

Many of my colleagues have asked to review those tapes of the phone calls between the Department of Public Safety in Texas and the Department of Homeland Security, but we are told by Secretary Ridge's office that the tapes are currently unavailable. That makes me and many of my colleagues wonder why.

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. LAMPSON. I yield to the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, I know the gentleman was expressing concern about using the Federal Bureau of Investigation with reference to political purposes. The gentleman is aware that it was the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY) who himself talked about calling out the G-men, the government men, and mentioned using the FBI. We have seen that movie "U.S. Marshal", pulling in the U.S. Marshal on this. This is all in addition to Homeland Security. He said that he had a former Justice Department official on his staff investigating this and that they pulled in some United States attorney, those are the people in charge of prosecuting crimes in the State of Texas, but some United States attorney down there who was also diverted to this political task.

Mr. LAMPSON. Reclaiming my time, Mr. Speaker, I understand that that exactly happened. Supposedly, it was in San Antonio. Those are not things that should be happening in our government.

If we learned anything from the Watergate era, it is that the government needs to be accountable for its actions. It cannot be held accountable if important documents are not available to journalists and Members of the United States Congress so they can review them. So we need to review these tapes to ensure that nothing improper happened and the Department of Homeland Security is working to protect us against terrorists and not members of the Texas House of Representatives.

CONGRESS SHOULD OVERHAUL U.S. DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES WITH POOR FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, today I had the opportunity to do something that millions of Americans would love to do: I asked the Internal Revenue Service to account for the use of its taxpayer dollars.

Representing the Committee on Government Reform at the Joint Committee on Taxation's annual review of the Internal Revenue Service, I took part in what is an absolutely essential function of Congress: oversight and reform.

Too often, both Members of Congress and voters forget that this body is not

here just to pass new laws and spend more money. We are here to review and to reform the programs that we have already created and the money that we have already spent on those programs.

In 2001, the Federal Government could not account for \$17.3 billion, according to the Treasury Department. That is 17.3 billion taxpayer dollars.

The U.S. General Accounting Office, the GAO, has refused to certify the Federal Government's own accounting books because the bookkeeping is so poor, and 21 of the 26 departments and major agencies received the lowest rating possible for their financial management, meaning that auditors cannot even express an opinion on their financial statements.

Clearly, we are talking about significant sums of money. I think many of my colleagues would agree that when it comes to hard-earned taxpayer dollars, there is no such thing as insignificant waste. Congress must live up to its obligation to provide stronger financial management oversight for Federal programs that are costing us billions of dollars, and that is billions with a B, every single year.

I know that the Committee on Government Reform and Congress are committed to reducing waste, fraud and abuse of current programs. More importantly, we should take the time and effort not just to chase after losses, but to overhaul a system that allows so much waste, fraud and abuse to exist.

SOCIAL SECURITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I come to the House floor this evening to talk again about the Republican raid on Social Security a year ago to cover their growing deficits because of the Bush administration tax breaks to the upper crust that created no new jobs. Where did they get the money to do it?

This first chart goes back about a year to June 18 of last year. At that point, they had taken from Social Security's trust funds over \$218,095,890,410, or about \$775 per American. We just asked the Department of the Treasury to give us the update. Now, this year already, clocking the Republican raid on Social Security to cover their tax breaks mainly to the top earners in this country, they have now taken \$498,863,013,099, or about \$1,714.24 per American. That is nearly a half a trillion dollars just as of May 20, just as of this week.

Now, Social Security is a financial lifeline for 46 million Americans, but the Republicans continue to play a game of fiscal "chicken" with the Federal deficit. They are borrowing from Social Security's trust funds to give tax breaks aimed at next year's elections.

Let us make one thing clear: Americans might have elected some Repub-

licans into this House and the other body, but they did not give them a mandate to rob Social Security.

Now, this past March, the Republican leadership of this House voted on a budget that will give us deficits as far as the eye can see. I thought that this particular editorial cartoon from the Rocky Mountain News was particularly illustrative, with this giant deficit that is being created for the future as a result of the type of tax program that they have put in place, with absolutely no jobs being yielded, but in fact giving us a debt that will kill jobs and weaken Social Security and Medicare, just when 77 million baby boomers start to retire.

Earlier this month, the same House Republicans voted a \$550 billion, more than half-a-trillion, in tax breaks, mostly to the wealthiest 1 percent of earners in this country, and there is no requirement that money be invested in this country. According to the Congressional Budget Office, the Federal Government has run a deficit of approximately \$202 billion in the first 7 months of this fiscal year. And where do we think they are getting the money from? Where does the money exist? In our Social Security trust funds.

Now that amount of debt that has been added this year is \$138 billion more than the same period last year, so it is getting worse. The Congressional Budget Office now expects that the government will end up this year with a deficit of over \$300 billion.

What is the biggest reason for this most radical fiscal reversal in American history and the raid that is going on on Social Security? The Bush tax program aimed at the next election, not the next generation.

What is the effect of this burgeoning public debt? They are mortgaging Social Security's future payouts. They are forcing our country to cover the rest of their borrowing with more dependence on foreign investors who buy our debt bonds, starting with China and Japan and then Saudi Arabia, and they are taking away independence for this Republic and for the American people and a lot less independence for future generations.

I am no longer surprised, but I am amazed at how President Bush and his fellow Republicans are so eager to chip away at Social Security, weaken Social Security, and ultimately play roulette with our people's Social Security trust funds, which we voted seven times to put in the Social Security lockbox. They are raiding the lockbox.

□ 1730

The American people deserve better. Working families deserve better. Your grandmothers and grandfathers deserve better. They have earned a secure retirement.

We have to get back to the fiscal basics and put Social Security first. Would you rather have \$300 today, or Social Security for all of your retirement tomorrows? Congress is the protector of Social Security, the primary

protector. It is the people's program, intended by President Roosevelt and its authors to allow generations of retirees to live with independence and dignity.

It is time for the Republican Party to stop the raid on Social Security, which as of today, again, amounts to, as of May 20, 2003, out of the trust funds, your trust funds, \$498,863,013,699 or \$1,714.24 for each single American who has paid into the system.

UTERINE FIBROID RESEARCH AND EDUCATION ACT OF 2003

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. COLE). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Ohio (Mrs. JONES) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. JONES of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, May is an important month for the Tubbs-Jones family. On May 15, my sister Barbara Walker celebrated her birthday. Happy birthday, Sis. I could not be there with you. Yesterday, my son, Mervyn Leroy Jones, II, celebrated his 20th birthday. Today, my father, Andrew Tubbs, celebrates his 83rd birthday. Happy birthday, Dad. I love you. And on Thursday, May 22, my dad will be named Senior of the Year by Cleveland's City Council. Congratulations, Dad. I love you.

Now, let me switch to something else very quickly. I rise today to bring to the attention of the Congress an issue related to women's health that is misunderstood, underfunded, and devastating to the physical and sometimes mental health of women. The issue is uterine fibroids. On Mother's Day, we took time out to honor our mothers, our grandmothers, our aunts and sisters; yet we have done very little to provide research and to educate our health care professionals and other women about uterine fibroids. Uterine fibroid-related expenses accounted for over \$2 billion in hospital costs. The National Institute of Health spent only \$5 million on uterine fibroid research this year.

Today, I introduced the Uterine Fibroid Research and Education Act of 2003. One out of every four women in their 30s or 40s will seek medical care for uterine fibroids. Uterine fibroids are noncancerous growths in the uterus that cause abnormal bleeding, urinary frequency, pain in the back, legs and pelvis, infertility, and miscarriage. My legislation's number is H.R. 2157.

This painful chronic condition disproportionately affects African American women, who are two to three times more likely to suffer from uterine fibroids than other women. Despite their prevalence, little is known about uterine fibroids and few good treatment options are available to women who suffer from them. More than 200,000 women will undergo a hysterectomy each year to treat uterine fibroids, which requires a 6-week recovery, has a 20 to 40 percent risk of complications, and means, in some in-

stances, that a woman can no longer bear children.

Other treatments for uterine fibroids have not undergone the rigorous testing that women expect. In fact, the Agency for Health Care Research and Quality, a Federal health agency, found a remarkable lack of high-quality evidence supporting the effectiveness of most interventions for symptomatic fibroids. Women deserve better.

This legislation, the Uterine Fibroid Research and Education Act of 2003, commits the Federal Government to expanding and coordinating research on uterine fibroids at NIH. It authorizes a doubling of what is spent currently, authorizing \$10 million for uterine fibroid research each year for 5 years. It provides education for health care providers so that they can educate themselves about the condition and do more to assist women with the condition. And, finally, it establishes a public education campaign for patients so that they have an opportunity to learn more about uterine fibroids.

I ask all of my colleagues to support me in the passage of H.R. 2157.

TRIBUTE TO ELMO JOHNSON

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

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening to commemorate the accomplishments and the service of a great American, a good friend and a constituent of mine, Mr. Elmo Johnson.

In 1945, Elmo Johnson, with trumpet in hand, joined the Army as part of the 285th Army Ground Force Band Unit. While serving in occupied Japan, Elmo began to play Taps for fallen compatriots, and for 58 years he has continued to play that somber requiem meant to honor the troops who have died in war so we can enjoy the freedoms we have today in this great Nation.

Mr. Speaker, Taps lasts for only 24 notes, about the time it takes for a tear to travel down a cheek, but it is by no means an easy piece to play. Even its ending is difficult. Over the sounds of clearing throats and the silky whispers of a flying flag, Taps simply fades away into silence. As an active member of the American Legion, Elmo Johnson has played this farewell for his fellow soldiers over 1,400 times. He has never sought payment or even recognition for this service, believing it a solemn honor to deliver the final thank you on behalf of a grateful Nation.

At the remarkable age of 87, Elmo continues to play tribute to the veterans who have passed on by playing Taps at their funerals. This Monday, on Memorial Day, the community of Black River Falls in western Wisconsin will officially recognize and thank Elmo Johnson for his service to our country and to our veterans.

Mr. Speaker, our Nation loses approximately 1,600 World War II and Ko-

rean War veterans every single day. Unfortunately, the combined branches of our military have only about 500 full-time trumpeters and buglers and must honor most deceased veterans by sending a boom box and a tape recording of Taps to graveside services. The Pentagon does have an active program to try to recruit and train for trumpeters, more Elmo Johnsons, so that families, friends, and communities throughout the country can experience the fitting tribute to our veterans that we in western Wisconsin have been so blessed with as a result of Elmo's selfless dedication.

Mr. Speaker, it is easy to see why we in Wisconsin are so proud of Elmo Johnson's accomplishments and why he is worthy of recognition on the floor of our Nation's democratic body. Thank you, Elmo, for your years of dedicated service to our Nation, and may God bless him and all of our veterans who have served our country so well this Memorial Day.

THE TEXAS LEGISLATURE

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

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, at the beginning of this year, as the Texas legislature convened, it faced, and continues to face, some truly significant problems: a budgetary crisis; proposals to drop 250,000 children from the Children's Health Insurance Program, so that their mothers will be faced with the crisis of trying to decide how to handle an illness and perhaps let it go until they have to go to the emergency room; proposals to stop the publication of new textbooks; in one school district after another, a freeze on the hiring of new teachers.

With all of these problems, it is understandable that the Republican leadership of the State early on expressed a reluctance to take up the question of redistricting. One statewide Republican figure referred to redistricting as like having the flu. I do not think that he envisioned that it was the lethal kind that Texas had last week.

Now, Mr. Speaker, fast forward several months to last week, and we find redistricting at the center of a struggle where Democrats are working in Ardmore, Oklahoma, and Republicans are twiddling their thumbs under the Capitol dome in Austin. How did this happen? Well, it happened very directly as expressed by our majority leader, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY), to *The Washington Post* when asked why they were doing redistricting. He said, "I'm the majority leader and I want more votes." He was very direct about it. Not unlike his answer when questioned about lighting up his cigar in a Federal building, and he said, "I am the Federal Government," when questioned about this apparent violation of the rules for operation of Federal buildings here in Washington.