

I also pray for the family members who sent their loved ones into harm's way to protect the freedom that every American enjoys. They are to be commended for their sacrifice and unwavering support for our troops.

My home state of Florida has sent over 5,000 Reserve and National Guard personnel to Iraq with the full understanding that not all of them would return to their families and loved ones, and my heart goes out to these brave Floridians.

Every member of our Armed Forces deserves our deep and unending gratitude for their professionalism and commitment to the ideals of this great country.

For the record, I would like to express my support for the second and third Whereas clause of the resolution we are currently debating, and I would like to submit Congressman HASTINGS' Resolution support the troops which I support in its entirety.

May God continue to bless America.

H. CON. RES.—

Whereas the valiant and dedicated members of the United States Armed Forces consistently perform in an exceptionally professional manner befitting an all-volunteer military force;

Whereas the members of Reserve and National Guard components of the Armed Forces consistently demonstrate their readiness and ability to respond and deploy quickly to become an integral part of the active components;

Whereas the families of the active and reserve forces provide exceptional and unwavering support for deployed forces;

Whereas the valiant members of the military forces of the allies of the United States share common goals and objectives with the United States in the war on terrorism and the war with Iraq; and

Whereas all citizens of the United States and the allies of the United States have demonstrated a show of unity in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, and against the threat to global security and crimes against humanity posed by Iraqi President Saddam Hussein: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring),* That it is the sense of Congress that—

(1) each member of the Armed Forces of the United States be commended for serving with such distinction and professionalism;

(2) the family members of members of the Armed Forces of the United States be commended for their special role in providing support for the members of the Armed Forces;

(3) each allied service member be commended for serving with such distinction and professionalism; and

(4) all citizens of the United States pay homage to the members of the Armed Forces and their families and to allied service members and their families.

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SHIMKUS). Pursuant to the order of the House earlier this legislative day, the previous question is ordered on the concurrent resolution.

The question is on the concurrent resolution.

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

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

#### CONCURRENT RESOLUTION ON THE BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2004

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 151 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the further consideration of the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 95.

□ 0210

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the further consideration of the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 95) establishing the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2004 and setting forth appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2003 and 2005 through 2013, with Mr. ISAKSON (Chairman pro tempore) in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore. When the Committee of the Whole rose earlier this legislative day, amendment No. 4 printed in part B of House Report 108-44, as modified, offered by the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPRATT) had been disposed of.

It is now in order for a period of final debate on the concurrent resolution.

The gentleman from Iowa (Mr. NUSSLE) and the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPRATT) each will control 10 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. NUSSLE).

Mr. NUSSLE. Mr. Chairman, I will close our side of the debate, and I only have one speaker. I believe I have that opportunity to do so; so I allow the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPRATT) to go first.

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise to claim my time and make a closing statement.

Mr. Chairman, this is not just another partisan vote. This is a pivotal vote with long-lasting consequences, and I urge everybody to ponder those consequences and beg everyone's indulgence at this hour to make just a few comments. When I came to this House 20 years ago, the Government was deep in debt. Over the 1980s the national debt tripled. It took us almost 20 years to rid the Government's budget of deficits. It took Gramm-Rudman-Hollings, which passed in 1985, the Budget Summit Agreement in 1990, the Clinton Budget of 1993, and the Balanced Budget Agreement of 1997.

These efforts finally bore fruit. After we passed the Clinton act in 1993, each

year thereafter for 7 straight years, the bottom line of the budget got better to the point where in 1993 for the first time in 30 years the budget was in balance.

□ 0215

Mr. Bush took office with an advantage few Presidents in recent times have enjoyed. He had a surplus, a big-time surplus. The Office of Management and Budget, OMB, estimated from 2002 through 2011, the surplus would be \$5.6 trillion.

Based on that projection and over the admonitions of many of us, Mr. Bush requested and Congress passed \$1.35 trillion in tax cuts. Now, just 2 years later, that \$5.6 trillion surplus is gone. That is what CBO and OMB told us when we opened the budget season in January of this year.

OMB told us that it had overstated the surplus. Adjusting it for what we now know about the economy, they said the adjusted surplus is not \$5.6 trillion from 2002 through 2011, it is more like \$2.4 trillion, and, more than that, about \$2.5 trillion has already been committed in new tax cuts and newly legislated spending, much of it for national defense. This means that any new tax cuts we pass will go straight to the bottom line. They will add dollar for dollar to the deficit.

In 2001, you could rationalize an enormous tax cut on the grounds that we had an enormous surplus, but you cannot do that anymore. Nevertheless, the President sent us a budget this year requesting another \$1.6 trillion in tax cuts, another round of tax reduction, as large as the last, with only a few modest offsets in it. All of it goes to the bottom line. When CBO did its analysis of the President's budget, it saw nothing but deficits, on-budget deficits, totaling over \$5 trillion between now and 2013.

The chairman of the Committee on the Budget and his colleagues embraced the President's tax cuts. They totaled some \$1.6 trillion, but they pared them down a bit, and then they went looking for offsets. They weren't able to identify specific spending offsets, so they settled on just across-the-board percentage cuts to entitlement spending under the jurisdiction of 14 different committees. Initially they asked for \$470 billion in entitlement spending. They settled later for less because they needed the votes to get it passed on their side of the aisle.

Today we have some \$262 billion in entitlement cuts entailed by this budget resolution. These will come out of programs within the jurisdiction of the Committee on Ways and Means, that is Medicare; and the Committee on Energy and Commerce, that is Medicaid, \$107 billion.

So if you vote for this resolution, you should know that you are still voting very possibly to cut Medicare by \$62 billion, Medicaid by \$107 billion, government pensions and railroad retirement by over \$40 billion, veterans' disability benefits by \$15 billion, school

lunches and student loans by nearly \$10 billion, and all of this is occasioned by the fact that you want to go forward with this tax cut of \$1.3 trillion to \$1.4 trillion. Because without it, the budget will be in balance between 2008 and 2010, if you just let the spending increase each year at the level of current service.

You should also know that this resolution calls for limits on domestic discretionary spending that will make it lower than inflation or current services by \$244 billion over the next 10 years. It has been claimed on this House floor that these were just cuts of 1 percent, but when you provide for a big increase in international affairs, \$51 billion is what the President sought over 10 years, and another big increase in homeland security, the rest of the accounts in discretionary spending have to be squeezed, and by our calculations they are squeezed easily by 6 percent.

That may not seem crippling, but look what is happening to education in this budget. Education is brought in \$50 billion below inflation. At this level we will never fully fund Leave No Child Behind; we will never get close to sharing our fair share of IDEA. That is true for other programs throughout the discretionary accounts. Veterans' health care, for example, it is cut by \$13 billion to \$15 billion, although today right now it has more veterans than it can say grace over to care for.

Mr. Chairman, I deeply doubt that these cuts will ever be achieved. Let us not forget what happened last year. We only passed 2 of 13 appropriations bills in 2002, did not finish the last 11 until a few weeks ago, and those were hard to pass because they had spending restraints on them that are a lot less challenging than what this bill will call for.

So what happens if the cuts are not achieved? The deficit goes higher, we stack up a mountain of debt. But, unlike the 1980s, we are right now on the eve of the retirement of the baby-boomers, and that will make the task of turning these deficits around more intractable and difficult than ever, believe me.

So, before you vote for this resolution, you should ask yourself if you want to take this gamble. You should know that even if all the mandatory and discretionary spending cuts are achieved, which is very, very unlikely, this budget will not be in balance until 2012, a long time from now, and between now and then this budget will accumulate more than \$1 trillion of additional debt. And in voting for this resolution, keep in mind, you are voting to raise the ceiling on the national debt.

So, what happens if we do not vote for this resolution? What happens if we vote it down tonight? Well, the default option is not really that bad. If you forego the tax cuts and you can also forego the spending cuts, you can put the budget back in balance by 2008. If you believe in balanced budget, if you

think deficits are a menace, that is not a bad outcome. I suggest to you it is a lot better outcome than the budget resolution before us.

Vote no on the budget resolution. Let us go back to the drawing board.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. NUSSLE. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Chairman, we always hear a lot about history whenever the Democrats come to the floor to talk about the budget, and it is in part because they do not want to talk about the future. They really just want to talk about history. They want to redefine it, they want to recapture it, they want to put it in new context constantly.

How did we get here? Because of a war, because of a national emergency, and because of an economy that has been in recession, and we have to address all of those needs today. We have to have a plan for the future.

Just like we commended our troops tonight, it is time to do our job. Yes, it is late. Yes, there are people who are asked to do much harder work than we are asked to do. But it is time to do our part in all of this. This budget is just the first step.

I have heard people tonight on both sides of the aisle talk about all sorts of devastating things that might happen, devastating things that will happen, all sorts of policies that will flow from this budget that has not even passed yet, that has not even been conferred with the Senate yet. We do not know where this process will end up, but I will guarantee you one thing: At the end of the day, no one will like it. No one will think it is a perfect budget. I can attest to that, because even though when I started this process I kind of liked what I wrote, by the end of it, I am not even sure I will recognize all of the details that are in this budget.

Why is that? Because 435 people in this body and 100 in the other body write the budget. This is not the Nussle budget, it is not the President's budget, it is not the Blue Dogs' or the Republican Study Committee's or the moderates' or the conservatives'. It is nobody's budget unless we get it done.

Why is it important for us to get it done? Because just last year we did not get it done. We passed one in the House, the other body did not pass a budget, and what happened? Gridlock, breakdown, 7 months of wrangling on the floor over 13 appropriations bills that only attributed one-third of all of the spending that Congress does and the Federal Government participates in. Seven months we spent over just one-third of the budget because of total budget breakdown.

