

Congress Split on Budget Plan

Associated Press

WASHINGTON - To a chorus of Republican ridicule, President Clinton sent Congress his budget finale on Monday, a \$1.84 trillion plan to expand health care access, shrink the national debt and shower Democratic constituencies with election-year largesse.



Blessed with a budgetary bonanza that past presidents could only dream about - a projected \$2.92 trillion in federal surpluses over the next decade - Clinton used his spending outline to propose something for almost everyone. He would cut taxes for the sick, elderly, poor and college-

bound; spend more for the environment, schools and gun-law enforcement; and erase the \$3.7 trillion publicly held portion of the national debt by 2013.

The proposal is sure to be heavily reworked by Congress, where defiant Republicans dismissed it as a gambit to bolster Vice President Al Gore's presidential bid and the Democratic drive to capture Congress. They promised to fatten the plan's tax cuts, trim its spending boosts and ignore its tax increases.

"It has all things for everyone they feel they'll need to get Al Gore elected president," said House Budget Committee Chairman John Kasich, R-Ohio, who called it "the president's fantasy budget."

"I look forward to working with the president in putting together a serious spending proposal," said Senate Budget Committee Chairman Pete Domenici,

R-N.M. "But this is a document designed to help Al Gore win election."

There was little denying presidential politics at the White House, where officials said at least a dozen Gore proposals were latched into the outline. But beyond that, Clinton's farewell spending blueprint - for fiscal 2001, beginning Oct. 1 - was an effort to choose the terrain of this year's budget battle.

Clinton proposed \$351 billion in tax cuts through 2010 that he argues can only be enlarged by eroding Social Security's trust funds, diluting efforts to expand and strengthen Medicare, or slashing other popular initiatives such as hiring teachers or reducing the national debt. "This budget, in short, makes really strong and significant steps toward achieving the great goals that I believe America should pursue in this new century," Clinton told reporters.

GRADUATION

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of about 4,100 seniors, including those enrolled in professional schools.

The School of Journalism and Mass Communication sent a mass e-mail to alert its students of the registration deadline, and the Kenan-Flagler Business School plans to do the same thing before

its self-imposed Feb. 15 deadline.

Taylor said the Feb. 11 deadline was flexible in some cases, but she stressed that missing the deadline jeopardized a student's chance of participating in the Commencement ceremonies.

Students will not receive their diplomas at this year's ceremonies, but instead they will take home a cover representing the diploma, Taylor said. In February 1999, students voted on

a referendum that called for majors and minors to be listed on their diplomas, delaying the date when seniors would actually receive the documents after graduation.

Taylor said listing majors and minors would delay printing and shipping for two to three months.

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SEATING

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ment the foundation made to the alumni who funded the Smith Center, said that because a growing waitlist for tickets existed, there was no help for students left in the upper deck.

Doug Weatherspoon, an active contributor to the Educational Foundation and a vocal supporter of the athletic program, said he agreed with Pruitt's goals but said the student leader needed to get the facts first. "We must find out who has those seats," he said. "Alumni would probably agree to getting the students closer to help the team improve the atmosphere and recruiting."

Heinke, who has contacted several donors and lower-level ticket-holders, said the next stage was to talk to the ticket-holders for those seats and work

toward a plausible solution.

"Some alumni have agreed to a one-game switch to get the team winning again," he said. "This is not the long-term answer, but it may get us closer to the final solution."

Although Pruitt has support from many alumni, there are others who called the situation bleak.

Mick Mixon, a color analyst for the Tar Heel Sports Network, said this was a tough issue because the problem had been created when the Smith Center was built.

"When the Smith Center was built, donors got to come in and pick out their own seats," he said. "The best interest of the team is served by moving the students closer to the court, but I feel with equal conviction, the University should honor its commitment to the alumni."

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ACCESSIBILITY

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ings across campus. Harris, however, said he would visit every hallway in every residence hall. "I'm not going to wait for people to come to me," Harris said. "I'm going to go to them."

He said he wanted students to feel comfortable enough with his administration to call his office when everyday problems, such as a broken streetlight, arose.

"We need student government to fulfill both ordinary, everyday needs and big plans," Harris said.

He also said he would like to have weekly campus e-mail updates of student government happenings and the text of his "State of the University" speeches printed in The Daily Tar Heel.

Student body president candidate Matt Martin said he wanted to treat student government as a "vehicle of communication."

Martin said he aimed to hold a weekly forum for students and faculty, to form a human relations committee dedicated to increasing communication with students and to have a biweekly column in the DTH.

Martin, a junior from Goldsboro, said he wanted to spend most of his time listening to students rather than becoming wrapped up in the confines of Suite C.

He said the purpose of his Cabinet was to free up his time for his own constant interaction with students.

"The reason why I have a supporting cast is because one person can't do everything," Martin said.

Taking Heinke's door-to-door program even further, Martin said he planned to have someone from his administration visit each on-campus student's home - twice.

"I'm a real face-to-face person. We're

going to go to them," Martin said.

Junior Brad Matthews, former senior adviser to Heinke, said his administration would be building on Heinke's successes. "We're going to continue to do the same things, but do them better," he said.

Matthews, who came up with the idea and pushed for Heinke's weekly door-to-door chat with students, said he wanted to expand personal contact efforts. He said he would like administrators and other students to accompany him on meet-and-greets with students.

"There is no substitute for face-to-face interaction with people who don't necessarily know what student government does or is," Matthews said.

Also, Matthews said he would require his Cabinet to attend the meetings of other campus groups.

Matthews even has plans for "dinner and a bitch session," in which he would take randomly selected undergraduate and graduate students out for pizza, asking them about their concerns.

"It's basically a focus group with attitude," Matthews said.

Student body president candidate Joshua Ray said he wanted to increase communication between student groups. If elected, Ray is planning to hold monthly meetings of campus leaders and to be a participant in the meetings of other organizations.

Traditional efforts to unite the campus are not fulfilling their potential, he said. "A basketball game or fraternity party isn't going to get people talking together," he said.

Ray has already formed a coalition with Corey Bell, candidate for Carolina Athletic Association president, and Gaffney Gunter, candidate for Residence Hall Association president.

"We are working together when we speak together so that after the election

EDWARDS

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said. "We want the NRC to expedite it so legitimate questions can be raised so that the safety issues are out."

Sen. Ellie Kinnaird, D-Orange, agreed, saying the earlier public hearings had not been effective.

"The NRC said, 'It was nice for the public; they like to be heard,'" she said.

Edwards voiced his concern to members of the press about the need for safety in nuclear power plants.

"(Nuclear power has) obviously been an important power source for North Carolina, but it needs to be handled safely," he said. "I think this is an issue that matters to a lot of people."

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