

were trying to heat their homes and a lot of them were freezing because they could not afford the bills. Nothing to investigate there. There is no market manipulation. It is normal for natural gas prices to go up by that much and for profits for this company to go up by 381 percent a year, except for recent revelations that have shown that El Paso Natural Gas bought pipeline capacity and then refused to use it and refused to let any other gas company use it so they could artificially restrict supply and drive the price up. But there is nothing to investigate there.

All right, let us turn then to electricity. Duke Power. I spoke earlier about their charging as much as \$3,800 a megawatt hour, 100 times the price of 2 years ago. Just multiply your home electric bill by 100. That is what Duke was charging folks in California this winter. But they only earned \$1.8 billion of profits and their profits are only up 109 percent in 1 year. Nothing to investigate there. No. Price of \$3,800 a megawatt hour, only up 100 times what it was just 2 years ago, why that is just natural. It is those Californians. They deserve this. Nothing to investigate there.

We need a comprehensive investigation. The Bush administration's own Federal Energy Regulatory Commission has found these prices unjust and unreasonable. The staff, unfortunately the chairman is appointed by the President, Mr. Hebert of Louisiana, and the chairman says, like our majority leader from Texas, there is nothing to investigate here. This is just the market at work, and consumers should just lump it.

Well, the Republicans are going to lump it at the ballot box unless they follow the advice of their conference chairman and start doing an investigation of what is going on. And if they do not do it here in the House, I predict it will happen in the Senate. And they might just have a little bit of egg on their face here when more and more of this evidence of price gouging and market manipulation comes out. Because the American people know what is happening to them. They know it every day when they pull up to the gas pump and they know it when they are opening their electric bill and when they get their natural gas bill, and they are not going to take it for much longer any more.

CONGRESS MUST HOLD FORECASTERS ACCOUNTABLE FOR THEIR PROJECTIONS

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

Mr. KIRK. Madam Speaker, we must hold forecasters accountable for the accuracy of their projections. As we are asking for straight A performance out of our public schools, we must also ask that out of our budget forecasters. We want better and more efficient use of energy resources.

As Secretary Rumsfeld is completing a comprehensive overall of our defense network, how can we expect anything less than continuous improvement from the way that we prepare the Federal budget? And we have a long way to go.

Everyone I talk to in Washington assumes that budget forecasts we use are setting priorities that are wrong; that they can be way off the mark; that we never are able to estimate correctly what our financial status is.

In 1997, the Congressional Budget Office estimated a \$145 billion deficit for fiscal year 1998. We had a surplus of \$69 billion. In 1999, CBO predicted a \$107 billion surplus for fiscal year 2000, \$129 billion below the actual \$236 billion achieved. You can see it here on chart number one, where CBO estimates a \$211 billion deficit, it was only \$107.

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Then a \$156 billion deficit, it was only 22. The biggest year they made a mistake was 1998; they forecast a \$145 billion deficit. We ran a \$69 billion surplus. And on and on the errors have gone.

Mr. Speaker, this is no way to fill our elected mandate of keeping the economy strong. There is more at stake than the issue of whose numbers are right. Congress uses these estimates to make key decisions about tax policies that encourage economic growth, foster entrepreneurship, and reward individuals for seeking opportunities to work, learn and get ahead.

Inaccurate forecasts end up crowding out uses of other Federal funds. If defense programs produce large cost overruns, then less money is left for new education projects. If the actual cost of Medicare part B programs often exceed preliminary estimates, it becomes harder to build support for new benefits such as a prescription drug benefit. Better forecasts should be a bipartisan initiative focused on the goal of making government more effective.

Some errors of the past can be blamed on estimates that rely on status quo analysis, assuming that taxpayers will not change their actions in response to legislative changes that affect their pocketbook. Such a projection applies recent growth rates to baseline-year figures, assuming that current trends will continue indefinitely. Common sense tells us when you increase taxes on something, such as saving and investment, you get less of it. A change in tax policy influences the decisions that individuals make, thereby affecting revenues.

The recent history of the capital gains tax policy shows the shortcomings of status quo analysis. In 1984, Congress passed the Deficit Reduction Act, which temporarily reduced the long-term capital gains holding period from 12 months to 6 months, making it easier for investors to qualify for preferential tax treatment. Investors reacted, and quickly.

Capital gains realizations in 1985 were twice the amount in 1984. How-

ever, investor euphoria was short-lived. Congress repealed the capital gains deduction as part of the Tax Reform Act of 1986. Our budget experts prepared status quo estimates that anticipated large Federal revenue gains from a higher capital gains tax. Quite the contrary happened. Capital gains realizations tumbled in 1987. Budget estimators were confounded by the fact that taxpayers acted to avoid taxes.

Chart 2 shows the reaction.

We projected as we raised taxes, that we would actually raise revenue. We did not. We lost it when we raised the tax on capital gains.

The status quo then changed once again when we used the estimates and when we reduced capital gains charts. The status quo predicted a dismal drop in revenue. In actuality, capital gains realizations increased steadily and substantially, contributing to the surpluses we have now enjoyed, as you can see from this chart, where the realizations for fiscal year 2000, we projected \$329 billion and we have \$643 billion.

In order to make the best decisions, Congress needs real-world estimates that account for the interaction between Federal taxes and Federal programs and individuals' behavior. We have just passed one of the largest tax relief packages in U.S. history without the benefit of real-world analysis that effectively forecasts the turning points that we can use.

Under the current House rules, the chairman of the Committee on Ways and Means has the right to request real-world forecasts, and the Joint Committee on Taxation must provide them in a timely manner. This should be required, not optional, and should be used for all tax bills.

The chairman of the Committee on Rules has introduced a capital gains tax reduction bill. Consider how a status quo analysis would misguide us on examining that legislation. Budget accuracy will be achieved with small steps, and we need it now.

This is a job for innovators ready to meet the challenge of helping Congress spend taxpayers dollars wisely. As a start, we can improve budgeting accuracy by using projections that do not ignore changes in the behavior of individuals when taxes increase and decrease. next, we need to account for expenditure increases when the government establishes a program that "pay for" goods and services, thereby making them less expensive for individuals. The Joint Committee on Taxation and the Congressional Budget Office are developing models that incorporate certain "real world" assumptions to measure behavioral changes; however, we are just at the beginning of this process. As we move forward, it will be important to check "projected" against "actual" results. By "backcasting"—loading actual economic variables in models to determine how much the variability of particular assumptions affected the overall forecast—we can isolate the best of what we have and identify what areas of our forecast models need work. Third, we must give every federal agency the incentive to employ the assets they own to their highest and best uses. For

example, the Defense Department owns major bands of Spectrum, but is unwilling to turn them over for commercial use; could this decision be based on the fact that it does not benefit from the sale of these assets?

The next few years should be a time of testing new limits and learning from what does not work. In the end, our goal should be to "leave no Congress behind." The accuracy of the projections we work with will influence the quality of our policy decisions. Each Congress deserves the best it can get—and so do the American people. The right decisions will stand behind economic growth that benefits us all.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PLATTS). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. HORN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HORN addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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

(Mr. SHOWS addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

END GRIDLOCK AT OUR NATION'S CRITICAL AIRPORTS

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

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, recently there has been much said and written about the possibility of new runways at Chicago O'Hare International Airport. Some might think new runways are a new idea. They are not.

In fact, in 1991, the Chicago Delay Task Force recommended that new runways be added to O'Hare in order to reduce delays and improve efficiency. The final report of the Chicago Delay Task Force reads that new O'Hare runways "represent the greatest opportunity to reduce delays in Chicago, particularly during bad weather conditions."

Unfortunately, this recommendation was ignored because the Governor at the time was opposed to new runways at O'Hare. Fast forward a decade to 2001. Delays are once again on the rise at O'Hare. Once again the Chicago Delay Task Force has been convened, and representatives from the Department of Aviation, the FAA, and the airport users will study O'Hare Airport to determine what can be done to most effectively reduce delays.

No one will be surprised when the task force once again determines that adding runways are the most efficient way to improve capacity and end delays at O'Hare. Jane Garvey, the administrator of the FAA, testified that, while the FAA's ongoing air traffic control initiatives will increase capacity, the initiatives will increase it only by a very small amount compared to

what the increase would be if a new runway or two were added at O'Hare.

