

great country needs to be counted, and there is no excuse not to fill out your form. If you do not fill out your form, it costs the Government more to collect the data, it hurts your local community, and there is nothing to be gained by not completing that form, and I am saddened that my colleagues gave the impression that the Republicans do not want to count people. That is so sad that we have to stoop to that level of politics to say that we are not interested in counting people. That is so, so unfortunate. Because we are doing so much more this year to try to get everybody counted.

I am really pleased with what the Census Bureau is doing on a lot of important things to get the undercounted population raised up so that they are fully counted. In fact, this census cost 150 percent more than 1990. We spent less than \$3 billion in 1990, and we are going to spend almost \$7 billion; and we have given every penny that the Census Bureau has asked for.

Now, I know my colleagues say oh, let the professionals at the Census Bureau do it. The professionals know what to do. Let us look at the first major thing the Census Bureau did in sending out a prenotification letter that was just received last week by 120 million people in this country. Well, what happened with that letter? 120 million were sent out and guess what? All 120 million were misaddressed by the Census Bureau. That is the largest mass mailing mistake in history. Mr. Speaker, 120 million mistake, because one digit was added to everyone's address. These are the professionals that do not make mistakes.

Then this form letter has a return envelope. It explains that the form is coming in the mail and on the back it gives a chance if you want it in five different languages. Unfortunately, for the large number of people who just speak English, they do not understand what it was all about because it never explained in English why the letter was coming. So the Census Bureau is getting all of these questions, being tied up with phone calls, why are we getting this letter. I do not understand what it is all about. They forget to put it in English.

I am also glad that my colleague from New York put up the phone number to call, because we do need to work in the local census offices. Because the Census Bureau in their letter, instead of giving the number, what they gave is call directory assistance. Well, that is nice. That only costs 50 cents, whatever it is, in your particular phone provider area, but they did not even have the ability to put down the phone number.

□ 1800

Now these professionals have botched the first big job. I want to make sure we have everybody counted, so I am saying that these mistakes were unfortunate, it is embarrassing for the Bureau, and we need to do everything we can to get everybody counted.

Now they say that Governor Bush will not release another set of numbers. First of all, the Supreme Court has ruled. The Supreme Court ruled last January, a year ago January, and said we cannot use these statistically-adjusted numbers. I am a former statistics professor. We have a lot of use for sampling and adjustments, but the court has ruled, so stop going on about that issue.

They tried this in 1990. They did something called the PES, similar to what is called the ACE this time. It was a failure. What they did was they did a full count and then they tried to adjust it and get a second set of numbers.

When they came up with the second set of numbers, they were not reliable. They played around with them for 2 years and they never used them. They still have never found a use for those numbers because it did not work.

To say, oh, we are going to have this adjusted set of numbers and they are going to be great, the statisticians will even tell us they are not sure it is going to work. They are going to take a sample of 300,000 and adjust the entire population, the 270 million people in this country, based on that 300,000 sample.

What we are working with in this is what is called census blocks, with maybe 25 people in them. It is a very complicated process. Here is a Census Bureau that cannot even send a letter out to tell us about the other matter straight. They botched it three different ways. And they are going to have the ability to do this extremely complicated experiment in statistics and get it right? I am really concerned about it.

Governor Bush is right to say, let us see what we can come up with. I do not think it is going to work. I feel very confident the Supreme Court is going to rule it is illegal and unconstitutional. In that case, we only have this set of numbers.

So please, everybody should complete their form. That is the best record we have. Everybody please complete their form, whether they get a short or long form. One out of every six people get the long form. I know there are a lot of questions on there, but we really need to get the best Census possible this year.

THE PRIORITIES OF THE FEDERAL BUDGET

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ISAKSON). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. SCHAFER) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. SCHAFER. Mr. Speaker, just across the street here, the Committee on the Budget is working on unveiling the blueprint for the Federal budget. We do this every year to pay for everything from social security for our senior citizens to Head Start programs for America's preschoolers.

The budget, introduced by House Republicans this week, has a few important priorities. I would like to spend the next hour talking about those priorities.

First, we save and protect social security by walling off the money and making sure it cannot be spent on anything other than retirement for America's seniors. We pay down public debt.

Republicans disagree with the Democrats and the leadership coming out of the White House, the Clinton-Gore team over there, on the matter of spending. We on the Republican side do not think it is right to make our children pay tomorrow for money that we are spending today. We think, frankly, that we ought to have the courage to find the cash to pay for the things we want to buy now, rather than make my children and their children pay for it many, many years from now at many times the expense, after we factor in interest and just the general cost of bloating the Federal debt.

We also provide Americans with relief from the unfair tax on marriage and the unfair social security earnings limit, which penalizes senior citizens who want to work beyond retirement age. In fact, for those who earn over \$17,000 this year, they will be penalized. They will actually have to pay dollars back to the Social Security Administration for every \$3 over that \$17,000 cap that they earn. For every \$3 they earn, \$1 has to go back to the government.

I just met with some constituents out in Colorado just last week at Wal-Mart, and found a number of individuals working there beyond traditional retirement age. One woman approached me and said she had to write a check. It was for \$88. She said it was not the dollar amount that bothered her so much as it was the principle of the thing, the notion that just to work she has to pay. If she wants to be ambitious and continue being productive in the work force, she has to pay the government back as a result of this penalty.

