

(c) Any request approved as provided under subsection (b) shall be immediately turned over to the staff appointed for action.

(d) Any information obtained by such staff shall be reported to the chairman of the subcommittee requesting such study and examination and to the Chairman and Ranking Minority Member, shall be made available to the members of the subcommittee concerned, and shall not be released for publication until the subcommittee so determines.

(e) Any hearings or investigations which may be desired, aside from the regular hearings on appropriation items, when approved by the Committee, shall be conducted by the subcommittee having jurisdiction over the matter.

SECTION 9: OFFICIAL TRAVEL

(a) The chairman of a subcommittee shall approve requests for travel by subcommittee members and staff for official business within the jurisdiction of that subcommittee. The ranking minority member of a subcommittee shall concur in such travel requests by minority members of that subcommittee and the Ranking Minority Member shall concur in such travel requests for Minority Members of the Committee. Requests in writing covering the purpose, itinerary, and dates of proposed travel shall be submitted for final approval to the Chairman. Specific approval shall be required for each and every trip.

(b) The Chairman is authorized during the recess of the Congress to approve travel authorizations for Committee Members and staff, including travel outside the United States.

(c) As soon as practicable, the Chairman shall direct the head of each Government agency concerned not to honor requests of subcommittees, individual Members, or staff for travel, the direct or indirect expenses of which are to be defrayed from an executive appropriation, except upon request from the Chairman.

(d) In accordance with Clause 8 of Rule X of the Rules of the House of Representatives and Section 502 (b) of the Mutual Security Act of 1954, as amended, local currencies owned by the United States shall be available to Committee Members and staff engaged in carrying out their official duties outside the United States, its territories, or possessions. No Committee Member or staff member shall receive or expend local currencies for subsistence in any country at a rate in excess of the maximum per diem rate set forth in applicable Federal law.

(e) Travel Reports.

(1) Members or staff shall make a report to the Chairman on their travel, covering the purpose, results, itinerary, expenses, and other pertinent comments.

(2) With respect to travel outside the United States or its territories or possessions, the report shall include: (1) an itemized list showing the dates each country was visited, the amount of per diem furnished, the cost of transportation furnished, and any funds expended for any other official purpose; and (2) a summary in these categories of the total foreign currencies and/or appropriated funds expended. All such individual reports on foreign travel shall be filed with the Chairman no later than sixty days following completion of the travel for use in complying with reporting requirements in applicable Federal law, and shall be open for public inspection.

(3) Each Member or employee performing such travel shall be solely responsible for supporting the amounts reported by the Member or employee.

(4) No report or statement as to any trip shall be publicized making any recommendations in behalf of the Committee without the

authorization of a majority of the Committee.

(f) Members and staff of the Committee performing authorized travel on official business pertaining to the jurisdiction of the Committee shall be governed by applicable laws or regulations of the House and of the Committee on House Oversight pertaining to such travel, and as promulgated from time to time by the Chairman.

FISCAL ISSUES RAISED BY PRESIDENT BUSH IN HIS ADDRESS TO CONGRESS

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

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I would like to address some of the fiscal issues raised by the President when he spoke in this Hall scarcely 12 or 13 hours ago.

First, we are told that a 4 percent increase in the budget for domestic programs is sufficient and represents a genuine increase in those programs. Keep in mind, Mr. Speaker, our population is growing faster than 1 percent a year. Inflation is greater than 3 percent. Accordingly, a 4 percent nominal increase in expenditure is actually a real cut in the benefits that can be provided by a government program.

For example, Mr. Speaker, if our goal was to provide one pencil for every schoolchild in America, we would need to provide more than a 4 percent increase in that budget, because the price of pencils is likely to go up over 3 percent, and the number of students is likely to increase by more than 1 percent.

Mr. Speaker, we were told, I think correctly, that we cannot continue year after year to increase expenditure by 8 percent, even nominally by 8 percent, but a 4 percent increase when not adjusted for population or inflation represents an actual cut.

Mr. Speaker, we were given a tax cut proposal in which almost half of the benefits go to the richest 1 percent of Americans, those with the highest income, a group of individuals who have, on average, \$900,000 of income every year. Certainly we can do better in targeting the tax cut.

We have been told that repealing the estate tax will not have an adverse impact on charity because, when people make charitable contributions, they are not influenced by the tax law but instead are influenced only by their desire to help the charity.

Our President yesterday exploded that argument that has been made on this floor by many Republican Members when he stated that "By allowing an income tax deduction for those who do not itemize, we will encourage as much as \$14 billion of charitable giving."

So our President asks us to imagine a person of modest means putting \$5 in the collection plate; that a person who does not even itemize their deductions somehow will be motivated to put more money in the collection plate if we

change our tax law, but that an individual leaving \$5 million to a university to have a building named after them will not be influenced by the repeal of the estate tax.

Nothing could be further from the truth. Trust me, I was a tax professional for nearly 15 years. I never got asked, "Should I put \$5 in the collection plate or \$6? But I venture to say there are very few \$5 million gifts that are not influenced by the estate and income tax law.

Then we were asked by the President to imagine a waitress with two kids earning just \$25,000, and we were told this was the reason we should adopt the President's tax cut. Keep in mind, his tax cut would increase her income by only 2 percent. That is as stingy as a 25-cent tip.

But just to the point, that \$25,000 waitress example was a carefully selected anomaly designed to disguise what the Bush tax proposal really does. Keep in mind, there are many waitresses who make only \$20,000 a year, and under the President's proposal they get nothing, not even a 1 cent in-lust tip left on the table.

If we want to design a tax cut to benefit that image that was painted for us so cleverly yesterday of someone who is busing tables or waiting on tables making \$25 \$20,000, \$25,000 and trying to support a couple of kids, we need to adopt a completely different approach to the tax cut.

Mr. Speaker, we need estate tax relief, but we need estate tax relief that is designed not to gut the estate tax as a source of revenue, but rather, something that will make sure that the estate tax falls only on 1 percent of the estates, meaning 99 percent of Americans would not have to worry about that tax.

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That would still allow us to generate the vast majority of revenue that is generated by that tax, and then we could afford to provide real tax relief to waitresses making \$25,000 or even \$20,000.

THE 2000 CENSUS

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

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I want to first commend the President for proposing his tax relief package for permanent relief for the American people. Everybody who pays taxes gets tax relief. They have lowered the lowest rate, from 15 percent to 10 percent. That is going to help real working people in America.

But, Mr. Speaker, I am here to talk about the Census, because I feel it is important to place in the record some facts regarding the 2000 Census that some of us may have forgotten over the last several days as my colleagues on

the other side try to tear down the Census head count in order to build it up with a statistical adjustment.

What seems to be forgotten is how good the 2000 Census really was. The Census Bureau announced that compared to the last Census, the undercount of African Americans may have been cut in half. The undercount of Hispanics also was cut by more than half. The undercount of American Indians was reduced by more than two-thirds, and the elderly and children have never been counted so well.

The preceding Congress appropriated an unprecedented \$6.5 billion for the Census effort. Let us take a moment to see what the American people received for their tax dollars.

This 2000 Census reversed a three-decade drop in the questionnaire mail back response rate.

The 2000 Census reached more Americans, including those living in the hardest to count communities, than ever before.

The 2000 Census established a first-time-ever paid advertising campaign that focused on educating the American people on the importance of the Census participation.

The 2000 Census included more than 140,000 local, State and national partnerships to promote Census awareness and participation. The 2000 Census included a Census in the Schools program, that reached out to millions of students and parents nationwide to promote Census awareness and participation.

And for the first time, with the 2000 Census, Americans were able to file their Census forms electronically using the Internet.

There are Members of this body who are quick to focus on the limited number of people that chose not to participate in this Census. But I will point out for the record that Census 2000 found and counted nearly 99 percent of the population, more than any other Census.

This Census dramatically reduced the traditional undercount of children, the poor, and members of minority communities.

Regardless of what side of the adjustment debate a person falls, this Census was one of the best in our Nation's history. Opponents of a real head count said it could not be done. They said we could not improve upon past Censuses. They said that the undercount would most certainly grow larger. They said we must sample and adjust people because they will not answer the call.

But we said no. We must do everything we can to get an actual head count. Get out there and advertise, educate, involve local officials, spread the word, make it easier for people to be counted. An actual enumeration is what the Constitution calls for. It is what the Supreme Court called for, and it is what public law calls for.

And now we can and should stand proud and say, it worked. An unprecedented 99 percent of our population was

counted. All the efforts to get an accurate head count paid off.

Mr. Speaker, I call on my colleagues to congratulate the hard efforts of those career civil servants in the Bureau who worked long and difficult hours.

I call upon my colleagues to remember and congratulate the thousands of State and local volunteers and countless others in each and every one of our districts who partnered with the Bureau to make the head count such a success.

While the news regarding the Census has been good, the political rhetoric surrounding the Census threatens to taint the entire effort.

For months now, relentless pressure has been placed on President Bush and Secretary Evans to use the controversial adjustment plan known as sampling to recreate people that may not have been counted.

My position on adjustment has not changed. Adjustment is a Pandora's box, filled with unintended consequences, legal uncertainty and inaccuracy. Some would have us to believe that this decision is simply about statistics. Load the numbers into the computer, hit enter, and that is your answer. Adjust or do not adjust.

These people could not be further from the truth. The adjustment decision has far-reaching legal, political and social consequences. Adjustment simply has too many risks and unintended consequences to be justified for any Census, and particularly because we have such a great Census taking these risks even seems more unjustified. Instead, we should all be thrilled with the incredible inroads made with the differential undercount. Significant reductions occurred in the undercount rates for African Americans, Hispanics and American Indians.

The 2000 Census head count is one we all can and should be proud of.

MANAGED CARE REFORM

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

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, last night, we heard our President talk all about accountability. He wants our schools and our teachers to be more accountable to their students and the parents. This literally patterns after what is in a lot of our State laws and in the State of Texas.

He wants government to be more accountable to its citizens, and I think we all agree with both of those premises.

Mr. Speaker, I also appreciate the President's support for HMO reform, and hopefully similar to what the law is in the State of Texas. HMOs should be accountable to their patients, just like schools should be accountable to their students and parents, and government should be accountable to the taxpayers and citizens.

President Bush told us last night that he wants to promote quality health care through a strong, independent review organization, and I agree. The independent review organizations had been instrumental in the success of the Patients' Bill of Rights in the State of Texas.

But the independent review organizations, the IROs, are powerless if health plans can ignore their recommendations without consequences. By providing legal remedies in State courts, patients have a layer of protection that ensures health plans will do the right thing.

As much as the President talks about frivolous lawsuits, we have not seen that thing in Texas called a frivolous lawsuit. In fact, after 3 years on the books, our patient protections there have been less than five lawsuits filed in 3 years, less than five. That is hardly the glut of lawsuits that opponents of patient protection seem to fear.

The Texas plan for HMO reform has worked because the binding independent review protects health care plans from being held liable for punitive damages. You can provide that protection in there. But on the flip side, the HMO plans, the health plans know that if they ignore those independent review organization recommendations, they will have to answer in State court.

That is a powerful incentive to do the right thing.

The Bipartisan Patient Protection Act includes these important accountability provisions, while still protecting employers and health care plans from frivolous lawsuits.

The Bipartisan Patient Protection Act ensures that HMO plans who follow the recommendations of that external review board cannot be held liable for punitive damages. It also limits the amount of damages that can be awarded so that the plans are not forced to pay arbitrary sums.

Without accountability provisions, though, patients are defenseless against their HMO plans. They have no remedy if an HMO ignores the recommendation of the review board or acts in bad faith. Without accountability, a Patients' Bill of Rights provides no protections at all.

We have to have accountability, just like we do from the government to our taxpayer. Mr. Speaker, managed care plans seem content to write the rules, but they cry foul when we want them to play by those same rules. It is time we level the playing field on the Federal level, just like a lot of our States have done, and ensure that HMOs provide the medical care that they agreed to do.

That is why we should pass the Bipartisan Patient Protection Act.

LET US SUPPORT THE PRESIDENT'S INITIATIVE

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