So we need to pass a budget. We need a conference report. We need to have a plan. And what should that plan say? Well, we believe it needs three things:

Number one, it is not negotiable. We must protect America. That means strong national defense and homeland security that gives us the kind of secu-

rity we need to have to ensure that we can protect freedom at home and freedom around the world.

Number two, we must strengthen the economy and create jobs. A person without a job is not paying any taxes, and a person who is not paying any taxes, more than anything else, knows that they are not able to make ends meet. A person with a job, that is the most important thing we can do is to get people back to work.

So, yes, we reduce taxes. Yes, we take on taxes, because they are too complicated, they are too high, they are too onerous, and it has gone on too long. We have got to do something about taxes. The President has put a plan on the table. Yes, we incorporate that plan in our budget, but it is a first step to getting us back to work as a country.

The third area is fiscal responsibility. Now, I have heard the gentleman from South Carolina, whom I greatly respect, say that we will not achieve these cuts. He is right. We are not going to achieve these cuts, because they are not cuts. How can you cut when you are only decreasing anticipated increases on the one hand, and, on the other hand, when it is waste?

Why is it in America, for some reason in Washington, that whenever an agency or department or program wastes money, we rush in and give it more?

GAO, our General Accounting Office, if you want to talk about waste, we hire great people who put together reams and volumes and all sorts of reports; defense acquisitions, financial management, FAA, Medicaid, Medicare, U.S. Postal Service, food stamp program, tax administration. It goes on and on and on in waste.

We are paying dead people benefits under the Veterans Administration. We are sending dead people checks under Social Security. There are folks in the Lorton prison that are getting benefits under welfare still. And this is under a reformed welfare system.

People will come up to me and say, "Gosh, do you know what is really tough? We cannot find that waste. We are having a real tough time." And our friends on the other side are saying, "You are cutting, throwing children in the street. People will be kicked out of nursing homes."

We are after this. This is what we are after. We want to find the waste, fraud and abuse within our system. Is it going to be hard? You bet, because for 5 years we have not been doing it.

Five years ago we reached a balanced budget. Why? Because the Republicans took the majority. We put in a 7-year plan to balance the budget. We got there 4 years earlier than we said because the economy was growing, and we controlled spending. But when we got to balance, we stopped working on spending. We have got to get back to working on the spending side of the budget.

So, this is where I end here tonight with a quote. It is kind of an interesting quote, apropos for tonight, I believe. The quote is, "We shall, therefore, neither postpone our tax cut plans nor cut into essential national security programs. This administration is determined to protect America's security and survival, and we are also determined to step up its economic growth. I think we must do both."

President Kennedy said that in 1962. Let us do that job again tonight. Let us vote on the budget.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Chairman, I rise today to highlight how the administration's budget leaves children and families behind. As we begin debate on the FY2004 Federal budget, we must remember that the biggest challenge facing American families is how to bridge their responsibilities between work and caring for their families.

Our children and our families need our help now, more than ever, as this country is involved in a pre-emptive war with Iraq; this is especially true today for the families of our troops, national guard and reservists.

Whether already deployed, or waiting for their orders, these brave men and women and their families are wondering how they'll make ends meet as they fulfill their military duty. How will they juggle their work and family responsibilities as well as their Nation's call?

What we need is a budget that invests adequately in the programs and safety net that help all families balance work and family responsibilities.

That's why it's bad policy that the Republican budget cuts many crucial programs that help parents and children.

For instance, under the President's FY2004 plan after-school programs are cut by nearly \$400 million and cuts necessary funding for the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP). Under the President's budget, CHIP will be jeopardized by a plan to merge it with Medicaid programs through a new block grant.

States will have unprecedented latitude to scale back coverage of necessary care for children, impose substantial cost-sharing requirements on low-income families, and put many children in a position to have no coverage for their health care.

Child care services—which provide care so parents can work knowing their kids are safe—are also being cut. Only 1 in 7 children eligible for Federal child care assistance currently receive the funding they need. Under the President's plan a funding freeze will mean approximately 30,000 low-income children lose child care help in 2004.

Programs such as Head Start will also suffer. Head Start, the premiere early childhood program for disadvantaged preschoolers would be dismantled and sent to the States, without the performance standards that are the core of the program's success.

Mr. Chairman, this budget fails to provide the support that many of our working families depend on to give their children the best possible care. Families need this financial and emotional support to keep it all together. In fact, it seems that whatever we do in this fast-paced competitive society requires a balancing act.

All families can use a little help, yet, families are told that this is their own "personal problem"—although most everyone experiences

it—and "don't look to Washington for help, the Federal Government has other priorities" such as a \$400 billion defense budget to champion or a \$675 billion tax break for the wealthiest few.

What I propose is that we need a common vision of how to assist the struggling families of our country. A balancing act would recognize that there is no more important job than parenting.

A balancing act would give parents the opportunity to stay at home for at least the first three months after a birth, or an adoption, without the loss of income or employment.

A balancing act would see that when parents go back to work they would have access to quality child care.

A balancing act would provide voluntary universal pre-school for every three- and four-year old.

A balancing act would ensure that all children are cared for . . . not just during the school day, but after school as well. Instead of kids hanging out in the street with lesson in drugs, alcohol and early pregnancy, let's have safe places and enriching experiences available for our kids . . . places where they want to be . . . where they are safe and where they now they are cared about.

A balancing act would address the sad fact that in too many families, breakfast is a casualty of the new economy and our fast paced life. When kids go to school on an empty stomach, they can't learn.

And finally, a balancing act would extend benefits to part time workers. Whether an employee works 40 hours or less, their contribution to the company is just as great. All parents, and their families deserve to be protected against illness and loss of employment.

Mr. Chairman, our first priority in this budget must be helping working families find a balance between their work and home responsibilities. I encourage my colleagues to remember children and families as we debate the FY2004 Budget.

Mr. BACA. Mr. Chairman, if Republicans are trying to send a message with this budget, the bright neon lights spell "working families don't count." This is a budget of missed opportunities, misguided plans and misplaced priorities. This budget does not even account for the war, and reduces or eliminates benefits to the same brave soldiers that are waging that war as we speak.

This budget is missing any serious recognition of the devastating economic downturn our Nation has suffered during this administration or of the severe budget crisis facing the states.

The budget fails to invest in what matters most to American working families:

It does nothing to rebuild or modernize our schools. It does nothing to improve our nation's aging transportation system.

It does nothing to patch the holes in our homeland security framework.

It does nothing to stem the relentless loss of jobs in our nation's manufacturing and industrial base.

It does nothing to create new jobs.

Small businesses form the entrepreneurial backbone of our Nation's economy. Most new jobs in this country come from businesses started only from a little seed money and a big dream. Yet, this budget cuts the very Small Business Administration programs that help keep the American Dream alive.

This dream is being lived, at this very moment, by the hard working owners of countless Section 8A-small businesses. These businesses provide services to our government that are often less expensive and higher quality than many large corporations.

We must oppose a budget that bundles small business contracts together into larger contracts that only multinational and large corporations will be able to bid on.

This budget also does nothing to solve our Nation's crippling health care crisis, which means high cost and little coverage to working families. It also means a consistent 15 percent yearly cost increase to employers who are becoming less willing to pay for their workers' health care.

This budget leaves behind the \$9 billion in funding that President Bush promised for education. This budget leaves behind 40 percent of the funding for after school programs, 26 percent of the funding to migrant education programs, 43 percent of the funding for high school equivalency programs, 13 percent of early education programs, and the list goes on.

I wish my Republican colleagues understood that it is neither apathy nor laziness that makes people poor and creates under-performing schools. Even where the budget seeks new funds for neglected priorities, the approach to solving the problem is deeply flawed and the conditions are unfair and counterproductive.

During a time of corporate scandals, Republicans choose instead to go after labor unions. The Department of Labor is even increasing its funding to audit, investigate, and prosecute labor unions. It increased its funding by closing down the United States Employment Service.

During a time of state budget shortfalls that are forcing deep cuts to education, this budget instead redirects critical education funding to private school vouchers so that he can begin to privatize public education.

During a time of soaring energy prices, the Republican budget freezes funding for the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program, so our seniors can bake in the summer and freeze in the winter.

Seniors will be forced to leave Medicare to get a prescription drug care benefit, only to be covered by HMOs that will provide less care for more money.

Our seniors are concerned that this budget puts the long-term solvency of social security in serious jeopardy.

This budget will have a record of \$1.8 billion deficit over the next 10 years. This reckless deficit must be paid off, but how? Republicans hope to indebt our Nation to the point where we have no choice but to privatize Social Security. We must strengthen Social Security—not privatize it!

The current state of our economy demands investments to help people, but Republicans are instead squandering the funds on tax cuts. The resources that the budget seeks fall well short of basic needs—a direct result of the President's obsession with butchering the tax code and wringing from it trillions in tax breaks for the wealthiest. Tax breaks that are breaking the backs of our State budgets. According to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, the President tucked 11 tax cut proposals in his budget that would have disastrous effects on State budgets. Talk about kicking someone when they are down!

The tax cuts will cost the States \$64 billion in revenues over the next 10 years. Those are \$64 billion dollars that would have funded our police and funded our schools. Eleven States have cut their spending on K–12 education, delaying much-needed renovation and construction, eliminating preschool and after-school programs and, in some places, cutting days from the school week. Nineteen States have cut higher education spending, forcing cancellation of classes and tuition hikes.

Eighteen States have cut their welfare programs, even though the rolls are rising for the first time since passage of the 1966 welfare reform law. The number of States with waiting lists for child care assistance has grown, and the waits are getting longer. In seven States, eligibility for child care aid has been tightened significantly, and five States have hiked parent fees.

