

of the civilian leadership, with the White House, the Pentagon, and this Congress making decisions that cost our country billions, in fact, \$1 billion a week, actually. Anyone who thinks that the more than \$200 billion that Congress has allocated for the Iraq war so far has not affected important domestic programs is just kidding himself or herself.

In the last example and the very latest example, tomorrow, the House will vote on a reconciliation bill that would give tax breaks to the wealthy of \$70 billion to \$100 billion in tax breaks, while slashing safety net programs for the poor, programs like Medicaid, student loans, child support enforcement, and veterans' health care. This is just wrong.

If he wants to get things right, President Bush and his administration would actually send a clear message that it has let the American people down, and now it is time to start anew. First and foremost, that means leaving Iraq.

After all, the President's notion that we are fighting the terrorists in Iraq so we will not have to fight them here at home is pure nonsense. If that were true, how could the President explain the London subway bombings earlier this year? How could he explain the terrible bombs that went off at three hotels in Jordan earlier today, already killing over 50 people and wounding more than 100?

Mr. Speaker, our troops and the American people have endured enough sacrifice. We need to end this war and bring our fine soldiers home. We need to give Iraq back to the Iraqi people through a range of economic, political, and humanitarian partnerships.

The American people deserve better than a war that has destroyed the social safety net here at home, and the extraordinary men and women whom I met in Iraq certainly deserve better. In return for their unflinching loyalty, they deserve basic competence and integrity from their Federal Government. They deserve leaders as courageous as they are.

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

(Mr. MCHENRY addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

NOVEMBER IS NATIONAL HOSPICE AND PALLIATIVE CARE MONTH

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to speak out of turn.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Georgia?

There was no objection.

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

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to encourage all Americans to take the time to prepare an advance directive. November is National Hospice and Palliative Care Month, and this month should serve as a reminder for individuals to take the time to discuss with their loved ones important end-of-life and medical decisions.

As people discuss their end-of-life health care wishes, there are two legal documents that can help. The first is a living will. Living wills are probably the most recognizable and familiar document to aid individuals in communicating their wishes.

However, Mr. Speaker, today I would like to draw the attention of the American public to a different type of advance directive, a medical power of attorney. A medical power of attorney, or health care proxy, allows you to appoint a person whom you trust to serve as your health care agent.

Each State government has a medical power of attorney form that a citizen can fill out and have witnessed. This then authorizes the appointed agent to make health care decisions on an individual's behalf. Mr. Speaker, people should not be scared away by these forms; they are written in plain English, and they are very easy to fill out.

I have brought with me an example from my home State of Georgia in order to illustrate how easy this process can be for the American public. The form is simple and straightforward, and is only 6 pages long. I have highlighted two sections for us to look at today.

First is the portion where you identify yourself and then name your power of attorney, and I call my colleagues' attention to the first poster. It may be a little bit difficult to read from the back of the Chamber but basically, Georgia's statutory short form durable power of attorney for health care. And the instructions, again, pretty simple. Print the date, print your name and address, print the name and address of your agent. It is that simple. This authorizes the individual to act for you and, as my colleagues can see, in Georgia, you have the opportunity to initial the statement also. This is the second poster, Mr. Speaker, to check the box really that best reflects your wishes, and there are three. It is just a simple, initial process.

The first one is, I do not want my life to be prolonged, nor do I want life-sustaining or death-delaying treatment, et cetera.

The second check box: I want my life to be prolonged, and I want life-sustaining or death-delaying treatment to be provided, under certain circumstances.

And then the last box, and again, a simple check: I want my life to be prolonged to the greatest extent possible without regard to my condition, the chances I have for recovery, or the cost of the procedure. It is as simple as that.

In addition to State government and public health departments, many organizations and hospitals around the country have advance directives available for patients and loved ones who may find themselves facing these tough decisions.

Mr. Speaker, executing living wills and powers of attorney are so important, I plan to introduce legislation next week that encourages all Americans at all stages of life to prepare these advance directives. My legislation will offer a one-time, refundable tax credit to those individuals who prepare an advance directive.

The refundability of this tax credit is essential in incentivizing lower-income Americans, who often are unaware or unable to adequately prepare for end-of-life medical decisions, to prepare advance directives to ensure that their wishes are honored and valuable health care resources are used where they are needed and wanted.

Mr. Speaker, it has been shown that medical care at the end of life consumes almost 15 percent of our country's health care budget and nearly 30 percent of the Medicare budget. In addition, according to an article in the Journal of the American Medical Association, it has been estimated that hospice care and advance directives can save between 25 and 40 percent of health care costs just during the last month of life.

Mr. Speaker, the Federal Government needs to provide an incentive to the American people to have these conversations and to take these important actions. It is not only in the best interests of patients and families, but also our country's health care system and the American taxpayer.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to encourage my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to join me in cosponsoring this important piece of legislation.

FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY

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

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, there seems to be a new-found sense of fiscal responsibility on the Republican majority side of the aisle. There should be.

Last year, the fiscal year was a record deficit, nearly \$600 billion. Not only did the United States of America borrow over \$400 billion from investors, and a great deal from China and other foreign interests, they also borrowed the entire Social Security trust fund surplus for the year, about \$180 billion, money that was intended to pay for future benefits for Social Security retirees to ensure that those benefits would be there to pay for the looming retirement of the baby boomers.

Mr. Speaker, \$180 billion extracted only from people who earn salary and wages and earn less than \$90,000 a year was borrowed and spent. Some of it was

spent to give tax refunds to profitable corporations, some of it was spent to give huge new tax breaks to people who earn over \$300,000, and some of it was spent on other Federal Government purposes.

