

Small businesses that employ fewer than 20 employees pay almost \$7,000 a year in regulatory costs per employee. Instead of using these funds to create new jobs, pay higher salaries or fund new or expanded health care benefits, small business owners are forced to pay to comply with too many inflexible and Draconian Federal regulations.

Democrats are working hard to make bureaucrats more powerful. Mr. Speaker, Republicans are working hard to make American companies more competitive.

CALLING FOR RESIGNATION OF SECRETARY RUMSFELD

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

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I regret to come here this morning to again call for the resignation of the Secretary of Defense, Donald Rumsfeld. The pictures, the videos that continue of our troops humiliating prisoners in Abu Ghraib and the acts of retaliation by Iraqi militants, the graphic accounts of sexual and physical abuse that go on and on and on, this is not about the failure of some rogue elements in the military. Quite the contrary.

It is a part of the total failure of leadership at our highest levels, and I refer my colleagues to The New Yorker magazine article by the distinguished investigative journalist Seymour Hersh.

MEDICARE PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

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

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, relief from skyrocketing prescription drug prices is finally on its way.

Beginning in June, Alabama seniors previously without prescription drug coverage should begin to see savings of between 10 and 25 percent on their medications. For example, seniors who previously paid \$100 per month for one prescription could now pay as little as \$75 per month under this new 100 percent voluntary plan. These same seniors could now see savings of up to \$300 per year just on this one medication; and for low-income seniors, even more help is on the way.

Thanks to a \$600-per-month credit, 21,400 seniors in my congressional district should see an additional assistance with their drug bills. What is more, Alabama seniors will soon be eligible for important new features like diabetes screening and a free welcome-to-Medicare physical.

The legislation makes important new investments in our rural hospitals and clinics as well. These investments will help improve the health for all of our seniors, as well as all of our families and children.

TIME TO HELP SENIORS FIGURE OUT WHAT BENEFIT IS BEST FOR THEM

(Mrs. WILSON of New Mexico asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. WILSON of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, on the first day that seniors could sign up for prescription drug cards, the discount cards, I went to the Barelbas Senior Center, and I sat down at one of the tables at lunchtime and chatted with a little lady and started talking about this new card that would be available.

She say, oh, I already know; I talked to AARP and I already have my card. She pulled it out of her wallet and she showed me, and it had the Medicare sign on it. She said, I asked the lady and I tried to use it, and I did on Saturday, and they let me use it, and I saved \$7.

It is not too hard for people to understand what these prescription drug cards will do for them; and when I talked to more people at the Barelbas Senior Center, they were very interested in the \$600 that can be added to that debit-like card to help them with the cost of their drugs.

It is time to put aside the bickering and help seniors figure out which benefit is the best for them so that they can afford their prescription drugs.

BETTER HEARING AND SPEECH MONTH

(Mr. RYUN of Kansas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. RYUN of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the month of May as Better Hearing and Speech Month.

I am one of 2 million Americans who have experienced a hearing loss personally, but my hearing loss was the result of a birth defect as an illness that took place early in my life, and there are many who need help as a result of this.

Today, we are exposed to harmful levels of toxic noise in our environment and must be aware of these harmful sounds and do our best to protect ourselves from them so that we can avoid problems in the future.

One-third of our seniors have hearing loss. Eighty percent of these seniors have not sought treatment, and 75 percent of those needing hearing aids do not have them.

Left untreated, hearing loss leads to isolation, depression, and dangerous situations.

I introduced the Hearing Health Accessibility Act, H.R. 2821, to give seniors direct access to audiologists under Medicare. This would provide effective care for our seniors with hearing loss because hearing aids are expensive, and most insurance companies do not cover them.

I have also introduced the Hearing Aid Assistance Tax Credit, H.R. 3103.

This \$500 tax credit would be available once every 5 years to children and those over 55.

I encourage my colleagues to cosponsor these initiatives.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF CONFERENCE REPORT ON S. CON. RES. 95, CONCURRENT RES- OLUTION ON THE BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2005

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 649 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 649

Resolved, That upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider the conference report to accompany the concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 95) setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2005 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 through 2009. All points of order against the conference report and against its consideration are waived. The conference report shall be considered as read. The conference report shall be debatable for one hour equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Budget.