Twelve States are cutting Medicaid. At least 1 million people, largely in working poor families, will lose their health care coverage if these cuts are fully implemented. Another 1 million are experiencing cuts in coverage and benefits.

Many States have implemented or are considering tax increases to raise revenues. Among the 34 governors who have submitted 2004 budgets, 16—Republicans and Democrats—have called for increases in taxes and fees. Three are proposing personal income tax hikes, seven recommend sales tax increases or an end to sales tax exemptions, five propose corporate tax hikes and three are considering various other fees and levies. Ironically, these State tax hikes, many of which will hit low- and moderate-income residents, may offset any Federal cuts.

This budget and the tax cuts are clear examples of how Republicans want to shift the tax burden of our Nation from the rich to the working class.

Around this time last year, I led a successful effort to restore food stamp benefits to legal permanent residents. Although the President signed the law, this budget does not fund our commitment to keeping all lawful residents of our Nation fed. We cannot approve monumental reforms that bring hope to people's hearts and then coldly deny the funding for these very same programs.

I urge my colleagues to oppose this budget. It's a budget that sends its message—in bright neon lights—"real people don't matter."

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in strong opposition to this budget resolution, which undermines our long-term fiscal health and severely hampers our ability to meet critical domestic needs and foreign responsibilities.

I stand united with the President and my colleagues on both sides of the aisle in our commitment to win the war against Iraq and take all necessary steps to defeat terrorism and preserve national security both at home and abroad. However, despite the many new security and economic challenges confronting us, the war and our homeland protection efforts should not, and need not, shortchange our domestic priorities. We can win the war against Iraq and terrorism without raiding Social Security and Medicare and without increasing the national debt. Yet, this Republican budget resolution would accomplish just the opposite.

Two years ago, the administration and Congress were looking covetously at a staggering

\$5.6 trillion cumulative surplus through 2010. At the time, Congress was continually reassured by the administration that we could afford an enormous tax cut, ensure the solvency of Social Security and Medicare, pay down the national debt, fund our domestic priorities and still have a large reserve fund for unanticipated emergencies. Like many of my colleagues, I cautioned the administration at the time that its budget and enormous tax cut were based on unrealistic surplus projections that would never materialize.

Earlier this year, the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) confirmed that in less than 2 years the 10-year projected surplus has been erased. While portions of this decline are a result of our efforts to defeat terrorism and preserve national security both at home and abroad, the depletion of the surplus to date was largely caused by the fiscally irresponsible policies of 2001. The additional \$1.3 trillion in tax cuts, much of which are due to excluding dividends from taxation, that the administration and the Republican leadership propose would only worsen our current situation and lead us further down the path of mounting deficits and escalating public debt.

To pay for the additional tax cuts, the Republican's budget resolution would raid the entire \$2.2 trillion Social Security trust fund to cover deficits in the rest of the Federal budget over the next 10 years. Moreover, the projections used to frame this budget are overly optimistic. They do not include the cost of the administration's plan to permanently extend several expiring tax cuts, which would add \$100 billion to the deficit between 2004 and 2013. In addition, this budget omits the cost of extending relief from the selling individual Alternative Minimum Tax (AMT) beyond 2005. Without AMT relief, the number of taxpayers subject to it will soar from 2 million today to over 43 million by 2013. The projections also leave out an assessment of the enormous cost of the current war and the subsequent costs of occupation, which could last for a number of years.

The disappearance of the 10-year surplus compels us to consider not just a 1-year but also a long-term budget plan. Congress and the American people have the right to know how the Republican Leadership proposes to restore fiscal discipline while enacting additional multi-year tax cuts, boosting spending for the military, and meeting commitments to a growing number of retirees. Furthermore, I find it incredibly irresponsible that the majority continues to pursue large tax cuts while short-changing important domestic priorities. Congress should devise budgetary rules that make tax cuts contingent on the realization of specified targets for the budget surplus and the Federal debt. Unfortunately, this budget fails on all those accounts.

Moreover, this budget would cut domestic appropriations by \$244 billion over 10 years below the amount needed to maintain services at the 2003 level. Remarkably, the funding levels in this budget are \$115.3 billion lower than the level in the President's budget, which many Members—on both sides of the aisle—thought was too low. Further, it would require cuts of \$265 billion over 10 years in programs such as Medicaid, veterans' benefits, student loans, housing assistance and pensions and benefits for Federal employee. This budget also fails to provide funds for necessary infrastructure improvements or help hard-pressed

states and localities. Meanwhile, it provides an inadequate prescription drug benefit, and underfunds other key priorities without reaching balance until 2012.

Instead, I plan to support the Democratic alternative that would eliminate the unfair, costly tax cuts for the rich, and would provide targeted tax rebates to working families, as well as additional funding for expanded unemployment benefits for laid off workers, assistance for states and localities, and necessary infrastructure projects. It would also provide greater funding for Medicare prescription drugs, education, housing, homeland security and other vital domestic programs. This alternative would provide an immediate boost to the economy and create thousands of jobs, without aggravating our long-term deficits.

The need to respond to new short-term needs is no excuse for ignoring the long-term problems we already have. Ultimately, deficits do matter. It is time that we all take the deteriorating budget outlook seriously. We need to ensure that the burden of today's fiscal policies is not placed on the shoulders of our children and grandchildren. This is a matter of fiscal stewardship and generational responsibility, and we must address it without delay.

I urge my colleagues to reject this misguided budget and to develop one that will ensure security at home and abroad, without dramatically increasing our debt, borrowing against Social Security and Medicare, or abandoning our commitments to children, workers, senior citizens and all Americans.

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. Chairman, today we are brought to the floor of this House as America's young men and women are at war in Iraq. The American people expect their elected representatives to address how much this war will cost and how much securing our hometowns will cost in our continuing war against terrorism as well. Instead, the Bush administration is asking this Congress to treat as its highest budget priority the lifting of that very onerous burden felt by the wealthiest of Americans—the double taxation of dividends. We all know what a huge burden double taxation of dividends imposes on the wealthiest Americans. Apparently Republican Party leaders in Washington feel that failing to lift this burden from the shoulders of the rich would be too great a sacrifice, even in wartime. For them, lifting the burden of double taxation of dividends is:

More important than paying for a war in Iraq and the subsequent rebuilding of Iraq.

More important than paying for security at our ports, airports, and nuclear power plants; and

More important than providing affordable health care and medicine to our grandparents.

Last night, President Bush officially created a whole new group of 250,000 war veterans—yet he does not even have enough money in his budget to take care of this country's obligations to veterans of the first Persian Gulf War, the Vietnam War, the Korean War, or World War II.

Never before has a President cut taxes in the face of war. According to the New York Times, the Civil War gave birth to an estate tax and World War II expanded the income tax. But during the war in Iraq the Bush administration plans to cut taxes by a total of nearly \$2 trillion over the next 10 years.

This tax cut for the rich is a fiscal MOAB [Mother of All Bombs], pointed right at the heart of the Federal budget.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Chairman, it seems that each year I've been in Congress, the Republican budget proposal is further and further removed from the needs and expressed wishes of the American public. This year follows that disturbing trend. Fundamental priorities and long-term fiscal stability are sacrificed for the sake of continued tax cuts.

This budget puts into place a framework that will fail to meet our needs. It ignores funding requirements for our operations overseas, our actions in Iraq and a commitment to rebuild and stabilize Afghanistan. Worst of all it ignores real problems here at home. There is no meaningful assistance for the 47 states, including mine, that are in serious financial difficulty, to say nothing of the unmet needs for transportation, environmental cleanup and "hometown" security.

We must look at this current budget as an opportunity, despite the fact that we are now at war and our economy continues to stumble. We have a choice whether we want deficits as far as the eye can see. We have a choice whether we want to provide tax cuts to the detriment of education, healthcare and the environment. The Democratic budget alternatives we are voting on today are far better in addressing these choices.

The Democratic budget alternatives:

Invest in our communities, which creates jobs, provides needed infrastructure improvements for transportation and water, and cleans up the environment;

Help state and local governments cope with their current budget crises and provides money for "hometown" security and the first responders that protect our communities;

Provide increased funding for discretionary healthcare programs and education, reducing classroom sizes and providing advanced teacher training—proposals President Bush promised but the Republicans refuse to fund; and

Offer tax cuts and reforms that are much more affordable and equitable. They repeal the marriage penalty, provide immediate and permanent estate tax relief that increases the family exclusion level to \$6 million, and accelerate the child tax credit to \$800 per child. Other tax cuts would be deferred if the budget remains in deficit because of the war in Iraq or other factors.

My constituents and the American people understand that these are extraordinary times. They are willing to make the sacrifices necessary to protect our communities, to educate our children, and to clean our environment. We have an opportunity to help families become safer, healthier, and more economically secure. The Democratic budget alternatives seize this opportunity.

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Chairman, I rise to voice my concern about the budget resolution before us today. As a Member of the House Veterans' Affairs Committee, I am especially concerned about the amount of funding included in the budget resolution for our Nation's veterans.

This Republican budget is woefully short of what is needed, and I urge my colleagues to support the Democratic budget alternative. Our alternative provides \$32 billion more than the Republican budget over the next 10 years for veterans. This means providing \$17 billion more for veterans' health care and rejecting the Republican cut of \$15 billion for mandatory veterans' programs, programs like service-

connected disability compensation, pensions, survivors' benefits, vocational rehabilitation, educational and burial benefits. I cannot imagine even thinking about cuts to compensation for our disabled veterans!

