

who have been spoiled by a sound that, no matter where or when it is heard, is always fresh, always new, and uniquely American.

As Tony approaches his 80th birthday, he has sold more than 50 million records, he has won the praise of musicians across the spectrum, and been acknowledged by his industry for his lifetime of achievement. Yet, he continues to work, bringing enjoyment to thousands of fans each year, and winning new ones each day.

His accomplishments are not limited to just music. He is also an accomplished painter in his own right. He is a tireless advocate for Juvenile Diabetes research, and the American Cancer Society—each year he donates one of his paintings for the ACS holiday card. He has been a friend of Presidents and Heads of State, singing at the Inaugural festivities for President John F. Kennedy in 1961 and President Bill Clinton in 1993.

Tony has never been afraid to point out injustice and advocate for equality. He marched with the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in Selma, Alabama, and was an activist throughout the Civil Rights Movement. Coretta Scott King, bestowing the Martin Luther King Center Award for Excellence upon Mr. Bennett in 2001, said, "Tony is not only one of America's premier performing artists, but he was a deeply-committed friend and supporter of my husband and the Civil Rights Movement, and he has continued to support the efforts of the King Center to fulfill Martin's dream."

The list of accomplishments for Tony is innumerable, he has embodied the American spirit and he has lived the American dream. I could not be more pleased that the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts has chosen to honor Tony Bennett with its highest honors on December 4th, 2005. Tony is truly a credit to his Italian heritage, and to the contributions of millions of immigrant families who have made this country great.

His story is that of what is possible in America, what is great about America, and his life is the embodiment of what it means to be an American. In short, Tony Bennett is a national treasure, and it is with great pride that I speak today as his friend to say thank you for his contribution to our Democracy.

IMPORTANCE OF IMPACT AID

HON. JERRY F. COSTELLO

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 18, 2005

Mr. COSTELLO. Mr. Speaker, as a co-chair of the Congressional Impact Aid Coalition, I rise today in strong support of the Impact Aid program.

Impact Aid provides important resources to replace lost tax dollars to school districts that include a military base, Indian land, or any type of Federal presence or activity to assist with the basic educational needs of its students. These funds improve the quality of life for our military personnel by ensuring their children receive a quality education wherever they are stationed.

Due to budget constraints, the Impact Aid program faces unique challenges. While most education programs contend with an increase in the cost per pupil each year, Impact Aid faces the additional challenge of an increasing

number of military dependents within the program—projected to dramatically increase over the next 10 years—causing the cost of fully funding Impact Aid to escalate sharply.

For example, as a result of the BRAC recommendations, over the next 4 to 5 years, the Department of Defense estimates that an additional 32,000 dependent children of military families will enter stateside public schools due to overseas base closures and realignments. Without additional funding, this tremendous increase will cause a significant change to the level of assistance to the current and future school districts serving our military children and to the services and resources the districts will be able to offer our children.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask my colleagues to pay attention to the critical situation our military children are facing and the further deterioration of their educational resources and services if we do not act soon. In a time of war, it is absolutely essential that we provide the necessary resources to ensure our military dependents' educational funding will be maintained.

TRIBUTE TO WILLIAM E. LIGHTFOOT

HON. TIMOTHY V. JOHNSON

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 18, 2005

Mr. JOHNSON of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I come to the house floor today to pay tribute to William E. Lightfoot, PFC, of Lexington, IL, as well as the 13 other Navy and Marine Corps airmen of Flight 19. On December 5, 1945, a five-plane squadron took off from Ft. Lauderdale Naval Air Station in Florida. This would be the last time anyone would see these brave men, as all five planes mysteriously vanished while flying over the Bermuda triangle. A Mariner rescue plane, comprised of 14 crew members, was sent to look for survivors but they also vanished without a trace. In all, 27 men died in this unexplainable tragedy.

To this day, no wreckage from any of the six planes has been found and no explanations have been realized. However, today, the House of Representatives approved H. Res. 500 to honor these men and recognize the 60th anniversary of the disappearance. Unfortunately, when this vote was called today, I was unable to cast my vote. Had I been able, I would have voted "yes." I was a proud co-sponsor of this resolution and strongly support honoring these brave men. My heartfelt sympathy and admiration go out to Private William E. Lightfoot and his surviving family members.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JERROLD NADLER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 18, 2005

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, due to official business, I missed a vote on November 17, 2005. I ask that the RECORD reflect that had I been able to, I would have voted "yea" on H. Res. 500 (rollcall vote No. 597) recognizing

the 60th anniversary of the disappearance of the five naval Avenger torpedo bombers of Flight 19 and the naval Mariner rescue sent to search for Flight 19.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. RUSS CARNAHAN

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 18, 2005

Mr. CARNAHAN. Mr. Speaker, due to technical problems, my vote in favor of H.J. Res. 72 on Thursday, November 17 (rollcall No. 599) was not recorded. I was, in fact, present for this vote and did vote in favor of the resolution.

