

Strickland	Tiaht	Weldon (PA)
Sullivan	Tiberi	Weller
Sweeney	Turner	Westmoreland
Tancredo	Upton	Whitfield
Tanner	Viscolosky	Wicker
Taylor (MS)	Walden (OR)	Wilson (NM)
Taylor (NC)	Walsh	Wilson (SC)
Terry	Wamp	Wolf
Thomas	Wasserman	Wynn
Thompson (MS)	Schultz	Young (AK)
Thornberry	Weldon (FL)	Young (FL)

NAYS—106

Ackerman	Johnson (IL)	Petri
Andrews	Johnson, E. B.	Ramstad
Baird	Jones (OH)	Rangel
Baldwin	Kelly	Rothman
Bass	Kildee	Rush
Becerra	Kilpatrick (MI)	Sabo
Blumenauer	Kirk	Sánchez, Linda
Boswell	Kucinich	T.
Capps	Leach	Sanchez, Loretta
Cardin	Lee	Sanders
Case	Lewis (GA)	Schakowsky
Castle	LoBiondo	Scott (VA)
Conyers	Lofgren, Zoe	Serrano
Cooper	Maloney	Shays
Cummings	Markey	Slaughter
Davis (IL)	McCollum (MN)	Smith (NJ)
DeGette	McDermott	Smith (WA)
Delahunt	McKinney	Solis
Dingell	McNulty	Stark
Doggett	Meeke (NY)	Stupak
Ehlers	Menendez	Tauscher
Engel	Michaud	Thompson (CA)
Eshoo	Millender-	Tierney
Farr	McDonald	Towns
Filner	Miller, George	Udall (CO)
Fitzpatrick (PA)	Moore (WI)	Udall (NM)
Frank (MA)	Nadler	Van Hollen
Grijalva	Napolitano	Velázquez
Hastings (FL)	Oberstar	Waters
Hinchey	Obey	Watson
Hoekstra	Olver	Watt
Holt	Owens	Waxman
Honda	Pallone	Weiner
Inslee	Pastor	Wexler
Jackson (IL)	Paul	Woolsey
Johnson (CT)	Payne	Wu

ANSWERED "PRESENT"—2

Burton (IN)	Saxton
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NOT VOTING—18

Baca	Hostettler	McGovern
Davis, Jo Ann	Hyde	Miller, Gary
Emanuel	Istook	Myrick
Gutierrez	Johnson, Sam	Radanovich
Harman	Jones (NC)	Reyes
Hefley	Koibe	Roybal-Allard

□ 0504

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ changed her vote from "nay" to "yea." So the conference report was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

VACATING ORDERING OF YEAS AND NAYS ON HOUSE RESOLUTION 633, HONORING HELEN SEWELL ON THE OCCASION OF HER RETIREMENT FROM THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. NUSSLE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the ordering of the yeas and nays on House Resolution 633 be vacated to the end that the Chair put the question de novo.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HASTINGS of Washington). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Iowa?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. NEY)

that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 633.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON S. 1932, DEFICIT REDUCTION ACT OF 2005

Mr. NUSSLE. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 640, I call up the conference report on the Senate bill (S. 1932) to provide for reconciliation pursuant to section 202(a) of the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2006.

The Clerk read the title of the Senate bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 640, the conference report is considered read.

(For conference report and statement, see prior proceedings of the House of today.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Iowa (Mr. NUSSLE) and the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPRATT) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Iowa.

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

Mr. Speaker, we have a plan to reform the government and achieve savings. We present that plan to the House.

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

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume. We have before us a conference report that everybody should understand there has really been no conference in which House and Senate Democrats have had any meaningful role.

Our objection to this bill begins with its title: The Deficit Reduction Act of 2005. Let us be honest, this bill does not reduce the deficit. When this reconciliation bill with spending cuts is paired with its counterpart, the reconciliation bill with tax cuts, the deficit is actually increased, not decreased; and the increase in the deficit gets worse when you add, as I think you should, the \$50 billion in other tax cuts passed by the House over the last few months.

At the outset, the proponents of this bill called it necessary in order to help pay for hurricanes Katrina and Rita. That has proven to be a false claim, too. This bill has nothing to do with paying for Katrina. It has everything to do with facilitating further tax cuts. This bill comes out of a budget resolution that calls for a total of \$106 billion in new and additional tax cuts, \$70 billion reconciled, \$36 billion unreconciled.

