

would allow more pay-as-you-go money for SS.

Instead, Clinton announced a clutch of new programs that would eat up the surpluses—despite iffy funding from tobacco revenues.

Hence the appeal of Moynihan's approach. It would allow Americans to voluntarily use as much as 15 percent of their SS payroll tax for personal pension savings accounts. Because that's optional and restricted to a modest percentage, it would minimize the danger that at retirement a pensioner might suffer from a market drop. And the upside—higher compounded returns over decades of savings—would compensate for increased risk.

Meanwhile, Moynihan would seek to ensure that the basic SS pension remains rock solid by assuring its yearly pay-as-you-go integrity. To make bearable the tax burden borne by next generation workers paying for their retiring baby boom parents, he adapts two existing ideas: (1) Speed the move to a standard retirement age of 70, reflecting longevity statistics. (2) Trim the rate of indexing for inflation.

There will be battles to come. But at least one of our most thoughtful political statements has gotten a realistic mix of elements on the table. Now it's up to his colleagues.

Mr. LAUTENBERG. With that, Mr. President, I yield back the time on our side and hope that we can proceed forthwith.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the amendment.

Mr. DOMENICI. The Senator wants to ask for the yeas and nays on his amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second? There appears to be a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

Mr. ROTH. I also ask unanimous consent that Senator BROWBACK be added as a cosponsor.

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

Mr. LAUTENBERG. I have a request.

Mr. DOMENICI. Did you have a request?

Mr. LAUTENBERG. I do.

Mr. President, the Senator from Iowa has asked for some time to discuss something, and I would give him 5 minutes off of the resolution to do that, unless there is an objection.

Mr. DOMENICI. Let me just see if we can get an agreement that you and I have spoken to.

I say to the Senator, are you going to speak on the subject that is before us? Or do you just want consent to speak on a subject not pertaining to the budget for 5 minutes?

Mr. HARKIN. It has something to do with the budget.

Mr. DOMENICI. But it is not a proposal?

Mr. HARKIN. No.

Mr. DOMENICI. We are going to be able to arrange that for the Senator.

Mr. President, I want to suggest that when we entered into the unanimous consent agreement, the idea was that we would expedite the voting on amendments and minimize the number perhaps that was going to be voted on in the so-called "votarama" with 1 minute on a side by amending the

statutorily allotted amount of time for amendments and second-degree amendments. And we did so agree. But we were not specific in saying that there shall be no time yielded off the bill to those new time agreements. So I just ask, with the concurrence of my friend from New Jersey, unanimous consent that there be added to the unanimous consent agreement regarding the time allotted on amendments and second-degree amendments, the following language: And that no time, no additional time, shall be allotted from time remaining on the bill by either side.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection? Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DOMENICI. I thank the Chair.

I say to the Senator, did you want to do something?

Mr. LAUTENBERG. If we can let our friend from Iowa make his statement.

Mr. DOMENICI. I say to the Senator, we will yield you 5 minutes off the bill.

Mr. HARKIN. I thank the Senator. I appreciate it.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

#### THE AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH CONFERENCE REPORT

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I want to speak for a couple of minutes about a conference report that is now before the Senate which is of the utmost urgency that we proceed to and pass yet today. I am hopeful we can do it. That is S. 1150. It is the agricultural research bill which we passed here last year by unanimous consent. What happened is, the House passed it also last year but the House, for one reason or another, refused to go to conference, and then the session ended last year.

About 3 weeks ago, the House finally consented to go to conference. We went to conference. We worked out our agreements on a very important bill. And that bill now is before the Senate.

In the ag research bill, there are at least three very important parts: The ag research; crop insurance, to work out the problems in crop insurance so we can have a disaster crop insurance program for the next 5 years; and there is also a food stamp provision for refugees and the asylees that were inadvertently left out of the welfare-to-work reform bill that we passed in August of 1996.

We need to pass this bill today. It is of the utmost urgency. We have over 717,000 catastrophic crop insurance policies in America today, farmers all over this country, from California to Maryland, from North Dakota to Texas. All rely upon this crop insurance program.

If we don't pass this bill very soon, those policies will start to lapse and those farmers who have to plant in the summertime for winter crops will not be able to get their crop insurance. That means if they were to have a natural disaster that would wipe them out completely, they would be in here to

Congress again begging us to bail them out. That is why it is so important we pass this today.

Now, why today? Because we have a very strange parliamentary situation. If we don't pass it today and this budget passes tomorrow, which it will, then we lose all the money that we have for crop insurance to help out our farmers. I might also add, we lose the money that is in there to meet a need for refugees and asylees who are legal immigrants in this country. Some of them, like the Hmong who fought alongside our American troops in Laos during the Vietnam war, were inadvertently cut out of the welfare reform bill. This is in the bill before us, S. 1150.

