

February 9, 1998, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

7219. A letter from the Director, Congressional Budget Office, transmitting the CBO Sequestration Preview Report for Fiscal Year 1999, pursuant to 2 U.S.C. 904(b); jointly to the Committees on Appropriations and the Budget.

7220. A letter from the Secretary of Defense, transmitting a report on several initiatives for Gulf War veterans, pursuant to Public Law 103-337, section 721(h); jointly to the Committees on National Security and Veterans' Affairs.

7221. A letter from the Director, Congressional Budget Office, transmitting the report on "Unauthorized Appropriations and Expiring Authorizations" by the Congressional Budget Office as of January 15, 1998, pursuant to 2 U.S.C. 602(f)(3); jointly to the Committees on the Budget and Appropriations.

7222. A letter from the Acting Director of Communications and Legislative Affairs, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, transmitting a copy of the Commission's report entitled "Federal Sector Report on EEO Complaints and Appeals, FY 1996," pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 2000e-4(e); jointly to the Committees on Education and the Workforce and Government Reform and Oversight.

7223. A letter from the Attorney General and Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting the annual report on the deposits to the Medicare Trust Fund and the appropriations to the Health Care Fraud and Abuse Control Program for the Fiscal Year 1997, pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 1395i; jointly to the Committees on Commerce and Ways and Means.

7224. A letter from the Secretary of Energy, transmitting the Department's tenth Annual Report to Congress summarizing the Department's progress during fiscal year 1996 in implementing the requirements of the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act, pursuant to Public Law 99-499, section 120(e)(5) (100 Stat. 1669); jointly to the Committees on Commerce and Transportation and Infrastructure.

7225. A letter from the Chairman, United States National Tourism Organization Board, transmitting the report of the National Tourism Organization Board, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2141b; jointly to the Committees on Commerce and International Relations.

7226. A letter from the Administrator, Agency for International Development, transmitting a report on development assistance program allocations for FY 1998, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2413(a); jointly to the Committees on International Relations and Appropriations.

7227. A letter from the Acting Comptroller General, General Accounting Office, transmitting the report on General Accounting Office employees detailed to congressional committees as of January 16, 1998, pursuant to Public Law 101-520; jointly to the Committees on Government Reform and Oversight and Appropriations.

7228. A letter from the Executive Director, Office of Compliance, transmitting the annual report on the use of the Office of Compliance by covered employees, pursuant to section 301(h) of the Congressional Accountability Act; jointly to the Committees on House Oversight and Education and the Workforce.

7229. A letter from the Director, Office of Insular Affairs, Department of the Interior, transmitting a report entitled "Impact of the Compacts of Free Association on the United States Territories and Commonwealths and on the State of Hawaii," pursuant to 48 U.S.C. 1681 nt.; jointly to the Committees on Resources and International Relations.

7230. A letter from the Board Members, Railroad Retirement Board, transmitting a draft of proposed legislation to amend the Railroad Retirement Act to make permanent the exemption of the Railroad Retirement Board trust funds from the payment to the General Services Administration of charges for rental of property occupied by the Board in excess of the actual cost of providing such property; jointly to the Committees on Transportation and Infrastructure and Government Reform and Oversight.

7231. A letter from the Commissioner, Social Security Administration, transmitting the Social Security Administration's Accountability Report for Fiscal Year 1997, pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 904; jointly to the Committees on Ways and Means and the Judiciary.

7232. A letter from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's final rule—Medicare and Medicaid Programs; Surety Bond and Capitalization Requirements for Home Health Agencies [HCFA-1152-FC] (RIN: 0938-A131) received December 31, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); jointly to the Committees on Ways and Means and Commerce.

7233. A letter from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting the report on Medicare reimbursement of telemedicine services, pursuant to Public Law 104-191, section 192 (110 Stat. 1988); jointly to the Committees on Ways and Means and Commerce.

7234. A letter from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's final rule—Medicare Program; Physicians' Referrals; Issuance of Advisory Opinions [HCFA-1902-IFC] (RIN: 0938-A138) received January 13, 1998, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); jointly to the Committees on Ways and Means and Commerce.

7235. A letter from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's "Major" final rule—Medicare Program; Limit on the Valuation of a Depreciable Asset Recognized as an Allowance for Depreciation and Interest on Capital Indebtedness After a Change of Ownership [HCFA-1004-FC] (RIN: 0938-A134) received January 29, 1998, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); jointly to the Committees on Ways and Means and Commerce.

7236. A letter from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting a report regarding Medicare SELECT supplemental policies, pursuant to Public Law 104-18; jointly to the Committees on Ways and Means and Commerce.

¶6.4 CENSUS MONITORING BOARD

The SPEAKER pro tempore, Mr. UPTON, by unanimous consent, announced that the Speaker, pursuant to the provisions of section 210(c)(1) of Public Law 105-119, appointed to the Census Monitoring Board, Mr. J. Kenneth Blackwell of Ohio, and Mr. David W. Murray of Virginia, from private life, on the part of the House.

Ordered, That the Clerk notify the Senate of the foregoing appointments.

¶6.5 COMMISSION ON MAINTAINING UNITED STATES NUCLEAR WEAPONS EXPERTISE

The SPEAKER pro tempore, Mr. UPTON, by unanimous consent, announced that the Speaker, pursuant to the provisions of section 3162(b) of Public Law 104-201, appointed to the Commission on Maintaining United States Nuclear Weapons Expertise, Mr. Robert B. Barker of California and Mr. Roland F. Herbst of California, from private life, on the part of the House.

Ordered, That the Clerk notify the Senate of the foregoing appointments.

¶6.6 NATIONAL COUNCIL ON THE ARTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore, Mr. UPTON, by unanimous consent, announced that the Speaker, pursuant to the provisions of section 955(b)(1)(B) of Public Law 105-83, appointed to the National Council on the Arts, on the part of the House, the following Members: Messrs. DOOLITTLE and BALLENGER.

Ordered, That the Clerk notify the Senate of the foregoing appointments.

¶6.7 ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON STUDENT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore, Mr. UPTON, by unanimous consent, announced that the Speaker, pursuant to the provisions of section 491 of the Higher Education Act, as amended by section 407 of Public Law 99-498, appointed to the Advisory Committee on Student Financial Assistance for a three-year term, Mr. Henry Givens of Missouri, from private life, on the part of the House.

Ordered, That the Clerk notify the Senate of the foregoing appointment.

¶6.8 COMMUNICATION TO THE SPEAKER—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore, Mr. UPTON, laid before the House a communication, which was read as follows:

THE WHITE HOUSE,

Washington, February 10, 1998.

Hon. NEWT GINGRICH,
Speaker of the House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to 15 U.S.C. 1022, attached is the Economic Report of the President together with the Annual Report of the Council of Economic Advisers.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON.

¶6.9 ECONOMIC REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

The Clerk then read the message from the President, as follows:

To the Congress of the United States:

For the last 5 years this Administration has worked to strengthen our Nation for the 21st century, expanding opportunity for all Americans, demanding responsibility from all Americans, and bringing us together as a community of all Americans. Building a strong economy is the cornerstone of our efforts to meet these challenges.

When I first took office in 1993, the Federal budget deficit was out of control, unemployment was unacceptably high, and wages were stagnant. To reverse this course, we took a new approach, putting in place a bold economic strategy designed to bring down the deficit and give America's workers the tools and training they need to help them thrive in our changing economy.

Our strategy has succeeded: the economy has created more than 14 million new jobs, unemployment is at its lowest level in 24 years, and core inflation is at its lowest level in 30 years. Economic growth in 1997 was the strongest

in almost a decade, and the benefits of that growth are being shared by all Americans: poverty is dropping and median family income has gone up nearly \$2,200 since 1993. We also saw the biggest drop in welfare rolls in history. Many challenges remain, but Americans are enjoying the fruits of an economy that is steady and strong.

THE ADMINISTRATION'S ECONOMIC
STRATEGY

From the beginning, this Administration's economic strategy has had three crucial elements: reducing the deficit, investing in people, and opening markets abroad.

Deficit reduction. In 1993 this Administration's deficit reduction plan set the Nation on a course of fiscal responsibility, while making critical investments in the skills and well-being of our people. When I took office, the deficit was \$290 billion and projected to go much higher. This year the deficit will fall to just \$10 billion and possibly lower still. That is a reduction of more than 95 percent, leaving the deficit today smaller in relation to the size of the economy than it has been since 1969. And this year I have proposed a budget that will eliminate the deficit entirely, achieving the first balanced budget in 30 years.

Beyond that, it is projected that the budget will show a sizable surplus in the years to come. I propose that we reserve 100 percent of the surplus until we have taken the necessary measures to strengthen the Social Security system for the 21st century. I am committed to addressing Social Security first, to ensure that all Americans are confident that it will be there when they need it.

Investing in our people. In the new economy, the most precious resource this Nation has is the skills and ingenuity of working Americans. Investing in the education and health of our people will help all Americans reap the rewards of a growing, changing economy. Those who are better educated, with the flexibility and the skills they need to move from one job to another and seize new opportunities, will succeed in the new economy; those who do not will fall behind.

That is why the historic balanced budget agreement I signed into law in 1997 included the largest increase in aid to education in 30 years, and the biggest increase to help people go to college since the G.I. Bill was passed 50 years ago. The agreement provided funds to ensure that we stay on track to help 1 million disadvantaged children prepare for success in school. It provided funding for the America Reads Challenge, with the goal of mobilizing a million volunteers to promote literacy, and it made new investments in our schools themselves, to help connect every classroom and library in this country to the Internet by the year 2000.

