Management and Comptroller). It is a privilege for me to recognize his many outstanding achievements and commend him for the superb service he has provided to the Department of the Navy, the Congress, and our great Nation as a whole.

During his tenure in the Appropriations Matters Office, which began in July of 2001, Commander Voltz has provided members of the House Appropriations Committee, Subcommittee on Military Construction as well as our professional and personal staffs with timely and accurate support regarding Department of Navy plans, programs and budget decisions. His valuable contributions have enabled the Subcommittee on Military Construction and the Department of the Navy to strengthen its close working relationship and to ensure the most modern, well trained and well equipped naval forces attainable for the defense of our great nation.

Mr. Speaker, Jeff Voltz and his wife Teri have made many sacrifices during his career in the Navy. His distinguished service has exemplified honor, courage and commitment. As they depart the Appropriations Matters Office to embark on yet another Navy assignment in the service of a grateful nation, I call upon my colleagues to wish them both every success and the traditional Navy send-off ''fair winds and following seas.''

JOBS AND GROWTH RECONCILIATION TAX ACT OF 2003

SPEECH OF

HON. TODD TIAHRT

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 9, 2003

Mr. TIAHRT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of the Jobs and Growth Tax Act of 2003 (H.R. 2). I am supporting this jobs and growth package because that is exactly what my district in Kansas needs right now: new jobs and economic growth.

While most of the United States continues to feel the economic after-effects of the September 2001 terrorist attacks, southcentral Kansas is especially struggling to rebound. Wichita is known as the ''Air Capital of the World,'' but with the dramatic drop in demand for new aircraft, many companies have had to ground production work, causing massive layoffs. More than 12,000 aviation workers are out of work in the Wichita area, and several thousand more have been laid off in what has been a trickle-down effect. The local economy is desperate for new growth.

The jobs and growth package the House of Representatives is considering today will provide a real boost to the Kansas job market. According to estimates, the Jobs and Growth Tax Act of 2003 is estimated to bring an average of 5,700 new jobs every year to the State of Kansas, over the next five years. More than 8,000 new Kansas jobs would be created in 2004 alone.

H.R. 2 is a job-friendly package that will benefit people looking for work. By providing businesses the tools they need to grow, we will see new jobs created in southcentral Kansas. One of the stimulus tools I have strongly supported increases the bonus depreciation rate from 30 to 50 percent, which will allow businesses to recover more costs involved in the expansion of their production capabilities. Companies that have held off purchasing aircraft will now have a strong incentive to buy while the 50 percent bonus depreciation option is available. Companies that purchase new aircraft from Wichita would be allowed to depreciate 66 percent of the aircraft's value the first year. This incentive for companies to buy aircraft now translates to more jobs for Wichita.

Another tool H.R. 2 provides is the increase in the amount a small business can deduct from its taxes when it purchases new capital. This economic growth bill will increase the amount a small business can expense from $25,000 to $100,000, and it expands the definition of a small business from $200,000 of capital purchases to $400,000.

Another significant element in this jobs and growth package is the reduction of the personal income tax rate on long-term capital gains and dividends. Taxpayers in the lowest two brackets will have their rate on capital gains and dividends lowered to five percent; taxpayers in all other brackets will have their rates lowered to 10 percent for long-term capital gains and dividends.

By lowering these rates, investors will be more willing to invest because they will be taxed less on their profits. Businesses will see their costs decline when they invest in new projects. These new investments will boost our economy and create more jobs.

Businesses will also benefit from the extension of the net operating loss carryback. This provision will allow small businesses more flexibility in choosing when they can carry back net operating losses to a previous tax year. Generally, these businesses will receive a refund of Federal income tax for that year. Again, this is just another way we can free up resources to help spark the economy. If we expect businesses to create more jobs, we need to help them free up cash flows to expand their production capabilities.

H.R. 2 is also pro-family. It increases the child tax credit, expands the lowest 10 percent personal income tax bracket, accelerates marriage penalty relief, accelerates the individual tax rate schedule for millions of American families and small businesses, and saves nearly 10 million taxpayers from having to deal with the alternative minimum tax.

By accelerating the increase in the basic standard deduction amount for married joint tax filers, we will bring parity to that of single tax filers. Those who decide to get married should not be taxed more than they would if they were still single. With the enactment of President Bush's 2001 tax cut, we provided a phase-out of the marriage penalty over several years. H.R. 2 immediately phases it out for the next three years.

Millions of families will benefit from the child tax credit this year as it is increased from $600 to $1,000 for the next three years. By accelerating the phase-in of this provision from the 2001 tax cuts, we will be providing families with more cash to help pay for things like school supplies, clothes or summer vacations.

H.R. 2 is good for seniors. An estimated 10 million American senior citizens who receive dividend income will be able to make their golden years more secure by keeping a larger percent of these payments. Seniors who have worked hard all their lives and have invested for the future will see more money staying in their pockets instead of being sent to Washington.

Today I urge my colleagues to join me in sending a positive message to the American people by voting for passage of H.R. 2. This bill will pump an estimated $200 billion into the economy and create 1.2 million new jobs by the end of 2004. The tax rate cut on both dividend income and capital gains will provide relief for the 50 percent of Americans who are invested in the market, as well as the 70 million Americans who own their homes. This is the kind of economic relief America needs.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MIKE McINTYRE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 13, 2003

Mr. McINTYRE. Mr. Speaker, on Thursday, April 3, 2003, I was unavoidably absent for rollcall vote 104, on Sustaining the Ruling of the Chair, as I was visiting the Marines and their families at Camp LeJeune with the President. Had I been present I would have voted ''no''.

THE EMPLOYEES' PENSION EQUITY ACT OF 2003

HON. DOUG OSE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 13, 2003

Mr. OSE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce The Employees' Pension Equity Act of 2003, a bill that will prevent executives from walking away with ''golden parachutes'' while employees are left holding the bag.

We've all heard the stories: a company goes under leaving the employees unemployed and without the promised returns on their pension investments while, at the same time, the company's executives walk away with millions of dollars in their pockets.

How does it happen that the ''highly compensated individuals,'' an actual legal term, don't suffer when their decisions leave a business floundering while the footsoldiers of the business are left unemployed and facing financial hardships?

This bill seeks to right that wrong.

The Employees' Pension Equity Act requires that the employee funds be just as sound as executive funds. Employees need to know that their pensions will not be left to ''wither on the vine'' while executives walk away with big, guaranteed checks in their pockets.

This Act requires the annual comparison of employees' and executives' plans, and an annual additional donation to the employees' fund when they are not in the same fiscal shape as their executives' counterparts.

It's that simple.

The American worker deserves equal treatment and the guarantee that they will be taken care of before their bosses walk off with the company assets.

This bill takes a stand for the American worker and for equality and justice for all.