together. But we have got to be committed to it. We have to stick to our knitting. We have to get the job done, set the parameters, work in good faith with our colleagues across the aisle and with the President of the United States. But I think that the future is there for us to see and take a few steps back from the political skirmishing of today.

I have to say it must be really tough to be in the minority. I have never, thankfully, been in the minority here. But sometimes I think that there is a small group of folks here who believe that their only job and their only role is to resist and to criticize rather than to govern and to shape. I believe that together we can govern and shape.

If we take a little bit of a step back from protecting Social Security and resisting the temptation to increase taxes, protecting our national defense, and improving education, to see things in a little bit bigger context, 3 weeks from now, we are going to be celebrating the 10th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall. It has been a marvelous 10 years. We have achieved great things. We have resisted the temptation to turn in on ourselves. I remember very clearly the week that that wall came down. It was a life-changing experience for many Americans and for many Americans in uniform.

Very often, the aftermath of a great war is a rank thing. It certainly was in the First World War of this century. We resisted it after the Second World War because of the Cold War.

Ten years ago, I think there was a real fear that America would turn in on itself, but we have not. We are building a strong foundation for a new century. All of us who serve in this body should be proud of that.

We have a series of spending bills. They are pretty solid, based on some pretty solid foundations. We are committed to working with the President on the final ones, as long as they do not touch Social Security. We do not increase taxes, and we keep the focus on defense and education.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. CUNNINGHAM).

Mr. CUNNINGHAM. Mr. Speaker, I do not remember the exact amount, I believe it was almost 100 percent, if not 100 percent, of the authorization committee on defense supported the bill in the defense appropriation. That is in the Senate and the House. On the appropriations cycle, Democrats and Republicans alike supported the defense bill that came out in the conference. One hundred percent signed it. The President is wrong to veto a defense bill that increases our military servicemen's pay by 1.8 percent.

Mrs. WILSON. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman is right. There are over 350 members of this House that voted yes on that final conference report.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM. Mr. Speaker, I laud, not only the experience of the gentlewoman from New Mexico (Mrs. WILSON), even though it is in the Air Force instead of the Navy. But I laud her leadership in defense and also the gentlewoman from Florida (Mrs. FOWLER). I want to tell my colleagues, when it comes to standing up for our men and women in uniform, there are no two stronger women in this House than the gentlewoman from New Mexico (Mrs. WILSON) and the gentlewoman from Florida (Mrs. FOWLER).

Mrs. WILSON. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman's remarks, and I also appreciated the Diet Coke and his willingness to back his team in spite of certain defeat.

Mr. Speaker, it is a real pleasure to be here tonight to talk about some

things that I think are important to this country. I look forward to working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle and the President to working out these final elements of these bills.

We have drawn a line in the sand, as the gentleman from California (Mr. CUNNINGHAM) said. It is a line in the sand that says we are not going to raise taxes, and we are not going to cut Social Security. Within that, we will work with the President. Our priorities within that playing field are national defense and education. But we are willing to work with him to achieve something that is important for us and for our children. And that is our message tonight.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION WAIVING POINTS OF ORDER AGAINST CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 2466, DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2000

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington (during the Special Order of Mrs. WILSON), from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 106-407) on the resolution (H. Res. 337) waiving points of order against the conference report to accompany the bill (H.R. 2466) making appropriations for the Department of the Interior and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2000, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2300, ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT ACT FOR ALL

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington (during the Special Order of Mrs. WILSON), from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 106-408) on the resolution (H. Res. 338) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2300) to allow a State to combine certain funds to improve the academic achievement of all its students, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

HOUSE BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS APPROVED BY THE PRESIDENT

The President notified the Clerk of the House that on the following dates he had approved and signed bills and joint resolutions of the following titles:

March 5, 1999:

H.R. 433, An act to restore the management and personnel authority of the Mayor of the District of Columbia.

March 15, 1999:

H.R. 882, An act to nullify any reservation of funds during fiscal year 1999 for guaranteed loans under the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act for qualified beginning farmers or ranchers, and for other purposes.