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NEWS

U. S. SENATOR FOR KANSAS

FROM:

SENATE REPUBLICAN LEADER

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## UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS

SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT ON BENEFITS DEBATE;  
DEMOCRATS SHOULD COME BACK TO DOLE ALTERNATIVE

I RISE TO SPECIFICALLY ADDRESS THE COMMENTS MADE BY THE SENATOR FROM TENNESSEE DURING TUESDAY'S DEBATE ON ADDITIONAL EXTENDED BENEFITS FOR UNEMPLOYED AMERICANS.

IT IS INTERESTING THAT THE SENATOR FROM TENNESSEE SPECIFICALLY REFERS TO HIS CONCERN OVER A \$350 BILLION DEFICIT FOR THE COMING FISCAL YEAR AND YET HE STRONGLY SUPPORTS LEGISLATION TO INCREASE THAT DEFICIT ANOTHER \$6.2 BILLION. IT SEEMS TO ME THAT THIS IS TRYING TO HAVE IT BOTH WAYS. I DO NOT UNDERSTAND HOW WE CAN EXTOL THE VIRTUES OF BUDGET DISCIPLINE AND THE IRRESPONSIBILITY OF ADDING TO A RUNAWAY DEFICIT WHILE AT THE SAME TIME SUPPORTING LEGISLATION THAT FURTHER INCREASES THE DEFICIT.

THESE POLICIES ARE INCONSISTENT AND THAT'S WHY I, ALONG WITH SENATORS DOMENICI, ROTH AND OTHERS, OFFERED AN ALTERNATIVE UNEMPLOYMENT BILL THAT PROVIDED EXTENDED BENEFITS TO UNEMPLOYED AMERICANS WITHOUT INCREASING THE FEDERAL DEFICIT ONE RED CENT. THE BILL PAID FOR ITSELF AND STUCK BY THE RULES OF THE BUDGET AGREEMENT.

IT IS ALSO INTERESTING THAT THE SENATOR FROM TENNESSEE STATES THAT THE ADMINISTRATION CARES MORE ABOUT FOREIGN COUNTRIES THAN IT DOES ABOUT THE UNEMPLOYED WORKER IN THIS COUNTRY. NOTHING COULD BE FURTHER FROM THE TRUTH.

THE POINT THAT I HAVE BEEN REPEATEDLY MAKING DURING THE LAST FEW DAYS IS THAT INCREASING THE DEFICIT HURTS ALL AMERICANS -- THOSE WHO ARE UNEMPLOYED AND THOSE WHO ARE WORKING. WHILE MAYBE CONGRESS THINKS IT CAN CONVENIENTLY TURN A BLIND EYE TO THE DEFICIT, THE PRESIDENT KNOWS THAT THIS MONEY WILL HAVE TO BE PAID BACK WITH INTEREST BY FUTURE GENERATIONS OF AMERICANS.

CONTRARY TO WHAT THE SENATOR FROM TENNESSEE STATES, THE FACT THAT THE ADMINISTRATION IS PURSUING DEBT RELIEF FOR A HANDFUL OF DOWN-AND-OUT, BANKRUPT COUNTRIES HAS ABSOLUTELY NOTHING TO DO WITH THIS DEBATE.

THE PRESIDENT'S DEBT-FORGIVENESS PROGRAM IS 100% CONSISTENT WITH THE BUDGET AGREEMENT AND EXISTING LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY.

THE SENATOR FROM TENNESSEE SPECIFICALLY REFERS TO DEBT RELIEF FOR A NUMBER OF COUNTRIES INCLUDING UGANDA, MALAWI, AND HAITI. FRANKLY, WE ALL KNOW THAT THESE DEBTS ARE ALMOST -- IF NOT TOTALLY -- WORTHLESS. INDEED, FOR THE CHAIRMAN OF THE BUDGET COMMITTEE TO SUGGEST THAT THEY HAVE MEANINGFUL VALUE AND THAT THE PRESIDENT IS PURSUING A \$2 BILLION "GIVEAWAY" IS PLAIN WRONG.

