



# BUDGET COMMITTEE



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Judd Gregg, Chairman

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## **Senate Budget Committee Chairman Gregg's Floor Remarks on Budget Act Points of Order Raised Against the Deficit Reduction Act Conference Report**

### *Unofficial Transcript*

Mr. President, the Democratic leader on the bill has every right to make a point of order and clearly the Chair is going to rule that they're well-taken, but let's talk about the substance of them, quickly, because we don't have much time.

They are essentially technical points of order. Two deal with reports and the other deals with an issue of liability which is very narrow, dealing with what people are told when they come into an emergency room. And essentially the practical effects of doing these technical attacks on this bill, will be that the bill must go back to the House of Representatives, and the House of Representatives is going to agree and knock that language out, but the House of Representatives isn't here.

So what's the real practical effect? The real practical effect is that the Katrina money, which is in this bill won't be spent. The TANF program, which is the welfare program, will lapse. The Medicare physicians' payments increase, which basically makes Medicare physicians whole, will not occur. Then the transitional medical assistance for families who have worked their way off welfare will be lost. The therapy caps for seniors who suffer strokes will be lost, during this interim period.

Now why would we want to do that simply to go through a technical exercise? It makes no sense at all. No sense at all, other than the fact that the other side of the aisle just wants to delay the process here, but in the process of delaying for purely technical reasons – I mean, *two reports* are being challenged here – we get thousands of reports in this institution. To delay the Katrina benefits for the people in the Gulf Coast who have suffered is outrageous...over two reports. To potentially stop welfare payments in this country for up to a month because the House can't get back here, is outrageous...over two reports. To stop transitional medical assistance is outrageous...over two reports. To say nothing of the other programs.

Do you realize that if we do not enact this bill by the end of this year, there are \$18 billion worth of subsidies which are going to flow to corporate lenders, which are totally inappropriate. Which the HELP Committee has said we've got to stop. But those subsidies will go to those lenders, the money will potentially be lost and that money that was going to student loans and to reduce the debt will be lost, potentially, unless we get this bill done by the end of the year. We have serious issues here, which have to be addressed and they should not be tied up over technicalities and that is what these points of order are about.