SEC. 2. (a) Upon adoption in the House of the conference report to accompany Senate Concurrent Resolution 95, and until a concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2005 has been adopted by the Congress—

(1) the provisions of the conference report and its joint explanatory statement shall have force and effect in the House; and

(2) for purposes of title III of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, the conference report shall be considered adopted by the Congress.

(b) Nothing in this section may be construed to engage rule XXVII.

SEC. 3. The House being in possession of the official papers, the managers on the part of the House at the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on H.R. 2660 shall be, and they are hereby, discharged to the end that H.R. 2660 and its accompanying papers, be, and they are hereby, laid on the table.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LATHAM). The gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS) is recognized for 1 hour.

□ 1045

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, for purposes of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

(Mr. HASTINGS of Washington asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 649 waives all points of order against the conference report to accompany S. Con. Res. 95, the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2005, and its

consideration. The rule provides that the conference report shall be considered read and provides 1 hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Budget.

Section 2 of the rule provides that upon adoption in the House of the conference report, and until a concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2005 has been adopted by Congress, the provisions of the conference report and its joint explanatory statement shall have force and effect in the House.

The rule provides that for the purposes of title III of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, the conference report shall be considered for the purposes of the House to have been adopted by the Congress. The rule provides that nothing in section 2 may be construed to engage rule XXVII.

Section 3 of the rule provides that the conferees of the House on H.R. 2660, shall be, and they are hereby, discharged and that H.R. 2660 and its accompanying papers be, and are hereby, laid upon the table.

This conference report adheres to the principal goals of the House-passed budget, Mr. Speaker, strengthening America, growing our economy, and continuing our Nation's long history as a land of opportunity. This budget provides for increased funding to help secure America's borders, defend against biological attacks, protect our critical infrastructure, and to prepare first responders. It takes a comprehensive and responsible approach to protecting our Nation, winning the war on terror, and preparing us for future security needs and challenges.

Mr. Speaker, our economy is growing. It is headed in the right direction. By avoiding tax increases and protecting the child tax credit, relief from the marriage penalty, and tax relief for lower-income workers, this budget continues the policies that are helping to grow our economy. The budget also provides for full funding of Medicare so that seniors can get help paying for their prescription drugs for the first time ever.

It also includes a \$3.3 billion increase in budget authority for education to accommodate increases in programs like Pell Grants, special education, and Title I. And it provides for the full funding of No Child Left Behind.

Mr. Speaker, it helps us keep promises to our veterans by providing an additional \$1.2 billion over the President's requested increase for veterans' health care.

The budget provides for these priorities and puts us on track to cut the deficit in 4 years, with deficits declining each and every year, and this is accomplished without raising taxes on the American people.

Mr. Speaker, as a member of the Committee on the Budget, I would like to congratulate the chairman of that committee, the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. NUSSLE), and the conferees for producing a budget that is focused on

securing America, creating jobs, and responsibly planning for the future. I encourage, therefore, my colleagues to support both the rule, H.R. 649, and the underlying bill.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 5 minutes, and I want to thank the gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS) for yielding me the customary 30 minutes.

(Mr. MCGOVERN asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, since this mammoth budget was made available to Members of this House only a couple of hours ago, it is difficult to know exactly what goodies and gimmicks are hidden inside of it. We know enough, however, to know that this Republican budget is bad for the economy, bad for American working families, and bad for the future of this country.

Two months ago, the Republican leadership proposed a budget resolution that had tax cuts that were not paid for and slashed Medicaid by \$2 billion. On top of that, that budget did not include any legitimate plan for bringing our country out of the skyrocketing, record deficits, deficits made worse by the policies of this President and this Republican Congress. That budget resolution passed by only three votes.

And now the Republican leadership wants the House to consider a conference report that they claim is very similar to that bill.

Mr. Speaker, that budget was bad then and it is bad now.

This conference report continues the Republican pattern of fiscal mismanagement. Contrary to their claims, this conference report is only a 1-year budget.

Now, we used to consider 10-year budgets so we could fully assess the consequences of our fiscal actions. Then the Republican leadership changed the budgets to 5 years, so they could better mask the long-term impact of their misguided policies. And now we are considering 1-year budgets. What is next, 6-month budgets? 1-week budgets? How about a budget for the next 5 minutes?