We found the funding in our budget to eliminate that penalty altogether, and make it possible for people to go on working beyond retirement age without fear of being penalized and punished by their government for their entrepreneurial spirit, their dedication to work, and for their personal enterprise.

Finally, we strengthen funding for important priorities like education and defense, so both our children and our Nation have a more secure future.

These are the things I will be fighting for as the budget continues to work its way through Congress. These are the things I will continue to work for as I will help Congress craft a budget that meets the needs of people of all ages across my district in the Eastern Plains of Colorado.

Over the course of this next 55 minutes of the special order, we expect other members of the Republican majority to make their way down to the

floor to talk about the various components in the budget bill that they find to be of particular interest to themselves and to their districts and to the American people at large.

I think the first and most dramatic reality of this budget, and a point of tremendous pride, deals with the Social Security surplus. The reason is because we have accomplished something this year that for many, many years the people in the media and our Democrat colleagues on the other side of the aisle said could not be done, and that is to save Social Security and to stop raiding the Social Security fund in order to pay for the rest of government.

In fact, the President would like to continue dipping into Social Security to pay for the kinds of spending and new programs and growth in government that he envisions for the country and that the Clinton-Gore team has been promoting.

Our budget does something very, very different. First of all, that budget reserves every penny of the Social Security surplus to strengthen the Social Security program.

Here are some key points. The budget creates a safe deposit box to assure the Social Security surplus is not spent on any other government programs. It reserves the entire Social Security surplus, \$978 billion, over the next 5 years to pay down the debt held by the public. It reduces the government's interest payments to the public, thereby making funds available to pay Social Security benefits.

I brought a chart along here, Mr. Speaker, that shows exactly where we have come and how the history of this has gone. We have stopped raiding Social Security and spending beyond our means. This chart represents total spending for every dollar that comes into the Federal government. This is just tax dollars. This does not take into account the Social Security contributions of the American people.

As we can see, way back over here in 1995, the government was spending \$1.23 for every dollar it brought in in terms of tax revenues. A portion of that, the blue portion here, 6 cents, involves Social Security spending, and 17 cents involves additional public debt. In other words, this is what the addition to the debt was back in 1995. The brown area here is financed by the tax dollars that the American people sent here to Washington, D.C.

This is what we inherited when Republicans took over the majority in Congress. This chart, if we could look backward into the past, continues here. It starts even higher with greater quantities of deficit spending and spending here in Washington.

What changed this chart and began to move our country in a direction of more responsible spending, as we see here, is a change in the leadership of the House of Representatives. This was the year that the American people threw the Democrats out of the majority in the House and Senate both and

instituted Republicans as the majority party, because they believed that we were sincere and that we were quite intent on our promises to be more responsible with the taxpayers' dollars in Washington; that our goal would be to reduce the deficit quantities of spending in Washington, D.C. as quickly as possible.

If Members will remember, at the time we proposed a Contract with America, which were ten items that we promised we would introduce if elected. One of those promises was that we would find a way to balance the budget and actually get to the point we are here in 1999 in 2002. In other words, we suggested that we would accomplish this goal not in 1999, but 2 years from where we are now, and we managed to come in fully 4 years ahead of schedule.

So I think as a Republican majority we have in fact proven to the American people that we were serious about getting the Nation's fiscal house in order. We were quite serious about eliminating these huge red blocks in fiscal spending that are the legacy of the Clinton-Gore era of reckless, runaway spending in Washington; that we would reduce this in this case in 3 short years, and beyond that, stop raiding the blue area here, which is the Social Security funds that were used or borrowed essentially to pay for the rest of government spending.

It is an exciting accomplishment, and one that has solidified and is a commitment that is made in a more forceful way in the budget that is making its way as we speak from committee over here to the House floor.

Let me go through these numbers again. In 1995, the budget entailed, for every dollar in spending or for every dollar in taxation, tax revenues, about \$1.23 in spending. In 1996, we reduced that to \$1.16. In 1997 we reduced that to \$1.09. In 1998 we reduced it to \$1.02. In 1999, we managed to spend dollar for dollar. It was the first year that we no longer borrowed funds or increased the size of the debt in order to pay for government.

In 2000, we are actually spending less. In the year we are in now, we are actually spending less on government than the revenue coming in. That is significant because it allows us to reduce the debt much more quickly than we had anticipated.

Just by way of example, in 1998 we put \$51 billion into debt relief reduction, into public debt reduction. In 1999, we put \$89 billion into debt reduction. In 2000, we put \$178 billion into public debt reduction.

That is what we can achieve by being more responsible and frugal with the taxpayers' dollars, realizing that this government spends far more money than it needs to, and that the Federal government in general simply taxes the American people too much. So we have some things we need to accomplish.

We do have growing needs in the country: Defending our Nation, for ex-

ample; trying to find ways to get dollars to classrooms to help the students throughout the country who rely on certain Federal programs for their academic pursuits and goals.

But we also think that a government that taxes the American people too much and keeps too much of that cash here in Washington is a government that is irresponsible, so we want to take some of this savings and return it to the American people. That is a significant item, and I will spend a little more time on that, too.

