

even have a modest containment of spending on entitlement programs, which is where the growth is—about \$870 billion for discretionary spending and \$1.2 trillion for entitlements. The discretionary budget this year will come in almost flat this year, with little increase. But entitlement spending is going up at about a rate of 7 percent or so. It is just driving our deficits. We cannot even begin to discuss that, apparently, because people want to raise taxes and spend. They want to tax and spend. It is not the right way to go. That is not what this country was founded on.

When you look at the Europeans who have done tax and spend—look at Germany, with 11.5 percent unemployment, and France has 9.5 percent unemployment. That is what the statist Socialist economies produce. How did they get there? Because their congresses could not resist the demand to fund every feel-good program that comes along the pike. That is why. Then when you meet with a businessman from Germany, he says: I know we have to do something, Senator. Maybe we can cut back on this, but people are so dependent on these government programs, so used to them in Germany, that we cannot quite get the votes to stop it. We know if we don't do it, it can wreck our economy, but we cannot get the votes because people become addicted to it, they like it. They feel like anything they once received, if it is not received the next year, the demagogues say it is a big cut and you have been denied something you are entitled to.

So I just say that if I seem a bit frustrated, you can know that I am. We have had a lot of good discussion about how to contain the growth of entitlements—and I am not a bit sure that is going to bear fruit this year—just to maintain the current tax level and keep taxes from being increased next year. Now we come along on top of a generous LIHEAP program and add \$1 billion more, in violation of the budget agreement. We just voted to waive the Budget Act and do it anyway with 66 votes. I am telling you, this is not the way to get spending under control in this country. It is the way to move our country to a statist economy. That is not our strength.

Our unemployment is not 11.5. Our unemployment is not 9.5. Ours is 4.7. In my State of Alabama, it is 3.5. We didn't get there by taxing and spending; we got there by reducing the burden of government on the private sector and allowing the private sector to flourish. Tax revenues are up in every city in the State, I do believe. I traveled 26 counties last week. Every mayor and county commissioner I talked to is seeing increases in sales tax revenues. Many are telling me they have a 14-, 15-, to 18-percent increase in taxes. Why? Because the economy is

booming. Companies are hiring people. They are bidding up the wages. They cannot find people, and they have to pay higher wages. People are making more money, and they pay taxes on that. So revenue to the Federal Government is up. Yes, we have a deficit, but revenue is up.

People don't pay taxes to Uncle Sam if they don't make money. They are paying more taxes because they are making more money. We have a free market economy that allows growth and vitality. So I think this vote is an important vote for us as a people. It is a sad vote to me to see many people who claim to be frugal, claim to care about spending, but when the chips are down and we have a clearly dangerous bill like this one, a bill that we ought to be able to vote down overwhelmingly, we could not even get 40 votes to say no. We could not find 40 votes to say no to this plan. I don't blame Senators for trying to do this. They say that you in the South want help. Well, scrutinize the help we are asking for. If we are asking for something that is unfair, say so, vote against it. Don't come in here and vote for everything this one wants, everything that one wants, and everything that one wants, and then walk in here and say the deficit is too big and now we have to raise taxes. That is where we are headed. I think everybody here knows that. There are a lot on the other side of the aisle, and apparently some on this side, for whom that is a strategy. That is a strategy. The strategy is to increase spending and then say you cannot have lower taxes and we have to have higher taxes and we have to raise taxes. They don't want to say it publicly and openly, but that is what they are working toward.

That is a big divide in the Congress, as I see it. I hate that we have a dispute over this spending, but apparently we have. It is discouraging to see the vote. But I think, as we continue to talk about it, perhaps the American people will talk to their Senators and Congressmen. When I travel around, they talk to me about spending. Of course, they want their projects. They say: Oh, don't cut that. But overall, they want constraint.

I believe the American people fundamentally will respect us if we maintain some discipline. That means, on the discretionary account, staying within our budget figure, which is basically flat spending. When we are in a crisis, we try to keep our spending level. We have a deficit. We ought to stay level. We are not slashing anything. We have to stop going for more and more red ink, more and more new spending programs that we have not had before to fund heating oil in the warmest winter on record.

We are going to keep talking about it. There will be more votes in this Congress and in this Senate. We did pretty well last year. We did do some

reduction—modest reduction in entitlements with the Medicaid Program. We limited the growth of Medicaid, and we were proud of ourselves. Over 5 years, it was going up 41 percent before we passed the cost-saving bill, and now it is going up 40 percent. We thought we were quite proud of ourselves to save a little money that way. If we would do that on the other accounts, like Medicaid and Medicare and some other accounts—just a little bit—we would have big numbers as we go along and make a real difference in what we are doing. But it looks like that may not happen.

So we are going to have to, I guess, reengage the American people, reengage the Members of Congress, and they are going to be asked by constituents: How did you vote? How did you vote on LIHEAP? Did you vote to spend another \$1 billion? Maybe we can begin to have the American people talk some sense into those of us in Congress.

I thank the Chair and yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Mississippi.

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, I have some remarks to make in tribute to a combat infantry and armored brigade from Mississippi which has returned from Iraq. I ask unanimous consent that I may speak as in morning business.

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

(The remarks of Mr. COCHRAN are printed in today's RECORD under "Morning Business.")

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

#### MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent there now be 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.

#### TRIBUTE TO THE SERVICE OF THE 155TH SEPARATE ARMORED BRIGADE

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, I am pleased to pay tribute to the service of the 155th Separate Armored Brigade of the State of Mississippi. The 155th has a rich history of extraordinary military service to our Nation. It has participated in the War of 1812, the American Civil War, the Spanish-American

War, both World Wars, Desert Shield and Desert Storm, and operations in Bosnia.

Recently, the 155th completed a year-long tour in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. The 4,000-member brigade combat team was attached to the II Marine Expeditionary Force and deployed to the Al Anbar Province of Iraq. They conducted operations that included rebuilding infrastructure, hunting down insurgents, and supporting elections. Each of these activities made an indelible impact on the people of this fledgling democracy and improved their chances of surviving and prospering in a much safer and secure environment.

It is truly remarkable what our soldiers have accomplished. They served in a combat environment where they thwarted continuing attacks from a determined insurgency. They endured the hardships of being away from their families. They suffered the loss and injury of their fellow comrades. They had to endure the worry for their families' well-being as Hurricanes Katrina and Rita devastated the gulf coast. Through it all, they remained dedicated and determined to carry out their mission.

As Mississippians have done for centuries, these soldiers left their families and the comforts of home to answer the call of duty. This was not done without cost. During its deployment, the 155th lost 24 soldiers who made the ultimate sacrifice. These soldiers left behind wives, children, and loved ones. They answered the call of duty and gave their lives for America's freedom and security. This wasn't done for fame or fortune. It was done out of a commitment to duty and service to our great country. They are true heroes.

The 155th is the modern-day "Mississippi Rifles" that has carried on the proud traditions of Mississippi and our Nation.

As we honor these brave men and women, it is appropriate for us to also honor their families. No one understands the hardships of war and sacrifice more than a soldier's family. For 18 months, these Mississippians sacrificed as their loved ones answered our Nation's call. Although their lives were disrupted, they assumed the role of both mother and father. Their resilience and courage during Hurricanes Katrina and Rita continue to be admired by us all.

Of course, they did not accomplish all of this alone. Our Mississippi communities came together to provide support which ranged from countless letters and packages, to daily support at home that included clearing storm debris and ensuring shelter for their loved ones, to support for the families of fallen comrades and those who were seriously wounded.

As we pay tribute to the accomplishments of the 155th and give thanks to

their sacrifice and service, it is important we remember our country is still at war. The State of Mississippi has over 500 of its citizens deployed in Iraq, Kuwait, and Afghanistan continuing to fight the global war on terrorism. In addition, we have citizen-soldiers in various stages of mobilization preparing to answer our Nation's call. Our country's military is the most committed and powerful in the world, and they are well prepared to serve in our hometowns and across the globe. We will keep them in our prayers as they continue their great legacy of sacrifice and service.