This is the worst kind of shell game. It is a gimmick, a smoke screen that the American people will see right through.

It is time the Republicans in this body face the facts. They squandered a \$6 trillion surplus, turning it into an almost \$3 trillion deficit. This is the most fiscally irresponsible congressional leadership and administration in the history of the United States of America, and now they are seeking to make it worse by continuing to extend tax cuts that are not paid for.

Now, my grandfather always told me, you cannot dig your way out of a hole, and that is exactly where we are today, in a fiscal hole. Extending these various tax cuts without paying for them

may make for good press releases, but it is lousy fiscal policy.

And I do not know if my colleagues are aware of the inclusion of the Hastert Rule in this conference report. The Hastert Rule allows this body to raise the debt limit, also known as the national debt, without a direct vote by the Members of this House. In other words, Mr. Speaker, we busted our credit limit and we are giving ourselves an increase without even having the decency of taking responsibility for it. And guess what? We are sending the bill to our kids and our grandkids. That is wrong.

It is important for my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to know that a vote for this conference report is a vote to increase the debt. A "yes" vote will raise the debt over the \$8 trillion level for the first time in American history. Now, I hope Members will think long and hard about what kind of future we are creating for our kids and grandkids.

I believe that we have a responsibility to vote up or down on increasing the debt. Burying this debt increase in the conference report shirks the responsibility of the Members of this House.

You know, my Republican friends always complain about protectionists, but this conference report is one of the most protectionist things I have ever seen. But instead of protecting jobs, it protects politically vulnerable Republicans from being forced to vote up or down on increasing the national debt. It protects the Republicans from having to pay for their tax cuts.

And one other thing: As if the policies in this conference report were not bad enough, the Republican leadership added a provision to this rule that closes the conference on the fiscal year 2004 Labor, HHS, and Education bill. My colleagues and many Americans may be asking themselves, is that bill not already law?

Well, the truth is, the provisions that make up the FY 2004 Labor, HHS, and Education appropriations bill were included in the omnibus appropriations bill signed into law early this year. But the conference report on that bill was never formally closed. Under the rules of the House, Members of the majority and minority can still offer motions to instruct. My good friend, the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER), has attempted to do just that several times over the past couple of weeks.

Now, adoption of this rule today will formally close the conference, meaning that no Member can instruct conferees on any issue. The motions to instruct by the gentleman from California have focused on the administration's overtime policies. It is clear that the Republican leadership is scared to death of talking about the Bush administration's misguided plan to take away overtime pay for millions of American workers. The purpose of this section in the rule is to muzzle the gentleman

from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER) and any other Members who attempt to bring this important issue to the attention of the House and to the American people.

Why is this leadership so afraid of open and fair debate?

Mr. Speaker, this is a bad rule and it is a bad conference report, and I urge my colleagues to vote "no" on the rule.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 1 minute to respond to a couple of points.

The gentleman correctly pointed out that within this rule there is the provision that the debt limit will be raised. I think most people in this body recognize that.

I mean, after all, we inherited 4 years ago a recession, then 9/11 happened, and we certainly had to fund the war on terror and all of those efforts, and that took more money than we had. In fact, in every budget that we considered on the floor, the other side acknowledged that we had to raise the debt limit.

So, yes, if this is passed, and if the Senate passes this conference report, the debt limit will have been raised. However, if the Senate does not act on this, then we will have another opportunity to look at that debt limit in a different manner.

I just wanted to make that clarification.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 6 minutes to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPRATT), the ranking Democrat on the Committee on the Budget.

(Mr. SPRATT asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, at 6:20 a.m. this morning, this budget resolution, the conference report, so-called, was filed. At 7:15 a.m., it was before the Committee on Rules. No one outside the actual drafters of the legislation had had any time to look at its contents.

It only applies to \$2.3 trillion of spending authority. Some way to run a railroad.

And now, when the bill comes before the House, it comes because the rules of the House require a 1-day layover for a rule, so that we have a little time at least and not get surprised with provisions that we did not see on quick notice. That was overturned by meeting early this morning, adjourning and meeting again and deeming 1 day to have expired. So this budget resolution comes to us under sham circumstances.

