

Mr. Speaker, the Federal Government is going to take in about \$28 trillion in taxes over the next 10 years. We are proposing to give back \$1.6 trillion. That is about 6 pennies out of every dollar. That is not a whole lot. We are saying that taxpayers should take this money and buy their kids school clothes, buy appliances for their homes, use it to pay utility bills, to help their house payment or their car loan.

Mr. Speaker, this money belongs to the American taxpayers. We need to give it back to them.

BUDGET SHOULD BE AGREED UPON BEFORE TAX BILL IS DEBATED

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

Mr. CARSON of Oklahoma. Mr. Speaker, I rise on this, my maiden speech in the House of Representatives, to protest the policy conceived in haste, offered without consultation, and prosecuted almost without discussion.

The question before us is not whether a \$2 trillion tax cut is a good idea or a bad one, nor is it whether a tax cut is consistent with our acknowledged duties to protect Social Security and Medicare and to invest more resources in an increasingly burdened military. The question, instead, is whether or not a budget, a budget, the master plan guiding spending and investments decisions of the Federal Government, should be agreed upon before we proceed to debate the merits of a tax cut.

I support a tax cut, as do most of my colleagues. But a budget that sketches our spending needs against the backdrop of anticipated revenue will allow us to determine, and more importantly allow the people to determine, the magnitude of the appropriate tax cut. The sense of this approach is obvious, save to those people more interested in short-term political gain than the long-term solvency of our Federal Government.

NEW ADMINISTRATION MUST SUPPORT NEEDS OF MILITARY

(Mrs. JO ANN DAVIS of Virginia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. JO ANN DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, on Sunday, in Newport News, Virginia, I attended the christening of what will soon be the U.S.S. *Ronald Reagan*, a new magnificent aircraft carrier. Mrs. Reagan, the President, Mrs. Bush, and other leaders were in attendance to witness the christening of this vessel and to honor our former great President.

It is only appropriate that this awesome vessel be named after the leader who led us to victory in the Cold War. This Nimitz-class aircraft carrier rep-

resents the “peace through strength” philosophy which played such an integral role in President Reagan’s successful foreign policy.

It is crucial that we recognize President Reagan’s extraordinary foreign policy achievements. This awesome new addition to our fleet will be a testimony to Reagan’s enduring legacy of military dominance. America is a better and safer place for having had President Reagan in the White House. However, we cannot sit back and admire his achievements without noting that our world remains a dangerous place.

We must direct more attention to our armed forces by reforming and revitalizing our military. When President Reagan left office in 1988, the Navy had 15 aircraft carrier battle groups, and 594 ships in service. It now has 12 carrier battle groups and a fleet numbering about half as many ships. The new administration must support the needs of the military to ensure that our armed forces are well equipped and trained to carry out our Nation’s priorities while providing support to our allies abroad.

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THE PRESIDENT’S TAX CUT

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

Mr. MATHESON. Mr. Speaker, I came to Washington to set aside partisan differences and bring common-sense logic to our debates. With breathtaking speed, we are rushing the President’s tax cut proposals toward a vote. We have little time for questions, analysis or discussion.

There is no question that tax relief is one of the primary concerns for families and businesses across my State. During my campaign I supported tax relief proposals such as elimination of the marriage penalty and estate tax relief. But let us not kid ourselves. The breakneck pace adopted by many in Congress right now leaves no time to consider our priorities. We are sacrificing the wisdom of the longer view for the instant gratification of an easy tax cut.

Unfortunately, rather than having a thoughtful debate and review of an overall budget framework, Congress is set on a path to consider individual pieces of the tax relief package without first understanding their combined impact.

I come from Utah. In Utah we live within our means. We pay our bills, we balance our family budgets and we save for our future. Why should our government not behave the same way?

TAX CUTS ARE THE RIGHT THING TO DO

(Ms. GRANGER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. GRANGER. Mr. Speaker, the hardworking American people deserve a break. The economy is slowing down. Consumer confidence is low. A tax cut now would put money back in the pockets of those who know best how to spend it; that is, the American taxpayer.

A tax refund would provide the average family of four in Texas with over \$1,800 in relief. That may not seem like a lot of money here when we talk about billions and trillions, but that can make a real difference to a family in Fort Worth, Texas. That \$1,800 could pay credit card debt down or pay down a college loan or help with a down payment on a new home.

Just because the government has extra money in its possession does not mean it should spend it needlessly. If a contractor is building a house and comes in under budget, he does not get to spend that estimated surplus on marble counter tops or solid gold fixtures. The unspent money would go back to the homeowners.

These surplus tax dollars should go back to their rightful owners. The American taxpayers deserve a refund of their money. It is the right thing to do, and it is the right time to do it.

THE PRESIDENT’S TAX CUT

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

Mr. SANDLIN. Mr. Speaker, country singer Alan Jackson croons, “Who says you can’t have it all?” We need tax cuts in America. We deserve tax cuts in America. We support tax cuts in America. But the American public is not fooled by the charade that is before us today. It is time to do what the American people do every day. It is time to do what American families do, American farms, American businesses. We simply must know what our budget is before we pass massive tax cuts in this country. There is no other responsible way.

Because make no mistake about it, Mr. Speaker, if we pass massive tax cuts without a budget, there is absolutely no way to address prescription drugs, to address education, to address military readiness in this country. The only way to do that is to spend the Social Security Trust Fund. That is just not right.

In closing, let us reflect on the musings of President Herbert Hoover, he of fiscal fame, who said, “Blessed are the young, for they shall inherit the national debt.”

Mr. Speaker, we do not need another Herbert Hoover. We do not need anything like that. We need responsibility. We need discipline. We need a budget, Mr. Speaker.

TAX RELIEF AND A RESPONSIBLE BUDGET

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

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, even at a time when consumer confidence is falling and energy costs are skyrocketing and the economy is slowing, Washington is racking up huge tax surpluses. This is just more evidence that Washington is overcharging taxpayers and that we desperately need to refund the surplus to the people who created it.

Even as some economists are forecasting gloom and doom, the surplus numbers since Republicans took the majority control in Congress continue to roll in. That is why the time is now to pay off the public debt and to offer tax relief to hardworking Americans. If we are to pay off the debt and provide needed tax relief for economic growth and job security and balance the budget, we must keep government spending down and get rid of the waste and the fraud and the abuse.

Last year's budget, let us face it, was out of control. But this is a new White House, one that is fiscally responsible. This White House realizes we are talking about the people's money.

Mr. Speaker, tax relief will result in job security and economic growth and give some of the money back to the people who earned it in the first place. Let us cut their taxes. Let us do it now.

THE PRESIDENT'S TAX CUT

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

Mr. TURNER. Mr. Speaker, the President's recently submitted general budget outline leaves a lot of questions remaining about his tax cut plan. Frankly, it appears that trying to fit his tax cut into a realistic budget is like trying to fit a size 11 foot into a size 6 shoe.

The American people understand there is no surplus today and that forecasting the surplus for the next 10 years is a lot like making a 10-year weather forecast. We do not want oversized tax cuts to take us back to the choice of deficit spending or higher taxes for our children. Now the leadership in the House wants us to take a vote on a major tax cut before the House has even adopted, or even debated, a budget.

Tax cuts are an important priority, but equally important is paying down our \$5.6 trillion national debt, saving Social Security and Medicare for the future baby boomer retirement, and strengthening education and national defense.

Blue Dog Democrats have come to the floor this morning to say we are for the largest tax cut we can afford, and to know what we can afford we need a budget first.

A RESPONSIBLE BUDGET FOR AMERICA'S PRIORITIES

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

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, it is important that all of us work with the President when he presents his budget in April. All of us should be committed to three things: A budget that fits America's priorities; second, a budget that reduces the largest debt in history; and, three, provide fair and responsible tax relief to all American taxpayers.

Consider this. Washington will take in \$28 trillion in the next 10 years and President Bush's tax cut relief is \$1.6 trillion. This is about 5.7 percent of the total revenues brought into this government in the next 10 years. Surely we can return about 6 percent of this money to the taxpayers.

This is not a massive tax cut, as the Democrats say. In April, as we do every year, we bring in the budget. We will vote on it. That is just how we do it around here. The economy will be strengthened and jobs will be secure with a tax relief program for the American taxpayers. We cannot wait. The economy needs this incentive now.

THE PRESIDENT'S TAX CUT

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

Mr. JOHN. Mr. Speaker, I think it is imperative that this Congress provide a tax cut to the American people. We can afford it. It has positive economic impacts, and we should do it. But I think equally important is paying down our national debt. And then we factor in priority spending on education, which is important to us, prescription drugs for Medicare benefits, missile defense, agriculture, the list goes on and on. How do we know how much money to allot in different places? How do we know that \$1.6 trillion is not too much of a tax cut? How do we know if \$1.6 trillion is not too little of a tax cut? How do we not know if \$1.6 trillion is just right?

Please present a budget to us so we can prioritize the surpluses that may occur over the next 10 years. I urge the other side to show us the budget. It is important for the American people to provide not only a tax cut but to prioritize the spending of this country for the next 10 years.

PROTECTING SOCIAL SECURITY AND MEDICARE FROM BIG GOVERNMENT SPENDERS

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

Mr. COOKSEY. Mr. Speaker, senior citizens and all Americans deserve to know that Medicare and Social Security will be there when they need it. Yet for years, politicians in Washington have shortchanged Medicare and Social Security by spending these limited resources on wasteful, big government programs.

The Social Security and Medicare Lockbox Act of 2001, which is H.R. 2, would lock away all surpluses from the Social Security and Medicare Trust Fund. This bill locks up the \$2.9 trillion surplus from the Social Security and Medicare Trust Fund. This was overwhelmingly passed by the House of Representatives in the last Congress. Yet it was stymied by the Democrats in the Senate.

Mr. Speaker, we have a unique opportunity this year to provide meaningful tax relief for hardworking Americans while guaranteeing the Social Security and Medicare Trust Funds remain untouched. We have promised our seniors that Social Security and Medicare will be there for them. This lockbox legislation will help to deliver on that promise.

THE PRESIDENT'S TAX CUT

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

Mr. BACA. Mr. Speaker, my father had 15 children. He knew what money was in his paycheck to be budgeted for all of us to have shoes and shelter, to make sure that we had enough food to eat. He had to do it wisely and budget it. Otherwise we would have gone bankrupt. We would not have had enough money for shoes, food or shelter.

What the Republicans are trying to do is to make a commitment for 10 years without a budget. If a family tries to do that or a business, it would be bankrupt in a few years. That is just what this tax bill that the Republicans rushed through will do. We owe it to the American people to give them a tax cut. No one disagrees. However, we owe it to them to do it right. We have to do it responsibly. We have to do it wisely. We have to have a budget first.

This tax plan is based on phony-baloney numbers. There is no substance without a budget. There is no beef, Mr. Speaker.

THE PRESIDENT'S TAX CUT

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

Mr. MOORE. Mr. Speaker, I got a call at 3:30 yesterday afternoon from a senior administration official.

He said to me, "Congressman, can you be with us on this tax cut?"

I said, "I'd like to be direct with you."

He said, "Please do."

I said, "Number one, I have a grave concern that we don't have a budget. And, number two, when it comes to this \$1.6 trillion tax cut, it relies on projections of \$5.6 trillion over the next 10 years. Projections."

Sunday night I was lying in bed watching the news and the weather and the weatherman projected a 12-inch snow in Washington, D.C. I wondered if I would make it back here for this tax cut vote.