The Democratic budget is supported by the authors of the Independent Budget, a budget created by veterans' service organizations who are on the front lines and in a position to know exactly what is needed. They call the Democratic alternative "a solid step forward in meeting the very real needs of veterans".

This morning I attended the joint Senate and House VA Committee hearing, where we heard views on the budget from the Vietnam Veterans of America, the American Ex-Prisoners of War, the Military Officers Association of American, and AMVETS. I must report that for much of the hearing, there were only two Members present to receive the veterans testimony.

On the day following the beginning of the war with Iraq, it is hard to believe that most of the Members of the VA Committee were too busy to attend this hearing about funding for our veterans' programs. Perhaps our Republican colleagues were reworking their original budget resolution, working to respond to the outcries from veterans and the public about their original budget resolution. But the final result before us today is still woefully inadequate.

Mr. Chairman, as we send our young men and women to war in Iraq, certain to result in disability for some young Americans, we unfortunately are simultaneously sending the message that Congress is not concerned about their future as veterans! This is unconscionable.

Why does the Republican budget proposal fail to fund veterans programs at the level recommended by the Independent Budget? I am sad that it is largely because Congress is poised to give a tax break to the wealthiest Americans.

Who deserves to receive the benefits of the national treasury—America's disabled veterans or America's millionaires?

I urge my colleagues to reject this budget resolution.

Mr. WEXLER. Mr. Chairman, I find it deeply troubling that as this country prepares for war and unites in support for our troops, the House Republicans would push forward a deeply partisan, environmentally destructive budget, hoping that a nation focused on war abroad will not notice this domestic attack.

This outrageous budget cuts more from crucial environmental programs than even the President's proposals. Without bothering to explain where these cuts will come from, House Republicans slashed more than 10 percent for the 2004 environmental funding, over 3 billion dollars. Incredibly, these cuts continue through the next ten years, providing for less than minimally required to maintain the existing levels of enforcement and environmental protections Americans rely on to protect our health and natural world.

Perhaps most deplorably, this proposed budget dictates our nation's environmental policy for the near future. It is a back-door way to open one of

America's most precious wilderness areas to oil drilling. My Republican colleagues claim that this budget is 'silent' about oil drilling in the Arctic. If this budget is silent, it is certainly not neutral. The \$1.1 billion cut over 10 years will all but force the federal government to use income from oil drilling in ANWR to reconcile deep funding cuts to balance their budget.

While Secretary Norton may think that the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is "an area of flat, white nothingness," my constituents understand that the Refuge is an unique, irreplaceable coastal plain and home to more than 100 species of wildlife and birds whose habitat would be undeniably devastated by this reckless drilling. The Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is a gem of the national wildlife system, created over one hundred years ago by Teddy Roosevelt, and the area of proposed drilling, Area 1002, is the ecological heart of the refuge.

Slipping ANWR 'silently' into this budget is dishonorable procedure and dangerous environmental policy. I urge my colleagues to oppose this handout to big oil companies and to support the Spratt substitute, which will protect an invaluable American treasure.

Mr. CRENSHAW. Mr. Chairman, You can tell a lot about a family by looking at their checkbook. The same is true of our nation. This budget reflects our priorities by investing in Defense, Homeland Security, the economy, and programs supporting our most vulnerable populations. The number one responsibility of the federal government is to protect American lives.

Under this budget, our military men and women will have the best and most modern equipment, better pay, better housing, and better Veterans Benefits—\$62 billion dollars. That's \$4 billion more than the previous year.

In my district of Jacksonville, the USS *John F. Kennedy* is undergoing an extensive maintenance rehabilitation period. There are many other aging ships within our fleet that require this type of depot level maintenance. This budget provides \$5.3 billion for intermediation and depot level ship maintenance—an additional \$500 million over last year's levels. This budget is a responsible investment in Jacksonville as a national security asset.

Included in the 2004 Military Construction request is \$115.7 million for the acquisition of Blount Island. The Marines operate their maritime pre-positioning force from this location. Sixteen ships loaded with a brigades worth of equipment from light armored vehicles to the Meals Ready to Eat are maintained on a routine basis at this location. The Maritime Pre-positioning Force floats in certain geographical locations around the world to reduce time required to deploy Marine forces. Currently 11 of these 16 ships have off-loaded their Jacksonville maintained equipment in Kuwait for the Marines use in the liberation of Iraq.

Under this budget, the federal government is on a 9-year-track toward balance and we remove tax code obstacles that stand in the way of growing our economy.

I urge my colleagues to vote for this budget resolution, not just because it protects Americans, not just because it restrains spending, not just because it targets waste, fraud, and

abuse, not just because it removes barriers to economic growth . . .

Vote for it because somewhere in my hometown of Jacksonville, there's a family that will sit around their kitchen table tonight, and they will talk about how much money is in the checking account and they will talk about when their bills are due.

They are making responsible decisions and expect nothing less from us.

This budget blueprint will protect that family, it will let that family keep a little more money to pay a bill, buy new clothes, or save for their children's education.

Vote for this budget because it's what's right for America.

Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Mr. Chairman, I rise today to commend the House Budget Committee and Chairman NUSSLE's leadership in crafting a Budget Resolution that epitomizes fiscal discipline and brings important tax relief and job creation to hard-working American families. This Resolution will also protect Americans both here and abroad as we continue to face the challenges of the War on Terrorism.

It is too common in this chamber that Members talk about reducing spending, creating jobs, protecting Americans and providing common sense tax relief without a willingness to make the important changes. Unfortunately, rhetoric does not produce results.

This Budget Resolution symbolizes a strong commitment to make the needed reforms in spending that this body has been promising. This resolution is fiscally responsible and outlines a plan to balance the budget in nine years, while bringing important tax relief to American families.

This Resolution calls for a one percent reduction in growth, except for social security, defense, Medicare and Veterans and homeland security funding. By no means is this approach radical. This Budget Resolution allocates \$200 billion over the next 10 years for Medicare with an additional \$400 billion for Medicare modernization and prescription drug coverage. Veterans spending will increase by \$844 million in Fiscal Year 2004. Education, Defense, Homeland Security and many other agencies will receive significant increases under this plan.

A one percent reduction in growth will allow for the elimination of waste, fraud and inefficiencies that consistently plagues federal spending. Locating this abuse is no great challenge for most agency budgets and eliminating it should be our obligation.

The Budget Resolution also provides for sound growth policy that will stimulate our economy, provide jobs to Americans and reduce the tax burden on American families. For example, the budget resolution assumes the 2001 tax cuts are made permanent and accommodates the entire growth plan proposed by President Bush.

President Bush's growth plan is vital to stimulating our weak economy and creating jobs for Americans. This includes the permanent elimination of the marriage penalty tax, the death tax and the double taxation of dividends.

The elimination of the double taxation of dividends, alone, will provide an average of 500,000 jobs a year and will greatly help the 52 percent of Americans—half of which are seniors—that are invested in the stock market.

The President's Growth Plan will also provide job opportunities to unemployed Ameri-

cans throughout the nation. In Florida, alone, 248,500 jobs will be created over the next four years as a direct result to the policies of President Bush's Growth Plan.

Small businesses—the foundation of America's economy—would also receive important tax savings under President's Growth Package. In fact, 23 million small businesses will receive tax cuts averaging \$2,042 under this plan.

Unfortunately, the only plans the Democrats are offering would spend irresponsibly and raise taxes. This is not only an injustice to the American economy, but a great injustice to American families that rely on tax relief during rough economic times.

I came to Congress promising my constituents that I would support tax relief and the concept of fiscal discipline. There is no piece of legislation that outlines a plan that accurately adheres to these principles better than the Budget Resolution we have before us.

Today's vote will clearly indicate who restrains spending and provides tax relief and who only talks about it. I look forward to sending a clear message to America that the days of rhetoric are over—we are going to control spending, provide tax relief to hard-working families and open the door to employment opportunities for millions of Americans.

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in opposition to the Majority's fiscal year 2004 Budget Resolution because this resolution is unrealistic in reflecting the spending realities that our nation will face. Never in the history of our country has a Congress or a President dared to reward the wealthiest at a time of recession and war while asking the rest of America for painful sacrifice. If you believe seniors, veterans, and children are the problem, then the Majority has a budget solution for you. This shameful plan cuts funding for nearly every federal program, while at the same time making way for excessive tax cuts that will explode the deficit further and do nothing to help our economy.

This Budget Resolution contains deep and widespread cuts in every basic domestic program except Social Security and military retirement. The budget would require congressional committees to cut mandatory programs by \$470 billion over the next ten years. The cuts are reminiscent of those proposed by former House Speaker Newt Gingrich in 1995 and included in the Contract with America budget legislation that former President Clinton vetoed that year.

While requiring deep cuts in domestic programs, the budget makes room for most of the President's large tax-cut package, including \$1.4 trillion in tax cuts through 2013. The tax cuts in the "growth" package alone would cost \$725 billion over ten years and would, according to the Tax Policy Center, result in tax reductions averaging \$90,000 each in 2003 for those Americans who have incomes of more than \$1 million. Unfortunately, 35 percent of New Mexico taxpayers would get no tax cut at all under the Bush plan, and 53 percent of New Mexico taxpayers would get a cut of less than \$100.

Mr. Chairman, according to official projections by the Congressional Budget Office, budget deficits will turn to surpluses by 2008 if Congress refrains from enacting any further tax cuts or program increases, with the budget running a net surplus of \$0.6 trillion over the period from 2003 through 2013. As is widely

recognized, however, these projections are too optimistic: they do not include the large and inevitable cost of providing relief from the exploding scope of the Alternative Minimum Tax; they include no allowance for a war with Iraq; and they assume that various "temporary" tax credits will expire on schedule even though Congress nearly always extends them. Reflecting the cost of these three omitted items adds approximately \$1 trillion in deficits over ten years.

