

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 1836,
ECONOMIC GROWTH AND TAX
RELIEF RECONCILIATION ACT OF
2001

SPEECH OF

HON. CHET EDWARDS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 25, 2001

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to vote for this tax cut. It would be a politically easy vote. I could tell my constituents in Central Texas, including President Bush and my own family, that this bill would reduce their taxes.

However, I believe we have a moral obligation to our children and grandchildren to pay down our \$5.6 trillion national debt. I believe we have a moral obligation to provide a strong national defense and to support our servicemen and women, 60% of whom live in housing that does not even meet modest Department of Defense standards. I believe we have a moral obligation to provide a better education for all children and to protect Social Security and Medicare for our seniors.

In my opinion, this tax bill puts those key national priorities and moral obligations at risk.

This tax bill is a riverboat gamble. It is part of a ten-year budget built on a foundation of optimistic assumptions at best and false assumptions at worst. This budget assumes uninterrupted national growth for 10 years, with little or no consideration for the impact of economic recessions, regional wars or natural disasters. If this budget's national growth projections are off by only four-tenths of one percent, then a trillion dollars of the so-called surplus disappears, and with it our dream of paying off the national debt.

I have asked my constituents whether they would bet their own family's financial future based upon the assumption that a government economist's 10-year economic forecast would be perfectly accurate. Their answer is "no". If families would not bet their own futures on such an unrealistic assumption, then Congress has no right to risk the American family's future on that assumption.

This bill leaves little or no room to fund priorities that this Administration says it supports, including a stronger national defense, real pay raises for our servicemen and women, a national missile defense, new investments in better schools and a prescription drug benefit for seniors on Medicare. Who knows what unexpected needs might develop over the next decade?

One little known fact is that the so-called \$5.6 trillion surplus is not real—it is a hoped for surplus. Even worse, 70% of the hoped for surplus does not materialize until seven to ten years from now.

What is real is our \$5.6 trillion national debt, which cost American taxpayers \$223 billion in interest payments last year. That, on average, is approximately \$800 in taxes for every man, woman and child in America.

Paying off the national debt would provide huge benefits for American families. Lower interest rates on homes, cars and credit cards would, in effect, be a significant tax cut. In addition, reduced interest on the national debt could result in reduced taxes for all Americans.

The final tax bill was put together late at night and voted on early the next morning

without Members of Congress having time to review the bill or its cost. What can one say about a bill that repeals estate taxes nine years from now, but then repeals the repeal twelve months later? To call that an estate tax "repeal" borders on false advertising.

This bill is full of gimmicks to try to hide its true cost. Repealing all of its tax benefits at the end of the ninth year of a ten-year bill is a blatant way to try to hide this bill's real cost. Further, should those tax cuts be continued in year ten, the cost of this bill triples in the second ten years. Unfortunately, that is exactly when baby boomers start retiring and putting tremendous demands on the Social Security and Medicare systems. Thus, this bill puts Social Security and Medicare at risk for today's and tomorrow's seniors.

I will never forget what my predecessor, Congressman Marvin Leath, told me before his recent death. He said that his greatest regret during his 12 years in Congress was his vote for the 1981 tax bill, which he felt exploded the national debt. That bill promised lower taxes, increased defense spending and balanced budgets. Former OMB budget director David Stockman, a key architect of the 1981 tax bill, later wrote of it, "I knew we were on the precipice of triple-digit deficits, a national debt in the trillions, and destructive and profound dislocations throughout the . . . American economy."

Twenty years later, the 2001 tax bill promises lower taxes, increased defense spending and balanced budgets. Unfortunately, I believe the results will be the same as 20 years ago—deficit spending, a larger national debt, and higher interest rates.

Mr. Speaker, I hope I was wrong. I hope our economy has another decade of growth without recession or serious slowdown. I hope we have no natural disasters or wars. I hope Congress will show strong discipline in cutting spending. I hope we can protect our family farmers without disaster payments. I hope energy price spikes won't slow down our economy. I hope all of these things occur, but I am certainly not willing to put at risk our children and grandchildren's future based on such hopes becoming certainties.

Cutting taxes by over a trillion dollars may be politically popular, but by voting "no" on this bill and voting "yes" for paying down our \$5.6 trillion national debt, I believe I can look my own children in the eye and say, "I did what I believed was right for our country and its future."

A TRIBUTE TO MRS. OPAL LUCAS
OF LONDON, KENTUCKY

HON. HAROLD ROGERS

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 7, 2001

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, I use this means to sadly inform the House of the passing of Opal Lucas, a great American, woman, and friend. She will be remembered as a teacher, mentor, counselor, confidante, and inspiration.

Mrs. Opal Lucas of London, Kentucky passed from this life to eternal life at the age of 95 on June 2, 2001.

Opal was born in 1905 in Jackson County, Kentucky. Her father was a farmer, fertilizer

salesman, and minister. Her mother spent her life raising children. From these humble beginnings, Opal learned a devotion to family, God, and her community.

A devoted wife and mother, Opal saw the best of times and the worst of times. Her husband, Fred Lucas, was a former State Senator in Kentucky. Her eldest son, Fred Lucas II, joined the navy at the age of 16 during World War II. After surviving near death experiences, he was forever scared by the experiences of war. He second son, James, was born paralyzed from the waist down, but Opal and the family never allowed this to deny him a full life. James was a volunteer fireman with the help and love of family and friends.

During her life, Opal served her local and national community in numerous ways. She began as a teacher in a one-room schoolhouse. She and her husband owned and managed numerous businesses in Laurel County. She served as State Governor of the National Federation Woman's Club and in many other civic organizations.

Opal and Fred helped recruit industry into Southeastern Kentucky when this area of the state had no industry. They were instrumental in proving that these hard-working men and women that labored on the land could be excellent workers in industry. They proved their point and today the fruits of their labor are multiplied each year.

Opal was a dedicated Republican, as she served her party in nearly every capacity. She served as the National Committee Woman for Kentucky to the National Republican Party for a decade. She chaired campaigns for successful Congressmen, U.S. Senators, Governors, and numerous other offices. She counted as her very close friends former Senators John Sherman Cooper and Thurston Morton, and Congressmen Tim Lee Carter. I too, relief on Opal for sage advice, wisdom, and friendship.

Titles partially describe the accomplishments of this lady but they do not give full justice. Her rewards were never personal. She enjoyed victory but true victory was seen on the faces of families who benefited from good government, opportunities to work and provide for their families.

Opal was a unique person that possessed the most amazing ability to make everyone feel they were the most important person in her life. She radiated self-confidence and total relaxation with the person she was. You never saw her caught up in false pretenses or ulterior motives.

She can be described as a wonderfully calm charming lady speaking in soft tones, comforting and encouraging us to do our best—always confident in our abilities to accomplish anything we truly desire. She had a smile that would warm your heart. She was comfortable with her life and her own self-identity and never seemed to have a need for the trappings of public adulation.

Opal was consumed by the spirit of our Lord and it was evident in her every action but it was not something she has to speak of or point to like a plaque of recognition hanging on the wall. She was a Christian lady that always held her belief in God close to the heart. When you looked at her, you saw the Spirit of God within her.

There are individuals that pass through life that contribute more than can be measured and are truly the ones who epitomize all that

is good within our society and nation. Opal Lucas will be missed, but she surely made her community, Kentucky, and this nation a better place in which to live.

CHILD CARE QUALITY INCENTIVE
ACT OF 2001

HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 7, 2001

Mr. BISHOP. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing a bill that will make high quality child care available for children regardless of their families's incomes. This bill is entitled the "Child Care Quality Incentive Act of 2001" and already has 28 original cosponsors. I feel this initial response is a testament to the importance and value of this legislation.

We all recognize the importance of a child's early development, however, we must make an investment early on if we are going to succeed in providing a meaningful and accomplished system that helps those who are trying so hard to help themselves. This help will come in the form of supplemental block grant funding to providers in order to cover the true costs of their services. In addition, this bill helps raise the level of care to those who can already afford the market rate. Small businesses also benefit from this legislation—more money means more providers.

Finally, this bill has the support of many national, state, and local organizations and providers, including USA Child Care, the Children's Defense Fund, YMCA of the USA, Catholic Charities of the USA, and the National Child Care Association.

I ask my colleagues to move swiftly to bring decent and affordable child care to America's children—those who are the least able to take care of themselves.

REMEMBERING OUR PACIFIC
AMERICAN VETERANS

HON. CURT WELDON

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 7, 2001

Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to the second annual Roll Call of Honor in Remembrance Ceremony that occurred on May 27, 2001 at the Arlington National Cemetery, Arlington Virginia and the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific, Honolulu, Hawaii.

This celebration honors the sacrifices of thousands of Pacific Americans who have served our nation in our Armed Forces. What was once a veil of silence surrounding the contributions, courage, loyalty and dedication of our Pacific American veterans to our nation has now been lifted.

By honoring our Pacific American veterans, and those who continue to serve our nation, we honor also all our veterans who call the Pacific their 'aina.

Their names are being placed on scrolls that will serve to remind us their loyalty, courage, leadership and compassion.

On August 7, 1999 the Board of Directors of the Pacific American Foundation, a national

organization dedicated to improving the lives of all Pacific Americans wherever they live, concurred with the Department of Veterans Affairs to conduct the first ever Roll Call of Honor in Remembrance Ceremony to recognize the dedicated service and outstanding contributions of Pacific American veterans—American Samoans, Chamorros, Fijians, Hawaiians, Maoris, Tahitians, Tongas—and those veterans who call the Pacific their 'aina, to our nation.

The Pacific American Foundation, in partnership with the Department of Veterans Affairs, Kaumakapili Church, Veterans Affairs Regional Office Center Hawaii, veteran organizations in the Pacific and families of our veterans is proud to continue to host the annual Roll Call of Honor in Remembrance Ceremony.

Already research has revealed that Pacific Americans had served on the Confederate ship Shenandoah and fought at the Battle of Gettysburg.

All our veterans are special, and by honoring our Pacific American veterans I salute all of America's men and women who answered the call to duty.

The names of our Pacific American veterans on these scrolls will remind us forever of our nation's debt to their sacrifices.

This celebration could not have happened without the leadership of the Pacific American Foundation's Leadership Fellows, Troy Asao Kaleolani Cooper and Michael K. Naho'opp'i and their colleagues, Pacific Americans who represent the future for our nation. I wish to commend their leadership that is being felt by millions of Americans today.

It is this very type of selfless service that is lifting the shoulders and chins of the families whose loved ones gave their lives in defense of our freedoms, and it is certainly helping the millions of our military members and their families to know that we care.

We can never forget.

HONORING AL LIFSON'S INDUCTION INTO THE ELIZABETH ATHLETIC HALL OF FAME

HON. JIM SAXTON

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 7, 2001

Mr. SAXTON. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to congratulate Al Lifson for his April 26, 2001 induction into the Elizabeth Athletic Hall of Fame in Elizabeth, New Jersey.

Al has had a distinguished athletic career in basketball at both the high school and college level.

While attending Thomas Jefferson High School in Elizabeth, New Jersey (1949–1951), Al attained a number of impressive athletic distinctions including First Team All County (1951), All State Tournament First Team (1951), and Second Team Group IV All State Team (1951).

After completing high school, Al went on to attend one of the most storied and revered basketball institutions in the nation, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, N.C. At the University of North Carolina, Al continued to attain the highest athletic achievements as a four year starter. As a freshman, Al was the highest scoring rookie in Carolina history. He

was also selected three times to the All Conference Team, two times to the All Conference Defensive Team, and served as Co-Captain during his senior year. Al finished his career as the University of North Carolina's all-time scoring leader.

Al's many accomplishments speak not only to his natural ability, but also to his drive and dedication to succeed. Al's athletic career serves as an inspiration to all who strive to be their best.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in congratulating Al Lifson for his remarkable athletic achievements and most recently his induction into the Elizabeth Athletic Hall of Fame.

IN RECOGNITION OF PAUL KNUE ON THE OCCASION OF HIS RETIREMENT FROM THE CINCINNATI POST

HON. ROB PORTMAN

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 7, 2001

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a dedicated journalist and a true friend to the people of Cincinnati, Ohio—Paul Knue. After 18 years, Paul recently stepped down as Editor from both the Cincinnati and Kentucky Post.

Paul has had a long and distinguished career in journalism. In 1970, he started at the copy desk of the Cincinnati Post, the paper he had read growing up. He was named managing editor of the Evansville Press in 1975, then returned to the tri-state area in 1979 to become editor of the Kentucky Post. Four years later, Paul became editor of The Cincinnati Post, and in 1995, assumed leadership of both papers.

Those of us who work in politics are often affectionately called public servants. But the title of public servant seems more appropriate for an individual like Paul Knue. As Editor of the Post, Paul did not sit back and passively assess the goings-on in his community. Rather, Paul used his leadership of the editorial page to help shine a light on important issues, particularly urban development. He helped found both Downtown Cincinnati Inc., a downtown advocacy group, and SouthBank Partners, a Northern Kentucky development organization.

As a native of Cincinnati, Paul brought an extraordinary amount of knowledge and experience to the operations of the Post. During his tenure, the Post broke many important stories—including uncovering a tax break scandal in the County Auditor's office, and spotlighting the deterioration of city playgrounds, which eventually led to increased funding for park facilities.

Over the years, I have had the pleasure of working with Paul on the Coalition for a Drug-Free Greater Cincinnati. His efforts and commitments to the Cincinnati community have helped make the Coalition a big success.

Paul is also an accomplished long-distance bicycle rider. It is not uncommon to see him training on the Little Miami bike trail, leaving others way behind.

The people of Cincinnati know Paul Knue as a leader, but more importantly, they know him as a friend. His contributions at the Cincinnati Post and Kentucky Post will be sorely missed,