As I said, S. 1150 had bipartisan support in conference, Republicans and Democrats, House and Senate. We worked out all the differences. There are no objections in our committees to this. That is why it is so vitally important that we pass it today.

I guess I ask here on the floor, the majority leader, and to the staff who are here, if they could possibly bring up S. 1150 today, sometime by the end of the day. I don't know if the managers of the bill would mind if we set it aside for 15 minutes—I don't think it would take longer than that; after all, it passed by unanimous consent last year—and pass it today. I don't think it would take much time. As I said, I am sure Senator LUGAR, being the chairman, and I, the ranking minority member, don't need more than 15 minutes on this bill. It is vitally important, because if we don't pass it, we will lose the crop insurance for our farmers, especially those who need to plant summer crops.

I yield to Senator CONRAD from North Dakota.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I want to add my voice to the strong voice of the Senator from Iowa, Senator HARKIN. We are now facing an emergency with respect to the research bill. The research title is a bit of a misnomer because much more is involved here than agricultural research, although that is critically important. That is critically important because we have been hit all across the country with a set of diseases because we are in a wet cycle. That wet cycle has been devastating in my State. We lost 30 percent of the crop last year, over \$1 billion of economic loss because of scab and vomitoxin, and those losses continue.

Now we are in a situation where we desperately need research into those diseases, but it goes much beyond that. It goes to the heart of the crop insurance system in America. As the Senator from Iowa has indicated, there are 700,000 policyholders in America. They are about to get a notice that there is no crop insurance available for them. That is the danger that we risk if we fail to act, and act today.

The crop insurance shortfall may result in farmers across the Nation receiving cancellation notices. This is a dire emergency.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time is expired.

Mr. LAUTENBERG. I am delighted to yield 1 minute to our colleague from North Dakota.

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

Mr. DORGAN. I will be brief.

The Senator from Iowa raise a concern of some urgency for the United States Senate. What he is describing is a bipartisan agreement on legislation that is critical to our part of the country. It deals not only with research, but also with crop insurance. It deals with critically needed investment for research in crop diseases such as fusarium head blight or scab which produces vomitoxin in wheat and barley.

We have an awful problem out in our part of the country with these crop diseases and crop losses. We need a viable crop insurance program. We were delighted when the Senator from Iowa and the Senator from Indiana and others reached this bipartisan agreement and moved it through the conference with the House of Representatives. I know how hard that was. That was a tough thing to do because the sides were quite far apart. When they reached this agreement, we were delighted with that. It is an important agreement.

Now, as usual, in the case of politics, timing is everything. It is very important for this bipartisan conference agreement to be considered by the Senate and moved along. Time is of the essence here.

I commend the Senator from Iowa.

Mr. HARKIN. I thank both Senators from North Dakota for their strong voices and strong support for the crop insurance program.

To sum it up, our farmers, our refugees, our asylees, should not be penalized because of the delay on the part of the House last year—not going to conference—and they should not be penalized because of this odd parliamentary situation we have.

I hope the majority leader and his staff who are listening to this will hopefully bring up this bill today, and let's get it passed. I don't think it will take more than 10 or 15 minutes to get the job done and we can say to our farmers that their crop insurance policies are, indeed, going to be renewed for next year.

I thank both of the managers of the bill for yielding us this time to talk about this very important subject.

#### CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET FOR THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT FOR FISCAL YEARS 1999, 2000, 2001, AND 2003

The Senate continued with consideration of the concurrent resolution.

#### VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 2209

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the Roth amendment. The yeas and nays have been ordered.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 51, nays 49, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 56 Leg.]

#### YEAS—51

Abraham	Gorton	McConnell
Allard	Gramm	Murkowski
Ashcroft	Grams	Nickles
Bennett	Grassley	Robb
Breaux	Gregg	Roberts
Brownback	Hagel	Roth
Burns	Hatch	Santorum
Campbell	Helms	Sessions
Chafee	Hutchinson	Shelby
Cochran	Hutchison	Smith (NH)
Coverdell	Inhofe	Smith (OR)
Craig	Kempthorne	Specter
DeWine	Kyl	Stevens
Domenici	Lott	Thomas
Enzi	Lugar	Thompson
Faircloth	Mack	Thurmond
Frist	McCain	Warner

#### NAYS—49

Akaka	Durbin	Leahy
Baucus	Feingold	Levin
Biden	Feinstein	Lieberman
Bingaman	Ford	Mikulski
Bond	Glenn	Moseley-Braun
Boxer	Graham	Moynihan
Bryan	Harkin	Murray
Bumpers	Hollings	Reed
Byrd	Inouye	Reid
Cleland	Jeffords	Rockefeller
Coats	Johnson	Sarbanes
Collins	Kennedy	Snowe
Conrad	Kerrey	Torricelli
D'Amato	Kerry	Wellstone
Daschle	Kohl	Wyden
Dodd	Landrieu	
Dorgan	Lautenberg	

The amendment (No. 2209) was agreed to.