But the other thing we want to do is make sure we pay down the national debt quicker. We think we can do that not only through being responsible and frugal, as we have been, as we can see over the last few years from 1995 when the Republicans took over the House right on up to today, but we also believe that by returning a portion, about one-third of the surplus savings that we are realizing back to the American people, that we can continue to stimulate the kind of economic growth that has made for a robust economy for our Nation that has resulted in tremendous prosperity.

What Republicans believe that is very, very different and distinguishes us from our friends over on the other side of the aisle is that the American people can spend their money more wisely than the government can. That is a huge distinction between the two parties. We are seeing that not only in the presidential race, but we are seeing that with respect to the debate of whether reducing this debt is a good idea.

There really are people over on the Democrat side who would prefer these red blocks to continue, who believe that the government can do better at spending the American people's cash than the American people themselves can. We, on the other hand, are firmly convinced that the American people make wise decisions about making family investments, about making investments about whether to expand the farm, buy new equipment, buy new business equipment; whether to buy a new business, whether to hire a new employee, whether to invest in education and improve the marketability of one's own children or themselves, for example, when it comes to obtaining marketable careers and jobs in the work force.

All of these are important items, and I am excited that the budget that the House Committee on the Budget is about to send over here to the full Chamber is one that just keeps us on track of spending less, saving more, and putting money aside for quicker debt relief.

I am joined here by a couple of Members who I know share my concern for not only staying on track with a responsible budget plan, but also for making sure that the dollars we do spend get those priorities and items that we need most. One of those is education.

The gentlewoman from New Mexico (Mrs. WILSON) is one of our colleagues who has been one of the most forceful advocates of getting dollars to the classroom. She is one who has also been an articulate spokesperson for the Individuals With Disabilities in Education Act. This is the one program that the Supreme Court requires the Congress to fund, and since that requirement has gone into place the Clinton-Gore team has not allocated the funds necessary to make this unfunded mandate work smoothly back in our home States. It ends up robbing our classrooms of the vital resources that are needed in order to reach our children.

It is an item that we have been working on in common, and our constituents care about equally, I believe. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from New Mexico (Mrs. WILSON).

□ 1815

Mrs. WILSON. Mr. Speaker, I wanted to come down tonight to talk a little bit about the budget and about public education, because really the reason that I got into public life is a concern about public education and how we are going to prepare kids for the 21st century.

I was very pleased to see what was coming out of the Committee on the Budget this afternoon, because we have had a lot of discussions about things; but when it really matters is when they start to get the numbers down on paper.

I wanted to see, like many of the people in this House and actually on both sides of the aisle wanted to see, a balanced budget that protected Social Security, did not raid Social Security anymore; but within that budget, we wanted to see some priorities.

National defense is certainly one. All of us know that we have been eroding our national defense over the last decade, and we may pay a price for that in the lack of readiness.

But the second and the one I would like to talk a little bit about tonight is education, where we are going on public education in this country.

There may be folks today who are listening to me tonight who remember when all a kid needed to get ready for school was a Big Chief tablet and a number 2 pencil. It is not that way anymore. We do not get protractors and slide rules in high school anymore.

We are on the verge of the 21st century. It is a wonderful opportunity, but it will only be an opportunity for our children if they are prepared for that century with a great public education. I do not mean just some kids. I mean, every kid in every neighborhood.

We can no longer tolerate the gaps between rich and poor, the gaps that have grown since many of these Federal programs were instituted, like title I, between rich and poor, and black and white and brown. They have grown wider. We cannot afford that as a Nation if the 21st century is to be

just as much of an American century as the 20th century was.

So what are our dreams for the next decade? What do we want to see with respect to public education? How is that reflected in the commitment we are beginning to make here tonight and today with the next year's budget?

I think that there is kind of a myth out there that the Republican Congress does not care much about education. It always bothers me. It bothers me as a parent. It bothers me as a Member of Congress. I try to spend a lot of time talking with people about it because I think it is a myth, both in terms of financial commitment, but also in terms of personal commitment to the future of children. Because I happen to be one of those folks who believe that, unless America does have a strong system of public education, we cannot survive as a democracy. It requires an educated populous. We have to remain committed to that for every child.

I would like to talk a little bit about what is in this first budget with respect to education, this first look at this year's budget. For elementary and secondary education, the budget that came out of the committee today in the House Committee on Budget provides an increase of over \$2.2 billion over the last fiscal year, fiscal year 2000, and an \$20.6 billion increase over the next 5 years. That is a 9.4 percent increase in our commitment to public schools and Federal funding of public schools. That is the largest increase in the budget for the fiscal year 2001.

So the priority in the budget for this next year will be twofold: Defense, but first and foremost, public education.

The one area where we really differ, aside from how much money we should put into it, with the administration is flexibility. I want somebody making decisions about my child education who knows my son's name. I want teachers and principals and parents to have as much control as possible over the way that dollars are spent. I want those dollars to get into the classroom where they can pay for books and bricks and teacher salaries and teacher training. I do not think that Washington has the answers on public education. I have much more confidence in the principal of our local school than I do confidence on anyone that works in a Federal building here in Washington.

So where is the money going in education in this budget, and where have we been over the last 5 years? Over the last 5 years, this Congress has increased education spending by 26 percent. Last year, fiscal year 2000, we added \$200 million over the previous year, a total of \$1 billion more than the President requested in his budget.