You have to ask why? Why should something of this gravity, of this importance to the fiscal policy of this country come to us under these circumstances? And there is only one answer I can give you. It will not stand scrutiny. It simply will not stand scrutiny.

The Budget Act calls for spending in major functions of the budget, about 19

all together, and it calls for revenues, and it calls for those expenditures and revenues to be taken function by function and spread out, projected out over a period of 5 years. This budget resolution has real numbers for only 1 year. It is not extended out with real numbers. It has plugged numbers, but not real numbers. For only 1 year are there real numbers.

For the first time in 20 years, we will take up today, if this rule passes, a budget resolution that does not contain a 5-year run-out of the spending levels that we are approving.

In addition, when we set out with this budget, it was recognized that there were some budget process rules we adopted in the 1990s that worked and had a profound effect on our ability to move the budget from a deficit of \$290 billion to a surplus of \$236 billion in the year 2000. One of those rules was the so-called PAYGO rule which says, if you want to cut taxes and you have a deficit, you have to offset the cut in taxes with an increase elsewhere, or at least with a cut in entitlement spending that is commensurate to your tax revenue cut.

That rule no longer applies because it has legislatively expired. We have tried and tried to restore that rule so that we can put some discipline, some starch into the process here in the House, and we have not succeeded because of opposition on the other side.

What we now get in this so-called budget resolution is an extension of the PAYGO bill, the PAYGO rule for 1 year that applies in one House. It will not apply here in the House of Representatives. That means all sorts of tax cuts can still originate in the House of Representatives, will not be subject to a PAYGO point of order, can be sent to the Senate; there they may be defeated on 60-vote PAYGO point of order, but otherwise we have a crippled, broken-down PAYGO rule that applies for only 1 year.

When you read this bill, this resolution, and see what little it contains, you have to ask yourself, why bring it up at all? If you are not going to comply with the Budget Act, if you are not going to give 5-year extensions, if you are not going to use real numbers, if you are not going to extend PAYGO, why bring it up at all? Well, it does a couple of things. It allows you to claim that you are doing a budget resolution without doing the single most important objective in a budget resolution, and that is laying down a plan for erasing this huge deficit we have.

□ 1100

Members should understand that if they vote for this budget resolution, they will be voting to have a deficit next year of \$367 billion by the calculation of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle. That includes an offset in Social Security. If they wipe out the offset in Social Security, the total deficit would be \$541 billion.

And guess what, because of deficits we have sustained every year, we are

right up against the statutory ceiling for the national debt. It has to be raised and raised soon, or we will bump the ceiling again. And guess what, if Members vote for this resolution, buried under all of these plug numbers, these phony numbers, buried under them is a critically important feature and that is it will indirectly trigger an increase in the debt ceiling. At least with respect to the House of Representatives, we will be deemed to have voted for an increase in the debt ceiling of \$690 billion. I am putting Members on notice of that.

So Members who vote for this resolution should know there is a critical working component of it and Members will vote to raise the debt ceiling by \$690 billion to \$8.1 trillion.

So in a thumbnail, here is what you will be voting for when you vote for this sham resolution: First, Members will vote to raise the deficit to \$541 billion without Social Security, for \$367 billion including Social Security, add \$25 billion more in supplementals for defense, and we are right back up to a \$400 billion deficit.

Members will not be voting for any plan in process, any solution to the deficit, but will be putting us on a path, according to the Congressional Budget Office, of accumulating, and this is their number, \$5.132 trillion over the next 10 fiscal years.

That is what Members will be voting for if they vote for this resolution. It would be better that we vote down this resolution, send the conferees back to conference and tell them to do what the Budget Act requires them to do and tell them to get a handle on the deficit and put our fiscal house in order. Vote against the rule.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER).

(Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, for all of the reasons mentioned by the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN) and the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPRATT), not only does this budget resolution graphically demonstrate the incompetency of the Republicans to deal with the budget of this country and the budget resolution in this House, but it does something much more sinister than that.

Buried in this resolution is the prohibition against any votes to be taken in the House of Representatives against the provisions offered by the administration, the rules that they put forth to deny millions of working people in this country the right to overtime. When these rules go into effect, if we cannot vote against them as the Senate has voted against them, when these rules go into effect, millions of Americans will be required to work overtime

in the future; they just will not get overtime pay.

