

Republicans have recommended the termination of 98 inefficient and duplicative programs which would bring American taxpayers a savings of more than \$4.3 billion. Yet the Democrats continue to obstruct while singing the tax-and-spend tune. It is time to change the record.

The American people have repeatedly rallied against more taxes and more spending. It is time we listen to their song.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FITZPATRICK of Pennsylvania). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mr. HINCHEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE VETERANS HISTORY PROJECT

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

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, this year marks the 30th anniversary of the end of Vietnam War and the 60th anniversary of the end of Second World War. It also marks the fifth anniversary of the Veterans History Project.

Five years ago Congress unanimously passed legislation that I authored creating the Veterans History Project. It was ushered through Congress with the help of Representative Amo Houghton, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER), and Senators CLELAND and HAGEL.

The idea behind the project is simple, to collect, preserve and share with current and future generations alike the stories and history of American veterans and those who supported them on the home front. The project spans from World War I to the present, covering both World Wars, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, the Gulf War and the current conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq.

It acts as both a learning tool and a living memorial to our Nation's veterans. Since its inception in 2000, the Veterans History Project's success has far exceeded our expectations. Despite modest funding, the Veterans History Project has an ever-increasing collection with more than 40,000 histories contributed by America's veterans, making it the largest oral history collection in the world today. Each story is unique, but taken together as a whole, the compilation puts a familiar face on the universal realities of war, courage and fear, horror and exhilaration, sorrow and triumph.

These collections include oral interviews, written, audio and video recordings, and authentic diaries, maps, letters and photographs. Thanks to the dedicated staff at the Library of Congress, where it is being housed, and the thousands of contributions from our

many veterans across the country, the Veterans History Project has captured the American spirit better than any history book ever could.

The project also provides a way for local veterans to connect with students, community groups and each other. Across the country teachers have used the project as an eye-opening history lesson for their students. Veterans have been able to meet with classes, sharing their experiences with students and having their stories recorded as part of the project.

Two of the biggest supporters of the Veterans History Project in my congressional district are Bill Bruning, a veteran and Patriotic Officer for American Legion Post 52 in LaCrosse, Wisconsin, and Karen Schoenfeld. Karen teaches at a charter school in LaCrosse and includes the Veterans History Project in her class. Inspired by the veterans she and her class have met as part of the project, Karen wrote this beautiful poem that I would like to share. It is entitled "I Never Saw Your Face Before."

"I never saw your face before, I never knew your name. But now our paths have crossed, and I will never be the same.

"I never saw the flag before. Not really, not its soul. I only saw the stars, the stripes, a fabric on a pole.

"Now as I gaze upon our flag, I can see young faces, all called away from our proud land to other distant places.

"They did what they were called to do. They put their dreams on hold. They knew that others needed them. They did what they were told.

"And you, my friend, have taught me this, the sacrifices made. You helped me know what I have earned from the price that others paid.

"I've been in class, I've read the books. I've seen the movies, too. But now I know our freedom's price, all this I've learned from you."

This beautiful poem is a testament to the power this project has had in educating Americans about our bravest men and women.

The Veterans History Project is a salute and an ongoing memorial to these many brave individuals who have sacrificed to protect the ideals of this great Nation and those who continue that proud tradition of service today.

On this Veterans Day, I invite my colleagues in Congress, as well as all Americans, to participate in this nationwide effort to honor our veterans. Anyone can contact their Representative's or Senator's office for more information on the Veterans History Project, or you can contact the Library of Congress through their Web site at loc.gov.

On this Veterans Day may we all take time to thank the veterans in our life, perhaps do an oral history interview with them or find some other way to show them our gratitude.

May God bless our men and women in uniform wherever they may be serving our country today. May God bless our

veterans and their families and may God continue to bless these United States of America.

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

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

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

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

THE RIGHT PRIORITIES FOR AMERICA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands (Mrs. CHRISTENSEN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, after claiming that they believe in fiscal responsibility and balanced budgets, the Republicans in their years of control in Washington have created the deepest budget deficits in American history and spiraling national debt.

Now, after abandoning fiscal responsibility and borrowing to pay for tax cuts and to reconstruct Baghdad, Republicans say they must cut programs that primarily serve disadvantaged Americans in order to pay for reconstructing the Katrina-leveled gulf region. No other emergency funding required offsets.

They claim that they are going to get tough on Federal spending through the budget reconciliation process where they propose a cut over \$50 billion. They are getting tough all right, tough on the weak and needy, because this is where the cutting will be done: \$10 billion in Medicaid cuts to health services for poor children and long-term care patients, and increasing the costs of prescription drugs for those beneficiaries; \$844 million in food stamp cuts, eliminating nutrition and school lunch and breakfast benefits for hundreds of thousands of families and children; \$14 billion in cuts to student aid programs, raising the costs of college for students and their families through the increased interest rates and loan fees. And it cuts all discretionary spending programs, such as veterans' health care, by a 2 percent across-the-board cut.

I listened to some of my Republican friends yesterday who likened the increased spending to increasing a child's allowance, but the analogy does not work. These cuts are not the same as taking away an allowance which a parent gives a child for candy, ice cream, movies, books and incidentals. It is more like taking away the child's meals, not taking them to the doctor,

denying them college tuition, and then the parents borrowing for a vacation and having the child have to pay for it out of their allowance.

