

Democrats have come to the floor and spoken about an "exploding deficit" that will "haunt our children for years to come." One Democrat has even referred to the deficit as "immoral."

However, their record speaks much larger than their endless rhetoric. For example, the Democrats have proposed approximately \$890 billion in alternatives to major legislation considered on the House floor last year. This would have added almost one trillion dollars to the deficit. But before the chamber could clear, I am sure those Democrats were back on the floor yelling about deficit levels.

During the Fiscal Year 2004 Budget Resolution, Democrats had another great opportunity to focus on the deficit and responsible spending. The Budget Committee proposed a one percent reduction in non-defense spending in order to reduce the vast amount of waste, fraud and abuse so prevalent throughout the federal government. This proposal did not receive a single vote by a Democrat on the committee.

Unfortunately, the deficit is not the only economic issue where Democrats are strong on rhetoric, but absent on results. This chamber has been the venue for many Democrats complaining about the President's tax cuts. Democrats have called the President's tax relief plan "reckless tax cuts for the rich" and even a "fraud and a failure."

Unfortunately, when addressing President Bush's tax relief plan, there are no facts that Democrats fail to misrepresent. The accusation that this tax relief is a tax cut for the rich is the most often and obvious misrepresentation of the facts. Democrats not only voted against this tax relief, but some have even advocated rescinding the President's entire tax relief package. Let us take a look at what would happen had those Democrats been able to rescind the President's tax relief.

Reinstate nine million low-income Americans back on the tax rolls.

Reinstate the marriage penalty.

Cut in half the \$1,000 per child tax credit.

Raise taxes on education savings by 75 percent.

Eliminate income tax deduction for paying college tuition.

Raise the capital gains tax by 25 percent and 50 percent for lower income families.

Increase the double tax of dividends by as much as 62 percent.

Reinstate the death tax.

Reduce the adoption credit and the dependent care credit.

Eliminate emergency tax relief to areas affected by the attacks of September 11, 2001.

Not only do some of our Democrat friends fight tax relief, they only propose one alternative: raise taxes on hard-working American people. Their talking points may avoid the facts, but raising taxes is the only economic policy Democrats have put forth. In fact, Democrats have proposed raising taxes ten times in the House and fifteen times in the Senate over the last year. This record speaks for itself.

It is important, as well, to highlight the reasons why their rhetoric about the President's tax relief has been proven wrong. Their claim—as I have mentioned—that the President's tax relief was only "for the rich." I would guess they assume that low and middle income families are not affected by the marriage penalty, small family farmers are not affected

by the death tax and middle-income parents are not affected by the adoption tax credit. It also appears that they have forgotten that the President's tax relief took millions of low-income Americans off the tax rolls all together.

Democrats have also claimed that the tax relief passed by this Congress will create no stimulus for jobs. It is clear that economic developments have silenced that argument, but it is important to highlight why. According to the Department of Commerce, three million fewer Americans would be working today if the tax relief plan were not signed into law. Gross Domestic Product would also be as much as 3.5 to 4% lower by the end of 2004.

How can Democrats claim that job creation hasn't happened when 112,000 new jobs were created in January and 366,000 jobs have been added over the past five months? How can they claim that the President's tax relief plan is not creating jobs when the unemployment rate has had the fastest seven month decline in nearly a decade? These are the facts and the facts seem to stand in stark contrast to the rhetoric we hear from the Democrats when it comes to economic policy.

Now the Democrats are fighting to allow the tax relief to expire. Although Democrats try to avoid it, this policy is a tax increase. If the 2001 and 2003 tax relief acts were to expire now, it would raise taxes by an average of \$1,544 for 109 million taxpayers in 2003, according to the Department of Commerce.

While rhetoric may have led some to believe otherwise, Democrats have clearly outlined a plan over the last year that would not only contribute almost one trillion dollars to the deficit, but would also raise taxes on the American families. These are the facts and the records certainly highlight those facts.

We are at a crucial point in economic policy—as spending-driven deficits and burdensome taxes are clearly affecting American families. This resolution will address the deficit, spending and eliminating waste, fraud and abuse. This stands in stark contrast to the reckless spending and taxing advocated by the Democrats.

As we debate the budget, I encourage my friends on the other side of the aisle to join us in reducing the deficit—not by proposing almost a trillion dollars in additional spending, but focusing on reductions in programs that are wasteful, duplicative or outdated. Furthermore, I encourage Democrats to oppose the large increases that only foster high deficits, while helping to reduce the burden of the tax code on American families—not by raising taxes—but through common sense tax relief.

Republicans have focused on results—the economy is rebounding, the trend of job creation is increasing, homeownership is at record levels and GDP and consumer confidence is steadily growing. I ask my Democrat friends to stop the rhetoric and begin focusing on results.

TRIBUTE TO SCANA

HON. JAMES E. CLYBURN

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 10, 2004

Mr. CLYBURN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to commend SCANA Corporation, a Fortune 500 company headquartered in my State, on being

selected as the recipient of the United States Department of Labor's Opportunity Award. Each year, the Secretary of Labor selects one Federal contractor as the recipient of this high honor. It is given to the company which has most clearly exemplified that they have established and instituted comprehensive workforce strategies to ensure equal employment opportunity. On February 19, the Secretary of Labor presented this award to SCANA officials in what was a very impressive ceremony.

The nominees for the Opportunity Award must be Federal contractors covered by Executive Order 11246, Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act, and the Vietnam Era Veterans' Readjustment Assistance Act, and must have a spotless record of compliance with Federal law. All of them must demonstrate that they have developed and are implementing a multifaceted equal employment opportunity program directed towards the changing demographics of the labor force. I spent a lot of time, in my life before Congress, counseling Federal contractors in my State on the virtues of Executive Order 11246, and SCANA was often used by me as an example of how and why it could and should be done.

I am proud that my constituent, the SCANA Corporation, has continued to demonstrate a commitment to equal employment opportunity, and has achieved measurable results that have significantly enhanced equal employment opportunities for employees, including minorities, women, individuals with disabilities, and veterans. To win this high honor, a company must have strong core values to serve as the foundation for successful implementation of its equal employment opportunity policies in every facet of the employment relationship and throughout the company.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased that the Department of Labor has bestowed this high honor on the SCANA Corporation, and ask that you and my colleagues join me in commending SCANA for its ongoing efforts to institute comprehensive workforce strategies to ensure equal employment opportunities.

IN HONOR OF THE CITY MANAGER
LARRY BLICK FOR HIS SERVICE
TO THE CITY OF INDEPENDENCE,
MISSOURI

HON. KAREN MCCARTHY

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 10, 2004

Ms. MCCARTHY of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I rise in recognition of Larry N. Blick's retirement as City Manager of Independence, Missouri. Larry Blick came to Independence more than a decade ago with over 30 years of experience in public administration, and in these past 10 years has partnered with Mayor Stewart and the community to bring growth and a new spirit to this "All American City."

As Independence City Manager, Larry inspired community trust and was instrumental in the passage of numerous measures necessary to the revitalization of Independence's infrastructure, neighborhoods and parks. An active member of the International City/County Management Association, Missouri Municipal League Board, and the Independence Council for Economic Development, Larry Blick has served tirelessly in prominent roles with these

professional associations and boards. Through MARC, the Mid America Regional Council, he was instrumental in the economic development of the Little Blue Valley and the creation of the I-70/Little Blue Parkway interchange to ease traffic flow and provide access for valley expansion. His leadership was an integral part of the development of eastern Jackson County, particularly his focus on neighborhood revitalization, road improvements and numerous renovations to area parks.

I am honored by the opportunity to collaborate with Larry Blick and Mayor Ron Stewart to secure Federal funding for local projects such as the Lewis and Clark Roadway, the Memorial Building, grants to support local first responders in protecting our community, FEMA assistance for the devastating 2002 ice storm, and for the expansion of the Blue River Community College to train our law enforcement officials and first responders. A lasting achievement for which he will long be remembered is his efforts to secure the prestigious title of "All American City" for Independence in 2001. Larry Blick's work with the community played a crucial role in highlighting Independence's enterprises, schools, parks and history to earn the support of the All-America City Program.

Around his office, Larry carries a coffee mug that states, "Will golf for food." I join with myriad others in wishing him time during his retirement to hit the greens and spend quality time with his loving family.

Another great leader from Independence, President Harry S Truman, made this observation in 1951: "Unless a man is fundamentally sound ethically, you can't teach him what to do as a public servant." As City Manager, Larry has exhibited exemplary vision, sound values and unwavering commitment to fundamental issues important to all of us.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in saluting the remarkable service of retiring City Manager Larry Blick. His leadership will be missed, but his accomplishments will live on as a reminder of the difference he made by his outstanding service to the city of Independence, Missouri.

UNSUNG HERO AWARD

HON. NICK LAMPSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 10, 2004

Mr. LAMPSON. Mr. Speaker, when the idea of Black History Month, formerly Black History Week, was conceived by historian, Carter G. Woodson, he envisioned a celebration of black history achievement as well as an educational medium. Mr. Woodson organized the first celebration in 1926 to be held the second week in February in honor of Frederick Douglass's and Abraham Lincoln's birthdays. Because of its popularity among the black and white press, schools and women's clubs, the week long commemoration was expanded into a month-long salute to African Americans. Black History Month now provides an annual forum for African Americans to share their culture with the world.

For the past 5 years, I have hosted an Unsung Hero Program during Black History Month as a means of acknowledging the many accomplishments of my constituents who often go unnoticed for their service to the community.

The following residents of Texas's 9th Congressional District have proven they embrace Mr. Woodson's vision of a brighter tomorrow by their efforts to serve humanity. I am proud and honored to present my 2004 Unsung Heroes for inclusion in the U.S. CONGRESSIONAL RECORD:

Mrs. Carla Allen, Mr. Rudolph P. Antoine, Ms. Shirley Bailey-Jones, Detective Alton James Baise, Mr. Reginald C. Boykin, Sr., Ms. Whitney Breaux, Bishop B. R. Brown, Mr. Keith Chachere, Mrs. Linda G. Clark, Mr. Freddie L. Coleman, Pastor Michael Cooper, Mrs. Tanya Mechelle Corbin, Ms. Josie Curtis, Mr. Shawn Dorian Dages, Ms. Kimberly Darest, Mr. Timothy W. Duriso, Mr. Murphy J. Fisher, Mr. Matthew J. Francis, Sr., Mr. Freddie Franks, Ms. Loma George, Mr. Melvin G. Getwood, Sr., God's Kitchen Angels, Bishop Curtis J. Guillory, Mr. Eddie Guillory, Mr. Shelton Guillory, Sr., Ms. Delores Jean Gunner, Mrs. Mary Hayes, Mr. Benjamin J. Jones, Sr., Mr. Willie "K" Knighton, Mr. Jerry Levias, Mr. Michael W. Lewis, Reverend Mark McKinley, Ms. Dorothy J. Milburn, Ms. Ann Monette, Mr. Everett Moton, Mr. Gregory B. Mouton, Mr. Christopher C. Mouton, Mr. Eric Narcisse, Ms. Tina Nguyen, Mr. John E. Payton, Mr. Edgar Sonny Perkins, Jr., Mr. Gene Perkins, Mr. Alex Warren Sanders, Jr., Mr. James Saveat, Ms. Madeline Kaye Savoy, Reverend Charles H. Segura, Ms. Ora Segura, Ms. Janai Sells, Mr. Brandon Smith, Reverend Adam Smith, Constable Joe Stevenson, Mr. Joseph Threats, Mr. Howard Trahan III, Ms. Thuytram Tram, Mr. Jack Turner, Mrs. Kate Walker, Ms. Wanda G. Wallace, Reverend Alfred White, Mr. Eugene Wilson, Jr.

Members of the communities in the 9th District nominated these individuals for the Unsung Heroes award that gives special recognition to those unsung heroes, willing workers, and individuals who are so much a part of Texas's and our Nation's rich history. The award winners were chosen because they embody a giving and sharing spirit, and made a contribution to our Nation. I am proud to represent them here in Congress.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO BARBARA JEFFERIES

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 10, 2004

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to Barbara Jefferies and thank her for the remarkable civic contributions she has made to her Durango community and the State of Colorado. As a lifelong resident and rancher of La Plata County, Colorado, Barbara has actively participated in numerous community organizations. Recently, the Durango Chamber of Commerce recognized her efforts as they named her their Agriculturist of the Year. It is with great satisfaction that I congratulate Barbara for her well-deserved award, and thank her for her significant contributions to the Durango Community.

Barbara's life has always revolved around agriculture; she was born on her grandmother's farm, raised on her parents' ranch, and now works on a ranch with her husband Ned. Her commitment to the agricultural community in Colorado includes her involvement

with the La Plata County Cow Belles, La Plata-Archuleta County Farm Bureau and Cattleman's Association, and the Colorado Cattlemen's Association. Her enthusiasm for taking part in these organizations comes from her firm belief that "agriculture takes a lot of people to be involved to keep it going," as told to the Durango Herald.

Mr. Speaker, it is clear that Barbara Jefferies is a woman of great commitment to the agricultural community in Durango and the State of Colorado. Barbara's willingness to provide her time and experience to her fellow farmers and ranchers is worthy of recognition before this body of Congress and this nation today. It is my privilege to extend to Barbara my sincere congratulations on her being named Agriculturist of the Year by the Durango Chamber of Commerce, and to wish her all the best in her future endeavors.

ON BEHALF OF VETERANS

HON. MIKE McINTYRE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 10, 2004

Mr. McINTYRE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of the 77,015 veterans in my district. These selfless warriors have dedicated their lives to fighting for this great country and our freedoms, and it is disheartening that many of them do not have access to adequate and affordable health care. Long ago, we made a promise to our veterans and military retirees that we would provide quality health care in return for their service. Unfortunately, over time, this promise has been broken, and too often today quality veterans' facilities are too far away to be truly accessible to rural veterans. How can we continue to sit back and ignore our veterans' requests for better access to health care? Don't we owe it to them to ensure that they are properly cared for? It is time that we take on a new attitude and put forth real actions that will help us to make achievements for veterans for years to come.

First, it's about attitude—the attitude to change the way we provide health care to our veterans today. In my district in rural southeastern North Carolina, there has been enormous growth within the veteran population. In addition to being the home of or near to important military installations, including Fort Bragg, Pope Air Force Base, Military Ocean Terminal Sunny Point, and three Coast Guard stations, the area is widely known for its pristine beaches and recreational activities. These amenities make the area a popular destination for retirement, and I am pleased that so many of our courageous service men and women either move to or remain in the area after their retirement. However, with this increase in the veterans' population comes the important issue of how best to serve our veterans' health care needs.

Although Southeastern North Carolina is represented by two commendable VA facilities, access to care remains limited. Veterans in the town of Supply must drive over two hours to be seen at the Fayetteville VA Medical Center. And those who need more specialized care must drive an additional two hours to the Durham VA Medical Center. One trip alone could equal eight hours of driving! In addition, because both the Fayetteville VA