Now, they are projecting that the first quarter next year, we will borrow more money in one quarter than any quarter in the history of the United States of America. So they maybe should get some new-found fiscal responsibility on that side of the aisle. They have raised the Federal debt by 62 percent in 5 short years. George Bush has more than doubled the Federal debt in 5 short years.

Now, DICK CHENEY, the Vice President, of course says deficits do not matter, but I think they do, and I think the American people know they do. They know they cannot spend more money than they know they have in income every month forever. They know they cannot continuously borrow money on their credit cards or from the bank.

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Likewise, the United States of America. Now, what are they doing about it. Well, they are bringing up with great fanfare a bill tomorrow called the reconciliation bill, \$53.9 billion of supposed new income or cuts and programs. There are some real cuts. There are real cuts that will hit hard at middle-income and struggling families. The biggest cuts are to the student loan programs, \$14.3 billion, adding about 6,000 bucks to the average kid's public school 4-year cost with new interest charges and up-front charges. Cuts in foster care, cuts in long-term care. This is the family values side of the aisle over here, they like to claim, remember. And many other vital Federal programs.

And then they are assuming some phony revenues, 50 times as much per acre to lease out the Alaska National Wildlife Refuge with unknown reserves, as we just got a few months ago for the naval petroleum reserve with known reserve closer to the pipeline. So phony baloney and mean cuts.

But that is not even the end of the story. They are going to follow these mean cuts and the phony baloney with \$70 billion in real cuts to the richest among us, predominantly weighted toward those who earn over \$300,000 a year, particularly toward those who earn over a \$1.2 million a year. They are averaging \$120,000 a year in tax cuts now. Under their proposal, it will be even more generous, and that is because those wealthy people, also their contributors, are going to trickle down on the rest of us and bring new prosperity to America and wipe out the deficits with that new prosperity.

After all, when we wax their yachts, when we cut their lawns, when we do other things that they will employ us to do when they are not spending the money overseas or on luxury items produced overseas that will bring jobs to

America. As they say famously on that side, they never saw a poor person give anybody a job. No, those poor people are doing the work and paying taxes, unlike the rich people who they are favoring and showering money upon, and they are borrowing money and taking money from programs that are important to middle-income and poor people to give to the rich people.

Trickle down economics. And in the end, guess what? They are actually going to increase the debt of the United States and the deficit because they are going to cut taxes for rich people by \$70 billion. They are going to assume some phony baloney and make mean cuts against middle-income and working families for \$54 billion. They are going to increase the deficit by \$16 billion although they claim that is not true because the rich people are going to trickle on us and that will create more revenue than the \$16 billion of new deficit that is created.

You might think it is April Fools, but it is not. It is just another move by the arrogant majority, thinking that America is not watching. Well, I think America is beginning to pay attention; and I urge my colleagues to oppose this mean-spirited, short-sighted legislation. Assume real fiscal responsibility, reimpose tax fairness for this country, and let us give a fair deal to the American people.

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

(Mr. BISHOP of Utah addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

ACCOUNTABILITY OF CONGRESS

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to go out of order and address the House for 5 minutes.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FITZPATRICK of Pennsylvania). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

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

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, indeed, tomorrow this House will hear the debate on the budget resolution, and I think the country needs to hear the debate. I think the country needs to see that all of us in Congress, on both sides of aisle, are accountable. They need to see that we are results driven. We are results oriented, and they need to see some success from this body.

Now, our commitment, my commitment is to the hard-working Americans who pay taxes in this country. I think we have an obligation to the taxpayers of this country to redesign government when necessary, to reform programs if they are not working well, and always ensure that those Federal programs,

those Federal agencies are working at peak performance.

Mr. Speaker, it would not be saying too much to say we need to rebuild some confidence in America. If we can cut some red tape then I think we should. Where local solutions will work, we need to empower local authorities to envision and utilize those solutions. The Secretary of Health and Human Services was addressing our committee yesterday and talked about preparation for pandemic flu and he was challenged and someone said, Mr. Secretary, you need to have a plan. Do not let the local people have to come up with a plan. And the Secretary does have a plan. But he said, local activities are going to be important as well. You do not need the Secretary of HHS telling every school district across the country when they can and cannot open their doors.

I could not agree with him more. Mr. Speaker, we need to modernize some of our Federal programs, where we are using tin-can telephones when the rest of the world is using satellite communications, and it is not right. We need to reform government. We need to set priorities. And sometimes that means making some tough choices. Certainly, Mr. Speaker, we need to learn from the past, learn from the past, whether it be the Spanish flu outbreak of 1918, learn from the past of previous wars this country has fought; but along those same lines, we need to utilize that information from the past to plan for our future.

Now, Mr. Speaker, a few weeks ago, 2 weeks ago, my committee, the Committee on Energy and Commerce, spent 3 days, 3 days on a markup to produce a plan, a plan that reforms government and leads to greater value for dollars spent, particularly in the Medicaid program. We held hearings through the spring and the summer leading up to this legislation. We heard testimony from Members; leaders of the National Governors Association, a body of 35 bipartisan Governors in this country, who came to us with a set of principles and said we had a lot of ideas that we put out on the table, but here are seven things that everyone of us, 35 out of 35 agreed upon.

And, Mr. Speaker, we crafted legislation that incorporated at least six of those seven principles. We left out some judicial reforms that I would have liked to have seen in the bill, but maybe that is for another day. But those other reforms were crafted in legislation and then we spent 3 days, 3 days on the Committee of Energy and Commerce talking about that.

Mr. Speaker, at the end of the day, I think we have crafted a legislation that is going to save Medicaid for the poor, the truly infirm, the people that really need it in this country. The default position was to see more and more people turned off the Medicaid roles by the States as they could no longer afford to keep up with the expenditures in Medicaid. So we are