Mr. ROTH. Mr. President, I move to reconsider the vote by which the amendment was agreed to.

Mr. LAUTENBERG. I move to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

Mr. LAUTENBERG addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey is recognized.

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Mr. President, once again, I don't think we are going to hear any profound speeches in the next few minutes, but at least we ought to know what it is that is going on, because if those amendments are not up there by the witching hour of 6 o'clock, they will not have a chance to get an amendment considered, whether it is a "vote-a-thon," "vote-a-rama," "rapid fire," or whatever you want to call it, or whether there will be a chance for debate. Six o'clock is it. We all turn into pumpkins at that time.

#### AMENDMENT NO. 2204, AS MODIFIED, AND AMENDMENT NOS. 2226 THROUGH 2247, EN BLOC

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Mr. President, I have amendments to send to the desk on behalf of the following Senators: Senator KOHL from Wisconsin has a modification to amendment No. 2204, Senator ROCKEFELLER, Senator CONRAD, Senator BUMPERS, Senator FEINSTEIN, Senator JOHN KERRY, Senator WELLSTONE, Senator CHARLES ROBB, Senator BIDEN, Senator BOXER, Senator BINGAMAN, Senator BINGAMAN again, Senator ROBERT KERREY, Sen-

ator MOSELEY-BRAUN, Senator MOSELEY-BRAUN again, Senator MOSELEY-BRAUN again, Senator DURBIN, Senator DORGAN, Senator LAUTENBERG, Senator LAUTENBERG again, Senator TORRICELLI, Senator TORRICELLI again, and Senator MOYNIHAN.

I offer those amendments and ask for their consideration. I ask unanimous consent that we suspend the reading of the amendments.

Mr. President, I offer them en bloc. I also ask unanimous consent that they be put aside after being laid at the desk.

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

The amendment numbered 2204, as modified, and amendments numbered 2226 through 2247, en bloc, are as follows:

#### AMENDMENT NO. 2204, AS MODIFIED

(Purpose: To express the sense of the Senate regarding the establishment of a national background check system for long-term care workers)

At the end of title III add the following:

#### SEC. . SENSE OF THE SENATE REGARDING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A NATIONAL BACKGROUND CHECK SYSTEM FOR LONG-TERM CARE WORKERS.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Senate makes the following findings:

(1) The impending retirement of the baby boom generation will greatly increase the demand and need for quality long-term care and it is incumbent on Congress and the President to ensure that medicare and medicaid patients are protected from abuse, neglect, and mistreatment.

(2) Although the majority of long-term care facilities do an excellent job in caring for elderly and disabled patients, incidents of abuse and neglect and mistreatment do occur at an unacceptable rate and are not limited to nursing homes alone.

(3) Current Federal and State safeguards are inadequate because there is little or no information sharing between States about known abusers and no common State procedures for tracking abusers from State to State and facility to facility.

(b) SENSE OF THE SENATE.—It is the sense of the Senate that the assumptions underlying the functional totals in this concurrent resolution on the budget assume that a national registry of abusive long-term care workers should be established by building upon existing infrastructures at the Federal and State levels that would enable long-term care providers who participate in the medicare and medicaid programs (42 U.S.C. 1395 et seq.; 1396 et seq.) to conduct background checks on prospective employees.

#### AMENDMENT NO. 2226

On page 14, line 7, strike "\$51,500,000,000." and all that follows through line 24, and substitute in lieu thereof the following:

"\$51,000,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$42,300,000,000.

Fiscal year 2000:

(A) New budget authority, \$50,800,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$43,700,000,000.

Fiscal year 2001:

(A) New budget authority, \$50,100,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$43,700,000,000.

Fiscal year 2002:

(A) New budget authority, \$48,400,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$42,800,000,000.

Fiscal year 2003:

(A) New budget authority, \$48,000,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$42,900,000,000."

On page 25, line 8, strike "—\$300,000,000." and all that follows through line 25, and substitute in lieu thereof the following: