

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia: Mr. Speaker, the supporters of this legislation have spoken at length about how nice it would be to balance the budget and how dangerous deficits are. The speeches, there are great speeches about the budget, but the one thing they have not talked about is how the provisions of this legislation will actually help balance the budget.

Now, we had a hearing earlier this month where the former Governor of Pennsylvania talked about the Pennsylvania balanced budget amendment and how their constitutional provision was such a good thing; but he had to acknowledge that other than the title, there is nothing in H.J. Res. 2 that can be found in the Pennsylvania Constitution.

We also found that the gentleman from Arizona had to acknowledge, after he talked about how good the balanced budget amendment works in Arizona, that Arizona was able to balance its budget only because federally borrowed stimulus money provided \$6 billion to Arizona; \$1,000 for every man, woman, and child in that State. And that wasn't enough. Arizona had to sell their State capitol and supreme court building. That's right, sold their State capitol and supreme court building and leased it back in order to achieve about a billion dollars worth of cash needed that year.

So we should be looking at the provisions of the legislation, not just talking about how nice it is to balance the budget.

One of the provisions is a three-fifths vote to increase the debt ceiling. Last August, the United States lost its AAA credit rating because it looked like we were not going to be able to achieve a simple majority. We should explain how it makes a lot of sense to make that spectacle an annual affair. I think most people would think it would be fiscally irresponsible to enact that provision.

Another provision is a three-fifths vote to pass a budget that's not balanced in a given year. That would cover every budget we considered this year, including the strongest deficit reduction plan, because those budgets are not balanced in the first year.

Now, strong deficit reduction is politically difficult because we're talking about arithmetic. You have to raise taxes and/or cut spending. Now, you can't get a simple majority; we can't even get a simple majority to do that, so why would anyone think that this legislation requiring a three-fifths vote would make it any easier. In fact, that same three-fifths vote will be sufficient to pass new tax cuts and additional spending, making the deficit worse. Last December we passed an \$800 billion tax cut. We got three-fifths for that. But instead of discussing just the title of the resolution, we should be noticing that if this legislation were in effect in 1993, we never would have passed that budget.

We've heard people on the other side of the aisle taking credit for the hard work. I came in in 1993, and we passed a tough budget. There were tough votes. Fifty Democrats lost their seats

as a direct result of those votes. The deficit was \$290 billion at that time. In 1995 when the Republicans came in, they passed their little budgets; and rather than sign those budgets, President Clinton let the government get shut down rather than sign those budgets. If they want to take credit, they can take credit for President Clinton vetoing their budgets and shutting down the government.

In 1997, the deficit had gone from 290 down to less than 25 billion, and there were no tough votes on that. The budget was on the way to balancing itself if we hadn't done anything, and so we find out what would have happened if President Clinton hadn't capitulated in 1995.

In 2001, when the Republicans came in with a Republican President and a Republican Congress, we saw what happened. They passed two tax cuts, fought two wars without paying for them, prescription drugs without paying for them; and rather than, in 2001, when Chairman Greenspan had to answer questions like, What will happen when we pay off the national debt? Are we paying off the national debt too quickly?, it looked like we were on target by 2008 to pay off the entire debt held by the public. Those were the discussions.

The first tax cut was the last time you heard any of that discussion. And as a result of the two tax cuts, two unpaid-for wars and an unpaid-for prescription drug benefit, we ended up in huge deficits. The fact is the 1993 budget never would have passed if we had required a three-fifths vote.

Now we should be focused on the actual effects of the resolution. There's another provision, and that's the provision involving war.