So the spending cuts in this bill are really just the first step in a three-step process. Step two will come when the tax cuts reconciliation bill emerges from conference. When these two bills are paired, the result will be a deficit bigger by about \$60 billion over 5 years.

Then there is a third step. There is an increase in the national debt pending, an increase in the national debt ceiling of \$781 billion necessary to accommodate budgets like the 2006 budget being passed here tonight. This increase was deemed approved when the Republican budget resolution passed the House several months ago.

Over the last 4 fiscal years, to make room for budgets of the Bush administration and budgets that have been passed by the majority in this House, we have had to raise the legal debt ceiling of the United States by \$3.15 trillion to accommodate those budgets.

Once upon a time, the purpose of reconciliation was to rein in the deficit; but as you can see from the charts I am about to put up, and I knew this was just what you wanted me to serve you for breakfast this morning, more numbers and more charts, so I did not dis-

appoint. First of all, when you put this chart up, you can see what the debt increases have been over the last 4 or 5 fiscal years: \$3.15 trillion. As Casey Stengel said, "If you don't believe it, you can look it up." \$3.15 trillion.

Next, let me show you what reconciliation in past years has accomplished as opposed to what reconciliation this year will accomplish in terms of reducing the deficit. In past years, for example the Bush budget summit in 1990, the deficit reduction due to reconciliation was \$482 billion. In the Clinton budget in 1993, the deficit reduction due to reconciliation was \$433 billion. In the balanced budget agreement of 1997, reconciliation produced savings of \$118 billion over 5 years. This bill saves nothing. It aggravates and worsens the deficit.

Now, it is fair to ask: Why have the Republicans, those who put this budget together, why have they put spending cuts in one bill and tax cuts in another bill? Why did they not just combine the two so we could keep tabs on everything with one reconciliation bill? Which is typically what we have done in the past.

Well, there is a reason for this hiatus between spending cuts and tax cuts. The spending cuts made by this bill will hit the young, the old, the sick, and the poor, and hit them rather hard. The savings realized from these spending cuts will help offset tax cuts for top-bracket taxpayers. Our Republican colleagues want to avoid that connection, so they have produced two separate bills, one for tax cuts, and then a little later on, one for spending cuts.

Who bears the brunt of these bills? Single mothers still do. Despite some moderation in the effect of the cuts that were proposed originally, single mothers still take about a \$2 billion hit. Students struggling to pay for their college education. The hit on student loans is \$12.7 billion. The sick and the poor, whose only access to medical care is Medicaid. Medicaid still suffers a hit of \$7 billion.

So these cuts have been moderated in the conference with the Senate, but

some of the worst of the House bill provisions are still there. A bit less significant, but still hurtful to the people who are the victims of these particular cuts.

And bear this in mind. Bear this in mind. This bill still increases, for all of the cuts it makes, still increases the deficit, still uses spending cuts to offset tax cuts, and still cuts services for the least among us, the most vulnerable and poorest Americans.

In short, there are many reasons this bill does not live up to its title, the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005. It makes deep and painful cuts still, only to pave the way for new and additional tax cuts and never mind the deficit. The result is a larger deficit. So in this respect, today's legislation is like the budget resolution that set it in motion. This is one of a series of fiscal actions that will cause the debt ceiling of the United States at the end of this year to be moved to \$3.15 trillion.

Bear in mind that when the Bush administration came to office, it inherited a surplus and predicted that this surplus would endure even if its trillion dollar tax cuts were adopted. Well, the Bush budget was adopted, and in fiscal 2005 the bottom line was not a surplus of \$269 billion, as once projected, but a deficit of \$319 billion.

□ 0515

Realistic estimates from CBO show that if you take the Bush budget of 2006 as last proposed in July, and they are updated, if you take that budget and run it out 10 years with all the assumptions made in the Bush budget, these are the results. The deficit of last year, which was \$320 billion, this is CBO, will go to \$640 billion, if you follow the trajectory shown here, the curve shown here. The deficit goes from \$320 billion to \$640 billion. It doubles.

Debt service on the debt goes from \$182 billion last year to \$458 billion in 10 years, and the national debt doubles. That is the course we are embarked upon as we do one more part of a long series of fiscal actions that are leading us deeper and deeper into debt, and nobody should be fooled by what is happening here on the House floor tonight. Once the pieces are all put together, and you can see the whole puzzle, this means a deeper deficit and no resolution to the problem before us.

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

Mr. NUSSLE. Mr. Speaker, I would just note for the record that it is now the break of dawn. It is no longer the dead of night.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, it may be 5:15 in the morning, but that is not our fault. We would like to have done this in the light of day with a little more time to look at this package. Here is what we have got just 1 hour ago.

When we unpacked the package to see what was in it, we had the Speaker's press release, which told us earlier in the evening that, by golly, you

would come up with \$41.6 billion in total spending reductions. We got this package, and, finally, looking through 700 pages, we finally got a summary of the action taken, and they came to \$39.7 billion. It was \$1.9 billion less than the Speaker had claimed earlier. Even for government work, that is not very close.

Here is the Speaker's press release. We discern that this difference came from the fact that between the Speaker's press release and the release of this voluminous document here called the budget resolution, or the budget reconciliation bill, there was a deal made with the medical equipment manufacturers and suppliers with respect to Medicare reimbursement, a deal that costs your total package \$1.9 billion.

If I am not right, I would like to be corrected, which leads us to ask, if you could adjust for them to the tune of \$1.9 billion, couldn't we have gone back and looked at student loans and moderated the cuts being inflicted on them? Couldn't we have gone back and looked at children with delinquent dads and moderated what we were doing with respect to the cuts in child support enforcement, foster care, and the other things that are still in this bill? If you could do that for the medical equipment manufacturers, couldn't you do it for the least of these?

Mr. Speaker, it may be 5:20 in the morning, but Mr. DINGELL is still up and ready for a good fight. I yield to the gentleman for 4 minutes.

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

Mr. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise against the conference report. I urge my colleagues to vote it down. This might be called a Christmas Carol. The Republicans give tax cuts to every Ebenezer Scrooge and his friends, and they raise the costs to the Cratchit family and take medical care away from Tiny Tim.

There is no way to hide the fact that these cuts hurt beneficiaries. Cuts in the Medicare program come directly from the families who depend on them, by raising their payments, making health care unaffordable, or by not paying for needed treatments when those families seek care. Millions of children will lose medically necessary benefits and face increases in the amount that their parents have to pay for them to go to the doctor.

Because this conference report allows, in fact it almost requires States to charge families four times more today than they do to see their doctor at this time, we know this size increase will force people to forgo needed care. Millions of families will seek cuts in important services in mental health, physical and rehabilitation therapies, dental and vision benefits.

What good can come from allowing States to deny eyeglasses to children who cannot see in school or hearing assistance to children who cannot hear.

One in nine children with special health care needs are those who reside in military families and rely on Medicaid for supplemental health care jeopardized by this bill.

The conference report seeks to raise health care premiums on individuals who depend on Medicaid. A major portion of the savings of this provision will come from families, including children, losing health insurance coverage. There are more than 45 million uninsured now in this Nation. This bill will add significantly to that number. Nearly 40 children's groups, March of Dimes, Family Voices, oppose these cuts. AARP has written to urge the Congress not to harm those who rely on this program for long-term care. One hundred forty national groups, American Nurses Association, the American Academy of Pediatrics, wrote in opposition to benefit cuts and increases in cost sharing.

There is another little thing here that my colleagues will want to know about, and that is very interesting. The conference report takes away from the moneys that we could give to first responders to adequately respond from the spectrum sales that will occur, and it gives those monies as it gives other monies to tax cuts for the well-to-do.

The end result, my dear friend, is that first responders, public health, public safety will be shortchanged. Our first responders risk their lives to leave no one behind, but the Republicans here leave the first responders behind, and they are going to have a nice little tax increase for those who are going to see their television sets go blank because of the change from the normal analog spectrum to the digital spectrum which is going to take place shortly.

You can expect to hear from all of your constituents that they have had to go out to spend \$60 to get a converter box to go on top of their television. This, my friends, is a Christmas present of our Republican friends to the American people, tax cuts for the wealthy, cost increases on health for the small children and for the families on limited income and cuts in needed services to the first responders and spectrum and increases in the cost to ordinary citizens to continue watching television.

This is a bad program. I urge my colleagues to reject it.

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER), the Democratic whip.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, Ruth Marcus, a reporter for the Washington Post, wrote the other day that those who forget history are condemned to be spun by it. I remember history. I have been here for a quarter of a century, and I have heard the representations made by Republicans in the administration and on this floor over those years, telling me how their policies were going to lead to fiscal responsibility, reduction of deficits, elimination of debt. It hasn't happened. Not

in one of the 17 years has that happened.

In fact, when Washington is under the total control, absolute control of Republicans over the last 5 years, we have had the worst deficit performance in our history, and we have had much larger spending than we had under Bill Clinton.

There is only one person that can stop spending in America. You have heard me say this before. It is the President of the United States. He can veto a bill, and we have never in the 25 years I have served here overridden a President's veto that said we were spending too much.

As a matter of fact, the only veto override that I remember in the Reagan years was when we overrode a veto where President Reagan said we did not spend enough money. In that instance it was on defense; \$4 trillion of deficits under Republican Presidents, \$62.5 billion surplus under a Democratic President. That is the experience of the 25 years.

My friends, if we were responsible people, we would say we will cut spending, and then we will cut revenues. Because if we have the courage to cut spending, then we do not need to pay for the things that we cut. But if we do not have the courage to pay for what we buy, we are misserving the American public and, even more deeply, our children and our grandchildren. That is the consequence of your policy.

You come here cutting revenues. That is an honest policy, but you do not have the courage to cut the spending. You cut \$50 billion, you say, in this bill, but you then cut \$56 billion in revenue. You don't have to be much of a math expert to know that that is a \$6 billion addition to the deficit.

Ladies and gentlemen, America expects better of us. America expects honest leadership. America deserves honest policies. The absence of honest policies has led to us incurring \$1.5 trillion of deficits in less than 60 months. We can do better. We ought to do better. We must do better. Reject this irresponsible bill.

Mr. NUSSLE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume just to tell the gentleman from Maryland that our tax policies have created 4.5 million new jobs in the past 30 months. Our Nation's unemployment rate has dropped to 5 percent lower than the average rate of the last three decades. Revenue coming into Washington has increased this year by 15 percent, and we have reduced the deficit over the last 2 years by over \$200 billion.

We have a plan. It is reforming government. It is reducing the deficit, and we need to pass that plan, and we need to stop just talking about fairy tales and Dickens and all sorts of things that are very interesting but are certainly not getting us to the results that we need. We have a plan to provide those results, and we need to pass that plan this morning.

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

Mr. SPRATT. I yield to the gentleman from Maryland 3½ minutes.

Mr. HOYER. The chairman of the Budget Committee came to this floor and put a bag over his head because he was ashamed of serving in this House. He was ashamed.

Mr. NUSSLE. Would the gentleman yield on that point?

Mr. HOYER. Not yet.

Mr. NUSSLE. Well, the gentleman referenced me.

Mr. HOYER. I did reference you and I may do it again, but I will not yield yet.

He came to this floor, and he said he was ashamed. He was ashamed because of a bank scandal. It wasn't handled very well but there were no tax dollars involved, nobody lost anything and the account at Riggs Bank was never overdrawn. But, my friends, under his administration over the last 5 years, \$1.5 trillion in deficits.

Now, let me tell you something. Economic performance, these are facts. This is not Dickens or Chaucer or Shakespeare or anybody else. These are facts from your budget book. Average weekly earnings, Bush I, minus 1.1 percent; Bush II, minus three-tenths of 1 percent; Bill Clinton, plus eight-tenths of 1 percent; Median household income, Bush I, minus eight-tenths of 1 percent; Bush II, minus nine-tenths of 1 percent; Clinton, plus 1.6 percent.

□ 0530

Poverty, Bush I, went up 1.8 percent. Bush II it has gone up 1.4 percent; Clinton, down 3.5 percent. Jobs, you talked about jobs. Bush I, plus-2.13 million; Bush II, now about 4 million; Clinton, 21 million new jobs average. Now, let me give you the averages. Bush I, 44,500 per month; Bush II, 34,678 per month; Clinton, 228,464 per month. Real GDP. Bush I, up 2.1; Clinton, plus-3.6 percent; Bush II, plus-2.6 percent.

Now, ladies and gentlemen, we like a lot of polls. The Dow Jones, that is sort of a poll on economic security, growth, confidence in our economy, Dow Jones under Bush I, up 46.7 percent. Under Bush II, now it has gone up a little bit the last few days, about 1 percent, from the time he took over to now.

Now, listen to this, my friends. This is a poll that counts about people who think our economy is doing well. Up under Clinton, remember it was 46 percent under Bush I, 1 percent under this President, under Bill Clinton, 255 percent increase in those 8 years.

So in conclusion, my friend, I will tell you that on every statistic, the representations you have made have been wrong. I will tell you the last 2 months, the last 2 months, ladies and gentlemen, the deficit in America went up \$130 billion of deficit spending in just the last 2 months. That is the fiscal management that presents this program on the floor today. America ought to reject it, and we surely should on their behalf.

