

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.

That was a projection that did not come true. My concern is that these projections, these economic projections, may also not materialize just like the snow did not. If that happens, we are going to be in deficit mode again. We owe it to our children, we have placed a \$5.7 trillion mortgage on their future, to start to pay down our debt and live within our means.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BONILLA). Earlier the Chair had announced that one-minute speeches would be limited to 10 Members per side prior to business. However, there has been a misunderstanding, apparently, and in light of that, the Chair will recognize two additional speakers on each side.

THE PRESIDENT'S TAX CUT

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

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, Americans deserve a tax cut, but they also deserve a Congress that carefully considers and balances all of our budget priorities, including Social Security, Medicare and debt reduction. Tomorrow we will vote on the first part of the President's tax cut proposal. This vote will be premature. The administration is not submitting the details of the budget until spring. Congress has yet to debate and adopt a budget resolution. Without a budget framework, we are forging into the great unknown. It is bad public policy and it is political hocus-pocus to pass any bill costing this much without first having a budget. Some are urging quick action in order to give the economy a boost. However, the economic prosperity of recent years has been due in part to fiscally conservative policies that, coupled with the hard work of the American people, turned deficits into surpluses and reduced our debt.

I agree that taxpayers should benefit from the budget surplus, and I will support a tax cut but one that is fair and one that we can afford. We need to be fiscally responsible and we need a bipartisan budget before we can consider any specific spending measures or cuts. The American people deserve no less.

□ 1030

EVEN CBO SAYS IT WOULD NOT BET ON ITS OWN BUDGET NUMBERS

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

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, introducing a trillion dollar tax bill without a budget framework is like going to the race-track and putting all your money on

the long shot. The leaders of this House only win their wager if the Congressional Budget Office's surplus projections are accurate for the next 10 years, but even CBO says it would not bet on its own budget numbers. CBO says its surplus estimate for the next year has a 50 percent chance of being wrong by more than \$97 billion. For years 6 through 10, CBO says the odds are even longer. This is a big problem, because two-thirds of the \$5.6 trillion surplus are supposed to materialize in years 6 through 10.

Mr. Speaker, almost 20 years ago Congress made another gamble on the projected budget surpluses and it lost. That is exactly the way then-Senate Majority Leader Howard Baker described the 1981 tax cut. He called it a riverboat gamble.

We lost enough money on that bet. Let us pass a budget resolution before we take up tax and spending bills.

EASING REGULATORY BURDENS AND LOWERING TAXES CREATES MORE FREEDOM FOR THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

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

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, these are interesting times. We are going to have a good battle and discussion on things that conservatives have fought for for many years: Easing the regulatory burdens, lowering taxes. Although some of my friends on the other side seem to be frustrated with this, it should come as no surprise; easing regulatory burdens, lowering taxes creates more freedom for the American people.

I will stand on the side of freedom and individual responsibility and individual initiative every day of the week. It is a sound foundation. It is solid ground.

Let me address the issue of 10-year projections. I used to be a school-teacher. Everybody does long-term projections. Corporate entities do long-term projections. To base a debate on the ability of not taking into account long-term projections does not understand the real world in corporate America or local taxing districts.

I look forward to having these votes. I look forward to providing more freedom to the American people.

REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL ONE MINUTES

Mr. STENHOLM. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that in light of the misunderstanding that occurred regarding the number of one minutes, that any additional Members on either side that wish to deliver one minutes might be able to do so.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BONILLA). The Chair appreciates the sentiment of the gentleman from Texas (Mr. STENHOLM), but the Chair has already tried to exercise a little flexi-

bility in light of the misunderstanding this morning. The Chair does not recognize for that unanimous consent request at this time.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. STENHOLM. Mr. Speaker, parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas (Mr. STENHOLM) will state his parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. STENHOLM. If we all understand, both sides of the aisle, the procedures of the day in which it was announced there would be unlimited one minutes, under what procedure is this able to be changed?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair announced earlier that there would initially be ten Members per side recognized. Precedents under clause 2 of rule XVII commit that matter of recognition entirely to the discretion of the Chair. Again, the Chair tried to exercise some flexibility in light of the miscommunication.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the pending business is the question of agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal of the last day's proceedings.

The question is on the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. STENHOLM. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Evidently a quorum is not present.

The Sergeant at Arms will notify absent Members.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 337, nays 72, answered "present" 1, not voting 22, as follows:

[Roll No. 28]
YEAS—337

Abercrombie	Boswell	Conyers
Akin	Boyd	Cooksey
Andrews	Brady (TX)	Cox
Armey	Brown (FL)	Coyne
Bachus	Brown (SC)	Cramer
Baker	Bryant	Crenshaw
Baldacci	Burton	Crowley
Baldwin	Buyer	Cubin
Ballenger	Callahan	Culberson
Barcia	Calvert	Cummings
Barr	Camp	Cunningham
Barrett	Cannon	Davis (CA)
Bartlett	Cantor	Davis (FL)
Barton	Capito	Davis (IL)
Bass	Capps	Davis, Jo Ann
Bentsen	Cardin	Davis, Tom
Bereuter	Carson (IN)	Deal
Berkley	Carson (OK)	DeGette
Berman	Castle	Delahunt
Biggert	Chabot	DeLay
Blagojevich	Chambliss	DeMint
Blumenauer	Clayton	Deutsch
Blunt	Clement	Dingell
Boehrlert	Clyburn	Doggett
Boehner	Coble	Dooley
Bonilla	Collins	Doolittle
Bono	Combest	Doyle