The balanced budget agreement created the HOPE scholarship program, to make completion of the 13th and 14th

years of formal education as widespread as a high school diploma is today. It offered other tuition tax credits for college and skills training. It created a new Individual Retirement Account that allows tax-free withdrawals to pay for education. It provided the biggest increase in Pell grants in two decades. Finally, it provided more funds so that aid to dislocated workers is more than double what it was in 1993, to help these workers get the skills they need to remain productive in a changing economy.

But we must do more to guarantee all Americans the quality education they need to succeed. That is why I have proposed a new initiative to improve the quality of education in our public schools—through high national standards and national tests, more charter schools to stimulate competition, greater accountability, higher quality teaching, smaller class sizes, and more classrooms.

To strengthen our Nation we must also strengthen our families. The Family and Medical Leave Act, which I signed into law in 1993, ensures that millions of people no longer have to choose between being good parents and being good workers. The Health Care Portability and Accountability Act, enacted in 1996, ensures that workers can keep their health insurance if they change jobs or suffer a family emergency. We have also increased the minimum wage, expanded the earned income tax credit, and provided for a new \$500-per-child tax credit for working families. To continue making progress toward strengthening families, the balanced budget agreement allocated \$24 billion to provide health insurance to up to 5 million uninsured children—the largest Federal investment in children's health care since Medicaid was created in 1965.

Opening markets and expending exports. To create more good jobs and increase wages, we must open markets abroad and expand U.S. exports. Trade has been key to the strength of this economic expansion—about a third of our economic growth in recent years has come from selling American goods and services overseas. The Information Technology Agreement signed in 1997 lowers tariff and other barriers to 90 percent of world trade in information technology services.

To continue opening new markets, creating new jobs, and increasing our prosperity, it is critically important to renew fast-track negotiation authority. This authority, which every President of either party has had for the last 20 years, enables the President to negotiate trade agreements and submit them to the Congress for an up-or-down vote, without modification. Renewing this traditional trade authority is essential to America's ability to shape the global economy of the 21st century.

SEIZING THE BENEFIT OF A GROWING, CHANGING
ECONOMY

As we approach the 21st century the American economy is sound and strong, but challenges remain. We

know that information and technology and global commerce are rapidly transforming the economy, offering new opportunities but also posing new challenges. Our goal must be to ensure that all Americans are equipped with the skills to succeed in this growing, changing economy.

Our economic strategy—balancing the budget, investing in our people, opening markets—has set this Nation on the right course to meet the goal. This strategy will support and contribute to America's strength and providing our people with the skills, the flexibility, and the security to succeed. We must continue to maintain the fiscal discipline that is balancing the budget, to invest in our people and their skills, and to lead the world to greater prosperity in the 21st century.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON.

THE WHITE HOUSE, *February 10, 1998.*

By unanimous consent, the message, together with the accompanying papers, was referred to the Joint Economic Committee and ordered to be printed (H. Doc. 105-176).

¶6.10 RECESS—3:28 P.M.

The SPEAKER pro tempore, Mr. UPTON, pursuant to clause 12 of rule I, declared the House in recess at 3 o'clock and 28 minutes p.m., until approximately 4 o'clock p.m.

¶6.11 AFTER RECESS—4:04 P.M.

The SPEAKER pro tempore, Mr. UPTON, called the House to order.

¶6.12 PROVIDING FOR THE
CONSIDERATION OF MOTIONS TO
SUSPEND THE RULES

Mr. SOLOMON, by direction of the Committee on Rules, called up the following resolution (H. Res. 352):

Resolved, That it shall be in order at any time on Wednesday, February 11, 1998, or on Thursday, February 12, 1998, for the Speaker to entertain motions that the House suspend the rules. The Speaker or his designee shall consult with the minority leader or his designee on the designation of any matter for consideration pursuant to this resolution.

When said resolution was considered. After debate,

On motion of Mr. SOLOMON, the previous question was ordered on the resolution to its adoption or rejection.

The question being put, *viva voce,*

Will the House agree to said resolution?

The SPEAKER pro tempore, Mr. UPTON, announced that the yeas had it.

Ms. SLAUGHTER demanded that the vote be taken by the yeas and nays, which demand was supported by one-fifth of the Members present, so the yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore, Mr. UPTON, by unanimous consent and pursuant to clause 5(b)(1) of rule I, announced that further proceedings on the resolution were postponed until approximately 5 o'clock p.m.

¶6.13 RECESS—4:32 P.M.

The SPEAKER pro tempore, Mr. UPTON, pursuant to clause 12 of rule I,