DEFICIT REDUCTION ACT OF 2005

SPEECH OF

HON. JOE BACA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 17, 2005

Mr. BACA. Mr. Speaker, the budget reconciliation process is wrong, and it must be stopped.

We must reject any cuts to critical federal safety net programs when so many Americans are experiencing hard times. They have been forced to turn to the government, as well as charities, for assistance with basic necessities.

Nine hundred thousand American families affected by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita are relying on the Food Stamps Program to avoid hunger. Voting for this budget resolution is voting to cut food stamps for these families—and for millions of others who would otherwise go hungry.

This budget resolution boosts mandatory cuts in crucial programs, including health care and student aid, by 44 percent.

Over ten million Latinos on Medicaid will be affected by these cuts. Medicaid provides health insurance to about 50 million people in America, including 41 percent of people in poverty. We need choices that can help the 34 percent of Latinos that are uninsured.

The budget reconciliation shows how misguided Republican priorities are. Instead of helping make health care affordable, they will force families to choose between staying healthy or keeping the lights on.

The budget will slash such programs as student loans and therefore hurt hundreds of thousands of American families. And yet the GOP budget also requires \$70 billion in new tax cuts, helping mainly the wealthiest Americans.

Under the proposed cut in student loans, the typical student borrower could be forced to pay an additional \$5,800 for his or her student loans compared to under current law.

These budget cuts do nothing to ease the national budget deficit.

While Republicans claim that they are serious about deficit reduction, their reconciliation plan actually increases the deficit by \$20 billion.

Let me repeat: the two GOP reconciliation bills together will result in a \$20 billion increase in the deficit! One cuts mandatory spending by \$50 billion and the other cuts taxes by \$70 billion.

Mr. Speaker, this proposal makes no sense and is immoral. We cannot balance the budget on the back of the poor.

People across the country responded with compassion and generosity to the suffering and devastation caused by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, and the federal government must continue to play a role to reduce the suffering of our fellow Americans in the gulf region.

It is not compassionate to cut funding for critical programs that in many cases would hurt those very communities.

I urge my colleagues to oppose this budget resolution.

DEFICIT REDUCTION ACT OF 2005

HON. JERROLD NADLER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 18, 2005

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to this horrible legislation. In all my years in Congress, this is easily one of the ugliest bills I have ever seen. I can't think of a more glaring example of pandering to the rich on the backs of the poor. It's no wonder the Republican leadership needed all the extra time to bring it to the floor.

The cuts in this legislation will result in the reduction, if not elimination, of services to those who need it most, and those who are able to fight for them least. I hope that those in the faith-based community are watching closely: this is the true face of "compassionate conservatism." This from the party which claims to have cornered the market on morality.

It is hard to identify what is most egregious about this bill—there is such a litany of problems here. Is it the cuts in food stamps that will leave hundreds of thousands hungry? Is it that Medicaid funding has been decimated, adding to the rolls of the millions without adequate health insurance? Is it the hits that student loan programs take, leaving our Nation's youth with still more financial burdens? Is it the insidious weakening of environmental provisions, inserted under cover of darkness? The list goes on and on.

And despite the rhetoric from the other side, this bill will do nothing to reduce the staggering deficits we've been seeing. That is because, under the Republican fiscal policies, deficits are built into the system. As a result of the tax cuts for the wealthy that the Republicans forced down this country's throat several years ago, there is simply not enough revenue coming into the treasury to eliminate the shortfall. Indeed, unless Republicans are planning to gut just about all discretionary spending, there is simply no way to plug the hole. It's basic arithmetic.

No, what's going on here is that my Republican friends have created a monster. Their tax cuts have starved our government of its resources, and have brought us from record surpluses to record deficits. But will budget reconciliation reduce the deficit and begin to fix the problem, as they claim? No. This bill actually increases the deficit. This bill is about making room for still more tax cuts. In fact, the bill allows for up to \$106 billion in new tax cuts during FY 06, not just the \$75 billion specified in the bill. \$50 billion in spending cuts, and \$106 billion fewer dollars in the treasury, leads to an increase in the deficit to \$56 billion!

And the \$106 billion in tax cuts will not benefit the families of the troops fighting in Iraq, nor those who suffered in the gulf coast. No, these cuts are targeted to benefit corporations and the wealthy.