The emphasis was on special education kids, and that is what I want to talk a little bit about here with this chart. The Federal Government assumed a responsibility for special education, that there is a civil rights issue around special education.

When we passed the IDEA Act originally, we promised to pay for 40 per-

cent of the cost. But the Federal Government never met that obligation. The States and local school districts still have to meet those Federal requirements. So because the Federal Government did not pull its share of the load, States and local governments are having to foot the bill; and that money that could go for other priorities in education goes to special ed to meet the Federal requirements.

So the first requirement of this budget is to say let us meet the obligations the Federal Government has already assumed with respect to education and IDEA.

In the 2001 budget that just passed out of the Committee on Budget today, there is a \$2 billion increase in IDEA funding, and that will boost us up to 12.6 percent of the cost of educating a special needs child.

This is the IDEA funding here on what we have done since 1996, and it shows the President's request, and it shows the amount that the Republican Congress has put into special ed, which every single year has been larger than the President's request. We want to fund our obligations before we bring in new programs and new programs created or controlled in Washington, and get this money down to the kids that need it in special education classrooms across this country.

I also want to talk a little bit about title VI, which is for innovative programs in education. It is not a huge program. But it does have a lot of local flexibility to fund things that, maybe, are just too much for a local school's budget, but they want to try something new, they want to try a new curriculum, they want to try teaching math using manipulatives or whatever they want to do.

Title VI is that kind of flexible funding. Every single year, the President has proposed to eliminate this funding. Every single year, the Congress has said give the local communities some flexibility and some funding to make some decisions, and fund title VI.

We are going to do that again. It was funded at \$365 million last year, and we are going to continue to fund that in this year's budget, despite the President's request to zero out the program again this year.

Impact aid is a major issue for those of us in the West with a lot of public lands. I see the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. HAYWORTH) is here.

If one is in the Four Corners area of New Mexico, the counties there are 90 percent Federal land. So if one is funding one's schools based on property taxes, it is really tough. Fortunately, in New Mexico, we do not have property taxes that are funding our public schools. A lot of schools do.

What this says is, when the Federal Government owns the land, they have got to make a contribution to that school system; and that is what impact aid is for. It is the same if one has got a huge military base in one's town. There are kids there, and there is land

that is owned by the Federal Government. It is kind of the contribution in lieu of taxes that might otherwise go to the local community.

Again, the President has requested very small amounts of money for impact aid, and the Congress consistently over the last 5 years has increased that funding.

I do not know if the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. HAYWORTH) would like to comment on impact aid.

Mr. HAYWORTH. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. SCHAFER) will yield, I would like to reiterate the point about impact aid, because we talk so much about education. Certainly it is our philosophy within this common sense majority, as the gentlewoman from New Mexico (Mrs. WILSON) has outlined, to transfer dollars and decisions back home, home to the family, home to the local school boards, home to the teachers.

But there are three clear and compelling places where the true Federal involvement in education cannot be disputed. As the gentlewoman from New Mexico reiterated, for children, dependents of men and women who have worn the uniform of our country, who are on active duty. So military dependents. For Native American children, because of the tribal trust treaty obligations ratified by the United States Senate and part of our law. Also for children within the District of Columbia. We have clear unassailable constitutionally mandated Federal involvement in education. Impact aid really affects, more than anyone else, children of military dependents and Native American children.

I watch with curiosity many things that go on here in Washington. I can remember before my colleagues on this floor joined me in this endeavor, relatively early in my time here, I introduced an amendment to add some \$18 million to impact aid funding that would come out of the National Labor Relations Board. That is the Taj Mahal down the street encased in marble where each of the five commissioners has a private shower, a private dining room, and a private car, and, oh, yes, up to 22 lawyers working under his or her supervision.

To put that into perspective, across the street at the Supreme Court, an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court can have three clerks, three lawyers in his or her employ. The Chief Justice of the United States is only given five attorneys.

But when I came here and offered that modest amendment, the hue and cry from those who claim to be friends of Native Americans and who claim to want to add money to school funding for construction was resounding. Sadly, the modest amendment was defeated.

Yet, here we have again ample evidence, as the gentlewoman from New Mexico points out.

We all are certainly enthralled in hearing our President come and stand

at that podium and offer a masterful, empathetic, sympathetic oratorical review. But the advice we learned long ago is not to listen necessarily to what is said; watch, instead, what is done. Plenty of folks can come and talk the talk. But can they walk the walk?

The gentlewoman from New Mexico (Mrs. WILSON) provides the evidence, the promise of the President in meager requests, the reality of Congress stepping forward with those funds for those schools where there is a clear and compelling and, oftentimes, described as a constitutional role to provide dollars for education.

It has been very interesting for our time here in Washington. We understand the notion of three separate and co-equal branches of government. But promises made by the executive are seldom followed up unless the responsible actions are taken here by a common sense majority. The gentlewoman from New Mexico offers that ample evidence.

Mrs. WILSON. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. SCHAFER) will continue to yield to me, I would like to talk a little bit about some of the other things that are going to be in this budget that came out of the committee today.

One of the things that I hear from kids in my district about is going to college. Fortunately, in New Mexico, we do have a program to give scholarships to kids who graduated from high school and who keep their grades up and can go to the University of New Mexico or New Mexico State.