Many reports and the Washington Post even in an editorial last month pointed out that the Republican post-Katrina budget plan would add to the deficit, not reduce it, because the required spending cuts do not come close to paying for the at least \$70 billion in new tax cuts provided for in the budget, cuts that mostly benefit the wealthiest Americans and that apparently remain sacrosanct no matter what other expenses pile up.

I think the American public needs to know what the Congressional Budget Office said about some of those cuts. That office said last Thursday that the House Medicaid cuts would save more than \$30 billion over 10 years. However, that office, the Congressional Budget Office, also pointed out that these savings will not come from the premiums and copays the Republicans say will create the savings, but they will come because those cuts would keep our most vulnerable communities and residents out of the health care system.

Many of those people dropped would be the hard-working poor. The majority of those dropped, like those in Tennessee like I visited with last week, would be African American and other minorities. But there will be large numbers of people with disabilities, children, people living in our rural areas and the poor of every race, ethnicity and nationality.

So instead of closing the health care disparity gap, which causes close to 100,000 premature, preventable deaths in this country every year, this body, should it pass the Republican budget package, would by that act be increasing those deaths and continuing the health care inequality which the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. called the most shocking and inhumane of all.

The poor folks, the folks in our rural areas, people with disabilities, seniors, people of color, immigrants, and our children should not be made to carry the burden of the war and pay for the luxuries of the rich. At the same time the Republicans are proposing such spending cuts, they are preparing to move forward with \$106 billion in additional tax cuts this year that will largely benefit the wealthy.

Will it save money? No. The net result of the GOP budget plan is \$100 billion of debt over the next 5 years.

As I said to my American Legion this past weekend, America is being transformed by the actions of this administration and this Congress into a country I do not recognize, one that has gone far astray from the values and principles on which it was founded and on which this United States became the leader of the free world. What this budget reconciliation will do and what it says about this country is not what they fought for and laid their lives on the line for. It dishonors their service

and that of the men and women who are fighting for this Nation even today.

So it is my hope and prayer that my friends on the other side of the aisle will abandon the irresponsible and heartless budget plan. Now is not the time to cut programs that are vital to the victims of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita and to our most vulnerable citizens who, like those victims, also face smaller but just as devastating socio-economic hurricanes every day, while they have cut taxes for the most fortunate and add to the deficit.

These are not the actions of a people who value life as Americans do. These are not the right priorities for our country.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Florida (Mr. CORRINE BROWN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

CUTS AND BLOOD

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

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, since Hurricane Katrina and Rita and the budget reconciliation talks began, practically all that we have heard in this House about budgets has been cut, cut, cut, and cut. And of course, Mr. Speaker, where I come from back in Chicago, if all that you do is cut, cut and cut, all that you get is blood, blood, and more blood. And, of course, the blood will be on the hands of those who have the knife.

Much of the debate in this House during the past 2 months has been around the majority's proposal to cut mandatory programs by \$35 to \$50 billion over the next 5 years. Just the idea of some of these Draconian measures is enough to send chills up and down one's spine because we are talking about programs that provide basic assistance to vulnerable, low-income families and individuals.

In essence and in reality, we are talking about Robin Hood in reverse; that is, take from the poor and give to the rich. We are talking about programs that provide help to people with disabilities, people who make use of the earned income tax credit, people who use Supplemental Security Income programs, Temporary Assistance to Needy Families and individuals who are independent elderly.

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Some of the proposed cuts include \$11.9 billion to Medicaid, and I can just imagine what this will do to the more than 20 hospitals, health centers, private physician practices in my district. Imagine the large number of children and poor people who will not be able to access adequate health care.

Student loans, \$14.3 billion. Look at the number of students who will not be able to go to college, to get the education that we all know that they must have if they are to compete and survive in a highly technical, service-oriented economy. We think of all of those who would not be able to go to law school, medical school, who would not be in a position to provide the services that our country will need.

Child support, \$4.9 billion. Imagine what will happen to the large number of children in my district being raised by single mothers and how difficult it will be for them to receive child support payments.

Foster care, \$577 million. My district has one of the highest percentages of children in foster care in the Nation. Any reduction in these funds will seriously imperil our ability to provide and care for these children.

Food stamps, unimaginable. I mean, how can you think of cutting food stamps, with all of the individuals who are homeless, hungry, in many instances hopeless and helpless, individuals who are unemployed, laid off from their jobs and having difficulties with acquiring the basic necessities to sustain life.

Mr. Speaker, I am strongly in favor of our government operating on sound fiscal policies. I am in favor of reducing the deficit to the extent prudent and possible. I am in favor of rebuilding the areas damaged by Katrina and Rita, but I am not in favor of continuing to throw money away on a war that we never should have been in in the first place. I am not in favor of giving huge tax breaks and cuts to the wealthiest 1 percent of the population. I am in favor of budget reconciliation, but not on the backs of the poor, needy, and most vulnerable sectors of our society.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I could do nothing less than oppose. As a matter of fact, it would be a dereliction of my duty and responsibility if I were to vote for the Budget Reconciliation Act that is before us. I will vote prudently and sensibly.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FITZPATRICK of Pennsylvania). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATERS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. WATERS addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

DEFICIT REDUCTION ACT OF 2005

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, you know, there is an age-old drama that Americans have seen play out time and time again here in Washington, and I