#### BOULDER CITY 75TH ANNIVERSARY

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I rise today to commemorate the 75th anniversary of Boulder City, NV.

Boulder City lies 24 miles east of Las Vegas, and 40 miles from Searchlight near Lake Mead. It's very close to my hometown, Searchlight, and it is a city dear to my heart. Boulder City is a Nevada treasure, and I am proud to honor them today.

Boulder City was created by the Federal Government on March 11, 1931, to provide housing to the thousands of people who built the Hoover Dam. Because Boulder City was operated as a Government reservation, the residents could not buy homes and unlike its neighboring cities, liquor and gambling were prohibited. In fact, gambling is prohibited in Boulder City to this day.

As the first planned community built in the United States, Boulder City has gone to great lengths to maintain its small town feel. Boulder City only sees about 400 new residents each year due to a growth control ordinance that was enacted in 1979.

Boulder City is most widely known as the home of the Hoover Dam. Twenty-one thousand men worked for 5 years and poured more than 5 million barrels of cement to complete the work on the \$49 million dam. Forty-nine million dollars adjusted for inflation equals \$676 million. Named after President Herbert Hoover, the dam is located in the Black Canyon of the Colorado River. It sits on the border between Nevada and Arizona and sees 13,000 to 16,000 people cross it each day.

Mr. President, it is important that everyone understand that Boulder City is more than just the home of the Hoover Dam, more than just a tourist attraction. It is a city whose people exemplify what being a Nevadan is all about. I invite all my colleagues here in the Senate and all the people of this great country to experience a part of Nevada that I love.

#### HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

STAFF SERGEANT GREGSON GOURLEY

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, it is my solemn duty to rise before the Senate

to pay tribute to one of the great sons of Utah, SSG Gregson Gourley.

Sergeant Gourley, who grew up in Sandy and Midvale, UT was killed last week with three other members of the 1st Battalion, 327th Infantry Regiment, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) near Hawijah, Iraq.

As I sat down to learn more about Sergeant Gourley's life, I was struck by his dedication to service. He first served as a missionary in Pennsylvania for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, then spent 16 years as a member of our Armed Forces. His aspiration for the future was to begin a career in law enforcement.

According to what his comrades have said, Sergeant Gourley's service surpassed the motto of his battalion: "Above the Rest." Not surprisingly, he had previously been decorated for meritorious service.

I believe that his grandmother, Adena Gourley, said it best, when reflecting on the sergeant's life:

He was a very gentle person. He has a great desire to be an outstanding soldier and an outstanding man.

Mrs. Gourley, I can say that, by all accounts, he achieved those goals.

Sergeant Gourley's passing is a further tragedy because he leaves behind a wife, three sons under the age of 10, and a newborn daughter.

To his boys, and especially little Alexa, over the years you will learn more about your father and that he was a remarkable man. But you should always remember that your father was a hero, a man anyone would be proud to call father, and our country will forever owe a debt of great gratitude to him for his unselfish service to our country.

I hope my colleagues will all join me in saluting the bravery of Sergeant Gourley, and in sending our condolences, prayers, and best wishes to his family during their time of sorrow.

SERGEANT RICKY E. JONES

Mr. BAYH. Mr. President, I rise today with a heavy heart and deep sense of gratitude to honor the life of a brave young man from Kokomo. Sergeant Rickey Jones, 22 years old, was one of four soldiers who died on February 22 when their vehicle was hit by a roadside bomb during a patrol near Hawijah, 150 miles north of Baghdad. With his entire life before him, Rickey risked everything to fight for the values Americans hold close to our hearts, in a land halfway around the world.

A 2002 graduate of Kokomo High School, Rickey joined the Army because of concerns about a tight local job market at the time. After his first tour in Iraq, he returned with a new world view and volunteered for a second tour of duty. His mother told local media that the change in her son was unmistakable and that during his time in the Army, Rickey had matured into a man and a true soldier. Rickey's