A lot of kids, to get to college, which some of them want to do because they know they need to go, they need grants and loans. Most of us in this Congress required grants and loans and scholarships to go on to school.

The Pell Grant is one of the biggest ones funded by the Federal Government. This is what has happened with Pell Grants, the maximum award for Pell Grants since 1991. The change since 1995 is startling.

Americans and Republicans are willing to invest in education. They are willing and we are willing to say to a kid, if you will go to school and work hard and go to college and get a degree, we all know you are going to be contributing more to this country, because you have got a great education. We will provide that opportunity through Pell Grants.

The cost of a college education is going up. That means that the amount that a kid can get through a Pell Grant needs to go up, too. So we have made that continued commitment, and we will do so again in the budget this year.

□ 1830

We want a great school in every neighborhood. We want teachers that are well trained and that can work with us as partners in the education of our children. We want charter schools in this country to give people choice.

Tomorrow, along with my colleague from Colorado, we will be introducing a charter school loan guarantee fund bill. The biggest barrier to charter schools in this country is they cannot get the capital money to fix up a building or a storefront in order to open and operate because most of them cannot get bond money.

So we are introducing a bill that will set up a Federal loan guarantee fund, so that people who are trying to set up charter schools can go to a bank and, without all of the signatures and putting their houses on the line and so many other things that people have been willing to do to start charter schools, there will be a Federal loan guarantee available there if the bank will loan them the money.

The concept in the bill is to make a \$600 million Federal loan guarantee program, which should leverage \$9 billion in public school construction in charter schools through the private markets. And what does that mean? It means a charter school, instead of paying 11.5 percent in interest to redo that old building or to redo the shopping mall, strip mall site for their school, can pay 5 or 5.5 percent. That is a lot more money that can go into teachers' salaries and materials for that charter school that does not have to be paid in interest. And we should make that investment in choice and public charter schools.

I call on the administration and my colleagues, because I expect this will be a bipartisan bill, to see if we can get this moving and get this through this year. I think it is up to us to commit ourselves and recommit ourselves to a decade of dreams for American education. We can no longer afford to leave any child behind, and that is why I wanted to come here tonight.

I thank the gentleman for his time.

Mr. SCHAFER. Mr. Speaker, it occurred to me, listening to the gentlewoman from New Mexico, that people monitoring our proceedings and this discussion during this special order might be confused actually to see on the charts that Republicans are leading the way of investments and dollars in education. Confused, I say, because the media and our friends on the other side of the aisle have year after year tried to persuade the American people that we somehow are unconcerned about quality schools around the country.

We are not just talking about spending more money, although in the case of these priority projects we are talking about spending more money, but in the case of the Individuals with Disabilities and Education Act, this is an acknowledged obligation we have under the Civil Rights Act to carry out this program. And the problem is that this administration is, frankly, not interested in spending dollars on a program that we are obligated to carry out. They instead would like to keep the Federal Rules but have our local school principals figure out how to come up with the dollars to pay for it.

So in the case of the four examples that were just presented, these are priority items for us. The IDEA program is our highest priority in the education budget this year.

But I want to keep it all in the proper context, again going back to the budget track record since the American people threw the Democrats out of the Speaker's chair, out of the majority, and put the Republicans in charge. We have dramatically dropped the amount of deficit spending in the country. What we are talking about today are the fruits of prioritization.

For too long in this town, Democrats, when put in charge of our national budget, talked about spending, but only spending. They did not talk about prioritization, picking those programs that truly make sense, that are truly in the best interest of the country, and getting rid of lesser priorities that, frankly, we have gotten rid of. And most Americans have not noticed that they are gone. That is the way we are able now to show and to establish for the House and for the American people that a Republican majority in Congress has delivered a balanced budget fully 4 years ahead of schedule.

We have eliminated these deficit spending blocks that my colleagues see here in red. We have ended this business of borrowing money from the Social Security Administration in order to pay for the rest of government, which is represented in the blue blocks, and now we are to the point where we are actually spending fewer dollars in Washington than the American people send us, which allows us to establish priorities, to make priorities for the American people, which the gentlewoman from New Mexico just described with respect to education.

We have other priorities, too. Not only do we want to elevate the stature of those priority programs that make sense for America's schoolchildren and for the defense of our country and for seniors and so on, we also want to send a certain amount of that money back home to the people who work hard to earn it, and we want to work harder to pay the debt down quicker. And we can do all these things by just being smarter in Washington.

That is what the American people believed we would do when they gave us the majority. They understood that the Democrats were incapable of building a responsible budget. They threw them out. They took the gavel out of a Democrat Speaker's hand and put it into a Republican Speaker's hand; and we are here now, in 2000, getting ready to bring a 2001 budget to the floor which keeps us on track for more responsible spending.

I know the gentleman from South Dakota is one who has been instrumental in helping us fight the hard fights of bringing responsible budgets to this Congress and helping to make the priorities not just to spend more money but to spend money on things that really and truly do matter and are

in the category of legitimate functions of our government at the expense of waste, fraud and abuse. I yield the floor to him.

Mr. THUNE. I thank the gentleman from Colorado for yielding, and would echo much of what he said, and the gentlewoman from New Mexico, who so very eloquently made the case for the investment that we have made in education, as well as the gentleman from Arizona and the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. TANCREDI) here on the floor this evening, who all share the same commitment.

