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U. S. SENATOR FOR KANSAS



NEWS

FROM:

SENATE REPUBLICAN LEADER

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BALANCED BUDGET ACT OF 1995

SENATE PASSES HISTORIC BILL TO BALANCE BUDGET FOR FIRST TIME
IN GENERATION; REPUBLICANS KEEP PROMISES, DO THE RIGHT THING
FOR AMERICA'S FUTURE

Soon after my election to the Kansas State House of Representatives, a reporter asked me whether I had a legislative agenda. And I replied that my agenda was simple--it was to stand up for what I thought was right. And I have tried to follow that philosophy throughout my career.

In just a few minutes I will vote to approve the Balanced Budget Act of 1995. I believe the vote is one of the most historic votes ever taken in this Chamber--and certainly the most important one I have cast in my years in the Senate.

And as I cast my vote to approve this landmark legislation, I can say that I have never been so certain that I am standing up for what's right. I have never been so certain that the United States Senate is standing up for what is right.

The Balanced Budget Amendment Act of 1995 is right for America's future. It is right for the American people. It is right for our children and grandchildren. It is right for our states, our cities, and our neighborhoods. It is right for our senior citizens. It is right for every American who is saving to buy a home. It is right for every American who is buying a car. It is right for every American who takes out a loan to send a child to college. It is right for those trapped in our failed welfare system.

Last fall, Republicans asked voters to give us a majority on Capitol Hill. And we left absolutely no doubt about what we would do if we got that majority.

Keeping Our Promises to the American People

We promised we would put an end to business as usual. Tonight, Americans know that we have kept our promise.

We promised to stop the mortgaging of our children's and grandchildren's future, and to put America on a path to a balanced budget. Tonight, Americans know that we have kept our promise.

We promised to replace our failed welfare system with one based on the principles of work, family, and personal responsibility. Tonight, Americans know that we have kept our promise.

We promised to cut taxes for America's families, and to encourage savings, investment, and economic growth. Tonight, Americans know that we have kept our promise.

We promised to shift power out of Washington, D.C., and to return it to where it belongs--our states, our cities, and our people. And tonight, Americans know that we have kept our promise.

A balanced budget. True welfare reform. Lower taxes. More freedom and power for our states, our cities, and our people. That's what Republicans are all about. And that's what this bill is all about.

President Should Allow His Actions to Match His Words

President Clinton has said that he will veto this bill. He will, as is his habit, stand in the way of change. And I would simply say to the President to take another look at this bill.

We are told that the President's pollsters are advising him that the American people have concluded that his actions don't match his words. By signing this bill, President Clinton would prove that his actions do match his words on a number of issues.

President Clinton has told the American people many many times that he is for a balanced budget. He said on June 4, 1992 he would balance the budget in five years. He said on May 20, 1995, he could balance the budget in less than 10 years. He said on June 13, 1995, he would take 10 years. And on October 19, 1995 he said he could balance it in either seven years, eight years, or nine years.

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Despite these claims, President Clinton did everything he could to defeat a balanced budget amendment, and the Congressional Budget Office--which the President has previously endorsed as an honest scorekeeper--has said that the budgets the President did propose left us with \$200 million deficits far into the next century.

President Clinton said in 1992 that he would end welfare as we know it. Yet, he admitted recently that the only welfare bill he proposed was a disappointment.

The President promised in 1992 that he would give "middle-class" Americans a tax cut. Yet, in 1993 he gave America the largest tax increase in history.

The President said that he wants to prevent Medicare from going bankrupt, as three of his Cabinet members have projected it will do within seven years. Yet, he has refused to work in a bi-partisan manner with Republicans to save Medicare. Instead, according to a remarkable editorial in the Washington Post, the President has "shamelessly used the (Medicare) issue...demagogued on it...and taken to the air waves with a slick scare program."

So, Americans have every reason to be confused. Just where does the President stand on balancing the budget? Where does he stand on reforming welfare? Where does he stand on cutting taxes for America's families? Where does he stand on saving Medicare?

The President's decision on this bill will, once and for all, clear up all confusion. Because by signing this bill, the President will finally allow his actions to match his words. But by vetoing it, he will make very clear that he is against a balanced budget, and the benefits it will bring. He is against welfare reform. He is against tax reduction. He is against saving Medicare.

And by vetoing his bill, the President will be against many other provisions. He will be against a capital gains tax cut. He will be against putting an end to the marriage penalty tax. He will be against medical savings accounts. He will be against adoption tax credits. He will be against helping Americans who provide care to their parents.

Now, when President Clinton vetoes this bill, he will shake his head, and he will say what many of his liberal allies have said today. He will say that he would like to sign this bill, but it's just too harsh. He will say that we are cutting spending on programs for the less fortunate among us. He will say we are cutting Medicare. He will say our tax cuts favor the business community.

He will say all that. And he will be wrong.

Look At The Facts

He will be wrong because this bill does not cut overall federal spending--it allows it to grow by 22% over the next seven years.

He will be wrong because this bill does not cut Medicare. In fact, Medicare will continue to grow at a rate of 7.7% a year.

He will be wrong because this bill does not cut programs to the needy--it allows them to grow by 34% in the next seven years.

He will be wrong because total funding for student loans will be increased by nearly 50% over the next seven years.

He will be wrong because 73% of the tax cuts in this bill will help families throughout their lives.

Those are the facts. The President will try his best to obscure these facts with emotional rhetoric. In fact, the Democrat National Committee already has a television commercial on the air trumpeting the President's so-called balanced budget proposal, and saying that the Republican plan will cut Medicare.

It's a nice commercial with catchy music, but not a word of it is true. As I have said, the President has never submitted a budget anywhere near balance. And the Republican plan increases Medicare spending.

Giving Farmers Freedom to Plant for the Market Place

I'm from a farm state, and I want to say to the farmers of Kansas and the farmers of America that this bill is also important to them.

Since the days of Franklin Roosevelt, the government has been in the business of telling farmers how to farm. Under this bill, that will end, and beginning in 1996, farmers will be planting for the market place.

Under this bill, farmers will have full planting flexibility, elimination of set asides, program simplicity, and a farm policy that transitions farmers into the next century without disrupting the farm economy or land values.

While I am concerned about farmers receiving payments in good years, I am pleased we were able to cap the entitlement spending of agriculture programs. We accomplish this goal through a declining transition payment which is guaranteed to the farmer. In exchange, farmers will be required to maintain their land conservation efforts

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in both good and bad years. And this bill also protects family farms by providing some much needed estate tax relief.

Let me conclude by saying that I know that the American people have wondered about the events taking place in Washington this week. They have wondered why the government was shut down. They have wondered why Congress and the White House aren't talking to each other.

Well, as I have said many times this week, I wonder why we haven't spent more time talking to each other. And I remain ready to talk with the President any time to put all federal employees back to work.

Debate About Our Future

But I also would tell Americans that if ever there was a debate you wanted your elected representatives to have, this is it. This is it. Because we are debating your future. We are debating the future of your children and grandchildren. We are debating the future of America.

I speak for all Republicans in saying that, as we approach Thanksgiving, we are thankful to have the opportunity to stand for something. We are thankful to have the opportunity to stand for fundamental change. We are thankful to have the opportunity to stand for a better future for the next generation of Americans.

And let me close by saying--and I know I speak for all members of the Senate--that we are thankful that we have the opportunity to serve with a Senator as courageous and committed as Pete Domenici, and I salute him for his many years of leadership in support of a balanced budget.

Let's do the right thing for America's future. Let's pass the Balanced Budget Act of 1995.

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