

THURSDAY \*\* AFTERNOON/PRIME TIME \*\* JANUARY 24. Table with columns for time slots (3 PM to 1:30) and rows for various broadcast and cable stations including KUSD, KTVI, KDLT, KMEG, KTTW, KXNE, KCAU, KELO, KSN, KSFY, KWSD, TWC, CSPAN, WGN-A, TVG, QVC, KAUNLP, HSN, ESPN, ESPN2, FSN, SPEED, LIFE, WE, FOOD, SOAP, HALL, HGTV, DIGN, NICK, CART, TVL, FAM, A&E, TRAV, APL, DSC, TLC, SYFY, HIST, FNC, CNN, MSNBC, HLN, CNBC, TCM, AMC, BRAVO, FX, WTBS, USA, TNT, SPIKE, COM, E!, TRUTV, TBN, EWTV, INSP, UNI, MTV, VH1, CMT, DXD, RFD-TV, and CSPAN2.

THUNE
From Page 1
predicting whether the new session of Congress will be more productive than the one that took office in 2010, Thune cited hopeful examples.
"President Ronald Reagan, in 1983, worked with (Speaker of the House) Tip O'Neill to reform Social Security," the senator said. "Those reforms are still in place today ... in 1986, President Ronald Reagan worked with Tip O'Neill and Democrats in Congress to reform the tax code. It was the first time that had happened in a generation."
Thune added that in 1996, a Republican Congress worked with a Democratic president - Bill Clinton - to reform welfare.
"My point simply is that divided government can be an opportunity as well as a challenge," he said. "It is a challenge because you have a lot of conflict, but it can also be an opportunity to do some really big things. It requires leadership on both sides."
Also key to reducing the nation's staggering deficit is a stronger economic recovery, Thune said.

"When people are working, people are investing, they are making more money, they are paying more taxes and government revenues go up," he said. "Getting growth back into our economy along the lines of more historic patterns, I think, is incredibly important."
A tax code with fewer loopholes and special interest provisions would be a step in the right direction, according to the senator.
"If we were to do something to simplify the tax code, to make it more fair, more clear and lower the rates," Thune said, "I think it would unleash a period of economic growth in this country unlike anything we've seen in a long time."
"I believe that not only should we be focused on the spending side and entitlement reform ... we've got to be focused on tax reform because we are not currently competitive in the global economy," he said.
Thune noted that productive negotiations between members of both parties will be needed to enact these and other needed changes. He also said the greatest responsibility for the political system's future success or failure lies with President Obama.
"If we end up like we have with some of these big fights lately trying to negotiate things out - you do the give

and take that's necessary to try and get a deal," he said. "I think the president is going to have to be at the table for that to happen."
"There is only one American among 307 million Americans who can sign a bill into law, and that's the president of the United States," Thune said. "We have one commander-in-chief, one individual, I think, who is capable of providing the leadership that is necessary to get things done. It's going to take that to get Congress - members on both sides - to work together. I hope the president will recognize what's at stake and really get himself into these discussions. It's going to take, obviously, some give and take on both sides."
The senator indicated that the necessary action that will soon be needed to on the nation's debt limit will be such an opportunity.
"Given the uncertainty that we just went through in December, and even given the great need for the fiscal reform that you just described, aren't we risking hurting the economy by tying these reforms to the debt ceiling increase?" Barry Vickrey asked.
"If you look historically at least in the last three decades, every major deficit reduction package has occurred around the debt ceiling increase," Thune replied. "There's a precedent

we're dealing with here. In August 2011, the principle we operated on was for every dollar increase in the debt ceiling, they ought to get a dollar of spending reductions or government reforms that would score a savings in the budget to actually deal with the debt."
He told the Vermillion crowd that to get people to the negotiating table, "you have to have incentives. And there isn't a lot of incentive right now, in my view, with the president on the spending side unless there's something he wants."
"He's saying you can't hold the debt limit hostage to get government spending reforms, but if you don't do it there, you might be able to do it on a continuing resolution," Thune said, "but there's very little incentive then for the president to do anything serious on entitlement programs. I would hope that we not look at this as an obstacle but as an opportunity to try to do something really meaningful in the area of deficit reduction."



While the U.S. Senate is in recess, Sen. John Thune has been on a whirlwind tour of South Dakota, holding listening meetings and speaking to various groups. Joe and Mary Edelen of Vermillion chat with the senator after he addressed the Vermillion Rotary Club Tuesday. (Photo by David Lias)

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Thank you
The family of Caryn Jacobson would like to thank everyone for the many prayers, cards, memorials and the beautiful plants and flowers given in memory of Caryn. Thank you also to Pastor Garen Pay; Kay Hanson, Pastor Shelly Aakre and Lindsey Peterson of Sanford Vermillion Hospice; Brian Claussen of Wass Funeral Home; and the Peace Lutheran Ladies Aid for lunch served after the service. Special thanks to Sandi VanBallegooyen for always being there for Caryn.
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