

Mr. Speaker, last year, we spent just \$26 per American taxpayer for the AFDC Program.

Child nutrition programs represented just one-half of 1 percent of total Federal outlays in 1994. The average food stamp benefits is 75 cents per person, per meal. Seventy-five cents. Children aren't driving our deficit.

Senior citizens are not the cause of our economic woes. Programs for the poor do not represent pork.

That is why I maintain that H.R. 4, the Personal Responsibility Act of 1995, is irresponsible.

Mr. Speaker, this Nation is strong, not just because of its military might or its technology.

This Nation is strong because of its compassion.

We care about those among us who are weak—the young, the old, the poor, the frail, the disabled. If our citizens are weak, we are weak.

I hope the American people will pay close attention to the statements by our colleagues this evening.

Change for the sake of improvement is good. Change for the sake of change is not. Something different does not necessarily create something better. Most of us support welfare reform because the current system does not serve us well.

However, the nutrition programs do not need the kind of sweeping change as proposed by the proponents of H.R. 4.

A compelling case against that proposal can and will be made tonight.

And, at the end of the presentations, I ask all to judge for themselves who will be helped and who will be hurt by the proposal to block grant our nutrition programs?

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CALL FOR A BALANCED BUDGET

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MCHUGH). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Michigan, (Mr. SMITH) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, Thomas Jefferson, in a letter to Elbridge Gerry in 1799, wrote:

I am for a government rigorously frugal and simple, applying all the possible savings of the public revenue to the discharge of the national debt; and not for a multiplication of officer and salaries merely to make partisans, and for increasing by every device, the public debt, on the principle of its being a public blessing.

I agree with Mr. Jefferson wholeheartedly, and I suspect that most other Americans do as well. Today, the Federal debt is in excess of \$4.7 trillion and growing at a rate of \$200 billion to \$300 billion per year. As the CATO institute has pointed out, this is both an economic and a moral problem. The economic problem is that deficit financing is the ultimate form of hidden taxation. Federal borrowing injects a huge prospending bias into the budget process by allowing politicians to hand

out a dollar of Government spending to voters, while only imposing 80 cents of taxes. Nobel Laureate James Buchanan in a 1977 book with his colleague Richard Wagner, alerted us to this problem. In their book *Democracy in Deficit*, Buchanan and Wagner argued strongly for a balanced budget amendment in order to contain the spending bias of a Government able to increase its expansion into the economy without the political restraints of raising taxes.

Unbridled Federal spending will eventually lead to what economists call monetizing of the debt, which in plain English means that the Government pays for its debt by increasing the money supply. That cheats the lenders and causes inflation. This hidden tax, which Adam Smith called the worst form of taxation, strikes most heavily on those who save. As every senior citizen knows, their security can be wiped out in short order by even moderate inflation. At 8 percent inflation, the Government can effectively take away half of the money one has saved over a lifetime of work in about 9 years.

The moral argument for a balanced budget is that federal borrowing is taxation without representation. Recall the words of the Declaration of Independence which refers to the repeated injuries and usurpations of King George because he imposed taxes on us without our consent. Can't our children make this same claim against a Congress that saddles them with interest payments that are already at \$339 billion annually? None of our children and grandchildren currently have a say in the political process that is now putting their future at risk.

On January 26, the House of Representatives passed a balanced budget amendment. Today, it was narrowly defeated in the Senate. This amendment would have imposed much-needed fiscal discipline on Congress and it would have taken away our ability to spend recklessly while sending the bills to our children and grandchildren.

Without this amendment, it will be much more difficult to balance the budget, but I for one am willing to make the hard choices. I call on my colleagues to stop deficit spending, and I call on all citizens to commit themselves to do their part, to sacrifice some of the many things they get from government, so we can balance the budget, look our kids in the eye, and tell them that we will no longer force them to pay future taxes to enhance our current standard of living. As a nation of people who look to the future, and care about our children as much as we care about ourselves, we can make the commitment to balance the budget, and keep that commitment.

IN SUPPORT OF FEDERAL NUTRITION PROGRAMS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gen-

tleman from Michigan (Mr. BONIOR) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, let me tell you a story about why the Federal nutrition programs are so important.

Let me tell you about a school in my county.

Not long ago I met with some teachers from a grade school.

They told me that before we instituted the Federal breakfast program that kids came to school late, if they came at all, they were disruptive in class, their attention spans were bad, and they weren't learning.

But then we instituted the Federal breakfast program.

Kids actually showed up a half an hour early and lined up just to get into the school for the breakfast.

As a result, the kids settled down, their learning ability went up, and test scores went up.

It was a tremendous success.

That story is repeated every single day in schools all over America. Every time a kid comes to school hungry, Every time a kid needs to be fed, no matter what his background, whether his parents are poor or middle class. This program makes sure they get a good, nutritious meal.

I can't understand why anybody would want to put that at risk.

If we've learned anything the past 50 years, it is simply this: a third grader can't learn if his stomach speaks louder than the teacher leading class. It's just that simple.

But the changes made by Gingrich Republicans last week in committee will put this program at serious risk.

As a result, I'm afraid we're going to see a diminished quality of learning in our school systems.

Let's be clear what the Republicans voted to do last week.

They voted to cut the school lunch and school breakfast program, to put all that money into Federal block grants, and send them to the States.

And here's what that means. As the school lunch program now works, any hungry child who needs a breakfast or lunch gets one.

If tough times come along and more children need to be fed—then they get the food they need.

Since 1946, the program has operated predictably and smoothly—and worked very well. But by putting this money into block grants, and turning complete control over to the States, all that changes.

Under this formula, each State gets a limited amount of money. When the money runs out, kids stop getting fed.

If tough times hit, under the new formula, kids will get turned away.

To make matters worse, by putting this money into block grants, you put them in direct competition with other programs.

And we all know what's going to happen.

Kids don't have a constituency on Capitol Hill. They don't have as many lobbyists working for their funding. We

all know that when push comes to shove, kids are going to be left out in the cold.

Republicans claim this new formula will reduce bureaucracy. But they seem to forget that by turning this program over to the States, you are in effect opening the door to 50 different sets of guidelines—rather than one standard. And that means 50 new bureaucracies.

Mr. Speaker, there's no reason why kids in Michigan should get any less for lunch than kids in Texas.

But by turning this program over to the States, that's exactly what we'll get.

The reason this program was instituted in 1946 was because many recruits to the military were found to have nutrition problems.

But over the past 50 years, this program has helped make our kids healthier and stronger and fed those who would otherwise go without.

I can understand fixing a program if it's broken. But this program is working fine. It's feeding hungry children. And there's no reason why we should put that at risk.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague the gentlewoman from North Carolina for her leadership on this.

Mrs. CLAYTON. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. BONIOR. I yield to the gentlewoman from North Carolina.

Mrs. CLAYTON. I was just wondering, as you say, less kids would be fed. I have records from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and you will suffer 279 less young people being fed under your program.

I did not know whether you were aware of that, to back up your statement that kids would not be served, the impact of that.

Mr. BONIOR. I know the cuts in dollars to the State of Michigan and as it will affect other States in this country, that there will be hundreds of thousands of youngsters in America who will not get the nutrition they need to perform well in school.

SUPPORT UNRESTRICTED LEGAL IMMIGRATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Florida [Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, my parents and I arrived in this country in the early 1960's after escaping the totalitarian dictatorship of Fidel Castro in Cuba with the dream of starting a new life in freedom. Soon after arriving, my family and I were able to learn why this great country was seen around the world as the land of opportunity. After much hard work, my parents were able to settle into their new home and provide us children with the foundations for our future prosperity. That same dream of freedom and democracy that my parents had is still shared by the immigrants who arrive to this country today.