I think that when we get right down to it on a very basic level, a budget is a statement of priorities. The budget resolution that will be adopted in the House, and I will admit I have not read the fine print at this point, but from all I have been able to gather about the work that the Committee on the Budget has under way, this is a budget that will be a reflection of the priorities that we have for this country.

Now, the people of South Dakota, the hard working people in my State, day in and day out, month in and month out, year in and year out have to go about balancing their budget. They do not have the luxury the Federal Government has had for so many years of going so far in the red and mortgaging their children's future. That is what has happened here in Washington.

So I think to suggest that we can, in a very straightforward way, make better use of the dollars that are at the disposal of the Washington government here and achieve the savings that are necessary so that people can keep more of what they earn and that we can distribute that power out of Washington and back home, I think is a very real commitment on the part of the Republican Congress.

Now, I will say that if we look at the statement of priorities that was evident in the President's budget, it was, is, and always will be the extension of the reach of big government and higher taxes. Make no mistake about it, that is exactly what was in the President's budget this year; and it has been in the President's budget every year since I have been here. And the gentleman from Arizona who was here in the Congress prior to our arrival here knows that we have made hard decisions about trying to come up with ways to achieve additional savings, come up with a budget that makes sense, that finds the waste, fraud and abuse in the Federal Government and roots it out so that we are being responsible to the people of this country who, again, day in and day out have to go about the process of coming up with a budget that makes sense for them and their families.

I just want to add that as I look at this budget resolution that we are in the process of considering this year. And look at the statement of priorities, it is a reflection of the things that we believe in profoundly. First off, I also have to note that if we look at

the accomplishments of the past 5 years, which the gentleman from Colorado noted, where we have come from, the budgetary priorities that have been established in the last several Congresses since we took control of this institution, have allowed us to, for the first time since I was 8 years old, in 1969, balance the Federal budget. Even more importantly than that, last year, balance the Federal budget without raiding Social Security. That is a remarkable accomplishment.

And that is coupled with the first time in a great many years of actually retiring a portion of the 3.6 publicly held Federal debt. The last couple of years we have paid down \$140 billion in debt. They said we could not do that. They said we could not reduce taxes. We reduced taxes in 1997, which has led to additional revenues. This program is working for the American people.

This year, this budget is a further reflection of those same priorities because they make essential investments in areas like the gentlewoman from New Mexico mentioned, and that is education. A program that is near and dear to my heart and the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. HAYWORTH) is impact aid, because we have a lot of federally impacted lands.

Special Ed. The Federal Government made a commitment that it has not fulfilled, not honored. We have a promise to the American people and the school districts in this country that we need to live up to, and we move down the path farther this year toward honoring that commitment.

The commitment to our seniors to protect Social Security and Medicare, to ensure that the programs that they rely upon in their retirement years are going to be there. We are, for the first time, walling off that money and saying we are not going to spend the Social Security surplus. That is a significant and radical departure from what has been happening in the past several years here in the Congress.

Commitment to our veterans. Last year we increased spending on veterans health care by about \$1.7 billion. This year, again, this budget resolution will recognize the commitment that we have to those who have served this country honorably and nobly. We need to ensure that we honor the promise that we made to them in the area of health care. This is a budget which will increase funding for veterans health care substantially.

Farmers. My State of South Dakota, farmers and small business people, farmers and ranchers, people working the land and trying to make a living and have had to deal with the tremendous terrible cycle of low prices, bad weather, and everything else associated with it, this budget puts aside about \$8 billion for crop insurance reform. That is the risk-management tool that producers can use to help manage the risk and manage, as best they can, to try to avert the devastating effect of weather disasters that are so frequent.

Additional assistance, emergency assistance, to combat low prices in agriculture. We have made a commitment to our farmers in this country that we are going to stand with them and at the same time we are going to go after the markets that we have lost, to ensure we are doing everything we can to open additional market. And, frankly, there has been a tremendous failure on the part of this administration in that respect. But having said that, that is an effort that we will step up and intensify, to open those markets; and in the meantime we are going to see that our farmers have the income they need to pay the bills.

Our families. We make a commitment to our families, because we are also including in this budget resolution a significant piece of tax relief. Earlier this year we passed the marriage penalty relief tax measure, which, unfortunately, is still hung up, I think, in the other body but, hopefully, will clear there and get sent down to the White House. And I would urge the President to sign it into law because this is an important piece of legislation that recognizes we can no longer punish and penalize people in this country in the Tax Code for making a choice to be married. We need to deliver the additional tax relief that is called for in the budget resolution.

So we will make a commitment so that the families of this country have more money in their pockets to spend on their priorities, whether it is making the mortgage payment on the house, the car payment, day care payments, buying tennis shoes for the children, whatever that might be. Those are decisions that ought to be made in the family living room and not here in Washington. And that is again a reflection of our philosophy.

We make a commitment to our children by ensuring that the funding levels are there for education and, furthermore, by ensuring that we continue to systematically pay down the Federal debt so that we are not saddling the next generation with an incredible, enormous burden of debt that they are never going to be able to get out from underneath.