Three hundred thousand low-income Americans will lose food stamp assistance; 17 million Americans, half of them children, will see increased costs in Medicaid; the average student will suffer an almost \$6,000 increase in his or her college costs because of \$14.3 billion in cuts to student loan programs. So we give tax cuts to those who don't even need them, and the back of our hand to those who need assistance. This is a disgraceful bill. It is socially unjust, and it will aggravate, not help cure, our Nation's fiscal crisis. In the strongest possible terms, I urge a no vote on this bill.

DEFICIT REDUCTION ACT OF 2005

SPEECH OF

HON. BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 17, 2005

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. Speaker, tonight the House leadership is making a second attempt at passing its 2005 budget reconciliation bill. This is still the wrong bill at the wrong time for America, and I will oppose it.

We have heard a host of arguments from the majority in support of this bill, which will cut vital Federal programs by approximately \$50 billion over 5 years. Some have made the case that higher deficits hurt our Nation's economy. I agree, but although this bill is titled the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005, it will do nothing to ease our deficit situation.

H.R. 4241 is part of a larger strategy by the House leadership resolution that calls for a total of \$106 billion in additional tax cuts. This strategy includes \$70 billion in reconciled tax cuts and \$36 billion in unreconciled tax cuts. The spending cuts in this bill are the initial step. The majority intends to follow tonight's vote with a tax cut bill. After the tax cuts are passed and in place, there will no funds available to pay for hurricane relief. In the end, the House leadership's charade will not reduce the deficit; it will make the deficit even larger than it is today.

In the weeks after Hurricane Katrina devastated the land and the lives of so many on the gulf coast, many lawmakers said they had a newfound understanding of the extent and depth of poverty in America. They also said that the photographs from New Orleans, particularly those taken at the Superdome and the Convention Center, had demonstrated that government does have an important role in lifting Americans out of poverty. There seemed to be bipartisan support for authentic, meaningful approaches to addressing the plight of poor Americans. I would hope that this sentiment still remains. But if it does, it is not evident in the majority's reconciliation bill that is on the House floor tonight.

This bill reduces access to health care for the poor. It contains \$11.9 billion in cuts to Medicaid, including cuts of \$8.8 billion that are borne by low-income beneficiaries through higher cost-sharing and new premiums. It also gives the States the green light to eliminate periodic health care examinations and the treatment of conditions picked up by those ex-

aminations for many of America's neediest children. Maryland's Medicaid rolls cover 430,000 children and health services for 90,000 of them will be jeopardized by this provision. Approximately \$2.5 billion of the Medicaid cuts will affect elderly Americans, who will lose access to nursing home care through tougher restrictions on eligibility.

This bill reduces access to higher education. It contains \$14.3 billion in reductions to Federal student loan programs over 5 years, by increasing the interest rates and imposing a new 1 percent origination fee on all loans.

This bill will hurt many families who rely on child support payments. It reduces the Federal match for child support administrative costs from 66 percent to 50 percent, eliminating \$4.9 billion in help for the States to enforce child support orders. The majority, which claims to want to help our States, is shifting the cost of enforcement to them. It will not save money in the long run, and it will hurt struggling single parent families across America.

As a result of this bill, fewer children in foster care will be eligible for payments, and \$577 million will be cut from these funds. This bill will also limit food stamp eligibility to only those households who are receiving cash assistance through TANF, and requires that legal permanent residents live here for 7 years, rather than the current 5 years, before they can receive food stamps. The result will be \$844 million less in food stamp assistance to low-income families.

The legislation before us is also making it harder for some of the most disadvantaged Americans, those who receive Supplemental Security Income, SSI, to receive assistance. It imposes an extra level of review for certain disability determinations and for those who are found eligible after lengthy delays, this bill requires that retroactive payments are spread out over a longer period of time, for a total savings of \$732 million.

So in the name of paying for hurricane relief, we cut funding for the programs that would help the neediest Americans, including many of the gulf coast citizens who were affected by that disaster.

At this time of economic uncertainty for our country, the so-called Deficit Reduction Act places the burden on the shoulders of the American families least able to carry it. It is clear that this legislation will make painful cuts, and when combined with the tax legislation will increase deficit problems that we face, and so I must vote against it.

DEPARTMENTS OF LABOR,
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES,
AND EDUCATION, AND RELATED
AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS
ACT, 2006

SPEECH OF

HON. MARK UDALL

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 17, 2005

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to the Conference Report on H.R. 3010, which provides Federal funding for health, education and worker programs.

On healthcare, the bill takes a huge step backward in efforts to maintain basic health