That means for millions of America's families, families that use overtime that is so important to them to qualify for the mortgages on their house, to qualify to buy an automobile, to put their kids through school, they are not going to have that in their paycheck in the future because they are going to be excluded from being eligible for overtime.

Now the Senate addressed this rule, and they voted against it. They voted to change it. We fought hard against the original rule because the original rule would have excluded maybe 11 million Americans from the right to have overtime pay when they work overtime. Americans understand why they get overtime pay, because when their employer comes and says they have to work late on Thursday night or Friday night, that means they have to rearrange their child care, that means they have to rearrange their ability to spend time with their family, that may mean they have to rearrange their doctor's appointments, and you have to change your life around for the convenience of the employer. So you get overtime pay.

Now when the employer comes to the worker and says he or she has to work overtime, there will be no overtime pay. That is why this House and the Senate defeated those rules on a bipartisan basis, and the administration now has come up with a new rule. And we find out that even the new rule excludes millions of hard-working Americans from overtime pay, people struggling to hold onto a middle-class lifestyle and standard of living for their families. That is about to evaporate. That is about to evaporate because this House will not allow us, the Republican leadership will not allow us to have an up-or-down vote.

We are fighting so hard for democracy in Iraq, but we cannot have an up-or-down vote in the House of Representatives. We cannot have an up-or-down vote. We cannot have an up-or-down vote because the majority, on a bipartisan basis, will vote to overturn these rules. By a vote of 99-0, the Senate voted to change these rules and exclude from the impact of these rules, to try to save these middle-class families, computer programmers, licensed practical nurses, nurse midwives, oil and gas pipeline workers, oil and gas field workers, oil platform workers, refinery workers. Get the message here?

Millions of hard-working Americans, the Senate voted 99-0 to exclude steelworkers, shipyard workers, teachers, technicians, journalists, chefs, cooks, police officers, firefighters, fire sergeants, police sergeants, emergency medical technicians; 99 to nothing the Senate voted, that means bipartisan. That means all of the Republicans and all of the Democrats voted to protect these workers and their families. In the House of Representatives, the Republicans will not let Members have a vote on this.

We tried twice in the last week to have a vote, and they voted on a partisan straight party line to subject these workers to these rules that will cut their pay this year.

When workers are faced with outsourcing, plant closings, no wage growth, higher health care premiums, now the Republicans have decided to cut their overtime pay. Not only do they show no concern for people who are unemployed; but if you have a job, the Republican's initiative is to cut your pay. But what are they going to do, they are going to continue the cover-up because buried in this rule they have denied the ability of this House to vote on this rule.

Again, the Senate, 99-0, voted to protect construction employees, production line employees, carpenters, mechanics, plumbers, ironworkers, craftsmen, anybody earning an hourly wage because the rule does not protect hourly wage earners. It helps painters, cement masons, stationary engineers, longshoremen, utility workers, welders. Does this sound like Members' constituency? Does this sound like the people who work in our congressional districts every day? Yes, it does.

Mr. Speaker, these are the people who built America, they built the middle class; and now the Republicans are taking away their overtime. But Members will not get to have a vote on that because the Republicans are afraid of the vote. They are afraid of democracy. They are afraid of the people's House working its will so they have shut down the debate and shut down the ability to have a vote.

The Senate had a vote, and they even voted on a bipartisan basis to exclude anybody who has overtime today.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LATHAM). The gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. So apparently the Senate can have bipartisan representation, apparently the Senate can have democracy, but this House cannot have democracy.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman's time has expired. The gentleman will suspend.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California.
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The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman will suspend.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California.
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The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman will suspend.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California.
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The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman will suspend.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California.
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The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman will suspend.

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, point of order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Washington will state his point of order.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. My point of order is when a Member yields time to another Member, does that Member have responsibility to abide by the time he was yielded to speak?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman's point of order is sustained. All Members are reminded to heed the gavel.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3½ minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ), the chairman of the Democratic Caucus.

(Mr. MENENDEZ asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. Speaker, we would not have Members who feel they are oppressed if we had rules that permitted full and free debate in the greatest democracy in the world. We go abroad, sending our troops to promote democracy, but we cannot seem to have a modicum of comity and democracy here in the House of Representatives.