Finally, we make a commitment to our military by increasing spending on defense. The record of this administration on defense is deplorable. Regarding the military today, in terms of equipment, weapon systems, personnel, pay for military people, we are having a terrible problem with retention. This budget goes a long ways toward addressing the very important priority that we place on ensuring that we have a safe and secure America. And the only way that we can have a safe and secure America is to have a strong America. And that means investing, making the necessary investment, in our national security.

This is a budget which is a reflection of our priorities. These are the things that are important to us as we begin to plan the future, as we move into this

next century, and how best to allow the American people to realize their dreams and do it in a way that incorporates our belief in the principle of allowing them to make more of the decisions that affect their lives and distributing power from Washington, D.C. back into the living rooms of this country so individuals and families are making decisions and we are not wasting their money here in Washington, D.C. on new programs which, frankly, most of which do not do very much to help the hard-working Americans that we are here to represent.

So I just would add this evening to what has already been said by my colleagues, that if we look at this budget as it is being proposed and the priorities that it places and how those priorities fit in with the priorities of the good people of South Dakota, this is a budget which honors our commitment to our seniors, to our children, to our families, to our farmers and ranchers, to our veterans, and to those who wear the uniform of the United States of America.

□ 1845

This is a budget which ought to be passed and that we ought to put into law and begin the process of moving forward in a way again that incorporates the principles and values that we here share and that I think are shared by the American people and continue to do the good work that has been started in paying down debt, reducing taxes, and balancing the budget and doing it in a way that is efficient and smart and does not waste Federal dollars and doing it in the same way that the families of this country have to do on a day-in and day-out basis.

I am pleased to be here this evening to participate in this special order, and I thank the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. SCHAFFER) for yielding.

I would again simply say, I hope we have a number of other opportunities to debate this issue. This is a budget that is right for the people of this country, it is right for America, and we need to move it forward.

Mr. SCHAFFER. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. HAYWORTH).

Mr. HAYWORTH. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Colorado (Mr. SCHAFFER) for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I thank all those who join us this evening to assess where we are headed with the majority budget plan which we will pass shortly from the Committee on the Budget for the American people to offer a roadmap that means continued prosperity for the American family for Main Street as well as Wall Street and all those avenues in between, for those who make their living from the soil in terms of farming and resource-based industries, and for those quite simply, Mr. Speaker, who work hard and play by the rules.

In the 1960s, there was talk of a credibility gap. Sadly, in this town at this

time with the current administration there exists a credibility canyon that, quite frankly, eclipses for its sheer magnitude the dimensions of that incredible wonder that is found in the State of Arizona, Grand Canyon National Park. And sadly, it is not beautiful. Because the ugly truth of this credibility canyon is beautiful rhetoric, notwithstanding, sadly, when it comes to the administration and those who, Mr. Speaker, some have dubbed the Clinton-Gore gang, we cannot listen to what they say, we must watch what they do.

And even as we have seen the spectacle of our Vice President coming out for campaign finance reform saying he will renounce soft money, even on the same day when he directs his party to raise some \$35 million in the same soft money, he stands and says he does not want to have happen, even when he talks about campaign finance reform while his former campaign aid Maria Hsai is convicted of campaign finance abuses over an appearance at a Buddhist temple, the Vice President tells us he did not realize was a fund-raising event, even as we see these different words and actions and contradictions, not limited to the campaign trail, not limited to one's conduct in office, but part of the budget process, again, my friend from Colorado (Mr. SCHAFFER) pointed out the gulf between the rhetoric of the administration, the reporting of those Washington journalists and the reality of what has been done here. And our colleague from South Dakota (Mr. THUNE) is quite right, the responsible, common sense, conservative majority understands that true compassion is not reflected with endless promises and pronouncements and phrases for focus groups and sound bites.

We understand that governing is hard work; and, accordingly, we have fashioned a budget that emphasizes education not simply with dollars but understanding who controls or who should control the priorities of education: parents in the home, teachers in the classroom, and locally elected leaders who can reflect a community's priorities. We have also stepped into the breach, as our colleague from New Mexico pointed out.

A point of personal privilege, Mr. Speaker. Two weeks ago I was honored with a visit from my cousin, who is a very special person. She has Downs syndrome. She is now 32. And I think about her years in different programs living at home with her aunt and uncle, working hard, always learning even with the challenges she confronted; and I think about the local school district in which she lived where there were empty promises made by a so-called compassionate group in Washington that left the funding to local leaders even when they had promised to pay for those programs.

This Congress has stepped up. In terms of national defense, this Congress has stepped up. Even as our

President would strip those great funds and send them to Kosovo and the Baltic for misadventures, we have stepped up.

We want to do what is responsible for people who play by the rules, for people who need a helping hand. And just as people have left welfare and gone to work, and just as the American people have more of their hard-earned money to spend on themselves and their families, to save and invest as they see fit, we present a budget that reflects those priorities.

I am honored tonight to join now my two colleagues from Colorado to review that process, with the closing words, Do not listen to what is said. Watch what is done. Actions speak louder than words. This Congress is prepared to take the right kind of actions.

Mr. SCHAFFER. Mr. Speaker, I want to yield the floor over to somebody who has done the hard work of freedom and help make some of the tough choices here in Congress, my good friend and colleague from Colorado (Mr. TANCREDO).

Mr. TANCREDO. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate my colleague's providing some time for me; and I appreciate him taking this hour to explain to the American public that there, in fact, is a difference.