Additional runways are needed not only at O'Hare but throughout our national aviation system. New runways are the key to ending delays and congestion and adding to our capacity.

Additional runways are especially critical at O'Hare. Chicago is and always has been the Nation's transportation hub. Therefore, the congestion and delays that plague O'Hare also plague the rest of our national aviation system. Delays at O'Hare ripple throughout the system, earning O'Hare the undesirable designation as a choke point in our national aviation system. If O'Hare remains a choke point, it threatens the reliability and efficiency of the entire United States aviation system.

The fate of new runways at O'Hare rests with Governor George Ryan. Unfortunately, despite Governor Ryan's excellent record in terms of transportation investment, the Governor is politically hamstrung in what he can do regarding additional runways at O'Hare. As the U.S. representative for residents living near Midway Airport, I know that quality-of-life issues in communities surrounding the airport are very important. The City of Chicago Department of Aviation has been quick to address these important quality-of-life issues. In fact, the City of Chicago has spent over \$320 million at O'Hare alone on noise-mitigation efforts. Yet despite these mitigation efforts, some of the airport's neighbors still seek to constrain the growth of O'Hare. Unfortunately, this group has the attention of their political leaders in the State legislature as well as the Governor.

George Ryan has offered to review plans for new runways; but local politics, I believe, prevent the Governor from ever seriously considering new runways at O'Hare. For months I have been working quietly behind the scenes with all of the major parties involved in moving new runways at O'Hare forward. It is clear that local politics will prevent new runways from being added at O'Hare. Of course, local concerns must be addressed; but a powerful few cannot continue to derail future development of O'Hare International Airport, the heart and soul of our national aviation system.

Therefore, a national solution is needed. For this reason I am introducing today legislation that will preempt certain State laws and will elevate the discussion to build new runways at O'Hare to the Federal level. O'Hare needs new runways to remain a vital and competitive airport. Nothing is going to change at O'Hare unless the Federal Government gets involved. An act to end gridlock at our Nation's critical airports allows the Federal Government to do just that.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this very vital legislation. This is the only way that we will end delays, the only way that we will end congestion, and the only way that we will add

capacity to the United States aviation system.

RECOGNIZING THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF ALAN WEBB

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. TOM DAVIS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a young man from Virginia's Eleventh Congressional District, Alan Webb, a senior at South Lakes High School in Reston. Perhaps you have been reading about him in the newspaper.

Mr. Speaker, it has been said that it takes many years to become an overnight success, and this is certainly the case with Alan Webb. I saw him for the first time compete in the Foot Locker Challenge in Charlotte, North Carolina, in 1999; and in the cross-country field he ran way ahead of the pack. He is an outstanding young man.

But Alan achieved national recognition in May when he competed in the 27th Prefontaine Classic at the University of Oregon. This is considered one of the premier races in the sport of track and field. Alan finished a remarkable fifth against some of the finest milers in the world. But even more remarkable, his time was 3 minutes 53 seconds, a new record for the high school mile.

The previous high school mark of 3 minutes 55 seconds was set 35 years ago in 1965 by my friend and colleague, the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. RYUN). Let us put that in perspective. An 18-year-old broke a 36-year-old record in what many consider to be the most exciting event in track and field.

His performance at the Prefontaine Classic electrified those in attendance. A large crowd anticipating Alan's record-breaking bid rose to their feet when Alan's name was announced. And their cheers were even more deafening when his time was posted at the race's end. He made no secret of the fact that he hoped to set the record at this event, putting an exclamation point on what was already an exceptional high school career. His accomplishment, in this sense, was Ruthian: He set the highest possible goal, and he achieved it.

What is most commendable, perhaps, is the grace with which Alan has accepted his fame. He has said that he knows his mark will one day be broken as well. He has publicly recognized all those who have helped him reach such heights: family, friends, coaches, and teammates.

As I noted earlier, Alan may have achieved new levels of public recognition by breaking the high school record, but the determination was evident long ago.

On June 2, Alan joined his South Lakes teammates at the Virginia AAA Track and Field Championships at Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond. They competed in the 4x4