This conference report on the budget was filed this morning at 6:20 a.m., less than 5 hours ago. The Nation's budget, multi-trillion dollar budget filed 5 hours ago, and we do not even have a chance to review it.

Under the Republican leadership, this budget resolution is, and the entire budget process has become, a complete fraud on the American people. Just like the way they have covered up the cost of the Iraq war and the Medicare prescription drug bill, with this budget congressional Republicans are trying to hide not only the true costs of making the tax cuts permanent, but also the huge size of the rapidly exploding deficit.

And instead of giving us an opportunity to debate and vote separately on raising the Nation's debt limit for the third straight year by almost \$700 billion this year alone, the Republicans have included that increase under the cover of all of these other shenanigans in this budget resolution.

So let us be clear so when Members come to the floor representing their constituencies, they understand a vote for this budget resolution is a vote to increase the debt ceiling of the United States to over \$8 trillion. Yes, I said \$8 trillion. Now, this will ensure that our tax dollars go not to shoring up Social Security and Medicare, or investing in our people, in their health care, education, or taking care of our veterans so that their widows do not get taxed, but to simply paying interest on this debt that Republicans continue to raise and just do not seem to care how far they continue to go.

Republicans talk all the time about fiscal responsibility, but by restoring the budget enforcement rules, the rules that say you have to pay for the expenditures of the Nation as you go, they do that for only 1 year, and they do that where? Not in the House. They

impose that upon the Senate. So they continue to spend wildly here in the House, have all of the tax cuts proposals in the world, keep driving us into deficit, but we have no budget enforcement rules here.

Mr. Speaker, these priorities are making the wealthy tax cuts permanent regardless of the damage that will be caused not only to the citizens of this country, but to the Nation's economic well-being. Vote "no" against the rule and against the resolution. It is ultimately the last opportunity to preserve America's future and the intergenerational responsibility this Republican majority has forfeited.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. NEAL), a member of the Committee on Ways and Means.

(Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, remember that old commercial, when E.F. Hutton talks, people listen? Well, I hope no one on Wall Street is listening today, and I certainly hope that Alan Greenspan is not listening or watching because this Republican budget is \$8 trillion of debt. Yes, Members heard me correctly.

If this budget passes for the third time in as many years on a Republican rule, we are not bringing down the national debt. What we did so successfully under the years of Clinton and Rubin, we are undoing during this administration's time. No, our vote today increases yet again the debt of this Nation. How we could have gone from \$5 trillion in budget surpluses under Clinton-Rubin to \$8 trillion in debt ought to be shocking to all.

Surpluses as far as the eye could see, we were suggesting just a few years ago. Today, \$2 trillion in revenue cuts; and now 4 years later, surpluses are but a memory, and we have debt as far as the eye can see.

Well, here is the simple strategy: we will have two wars with three tax cuts. A billion dollars a week for Iraq, do not worry about it, we need a tax cut.

□ 1115

A billion dollars a month in Afghanistan. Do not worry about it. We need a tax cut.

Troops to Haiti? Let us have a tax cut.

That is government by declaration. Things are always getting better even though we do not see any evidence of that. And then we hear from the party that built its base in American history on fiscal responsibility, increased spending and cut taxes. The evidence is there for all to see.

Then we are told on this floor that they inherited a recession. Everybody in America knows they inherited the best economy in the history of America, all due, I believe, to what at that time was bipartisan relationships in

this House. They are nonexistent now. These Members on the other side come to the floor day after day and insist on tax cuts while fighting two wars at the same time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. STENHOLM).

(Mr. STENHOLM asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. STENHOLM. Mr. Speaker, a vote for this budget resolution conference report is a vote to automatically approve a \$690 billion increase in the national debt. Under the Hastert rule, passage of the budget resolution conference report would deem that the House had passed separate legislation.

My friends on the other side of the aisle used to criticize this rule when the House of Representatives was under Democratic control and repealed it in 1997. But when the national debt started growing at a record pace, they reinstated it. I agreed with them when they criticized it in the past. Why have they changed?

A vote against the previous question would require the House and Senate to have a full and open debate and vote on increasing the debt limit instead of using the budget resolution to avoid a debate on increasing the debt limit. Last year the leadership slipped through a \$984 billion increase in the debt limit, the largest increase in the history of our country, without an up-and-down vote. This came less than 8 months after we raised the Federal debt ceiling by a whopping \$450 billion. Now the House leadership is trying to slip through another \$690 billion increase in the debt ceiling without a debate.

The national debt has increased by \$670 billion over the last 12 months and \$1.5 trillion over the last 3 years. Approximately 70 percent of our borrowing from the public last year came from foreign investors. At the end of March, foreign investors held \$1.7 trillion of our national debt. The \$323 billion we spent last year for interest on our \$7 trillion national debt represents a debt tax that must be paid by all future generations. Continuing to run up debt as we are doing will guarantee our children and grandchildren are overtaxed for the rest of their lives.

If my Republican colleagues honestly believe that tax cuts with borrowed money is good economic policy, they should be willing to stand up and take credit for the increase in the national debt that is necessary to pay for these tax cuts. Just like credit card spending limits serve as tools to force families to examine their household budgets, the debt limit reminds Congress and the President from time to time to re-evaluate our budget policies.

Before we vote to increase our national debt by another \$690 billion, Congress should sit down and figure out how to stop running up this debt rather than just bringing us a continued reinstatement of what we are

doing. I would say to my friends on the other side again, I would gladly join them and will to increase the debt ceiling if they would agree to add budget enforcement rules that they supported in 1997. I hope the four Senators will stay fast in the other body that they will do those things that they said they are going to do to send this budget right back to us until we at least get serious about restoring fiscal discipline.

Put PAYGO into this and we have got a deal. But, no, I read where the majority leader said recently the only thing he cares about in the budget is making it easier to pass tax cuts and that everything else in the budget really does not matter to him. Increasing the debt limit over \$8 trillion matters to me. I think it matters to a lot of other Members on both sides of the aisle. The decision on whether or not we make it harder for Congress and the President to pass legislation that puts us deeper into debt matters a great lot to me.

If cutting taxes with borrowed money is all that matters to you, then vote for this rule and vote for this budget. But if you are concerned about a national debt approaching \$8 trillion, if you are concerned about deficits of several hundred billion dollars structural as far as the eye can see, vote against the rule and against this budget.

Vote against the previous question. The vote on the previous question will be a clear up-and-down vote as to whether or not we should have at least 1 hour to discuss increasing our debt ceiling, at least 1 hour in which we would have an honest discussion between both sides as to whether or not we should continue in the path that we are on believing that that is the best for our country. Vote against the previous question.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPRATT).

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, let me just make Members painfully aware of what this rule will entail, since they have only had minutes to even acquaint themselves with the fact that it was coming before them today.

If Members vote for this rule, they will vote to make in order a budget resolution with the following consequences for our deficit and our national debt. Per the calculation in this budget resolution, the deficit for 2005 will be \$367 billion. That is probably the best dated sum they can come up with. There will undoubtedly be some more defense supplementals, probably another \$25 billion, before 2005 is out. That will take the deficit to \$392 billion. If we take Social Security out of the calculation, as we should, we should not include it, the non-Social Security deficit, the deficit in the basic accounts of the Federal budget in 2005 if Members vote for this resolution will be \$566 billion, which will necessitate another increase in the debt ceiling.

If Members vote for this resolution, they will, make no mistake about it, be

voting to raise the statutory debt ceiling by \$690 billion. That is the first in a series of raises, because if you read CBO's report on the President's budget which is essentially embodied in this resolution and run that budget out over 10 years between 2005 and 2014, according to CBO, we will cumulatively incur a debt of \$5.132 trillion.

Vote for this rule and you will be voting against any plan or any process to come to terms with this enormous, record-breaking deficit. There is no plan. There is no solution. Do not fool yourself in this resolution. Vote for it and you vote to tread water while the problem gets worse. You vote to kick the can down the road. If you want to deal with the deficit, deal with this debt, vote against this resolution, and send the conferees back to the conference. If you want to dodge the issue for another year while it gets worse, vote for this resolution. I would suggest we vote against it.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I will be urging Members to vote "no" on the previous question in order to expose a part of this budget resolution that my Republican colleagues would rather not talk about. When Members vote for this budget conference report, they will be voting to increase the statutory debt limit by almost \$700 billion for the next fiscal year. An uncomfortable fact they would rather not talk about today is that this budget raises our national statutory debt limit to the highest level in our history, to more than \$8 trillion. This comes on top of the fact that last year Republicans used the budget resolution to slip through a \$984 billion increase in the debt limit, the largest increase in the debt limit in the history of the United States of America without an up-or-down vote in this House.

Mr. Speaker, there is an honest disagreement in this House over our Nation's fiscal priorities. Many of us think that with large deficits and the growing costs of the war in Iraq, we need to rethink our budget priorities and figure out how to make our revenues match up better with our spending needs. My Republican colleagues do not seem to think there is a problem. They think it is just fine to continue on with the spending and the tax policies that have led us into this current fiscal mess. They seem to think it is fine to keep building up our national debt and leave it to our kids and our grandkids to figure out how to pay for it.

I would say to my Republican colleagues, if they honestly believe that tax cuts with borrowed money is good economic policy, they should be willing to stand up in this House and vote to increase the national debt to pay for their tax cuts instead of relying on undercover parliamentary tricks. Republicans used to criticize Democrats for using House rules to slip through increases in the national debt without a

separate vote. That is exactly what they are doing here today. If they believe in the fiscal policies that are sending the national debt through the roof, they should be willing to stand up on the floor of this House and vote for them.

I want to emphasize that a "no" vote will not stop the House from taking up the budget conference report. All it does is require Republicans to take responsibility for a fiscal policy that by the end of this year will cost our kids and our grandkids \$8 trillion.

I ask unanimous consent, Mr. Speaker, to insert the text of the amendment immediately prior to the vote on the previous question.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LATHAM). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Massachusetts?

There was no objection.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Again I would urge a "no" vote on the previous question.

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

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, this is a very important document. It is an important document because this sets the parameters of congressional spending to fund the government for 2005. We have heard a great deal from the other side in this debate about the debt limit. I addressed that earlier. I acknowledge that because we inherited a recession 4 years ago and we were attacked by terrorists and now we are engaged in an international war on terrorism, yes, we have spent more than we have taken in, and we do have to address this issue of raising the debt limit. But if we do not pass a budget resolution, that means we will not have any discipline on the appropriation process as we go through appropriating dollars for fiscal year 2005. That means if we have no discipline that the debt limit will increase higher because that is the way this body has always worked. Passing this budget is very important to put that discipline in place.

I would also make the observation, as I made earlier, every budget substitute amendment that was presented earlier when we were debating the House version of the budget, every one of those budgets acknowledged that we were going to have to address raising the debt limit in the future. Every one of them. They had it in different ways, different opportunities. Nevertheless, everyone acknowledged the fact that we have to address the debt limit problem.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, let me just suggest this, and I have learned this in the time that you and I have been here in this body. We will go through the appropriation process one way or the other. I think it is better to have the discipline of having a budget. But if we do not have the discipline of having a budget agreed to by both Houses, I suspect that what we will see when we go

through the appropriation process from the other side, we will see, continually, amendments offered to raise more spending, which, of course, if it followed what they would be suggesting, we will have to raise the debt limit even higher. Sometimes I wonder what the debate is when I hear their rhetoric as we go through this process.

I would urge my colleagues to vote for the previous question, vote for the rule and the underlying resolution.

The material previously referred to by Mr. MCGOVERN is as follows:

PREVIOUS QUESTION FOR H. RES. 649

H. CON. RES. 95, THE CONFERENCE REPORT ON THE BUDGET 2004

AMENDMENT TO H. RES. 649 OFFERED BY REPRESENTATIVE MCGOVERN

At the end of the resolution, add the following:

SEC. 4. Upon the adoption of this resolution rule XXVII shall not apply to the conference report to accompany S. Con. Res. 95, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2005 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 through 2009.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on ordering the previous question.

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. 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.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 4200, NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2005

Mrs. MYRICK. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 648 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 648

Resolved, That at any time after the adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4200) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2005 for military activities of the Department of Defense, to prescribe military personnel strengths for fiscal year 2005, and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and the amendments made in order by this resolution and shall not exceed two hours equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Armed Services. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule.