

goes up. It means that these people can better provide for their families, better save for their children's education, and better save for their own retirement.

The Constitution speaks of providing the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, and reducing death taxes means the family farms can stay in the family, the family business can remain in the hands of those who helped build it.

I urge my colleagues to support the tax relief bill when it comes before the House.

MEDICARE CUTS FINANCE TAX RELIEF FOR THE WEALTHY

(Mr. DEFAZIO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, the Democrats would tax the very air we breathe, or so the Republicans would have us believe. But the Republicans would actually take oxygen from the lungs of senior citizens and disabled around this country to finance tax cuts for the wealthy. And I am not making this up.

The measure before us today cuts the payments for oxygen and oxygen equipment by 20 percent and freezes payments through 2002 to save \$1.6 billion. Eighty percent of the cuts in the bill before us today come from Medicare, not to reform Medicare and stabilize its finances, but to finance tomorrow's bill, the bill that will extend tax cuts to the wealthy, tax cuts that will average \$27,132 a year for families that earn over \$400,000. And for those families who earn \$25,000 they will average zero, nothing.

Is this fair? I do not think so.

TAX RELIEF FOR WORKING AMERICANS

(Mr. HAYWORTH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HAYWORTH. Mr. Speaker, well, there they go again. It is tragic, in a sense, to come to the floor of this House and hear such extreme, shrill and, yes, I am saddened to say, false rhetoric from liberals who constantly apologize for expansion of government and higher taxes for the American people.

The sad fact is that the Treasury Department and other partisans, such as my good friend from Oregon [Mr. DEFAZIO], are using books that have been cooked so much they are charcoal broiled. How many families do my colleagues know who pay rent to themselves, owning their own homes?

That is what our friends say the American people do. That is why our friends would say that a middle-income family earning about \$40,000 a year somehow makes in excess of \$75,000 a year and somehow is wealthy. It does not add up. Indeed, when we come to saving Medicare, we worked out com-

monsense reforms with the very administration that I think my colleague from Oregon [Mr. DEFAZIO] would champion.

So let us return to a voice of reason, common sense, giving tax relief to working Americans. That is the key. That is what our plan does, 76 percent to families making between \$20,000 and \$75,000; and that is why the American people will prevail.

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TRAGIC EXAMPLE OF WELFARE REFORM

(Mr. HINOJOSA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HINOJOSA. Mr. Speaker, I come before Members today to tell them about the drastic effects of the welfare reform law passed by the 104th Congress. Specifically, I want to share with Members an example of someone who has been tragically affected by the welfare reform law.

Mr. Rosendo Tijerina is a legal immigrant who has worked in Texas for 11 years. Last November he was involved in a serious auto accident. His legs and pelvis were crushed and his heart was injured as well. He is now totally disabled.

Yet under the welfare reform law, Mr. Tijerina is not eligible for supplemental security income. He has worked hard, paid his taxes, integrated himself and his family into his community and has been a contributor to our country's economy. He deserves better treatment than this.

Mr. Tijerina and the other 125,000 legal immigrants who will be denied benefits under the law need to have these benefits restored. In my own State of Texas more than 34,000 legal immigrants are expected to be denied benefits.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that these people be given some consideration.

INTRODUCTION OF TECHNOLOGY FOR TEACHERS ACT

(Mrs. MORELLA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. MORELLA. Mr. Speaker, in an effort to address the challenges of technology in our Nation's classrooms, I am joining with the gentleman from Minnesota [Mr. VENTO] in introducing the Technology for Teachers Act. This bill would establish two competitive grant programs under the auspices of the Department of Education. One program would promote the inclusion of education technology in the initial undergraduate preparation of new teachers. The other would promote education technology as part of the ongoing professional development of current teachers. The Office of Technology Assessment recently released a study

that shows that most new teachers graduate from teacher preparation institutions with limited knowledge of the way technology can be used in their professional practice. The study also revealed that a majority of classroom teachers feel they need additional training in order to adequately use a personal computer. Yet a review of the data on teacher training and technology reveals that school districts across the country spend very little of their technology budgets on teacher training.

Mr. Speaker, advanced technology has improved America's economic competitiveness and improved the quality of life for millions of our citizens. By the year 2000, just 3 years away, 60 percent of American jobs will require technological skills. This bill is going to enhance and give teachers the training they need to meet the classroom challenge of the future.

THE MEAN-SPIRITED WELFARE BILL

(Mr. REYES asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. REYES. Mr. Speaker, this morning I want to put a human face on one of the hundreds of thousands of elderly and disabled legal immigrants who are the targets of a mean-spirited welfare bill.

Piedad Gonzalez entered the United States as a lawful permanent resident in 1986, then a healthy woman with no history of any physical or mental illness. Like countless other immigrants, she came to this country willing to work hard and contribute.

She soon found employment and had worked for 4 years before she began experiencing severe back pain. She became too disabled to continue working, having contracted arthritis.

In 1994, Ms. Gonzalez applied for SSI benefits and in November 1996 received a favorable decision. However, 1 month later, this was overturned, denying her SSI benefits due to the restrictions of the welfare bill.

Ms. Gonzalez should not be punished for coming to this country legally and working hard and playing by the rules. Instead, this bill wants to punish her and leave her with no means of support.

The gentleman from California [Mr. BECERRA] had an amendment to the spending bill which would have provided men and women like Ms. Gonzalez the means to survive. It was not made a part of the manager's amendment. I urge my colleagues to vote against the rule.

TAX CUTS IN BUDGET AGREEMENT HONOR WORK

(Ms. PRYCE of Ohio asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. PRYCE of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, it is painfully obvious by now how painful

it is for the liberal Democrats to accept tax cuts of any kind. The truth is they simply cannot justify letting Americans keep more of their hard-earned money.

In their view, Mr. Speaker, the politicians are doing people a favor by letting them keep what is already theirs. Their idea of fairness is that the people who worked harder, who went to school a little longer, who got up a little earlier, who stayed at the office a little later, who took the risks, who worked harder to come up with better ideas, their idea of fairness means that those same people are somehow not justified in their desire to be rewarded for their efforts.

In the commonsense view of fairness, money does not come easily for those who earn it. The tax cuts in this balanced budget amendment honors work. It lets millions of middle-class taxpayers keep more of what they worked so hard to earn.

VOTE TO DEFEAT UNFAIR RECONCILIATION BILL

(Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Mr. Speaker, those who negotiated the original bipartisan budget agreement recognize that restoring aid to legal immigrants residing in the United States prior to August 23, 1996, and later become disabled is good policy and a needed improvement to last year's welfare bill.

The reconciliation bill before us today violates the budget agreement reached earlier by the President and congressional leaders. As a result, innocent people who played by the rules will suffer.

An example is Mr. Loza, a 60-year-old legal immigrant residing in Los Angeles. Mr. Loza worked in the United States for 8 years before suffering a stroke which resulted in an unstable heart condition. In November 1996, his application for SSI disability benefits was denied because of last year's welfare bill. He is now trying to live on less than \$200 per month of general assistance relief.

Mr. Loza is an example of one who has worked hard, played by the rules and paid his taxes but by virtue of this reconciliation bill, we now abandon due to his disability. We must vote to defeat this unfair bill.

MATHEMATICS OF TAX RELIEF

(Mr. STEARNS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to point out something that probably has never once occurred to the other side. Consider this. According to the IRS, the top 50 percent of taxpayers pay 95.2 percent of the income tax.

Let me just repeat that. According to the IRS, the top 50 percent of tax-

payers pay 95.2 percent of the income tax. If Members understand that, then they can immediately see that of course those earning above the median income benefit the most from tax relief. After all, they bear the brunt of the tax burden.

In other words, when the folks on that side talk about tax cuts going to the benefit of only the wealthy, what they are really stating is nothing more than the fact that people with higher incomes pay higher taxes, which is not exactly news.

If one person makes \$30,000 a year and another person makes \$50,000 a year and both get a tax cut of 10 percent, could someone on that side of the aisle please explain to me how that is unfair to the person earning \$30,000 a year? Could someone on that side please explain to me how the person making \$30,000 a year is now getting a bad deal?

TAX RELIEF FOR HARDWORKING AMERICANS

(Mr. GUTKNECHT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GUTKNECHT. Mr. Speaker, we had our Committee on the Budget meeting that went late Friday afternoon, in fact it went well into the evening, and so I missed my flight and I flew home on Saturday. I did something on that flight back to Minnesota that I do not do very often. I looked out the window. I realized what a beautiful country this is, full of hard-working people, as the President says, who play by the rules, who pay their taxes, lots of good Americans.

When I got home, we drove back from the airport, there was a garage sale in my neighborhood. There was a family that was piling out of their kind of beat-up car. They had four kids. The youngest one was sort of permanently attached to mom's hip, and I think some of my colleagues know what I am talking about, one of those little chubbies. I thought about our budget agreement, about our tax bill and I said, "It's for families like that that we did this." Because they are going to get \$2,000 more to spend themselves, to invest themselves, to do what they want to do. And they are going to get help in terms of educating those kids.

When we talk about this tax bill and about this budget plan, it is about preserving the American dream for those kids and it is about allowing those families to keep more, to spend more and save more of their own money.

VOTE FOR TAX RELIEF TODAY

(Mr. KINGSTON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, if Republicans were giving away chocolate candy, Democrats would accuse them

of promoting cavities in America's children. They are masters of misrepresentation. They are totally against this tax cut. They do not want the middle class to have tax relief. But they are too clever to say, "Hey, we hate giving tax relief," so what they do is say, "Oh, this tax relief is only for the wealthy." That is very strange since the nonpartisan Joint Committee on Taxation says that 76 percent of the tax relief goes to middle-class families earning between \$20,000 and \$75,000 a year. Indeed, 91 percent of the tax relief goes to families with a household income of \$100,000 or less. This is solid middle-class stuff. This is not about tax relief for the wealthy. It is about couples like Debbie and Phil Spindle. Debbie makes \$24,000 and Phil makes \$40,000. They have a 14-year-old and an 11-year-old. They need the \$500 per child tax credit. They need tax relief. They need a break. They do not need a wasteful government that year after year takes money out of their pocket and spends it on countless bureaucracies and bureaucrats. Let us vote for tax relief today.

WINNERS AND LOSERS IN REPUBLICAN TAX PLAN

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, yesterday evening I was joined on the floor of the House by colleagues from the east coast, the Midwest, the west coast, and the South, combining the full representation of all Americans. We collectively acknowledged that in the next 48 hours, this House will be taking one of the most important steps, constitutional responsibilities of the spending and generating revenue for this government.

Our question was raised and it has not been answered: Who benefits from the Republican tax plan? Who wins and loses from the Republican tax plan? The rich certainly win. The working and middle-class members of this society and this Nation certainly lose. The reason is because we can find 91 million families who benefit from the Democratic alternative tax plan who are working middle-class citizens making under \$100,000 a year. In contrast we see the Republican plan where 91 million make over \$100,000 a year to \$250,000. The question is for the American public to answer. Who benefits in the Republican rich tax plan. Vote for the Democratic alternative plan that works for all working Americans.

SUPPORT ROHRBACHER AMENDMENT TO DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION BILL

(Mr. ROHRBACHER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ROHRBACHER. Mr. Speaker, in a few minutes my colleague for whom I