The most reprehensible component of the House budget, as with its Senate counterpart, is that as the United States has begun "Operation Iraqi Freedom" neither measure sets aside one penny for this war with Iraq. The Bush administration has resolutely refused to offer cost estimates of war or early reconstruction despite requests from those on both sides of the aisle. Leaders in both parties have expressed increasing frustration that the potential bill for war and rebuilding Iraq still remain a mystery.

Mr. Chairman, with nearly a quarter of a million young Americans crossing the Iraqi border this House is on the verge of approving a nightmare budget that sets aside no money for this effort. Instead of sticking our heads in the budgetary sand and ignoring the war's price tag, we need to be honest with American taxpayers and ourselves. To pass a budget plan including large tax cuts without attempting even to estimate the war and postwar reconstruction costs is breathtakingly irresponsible.

I oppose the Majority's Budget Resolution because: It Fails to Promote Economic Growth—Instead of Creating Both Short-Term & Long-Term Economic Growth.

It Fails to Provide a Meaningful Prescription Drug Plan—Instead of Investing in An Affordable Medicare Prescription Drug Benefit, Available to All Seniors.

It Embraces Fiscally Irresponsible Tax Cuts Totaling \$1.35 Trillion—Instead of Embracing Responsible Budgeting.

It Makes Substantial Cuts to National Priorities—like Education and Health Care—Instead of Funding Key National Priorities like the "Leave No Child Behind Act".

It Cuts Veterans' Benefits and Freezes Homeland Security Funding—Instead of Providing For Our Veterans and Giving Our First Responders the Tools they Need to Protect Our Homeland.

In closing, Mr. Chairman, as I said earlier we should be honest with the American taxpayers and with ourselves that the responsible thing to do is not pass this budget until we have the war supplemental figures before us and can reach consensus on other key federal programs.

Mr. STARK. Chairman, I rise in strong opposition to H.R. 975. This bankruptcy bill is touted as reform. But, it is actually a wolf in sheep's clothing intended to allow credit card companies and other lenders to gouge consumers when they are most vulnerable.

Republicans are giving this gift to the big credit card companies in the midst of this difficult recession, making it harder for working families to seek shelter from the common financial emergency of a lost job or lack of health coverage. In fact, 90% of all bankruptcies are filed for these very reasons. It's hard to see the abuse in these real instances of need, especially when many Americans live paycheck to paycheck.

Yet, this Republican legislation makes it more difficult for those Americans forced into

bankruptcy—a disproportionate number whom are women and minorities—to seek this protection. In fact, the bill requires the debtor in some cases to have to take on big corporate lenders in court to prove they are worthy of bankruptcy, forcing them to bear legal expenses they can't afford. In addition, this bill also allows creditors to threaten debtors with costly litigation that will in turn force many families to needlessly give up their legal rights.

In their continuing compassion, the Republicans have crafted this so-called reform so that a parent seeking to collect child support from an estranged spouse that's declared bankruptcy will have to fight it out with creditors to receive payment. Meanwhile, this bill makes it easier for those seeking bankruptcy protection to lose their homes or be evicted by their landlords. Yet, those with million dollar mansions will be able to keep their homes even while seeking the same bankruptcy protection. Nothing like a fair shake for America's working families.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, with all of the perks they've awarded to the big credit card companies, Republicans have done nothing to ensure that they are held accountable. There is nothing in this bill that stops the abusive, predatory lending that lands too many Americans in bankruptcy in the first place.

I urge my colleagues to vote down this anti consumer bill. Now is not the time to turn the tables on America's working families. Vote no on H.R. 975.

Mr. DINGELL. Mr. Chairman, the lengths to which my Republican colleagues will go to in order to help out their fat-cat buddies will never cease to amaze me. We are considering a budget resolution today that is so bad and so draconian that the Republican leadership is having trouble convincing some of their own rank and file to support it.

I am outraged, Mr. Chairman, absolutely outraged that at a time when this nation is at war, my Republican colleagues are attempting to cut funding for veterans. Have they no shame? Mr. Speaker, these men and women were willing to risk their lives for this nation and many lost limbs in the process. My colleagues on the other side of the aisle would repay these most patriotic of Americans by slashing \$15 billion from the Veteran's Administration budget over the next 10 years. Of course, since 96 percent of the VA's discretionary budget goes to pay for the healthcare of those who served this Nation, this means that we are reducing enrollment, reducing hospital days of care and reducing nursing staff. This is how the Republican leadership gives their thanks to our veterans.

At recent hearings, I expressed skepticism about the President's "budget-neutral" proposal to convert Medicaid to a block grant. Not only would this proposal leave States at risk if Medicaid costs rose, but I warned that it was a prelude to Congressional cuts in the program. The ink was not even dry on the Presi-

dent's proposal before the House Republicans are now requiring \$100 billion cut in the program. As State budgets are being squeezed, the notion of reducing Federal spending on Medicaid is an astonishingly bad idea.

Although our Republican colleagues appear to have backed off their threat to slash Medicare to the bone, no one should be mistaken that this is the last we will hear of it. For years, Republicans have sought to do away with Medicare and Social Security—most recently under the guise of privatization. Medicare and Social Security remain primary targets for Republican ideologues and tax-cutters, and we must remain ever vigilant to protect these vital programs.

Mr. Chairman, this budget also fails to protect the environment. In fact, it cuts FY 04 funding by more than 10 percent. And over the next 10 years, it slashes environmental spending by more than 11 percent. What does this mean? Well, it could mean cuts for clean water, which is a logical choice since the Bush Administration seems hell bent on dismantling the Clean Water Act and selling off our rivers to hydroelectric companies. It likely means cuts for brownfields redevelopment. Of course, my Republican colleagues try to soften this blow by opening the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to drilling, which they say will increase federal receipts by \$2.1 billion over the next 10 years. I am not certain how my friends on the other side of the aisle intend to do this, since some cooler heads in the Senate stripped the ANWR provision out of their budget yesterday.

Just two years ago, President Bush signed into law the No Child Left Behind Act, which was lauded by Democrats and Republicans alike. At the time that the bill was signed, the President and Congressional Republicans made a commitment to American families and their children that the programs in that bill would be funded at proper levels so that our public schools would not be placed in financial straight jackets. For two years that promise has gone unfulfilled, and this budget not only continues that dangerous trend, but actually cuts education funding. Mr. Speaker, Congressional Republicans have gone even further in their cuts than the President did in his budget, slashing spending by 8 percent. Let me give you a specific, Mr. Speaker. If this budget passes, more than 22,000 kids in my home state of Michigan will quite literally be left out in the cold. These kids will be left without any after-school services. Let me ask, is this what compassionate conservatism is all about?

Mr. Chairman, the cuts don't stop there. This sham of a budget drastically cuts our agriculture programs. Our farmers are the lifeblood of this great Nation. How do we show them our support? Well, my colleagues on the other side of the aisle thank our farmers by slashing agriculture programs by \$763 million in FY 04. What this means in real terms is that conservation, nutrition, rural development and producer payment programs would be cut by

more than 25 percent over their authorized amounts. These draconian cuts are neither justified nor sustainable. Again, that is not the end of the agriculture cuts. The Republican budget requires that the Agriculture Committee cut nearly \$20 billion in direct spending over the next 10 years. This means more cuts to our family farmers by slashing funding to farm loan programs, conservation programs, rural development, forestry and research.

All of this leads to a very logical question, Mr. Speaker: why are my Republican colleagues doing this? Why are they gutting programs that help America's working families? Well, Mr. Speaker, they are doing this to accommodate more tax cuts for the wealthiest Americans. Yes, the goal of this budget is to allow the President to push through more of his irresponsible tax cuts. Make no mistake: these tax cuts will not stimulate the economy and will not help middle class Americans. In fact, in my home state of Michigan, about 50 percent of taxpayers would get less than \$100 under the President's plan, and 30 percent would get no tax cut at all. Of course, this all leaves open the possibility that local communities will have to raise taxes because my Republican colleagues expect them to bear the burden of homeland security costs. This rascality is just another ploy for my Republican colleagues to help out their fat-cat corporate friends and leave the American people out in the cold.

Mr. Chairman, I would be remiss if I neglected to mention the cost of this current war with Iraq. We don't know how much the war will cost, and we have no idea how much it will cost to rebuild Iraq after the war. The Republican budget does not include one penny to pay for our troops currently overseas or the costs of reconstructing Iraq. Mr. Speaker, is this really the time to be centering the entire budget around tax cuts? I think not. This is a sham and an outrage.

Mr. Chairman, the Democratic budget provides members with a reasonable and responsible alternative and I would strongly encourage my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support it. Our budget is centered around a stimulus plan that provides both long term and short term economic growth—creating 1 million new jobs this year alone. The Democratic budget is responsible, balancing the budget by 2010 without unrealistic spending cuts. The Democratic budget gives schools the funding they need to implement No Child Left Behind, and more importantly, the funding they need to properly prepare our kids for the future. The Democratic budget provides \$32 billion over the next 10 years for Veterans healthcare. Mr. Speaker, making sure those who were willing to give their lives for this country are taken care of needs to be a priority. It is, quite simply, the right thing to do. At this time of war, the Democratic budget adequately invests in Homeland Security by providing \$32 billion

more than Republicans over the next 10 years—ensuring \$3.5 billion in desperately needed new money for first responders. The Democratic budget also provides an adequate prescription drug benefit so our senior citizens don't have to choose between groceries and filling a prescription.