Unfortunately, I am afraid that today, across the Nation and in some of our political leaders, there is a current which runs against this desire. The current, instead, runs in favor of severely restricting and even ending legal immigration. This movement is fed by the incorrect notion that immigrants are attracted to the United States because of our social programs and soon after arriving, they become a burden on the State.

Mr. Speaker, the facts do not back this notion. The reality is that immigrants have made positive contributions to virtually all sectors of American life. In the economic spectrum especially, immigrants have clearly been prominent participants in the growth of the U.S. economy. For example, in my hometown of Miami, the number of businesses, large and small, owned by Cubans has grown from barely 900 in 1967, to over 28,000 in 1990. As a matter of fact, 18 percent of all small businesses are started by immigrants. This is the entrepreneurial spirit and personal initiative we in this country admire, and which the Founding Fathers of the United States tried to instill to future generations.

Moreover, it has been estimated that legal immigrants pay a combined \$70.3 billion a year in taxes while receiving \$42.9 billion in services. Add to this the immense amount of human capital which legal immigrants bring to this country and there is little doubt that refugees have been an integral part of the U.S. economic success story.

Mr. Speaker, it will be a sad day in U.S. history when we no longer look at immigration as positive for our Nation's prosperity. No other country can share stories like that of Pablo Fonseca, a Cuban who arrived in the 1980 Mariel boatlift and just 2 years later had already graduated from Miami-Dade Community College with high honors. He then proceeded to the University of Florida and later obtained his dentistry degree from the University of Indiana while winning numerous honors and awards. Today, Dr. Fonseca is a practicing dentist, full of admiration and gratefulness for this country. As he himself said, "This great country is a place of unlimited opportunities. As long as you try hard and you know where you are going, the sky's the limit."

Or the story of Edith Bolt, a Nicaraguan who arrived in Miami in 1985 as a teen with no knowledge of English. After graduating from Miami Beach Senior High School in 1989 and attending Miami-Dade Community College for 2 years, Edith proceeded to graduate magna cum laude with a bachelor's degree in finance from Florida State University. Today, she works in the action-packed world of finance as a credit analyst for a Miami bank.

Or the story of Winy Joseph, a young woman from Haiti who also knew no English but through ESL courses was able to learn the language. Today, Winy attends Miami-Dade Community

College and plans to continue her studies in the field of international relations.

And finally the story of Jorge Sierra, another Cuban who emigrated in 1992 to the United States at the young age of 21 without knowing a word of English. Today he is a fluent English speaker who has successfully obtained a degree in computer science and works as a software developer.

Mr. Speaker, these are just four stories of the thousands which show the determination and hard work of immigrants in their drive to forge a new life of success. More importantly, these are the stories that make America great, that separate this country from all others. Where else can the daughter of Cuban refugees who fled their homeland in search of a new life become a member of the National Government? Only in America.

Mr. Speaker, I dare say that all my colleagues in this body know of many immigrant success stories. Whether it is the small businessowner, or the son or daughter of an immigrant who is now a doctor or a lawyer after much hard work from the parents; all of us know of immigrants who have succeeded through honest, hard work. To turn our backs on these American residents who share the same dreams and hopes as native born Americans would be detrimental to this country and would betray the spirit of freedom and opportunity of which we are so proud.

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CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAMS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MCHUGH). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Connecticut [Ms. DELAURO] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, I have listened to my Republican colleagues over the last several days get up here and tell the American people that by cutting the School Lunch Program that they will be able to feed more children. I think it is time to set the record straight.

In the fantasy world of the Republicans, higher food prices and larger school enrollments simply don't exist. But they do exist in the real world and current law allows funding for child nutrition programs to keep pace automatically, especially during difficult economic times. This is where the Republicans' block grant proposal fails and where our kids would get hurt.

Republicans argue that their proposal would increase child nutrition program funding by 4.5 percent every year. But this is deliberately misleading. Their so-called increases would not keep pace with food price inflation and rising program enrollments. Under the Republicans' plan, according to the Center for Budget Priorities estimates, school-based nutrition programs would be cut by \$190 million in 1996 and \$2.3