I ASK UNANIMOUS CONSENT THAT A CHART LISTING THOSE COUNTRIES MENTIONED BY THE SENATOR FROM TENNESSEE FOR WHICH DEBT HAS BEEN FORGIVEN OR FOR WHICH SUCH DEBT FORGIVENESS IS PENDING BE INCLUDED IN THE RECORD AT THE CONCLUSION OF MY REMARKS. THIS CHART SHOWS THAT WHILE THE PRINCIPAL AMOUNT OF THE DEBT FOR THESE COUNTRIES TOTALS \$2.1 BILLION, THE REALITY IS THAT FEW OF THESE COUNTRIES CAN REPAY THE DEBT AND IN FACT, THE ADMINISTRATION ONLY EXPECTS PAYMENTS OF \$34 MILLION DURING THIS FISCAL YEAR.

AND SO, THE BOTTOM LINE OF ANY SUCH DEBT RELIEF FOR THESE COUNTRIES IS THAT IT HAS MINIMAL IMPACT ON THE DEFICIT -- A TOTAL OF \$34 MILLION.

CONTRAST THIS TO THE SO-CALLED BENTSEN PROPOSAL APPROVED BY THE SENATE TUESDAY EVENING WHICH ASKS AMERICAN TAXPAYERS TO COUGH UP \$6.2 BILLION.

"EMERGENCY" ITEMS APPROVED BY THE PRESIDENT AND CONGRESS

IN ORDER TO MAKE THE RECORD CRYSTAL CLEAR ON THIS ISSUE, I ASK UNANIMOUS CONSENT THAT A LIST OF ALL EMERGENCY SPENDING ITEMS APPROVED BY THE PRESIDENT AND BY CONGRESS TO DATE BE INCLUDED IN THE RECORD AT THE CONCLUSION OF MY REMARKS.

IN EACH CASE EXCEPT ONE, THE EMERGENCY SPENDING RELATED DIRECTLY TO THE PERSIAN GULF WAR -- AN EVENT THAT GENERATIONS TO COME WILL LOOK AT AS A CRITICAL PERIOD IN THIS NATION'S HISTORY. THAT ONE EXCEPTION WAS FOR \$150 MILLION TO PAY FOR INCREASED STATE COSTS FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF UNEMPLOYMENT CLAIMS.

(MORE)



THIS RECORD SPEAKS FOR ITSELF, AND I WONDER WHETHER THOSE WHO CRITICIZE THESE EXPENDITURES, NOTWITHSTANDING THAT THEY PROBABLY VOTED FOR THEM, ARE NOW SUGGESTING THAT THE MONEY SPENT TO SAVE THE FAMILIES OF U.S. OFFICIALS STATIONED OVERSEAS OR TO PROTECT AMERICANS FROM TERRORIST ATTACKS WAS NOT WISELY SPENT.

#### DEFENSE COOPERATION ACCOUNT

FINALLY, I ASK UNANIMOUS CONSENT THAT A LIST OF THOSE COUNTRIES OR PROGRAMS FOR WHICH DEFENSE COOPERATION ACCOUNT INTEREST HAS BEEN USED BE INCLUDED IN THE RECORD AT THE CONCLUSION OF MY REMARKS.

AGAIN, MY COLLEAGUES ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE AISLE HAVE TOTALLY MISSED THE POINT WITH RESPECT TO THESE FUNDS.

NOT ONE PENNY OF THE MONEY THAT WAS SPENT TO PROVIDE AID TO THE KURDS OR TO SUPPORT THE U.N. PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS ON THE IRAQ-KUWAIT BORDER INCREASED THE FEDERAL DEFICIT.

THE REALITY OF THE COMPARISON THAT MY COLLEAGUES ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE AISLE HAVE BEEN TALKING ABOUT IS THAT THE BENTSEN BILL INCREASES THE DEFICIT \$6.2 BILLION WHILE THE EXPENDITURES LISTED ON THIS CHART CAME OUT OF INTEREST ON FUNDS PROVIDED BY OTHER NATIONS TO PAY FOR THE PERSIAN GULF WAR. IN OTHER WORDS, WHERE THE BENTSEN BILL IS A \$6.2 BILLION HIT TO AMERICAN TAXPAYERS, THE AID TO THE KURDS, THE AID TO THE U.N., AND THE OTHER DISASTER RELIEF ITEMS DESCRIBED ON THE CHART HAD NO IMPACT.

FINALLY, THIS CHART CONTAINS INFORMATION AS TO THE AMOUNT THAT WAS REQUESTED BY THE ADMINISTRATION AND THE AMOUNT THAT WAS ADDED-ON BY CONGRESS. IN ONE INSTANCE, THE ADMINISTRATION REQUESTED \$23 MILLION AND THE CONGRESS ADDED-ON \$45 MILLION. IN ANOTHER INSTANCE, THE ADMINISTRATION REQUESTED \$27 MILLION AND CONGRESS ADDED-ON \$40 MILLION. IT AMAZES ME THAT FINGERS ARE BEING POINTED AT THE WHITE HOUSE WHEN THEY SHOULD BE POINTING AT THE CONGRESS.