We have all heard the lament, Mr. Speaker, when I go home, and I am sure when all of my colleagues, every Member of Congress, goes home; and some time or other someone says something like this. You know, there really is not all that much difference between the two parties. There is not really a dime's worth of difference between the two parties. I have heard it. We all have heard it. Sometimes I probably have said it.

But I must tell my colleagues that there is nothing that brings home the reality of the situation more than a budget resolution and nothing more that defines the differences between the two parties that, in fact, do exist than the budgets presented by the President of the United States, in this case, and by the Republican majority in response to it.

On February 7, 2000, President Clinton and Vice President GORE submitted their budget for fiscal year 2001. Their budget raises taxes and fees on working families by \$250 billion. It creates 84 new Federal programs. It places Government spending increases on "auto pilot" and, as usual, takes a pass on any serious reform of Social Security or Medicare.

Now, that is the reality of the Democrat budget. So when we say things like there is not a dime's worth of difference, we may be right. There is not a dime's worth of difference. In this case, there are hundreds of billions of dollars' worth of difference between the two parties.

Because the Republican party has, in fact, submitted a budget set on priorities, as my colleague from South Dakota and my colleague from Colorado

has indicated. We have, in fact, established education, defense, the preservation of Social Security and debt reduction as priorities.

These are not the priorities of the minority party. These are not the priorities of the President. We all recall the President of the United States standing right there, Mr. Speaker, where the Speaker is right now and telling the Nation not all that long ago that, in fact, "the era of big Government was over."

Now, words are supposed to have meaning. We are supposed to be able to define exactly what is meant when people use them. "The era of big government is over."

Perhaps, in fact, he was right. Perhaps, Mr. Speaker, in Clintonian double-speak this era of big Government is over and what we are anticipating now is the era of huge government. Maybe that is what he meant. I mean, that is the only way we can interpret the words as applied to his budget. Right?

What in here, 84 new programs, \$250 billion more of taxes, what indicates to anyone that there is smaller Government on the horizon?

How about the following: These are taken directly out of the President's budget. These are proposals for new programs in an era of huge government, which he would like to see us enter into.

Let us see, new programs: Increase Amtrak funding by creating a new capital grant program for high-speed rail funded out of the Highway Trust Fund. Even though, by the way, Congress passed legislation to reduce Amtrak's dependence on the Government. It goes on and on. I am not going to read all of them, just a few I pick out as I go through.

Create a conservation security program; income payments to farmers who engage in "voluntary environmental efforts"; provide subsidized banking services in low-income areas; encourage the creation of low-cost bank accounts; increase access to ATMs; and enhance financial education. All might be wonderful ideas. I mean, all these things sound great.

What is the Federal Government's role in this and how do they fit an era of smaller government?

How about funding greening the globe initiatives, increased debt for nature funding. Create an initiative to prevent the spread of HIV within African militaries. Fund a clean partnership. Build a visitors center, an interpretive center. And acquire lands to preserve World War II Japanese-American internment camps in the West. Provide homeless vouchers, set-aside incrementals. Provide welfare-to-work set-aside incrementals. Create a voucher success fund. Create a housing production fund. Create an Indian home ownership intermediary initiative.

I mean, this all goes to Housing and Urban Development. Even though we know that HUD, of all the agencies of Government, and this is hard to say, I

mean, when we are talking about the agencies that waste more of Government, I mean, I do not even know how we can prioritize it, it is so difficult. But let us look at what Congress discovered with HUD. They had hired hundreds of politically favored employees at salaries up to \$100,000 a year each to promote department programs and publicize its activities.

The department dubbed these things "community builders." They have over 900 of these people, 10 percent of HUD's total staff, and these were never granted approval by Congress. The program was supposed to be reduced significantly and phased out by September 30, 1999. It has not happened. The President has asked for an increase in all of these things.

I know we are coming to the end of this hour, and so I want to return to my colleague from Colorado for his closing comments. I just want to say this, that the next time anyone says to you there is not a dime's worth of difference between the two parties, say, you know, you may be right because I think there are really billions, hundreds of billions of dollars of difference between the two parties, as evidenced by the budget.

This is the real world. This is not the world of rhetoric. This is where the rubber hits the road, so to speak. We can talk about era of less Government, but here is where we actually see what the President is talking about. Once again, I believe, Mr. Speaker, that the President has, in fact, deceived the American public.

Mr. SCHAFFER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for recognizing us for this hour of special order to talk about the difference between the Republican vision of a budget that secures America's future and contrasting that with the Democrat version of a budget which simply spends us in oblivion and taxes us more.

We hope the Republican version is the one that emerges victorious over the next few days, and we will commit our efforts to see to it that that actually occurs.

□ 1900

AGRIBUSINESS CONSOLIDATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, the lovely gentlewoman from Idaho (Mrs. CHENOWETH-HAGE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mrs. CHENOWETH-HAGE. Mr. Speaker, I begin my remarks tonight with the words from one of our Nation's greatest orators, Daniel Webster. This great Senator eloquently sums up the mission of agriculture for this Nation in a rally cry, and that rally cry is placed, Mr. Speaker, right above the Speaker's head in this very Chamber. That rally cry says, "Let us develop the resources of our land, call forth its powers, build up its institutions, promote all its great interests and see