I would ask my colleagues, all of my colleagues, to reject the Republican budget and support the Democratic substitute.

Ms. KILPATRICK. Mr. Chairman, as we are now unfortunately engaged in an assault on Iraq, I pray for the safety of our American servicemen and women engaged in that military campaign and hope for their safe return. As we debate this budget resolution to fund programs for the defense and investment in our country I am very troubled by the harmful consequences for the budget cuts called for in this document.

This budget resolution partially reflects our current priority to protect the men and women of our fighting forces. It is only a partial measure because we need to see the supplemental appropriations request before we really know what the defense budget is. Looking beyond defense, this resolution is a travesty to the Americans who live within these borders.

High priority programs like Medicaid, education, veterans benefits, federal employee pension benefits, prescription drug benefits, law enforcement, food stamps are targeted under this budget resolution.

The majority says the cut backs total represent a 1 percent across-the-board cut. But because the Republican budget mirrors the President's request for defense, they impose a 2.9 percent cut on nondefense spending.

This is a guns and caviar budget.

The budget resolution says these cuts will come from eliminating waste, fraud and abuse. That's hogwash; it cannot be found. The resolution instructs the authorizing Committees to do the dirty work. The Committees will be asked to pony up \$470 billion in direct spending program cuts over 10 years. When measured against a 10-year mandatory spending projection of \$15.6 trillion that amounts to a 3 percent cut.

The only way to accommodate a cut of this magnitude is to cut benefit levels or restrict eligibility for benefits for human service programs that service our children, elderly, veterans, farmers, federal workers and more.

This budget could push nearly half a million poor children out of child nutrition programs.

In the field of health care, the Republican budget does not provide any significant funding for a Medicare Prescription Drug Program—only \$28 billion. With that, you might be able to provide every senior with a bottle or two of aspirin each year.

The Resolution doesn't tell Congress to specifically cut funding for Medicare and Medicaid in order to provide a prescription drug program. It tells the Ways and Means and the Energy and Commerce Committees to do the dirty work. So if the Republicans want to deliver on their promise of a \$400 billion prescription drug program, the two committees will have to find a combined total of \$372 billion in program cuts.

Under this budget resolution seniors lose out in two ways. They get little or no prescription drug benefit and they will see their coverage under Medicare and Medicaid reduced. They will lose out because here are the options available for getting to the numbers called for in the Republican budget resolution:

Cut physician reimbursement by a third, saving \$215 billion. If we go that route, it will only encourage doctors to stop seeing Medicare and Medicaid patients.

Eliminate hospital payments for medical education and cost of uncompensated care, saving \$200 billion. That will be devastating to urban hospitals in Detroit and other inner cities, which are on the brink of financial collapse as it is.

Terminate home health benefits under Medicare. That will yield \$207 billion. Or do away with skilled nursing home benefits . . . that will save \$187 billion.

We can save \$51 billion by taking health care services away from 5.3 million low income kids under the State Children Health Insurance Program.

This is a resolution that says to the wealthy, you don't have to pay the cost of this war against Iraq. We'll give the bill to seniors, children, disabled Americans, the sick, the hungry and to generations not yet born. There is no sacrifice being asked of those who can afford it the most. Make no mistake about it. The \$382 billion dividend tax cut will do nothing to stimulate the economy. It most benefits those who financially benefit the most in our society.

And that's not just my view. It's a view point shared by the Disabled American Veterans. Ed Heath, National Commander of the DAV, says—and I quote—"Cutting already under funded veterans' programs to offset the costs of tax cuts is undefensible and callous."

I have been critical of the President's budget and foreign policies. Why, after all, are we conducting a war that we are not willing to pay for. The President is sending a message that we can extend our global military reach without any sacrifice and still afford a tax cut that will largely benefit the top one percent of Americans. This budget document echoes what the Administration has been saying: "We can have it all."

Well, we can't have it all if it means breaking a contract with federal workers by cutting their pension health benefits;

if it means breaking the contract that we have with our seniors to cut back on Medicaid and Medicare health coverage;

if it means reneging on a promise to provide seniors with a meaningful prescription drug benefit;

if it turns our back on disability benefits and health care for our veterans;

if it means denying opportunities to our children by cutting back on health programs, Head Start, and Pell Grants.

This budget resolution is nothing but a series of broken promises. All the alternatives being considered today represent a better way, and I am going to support them. With an America at war, we need to act with some fiscal responsibility. The Republican budget does not meet that test. This budget benefits the investment class with a dividend tax cut at the expense of programs that serve everyday Americans. It divides us as a country and worsens our economic position.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Chairman, I rise in very reluctant support of H. Con. Res. 95 because I believe that the cuts contained in the budget resolution, particularly as they relate to healthcare and veterans issues, will have dire consequences for a substantial portion of our nation. However, I will support the budget resolution today to ensure that this process moves forward. I know that last year Congress

was unable to pass a budget resolution, and it greatly harmed our ability to move forward and to the work of the American people. It's critical that the House move the budget process forward, with the hope that the Senate will do its share and also pass a budget, which will trigger a conference. It is my hope that after today we will be one step closer to creating a fairer budget that maintains fiscal discipline while still meeting the needs of our constituents.

As a four-year veteran, I have always worked hard to be a vocal advocate for veterans throughout my congressional career. I strongly oppose the provisions in H. Con. Res. 95 that call for approximately \$15 billion in mandatory spending programs for veterans. These programs include compensation for service-connected disabilities, survivor benefits and veterans' education benefits. I do not believe that forced budgetary reductions in these important mandatory spending programs are in the best interest of disabled veterans and their families.

While I will vote in favor of H. Con. Res. 95 in order to get the bill into conference with the Senate, I want to make it perfectly clear that I will not support the conference report on the budget resolution or any deeming resolution if it contains these or similar reductions in veterans' mandatory spending and does not provide sufficient funding for veterans' health care programs. Nor will I support the conference report if it contains significant reductions in Medicare funding. Moreover, if the conference report contains these types of reduction, I will do everything in my power to overturn them.

What kind of message are we sending to the men and women currently serving in our Armed Forces, especially those in Iraq, when we cut funding for programs that benefit our nation's current veterans? I want to remind my colleagues of a quote by our first Commander-in-Chief George Washington: "The willingness with which our young people are likely to serve in any war, no matter how justified, shall be directly proportional to how they perceive the veterans of earlier wars were treated and appreciated by their nation." We must support the brave men and women who have sacrificed so much to keep our nation free.

The Medicaid cuts contained in this budget can not be sustained. The cuts will seriously damage a program depended upon by our most vulnerable citizens. Waste, fraud, and abuse, particularly abuse, do exist but we must have time to excise these problems, without being forced into mandatory programmatic reductions. Also, we must realize that each of our States will be particularly hit hard by these cuts.

Mr. Chairman, I do believe that we can strike a balance that will provide tax relief to American families, fund our national priorities, while still achieving a balanced budget. I refuse, however, to do so on the backs of some of our nation's most vulnerable citizens; and I declare that I will consider myself bound by this resolution should the House and Senate fail to pass a joint budget resolution.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Chairman, as war begins in Iraq, Americans are rallying behind our Armed Forces. It is an extraordinary show of support for some of the finest men and women in America. They deserve our support and our gratitude.

Our soldiers confront the gravest threat of our time: the combination of rogue regimes, weapons of mass destruction and the forces of global terrorism. The cause of peace will prevail when terrorists lose a wealthy patron and protector—Saddam Hussein.

There is little doubt that Hussein will be fully disarmed. And the means of his disarmament will be carried out by the United States Army, Navy, Air Force and Marines. These are four institutions so identified with their commitment to honor, duty and country that words can never adequately convey their importance to the survival of freedom . . . to the survival of the United States of America.

On the eve of the war, Marine Major-General J.N. Mattis explained the mission to his Corps. They are words every American soldier in the Persian Gulf can embrace.

General Mattis said:

On your young shoulders rest the hopes of mankind. . . . Our fight is not with the Iraqi people, nor is it with members of the Iraqi army who chose to surrender. While we will move swiftly and aggressively against those who resist, we will treat all others with decency, demonstrating chivalry and soldierly compassion for people who have endured a lifetime under Saddam's oppression. . . .

For the mission's sake, our country's sake, and the sake of the men who carried the Division's colors in past battle—who fought for life and never lost their nerve—carry out your mission and keep your honor clean. Demonstrate to the world there is "No Better Friend, No Worse Enemy" than a U.S. Marine.

General Mattis deserves an enduring "Semper Paratus" for inspiring our soldiers. We hope and pray for their safe return home.

Mrs. WILSON of New Mexico. Mr. Chairman, I have four priorities for this budget; creating an environment for job creation, providing for the common defense, making quality health care more affordable, and improving education. I also want all these things must be done in a way that gets us back to a balanced budget within a reasonable period of time. The resolution we will pass tonight is tough medicine and doesn't do all it needs to do.

I believe that this budget will create jobs and stimulate the economy. By leaving room for significant tax relief we can leave extra dollars in the pockets of millions of Americans. I support tax relief, particularly for small businesses that create jobs and I applaud the chairman for his work.

During this time of war, this budget does a great job funding our national defense, both military spending and homeland security. This budget goes a long way toward making all Americans more secure. I am very concerned that even with the manager's changes, it sorely under funds our veterans programs.

Inroads have been made so this budget begins to address issues regarding the affordability of Health Care. When this budget was introduced it had spending levels in Medicare that were unworkable. Because of these cuts, I felt it necessary to introduce my own amendment that was not accepted by the House Rules Committee to provide more than \$375 billion additional dollars for Medicare and other Health programs over the next 10 years. Changes made in the Medicare accounts since its introduction have relieved many of my concerns. I hope that the conference re-

port will completely fix the funding of healthcare as it relates to Medicaid.