#### CONFERENCE REPORT STILL A BUDGET BUSTER

IN CLOSING, I JUST WANT TO TAKE A FEW MOMENTS TO ADDRESS THE CONFERENCE REPORT. AS EXPECTED AND AS I HAVE BEEN SAYING ALL ALONG, THE HOUSE AND SENATE DEMOCRATS AGREED TO THE BENTSEN PROPOSAL WITH ONE VERY SIGNIFICANT CHANGE. THIS CHANGE WILL BE RAISED AS A BUDGET POINT OF ORDER BY THE DISTINGUISHED SENATOR FROM NEW MEXICO.

MAKE NO MISTAKE ABOUT IT, THE LEGISLATION WE WILL BE VOTING ON NEXT WEEK IS A BUDGET BUSTER. IT IS LEGISLATION THAT THE PRESIDENT WILL VETO, AND IT IS OUR EVERY EXPECTATION THAT THAT VETO WILL BE SUSTAINED.

IT BREAKS THE BACK OF THE BUDGET AGREEMENT, AND IT WILL BREAK THE BACK OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE.

THE CONFERENCE REPORT DENIES THE AUTHORITY GRANTED TO THE PRESIDENT AND SAYS THAT THE PROVISIONS CONTAINED IN THIS BILL ARE DEEMED EMERGENCY REQUIREMENTS. IN SHORT, THIS BILL CONVENIENTLY IGNORES CURRENT LAW THAT REQUIRES -- I REPEAT -- THAT REQUIRES -- THE PRESIDENT TO MAKE AN INDEPENDENT DECLARATION.

LET'S BE FRANK ABOUT WHAT'S GOING ON HERE. MY COLLEAGUES ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE AISLE WANT TO BREAK THE BUDGET AGREEMENT. THEY WANT TO MAKE POLITICS OVER UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION.

THEY HAD THE OPTION TO VOTE FOR A RESPONSIBLE PACKAGE -- A PACKAGE THAT GOT EXTENDED BENEFITS TO UNEMPLOYED WORKERS AND THAT PAID FOR ITSELF. OUR BILL DID NOT ADD ONE RED CENT TO THE FEDERAL DEFICIT. THE CONFERENCE REPORT WE WILL BE VOTING ON ADDS \$6.2 BILLION TO THE FEDERAL DEFICIT. AND MAKE NO MISTAKE ABOUT IT, THIS IS REAL MONEY. IT'S MONEY THAT OUR CHILDREN AND GRANDCHILDREN WILL HAVE TO PAY BACK AND THAT WILL CRIPPLE THEIR STANDARD OF LIVING.

#### TRASHING BUDGET AGREEMENT SENDS CARELESS MESSAGE

IF THE BUDGET AGREEMENT IS CAST ASIDE, THIS CONGRESS MIGHT AS WELL GO HOME. WE MIGHT AS WELL TURN THE LIGHTS OUT WITH THE FOLLOWING MESSAGE:

- WE DON'T CARE ABOUT THE BUDGET AGREEMENT;
- WE DON'T CARE HOW BIG THE FEDERAL DEFICIT GROWS;
- WE DON'T CARE ABOUT FUTURE GENERATIONS OF AMERICANS;
- WE JUST CARE ABOUT PLAYING GAMES ON THE SENATE FLOOR -- GAMES THAT SCORE POINTS FOR A FEW BUT WHICH HARM EVERY AMERICAN.

WHEN THESE DEBATES ARE OVER, I HOPE THAT MY COLLEAGUES ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE AISLE WILL COME BACK TO OUR ALTERNATIVE. THE PRESIDENT HAS PUBLICLY STATED THAT HE WOULD SIGN IT SO THAT EXTENDED BENEFIT CHECKS WOULD BE IN THE HANDS OF THE UNEMPLOYED AS SOON AS THE BEGINNING OF NEXT MONTH.

THE LONGER WE DELAY AROUND HERE -- THE LONGER WE PLAY THESE GAMES THAT SUIT THE INTERESTS OF A FEW -- THE LONGER WE ARE IGNORING THE NEEDS AND INTERESTS OF THE UNEMPLOYED.

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