The most difficult part of this budget for me to accept is the lack of commitment to education. Just last year we passed the landmark legislation, "No Child Left Behind." I feel that this budget does not meet the promises we made in that legislation. The amendment that I proposed would have increased the budget authority on education by more than \$70 billion over 10 years. I urge the conferees to renew our commitment to education and fund education at least to the President's level.

I will vote for this budget, but my support comes cautiously. Last year we didn't have a budget and it created great difficulty in getting the appropriations done. We need to move this process forward building on the progress we have made in the last twenty-four hours. While I will support this budget today, I will not support a conference report that does not adequately support our veterans, keep our promises on education, create jobs, and improve our Nation's health system. I ask that the conferees make these important improvements before our final vote on this budget later this year.

Ms. MAJETTE. Mr. Chairman, I would like to take this opportunity to explain why I voted for those budget alternatives I supported today. The passage of the budget resolution to day represents the culmination of a long and arduous process involving 435 members of Congress and their often divergent views and priorities. As each member of Congress represents a unique constituency, each with its own concerns, it is entirely fitting that alternatives be considered and debated before the final federal budget is passed by this body.

This budget outlines the manner in which our shared national resources will be allocated for the year, and, as such, the resolution must be a statement of both our immediate needs as well as our long-term priorities. Consequently, the budget process requires each of us to make tough choices when deciding how much to burden American families with taxes as well as how to allocate these limited resources to different categories of needs.

The budget process often results in choices between imperfect alternatives that do not necessarily completely reflect any one member's priorities. In deciding which alternative to support, I balanced two primary priorities: my ardent desire to limit our spending's impact on the future, and my sincere belief that spending should be focused on programs that provide real investments in the future.

To realize our long term goals, we ought to minimize our long-term debts. In doing so, we will allow our children to pay for their dreams without being saddled with our realities.

I would like to bequeath to our children a world where we have tackled the problems of our day and provided them unfettered access to the tools they'll need tomorrow. If we are determined to spend our precious resources now (rather than saving them for our children's use) it is reasonable that we devote a large portion of these resources to the betterment of our children's future.

Perhaps the most future-oriented use of a taxpayer's money is to invest in exploration of our world through research. Scientific inquiry, by its very nature, offers no guarantees; the paths of discovery are rife with pitfalls and

stumbles. As the explosion of the Columbia tragically reminded us, exploring the unknown is never easy. It is often painful. In the end, however, scientific inquiry offers us our best hope that the world can be a better place.

Through government assistance, some of the greatest minds of our time are working to find cures for the disease that plague us, young and old, rich and poor alike. Failing to fund these initiatives robs our children of their hopes for a better world. One day in the future, these scientists will discover a cure for cancer, a vaccine for AIDS, and a better method for reaching further into the galaxy. We must continue to make their efforts a priority—they are exploring for all of us.

As we consider our nation's priorities, we must be absolutely certain that we fully fund education initiatives. Education is the ultimate mechanism for allowing social mobility by leveling the playing field of opportunity. The United States continues to be a beacon of hope for other nations as a place where anyone, regardless of socioeconomic background, race or parentage, is limited only by his or her dreams; a place where everyone can achieve their goals. Our promise as a nation rests on maintaining this ideal. As Thomas Jefferson once stated, "If the condition of man is to be progressively ameliorated, as we fondly hope and believe, education is to be the chief instrument in effecting it."

My preference today was to vote for a budget that is both fiscally responsible and that focuses the Public's resources on those programs for which we can expect the greatest return on our investment. After considering the alternatives, I voted in favor of more than one alternative.

The Blue-Dog budget provides a fiscally responsible alternative. As presented, this plan would have reduced the national debt by \$1.35 trillion, compared to the budget which passed. This reduction would have resulted in \$250 billion less in taxes that our children would have to pay simply to pay the interest on this debt. While limiting the debt burden on our children, this alternative would also have cut taxes and focused resources to educational investments including student-loan and child nutrition programs.

The budget committee's ranking member, Mr. SPRATT, offered a budget which is a powerful statement of priorities and would have continued to fund our nation's important commitments to job creation, social security and medicare. This budget would have ensured that education and science programs be allocated the necessary funding to ensure that our nation continues to be a leader in the information age. It also would have allowed our children to meet the challenges of the future with the resources necessary to face them.

Through none of the budget alternatives I supported passed, I look forward to working with my colleagues to continue to establish our priorities in the weeks and months ahead. It is crucial that as we do so we remember where we are going. IF we are truly committed to social equality and to leaving no child behind, we must provide our children with the tools necessary to create an even better world

than the entirely too dangerous one in which we now find ourselves. If we endeavor to better understand our world through research, we give hope to our children that they will not be afflicted by the ailments that we suffer today and we give them the legacy of vision to look beyond that which is not imaginable. Finally, we must not bind our children with debt if we hope to allow them to rise above our own accomplishments.

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to H. Con. Res. 95 because it fails to meet the challenges confronting our country. We need a balanced approach to fiscal responsibility that treats the national budget just like a household budget.

America is going through very trying times. The economy is struggling unemployment is up, consumer confidence is down and our Armed Forces are at war. H. Con. Res. 95 fails to address these concerns because it embraces an inflated and fiscally irresponsible tax cut plan totaling \$1.4 trillion. These tax cuts accommodate all of President Bush's proposals, but they would not provide the stimulus we need to jumpstart our economy. However, including all of them in this budget force us to make deep cuts in heavily relied upon programs.

I cannot go home and tell my constituents that I cut after-school programs, student loans, teacher quality programs, and COPS funding to make room for inflated tax cut plan that has no immediate impact on our economy.

I also cannot go home and tell my constituents that I slashed \$265 billion in mandatory spending, placed an increased burden upon cash-strapped States, reduced investments in highway construction, and only partially funded programs under the No Child Left Behind Act so we can make room for a back-loaded tax plan that crowds out important programs.

And don't forget our ongoing war in Iraq. There is not one penny in this proposal that budgets for the war or the cost of rebuilding the economy.

Some argue we can address these costs in a supplemental. However, supplementals are becoming more like 2nd budgets. If we have an idea of what something is going to cost, we should budget accordingly for it now. We should not be playing games with the numbers.

This body should pass a budget that: Puts us back in balance; provides a tax stimulus that actually stimulates; secures our Homeland; offers a sensible prescription drug proposal; and sufficiently funds our military.

Although I understand the need to make sacrifices if we want to jumpstart the economy, they shouldn't be made by passing bad policy.

That is why I supported Democratic substitute. This budget projects a balanced budget in FY 2010, but does so with \$500 billion less public debt than the committee-reported resolution. Unlike the resolution, the substitute does not cut domestic discretionary spending below the level needed to keep pace with inflation and does not contain any cuts in mandatory spending. Furthermore, the substitute provides a tax stimulus proposal that stimulates now.

Another important contrast is the prescription drug provisions contained in each budget proposal. The Democratic substitute provides \$528 billion in new funds over 10 years for a prescription drug benefit. The resolution, by

contrast, establishes a \$400 billion "reserve fund" for Medicare prescription drugs and Medicare modernization. Why create a reserve fund instead of budgeting for a prescription drug proposal today?

Reserve funds do not solve the problems confronting this country. We need specific budget allocations for specific problems. Generally addressing problems at a later time in a reserve fund simply dances around the issue.

I want to support a budget that actually stimulates while taking into consideration long-term budget implications. There is no room for political gamesmanship when people lose their retirement savings, or their jobs.

Mr. HOUGHTON. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to H. Con. Res. 95. I do so reluctantly.

I respect the President.

I admire the Speaker more than I can say.

I think JIM NUSSLE has done an extraordinary job under impossible conditions.

But I am going to oppose the Nussle bill because I think it moves us in the wrong direction.

There are strong arguments against my position, such as: This is only a step in a long process; the conference report is where the real vote is cast; and we must be loyal to the President and to the troops overseas.

But, Mr. Chairman, I don't think that being loyal to the President or our troops in the Persian Gulf—or for that matter to all the other citizens—is really an issue here.

This is a democratic process with which we work—and I know there are party pressures, and I know we need a budget—but this particular budget is not particularly helpful in solving our problems.

At the very least I feel that we should wait until the President submits his "supplemental" request—based on what he feels the military will need. This will be, I assume, a rather large number.

Also the issue of timing is critical. The expense budget which we will vote on is inherently tied to the tax reduction program. This scares me. Together the numbers are not right—the timing is bad. I ask myself—

How can we vote to adversely impact medical and education expenses in a war atmosphere?

How can we see our revenues collapsing in front of us and then consider a tax reduction bill which, while somewhat stimulating to our economy, will further deplete revenues?

For me this package, I'm sorry to say, doesn't hang together.

I just think we can do better.

I hope we can do better—so that I can soon vote for a program which does right by us as a country long term, stimulates our economy short term—and keeps faith with the families of our troops in the Persian Gulf.

Mrs. BROWN of Florida. This irresponsible Republican budget needs to be sent back to the drawing board. The war in Iraq is no reason to ignore the needs of this country. This budget cuts programs for our neediest citizens, while rewarding the wealthiest with huge tax cuts. It is particularly disturbing that at the very moment we send our young men and women into harms way, we fund the veterans budget at a level that keeps these national heroes waiting 12 months to see a doctor. This Congress can always seem to find plenty of money for tax cuts, but when it comes to veterans healthcare, we have nothing but lip service.

This Republican budget is bad for America, and bad for my home State of Florida which is suffering badly from the one-two punch of the Bush Brothers. The President's budget:

Cuts \$20 million for After School Programs in Florida; cuts \$3.7 million in Teacher Quality Funding for Florida; cuts \$40 million in transportation funding for Florida; cuts \$38 million from Election Reform efforts in Florida; cuts \$16.5 million in Clean Water Funding for Florida; cuts \$4.3 million from Community Service Block Grants in Florida; cuts \$1.2 million in Energy Assistance Programs; and cuts \$765 million for the COPS program, which put 7,280 new officers on Florida's streets.

All this while his brother Governor Jeb Bush slashes funding for state education and health programs, squeezes Medicaid resources to pay for Capital Gains Tax Cuts, and uses money meant for Local First Responders to pad his budget shortfalls.

This Republican budget was written for their political contributions, and not for the people of this country with real needs. Reject this sham budget, and support the CBC/Progressive budget. It's the right budget for every American.

Mr. SWEENEY. Mr. Chairman, it is with great regret that I voted to support the fiscal year 2004 House Budget Resolution. I did so because I appreciate the value of moving the process along towards a Concurrent Resolution with the Senate. I will not vote for a final Concurrent Budget Resolution that contains the same levels of funding as the House Budget Resolution.

It is my full expectation the cuts to Medicaid and Veterans programs will be restored in the final Concurrent Resolution. It is my intention to support a final Resolution that makes these programs whole again. New York hospitals face a Medicaid cut of \$1 billion from New York State. It would be unthinkable for my hospitals to face a deep cut on the federal level at the same time. They have survived the 1997 Balance Budget Agreement cuts, but can stand no more. One of the hospitals in my district is already scheduled to close and I simply can't afford to lose another one.

I support the goal of a balanced budget and have even cosponsored the Balanced Budget Act, but a balance is just that: matching the merits on both sides. Indeed there is some waste in the current programs and it is time for everyone to do some belt tightening, but the current cuts cannot stand.

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Chairman, this Member rises to express his reluctant and temporary support for H. Con. Res. 95, the House Budget Resolution.

Mr. Chairman, our country is facing a difficult fiscal situation and this budget resolution sets a framework for this Congress to carefully proceed over the next ten years. While the budget resolution reserves revenue to finance the full range of the tax cuts proposed by the President, this Member adamantly believes the proposed tax cut is too large and, in fact, this Member will not vote for such a large tax cut when the House separately votes on that issue.

There are three reasons this Member is opposed to this large tax cut. First, it is fiscally irresponsible. Second, in the economic sense, eliminating the tax on dividends is not the best

way to quickly and effectively stimulate the economy. Tax cuts for middle-income Americans and small businesses is far more effective, and eliminating the tax on dividends may in fact drain money from capital goods to dividends for the corporate leaders' pocketbooks through their large stock holdings in their company. And third, the elimination of the tax on dividends as a major part of this tax cut package is not equitable, because a very high percentage of tax relief would go to a small percentage of taxpayers.

The elimination or substantial reduction of the tax on dividends, which results in an estimated reduction in tax revenue of more than an estimated \$100 billion per year, is simply not sound fiscal policy—especially given the estimated size of the deficit, the unknown costs of the war in Iraq, the war on terrorism, and the costs of homeland security measures.

If the budget protects Medicare from huge cuts, as it must, and increases even more the revenues for veterans programs, it would cause impossibly large cuts in the rest of the discretionary budget. This cut in the remainder of the domestic programs required by this budget proposal is too severe even when the savings from the elimination of waste, fraud and abuse is taken into account.

Mr. Chairman, it is time to do what the other body is considering—responsibly cut back the size of the huge tax cut. It is this Member's hope that the conference agreement on the budget will follow the Senate's lead and decrease the funds held in reserve to finance a tax cut. If the conference report comes back to the House with the same fiscally unsound level of tax cuts and substantially the same level of tax cuts related to eliminating the tax on dividends, this Member will vote "no" on the conference report. It is fiscally irresponsible and inequitable to middle-income taxpayers, and the proposal to eliminate taxes on dividends will not give us the immediate economic stimulation our country needs.

Mr. Chairman, in closing, this Member votes "aye" on this budget proposal in order to move the process along. As we learned from last year's inaction on the budget by the other body, the passage of a budget resolution is critically important as the first step in the annual appropriations process that funds the U.S. Government and provides invaluable services to our constituents. As a result, this Member cannot in good conscience vote to stop or stall the process at this early stage. However, be assured that this Member will follow-up on his commitment to vote "no" on the conference report if the level of tax cuts is not decreased and the huge amount dedicated to eliminating the tax on dividends is not dropped or very substantially reduced.

Mrs. JO ANN DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Chairman, I rise reluctantly to support the budget resolution before us today. While the budget before us makes great strides to control spending and reduce the deficit, I am afraid the Veterans Administration will not have the necessary resources to take care of our nation's veterans. I know that many of my Virginia congressional colleagues share these same concerns as well.

While I fully recognize that no budget is perfect, I hope we can all agree that providing health care to our nation's veterans should be the last place we look to reduce spending. Perhaps it would be more appropriate for us to review our spending on foreign aid before we

ask our veterans to sacrifice yet again for their country. At a time when our country has soldiers deployed in Iraq in defense of freedom, it is important that we do not leave behind the men and women who have served our country in the past.

I will vote for this budget, however, because I believe it is vital that we keep the budget process moving. Further delaying the budget could negatively impact defense, homeland security, and other important government functions. As we all know, by failing to pass a budget resolution last year, the Senate caused a train wreck in the appropriations process. The House and the Senate never agreed on a common budget, which left the respective appropriations committees working from two different, irreconcilable sets of numbers. That resulted in Congress working on appropriations bills in January—bills that should have been completed last September. With America now at war, we cannot allow that to happen again.

It is my hope that the final product will be improved, so that I will be able to support the final budget conference report.

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Chairman, I rise in strong opposition to the Republican budget resolution. There are many reasons to oppose this budget, but I am going to concentrate on just one.

This resolution quite simply pays for tax cuts that benefit the wealthy by cutting programs for seniors and disabled people who are most in need of help in meeting their medical expenses.

The original version of this resolution was quite explicit: it required massive cuts in both the Medicare and Medicaid programs. Facing an uproar from beneficiaries and providers alike, what have our Republican colleagues done. They have responded by concentrating all of the cuts on Medicaid, the program that serves the neediest seniors and disabled beneficiaries, as well as millions of poor children.

They think they can fool people by doing this. But millions of America's seniors—widows living on Social Security, people in nursing homes, seniors living on modest budgets—are totally dependent on the additional assistance they get from Medicaid so Medicare can work for them. They know what these cuts mean. They need the help they get with their Medicare premiums and cost-sharing. They need Medicaid coverage of prescription drugs.

And they know that Medicaid is the only source of payment for long-term care services—both nursing home care and home and community based services. It is Medicaid payments that nursing homes rely on—to pay staff, to maintain quality, to provide services.

Medicaid is a critical payer for hospitals, community health centers, clinics and providers that serve the disabled, the low-income, the uninsured, and seniors.

Two-thirds of the dollars we spend in Medicaid go to seniors and disabled people, the very same population served by Medicare. These beneficiaries need both programs. And we all know our States are in desperate need of additional funds to maintain Medicaid coverage and services.

This budget responds to this crisis by slashing Medicaid instead of helping, by turning our backs on millions of disabled people, kids, and low-income seniors instead of assisting them.

This budget responds with a proposed cut in Medicaid twice as big as any reduction made by any previous Congress.

The Republicans have responded to the charge that they were financing their tax cuts on the backs of seniors and the disabled by financing them on the backs of the POOR seniors and disabled.

This budget will cripple our States, it will add to the numbers of uninsured, and it will be devastating for millions of Medicare beneficiaries who need extra help.

If the majority passes this budget, it will show the true colors of the Republican party. It will show a lack of caring for the most vulnerable of our seniors, for the disabled, for poor kids and their moms, for the institutions in this country who try to deliver health care to them, and to the States that are struggling to provide for them.

We should defeat this budget.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore (Mr. ISAKSON). All time for debate having expired, under the rule, the Committee rises.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. SIMPSON) having assumed the chair, Mr. ISAKSON, Chairman pro tempore of the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 95) establishing the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2004 and setting forth appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2003 and 2005 through 2013, pursuant to House Resolution 151, he reported the concurrent resolution, as amended by the adoption of that resolution, back to the House.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the rule, the previous question is ordered.

The question is on the concurrent resolution, as amended.

Under clause 10 of rule XX, the yeas and nays are ordered.

Pursuant to clause 8 and 9 of rule XX, this 15-minute vote on House Concurrent Resolution 95, the budget resolution, will be followed by a 5-minute vote on House Current Resolution 104 regarding Operation Iraqi Freedom.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 215, nays 212, not voting 8, as follows:

[Roll No. 82]

YEAS—215

Aderholt	Bono	Coble
Akin	Boozman	Cole
Bachus	Bradley (NH)	Collins
Baker	Brady (TX)	Combest
Ballenger	Brown (SC)	Cox
Barrett (SC)	Brown-Waite,	Crane
Barton (TX)	Ginny	Crenshaw
Bass	Burgess	Cubin
Beauprez	Burns	Culberson
Bereuter	Burr	Cunningham
Biggert	Burton (IN)	Davis, Jo Ann
Bilirakis	Calvert	Davis, Tom
Bishop (UT)	Camp	Deal (GA)
Blackburn	Cannon	DeLay
Blunt	Cantor	DeMint
Boehert	Capito	Diaz-Balart, L.
Boehner	Carter	Diaz-Balart, M.
Bonilla	Chabot	Doolittle
Bonner	Chocola	Dreier