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. McDERMOTT).

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, at this hour of the night, I am not sure who in the world is listening to whom. Certainly, none of our constituents are awake. They have all fallen asleep, except those who are total insomniacs.

But I had the experience last week when I was home of going to the City Club in Seattle. And they have a yearly meeting where they talk about how the year has gone and what they expect for the next year. It is sort of looking forward to the next year and what is going to happen, and they pick out important citizens from our city to put on the panel. And the question was asked of the panel, what is the thing you worry about most in the future?

Now, one of the panelists was a guy who some of you may know, his name is William Gates, Sr. He is the father of Bill Gates. He runs the Gates Foundation. And his answer was this: I worry most that people do not realize how close we are to economic collapse in this country. The spending that is going on, and he went on to elaborate, in terms of the issues that we face today, with a bubble of real estate out there, with everybody buying houses on interest-only loans, on the huge credit card debt in this country, on people working full-time and not having any increase in their wages.

Now, you can look at certain figures and we have the battle here of the figures. And if you are sitting at home thinking what are people thinking about all those flying back and forth, because their experience is that their wages are not going up. Prices are still going up. Their cable TV is costing more than it did and their gas is costing more than it did. But their wages are not going up.

Now, they read that the GDP is going well and that more taxes are coming in. That is not affecting the basic people in this society. And this bill, this so-called reconciliation bill, I do not know whoever thought that that was a good term for it, because we are not reconciling the people at the top and the people at the bottom. This is a bill directed at the people at the bottom. The people on the top are doing great.

There is nobody in this room who is going to suffer for one single minute in the next year. Not one single one of you will be cold or hungry or without the ability to go see a physician or receive a dental appointment when you need it, when you have got a toothache.

How many States are there in the United States that still have a dental program for the people on TANF? Practically none. And we stand out here and say that this is a great budget and you are going to cut, it is baloney. It is a sham and we ought to vote "no" on it.

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of the time.

Mr. Speaker, lest anyone think that we are about to launch a bill here that

will lead us to a balanced budget, let me disabuse you of that illusion.

First of all, let us look at some of the specific items in this particular package to see whether or not they are real in the way of budget reduction.

For example, this bill calls for the abolition of mandatory spending to administer the student loan program. Now, how do you administer the student loan program if you do not provide the funding for it? If you do not provide the mandatory funding for it, it has to come out of discretionary funding. That means we will be underfunding No Child Left Behind and other discretionary educational programs by \$2 billion a year more, because that is where the money for administration of the student loan programs will have to come from if you bar its coming from mandatory spending. It is a phony cut.

Secondly, \$3.6 billion is scored as a revenue to offset these spending increases, \$3.6 billion in PBGC premiums. Now why is that not allowable? In my good accounting book, if you book all of the liabilities that PBGC is faced with over the foreseeable future, there is no net balance in that account, even after you add this \$3.6 billion. That money is entrusted. It is encumbered and it cannot fairly be said to be available in the general fund to offset other spending. In truth, it will be spent much, much too soon anyway, and we will have to replenish it.

Third, child support enforcement. You have moderated that. You have brought it down from \$4.9 billion, which was absurd, to \$1.5 billion, which still hurts. You either shift that expense to the States that are responsible for child support enforcement, or parents who are looking to delinquent parents to pay their child support will have less assistance, and they will collect less in the way of child support. It is a false economy.

You say there are no tax increases in your bill. But the PBGC premium increase is certainly equivalent to the same thing. It will come out of paychecks. And the Medicare part B under your provisions is certainly going up. It will come out of Social Security checks. It is offset.

And then there is another thing about your bill that is myopic that gives us real problems with it. In looking for places to cut, you wholly ignore any kind of revenue effects connected with your tax cut agenda. And the way you are able to do this, and avoid responsibility for it, is you break the tax cuts into so many small pieces that you clutter the audit trail and make it hard for anybody, Members and otherwise, to follow just how big the tax tab, the tax cut tab is adding up to.

So let me take two charts here and try to reconstruct the path, the audit trail of tax cuts that has been implemented since the budget resolution for 2006 was passed just a few minutes ago, a few months ago, and what it means for the bottom line, that is, the deficit.

Let us start with the highway bill passed earlier this year. This revenue

impact is about \$500 million over 5 years. Next comes the energy policy act. Revenue loss over 5 years is \$7.9 billion. Then there is the Katrina tax relief act of 2005, which we adopted a few weeks ago. It has a revenue head of \$6 billion.

The biggest tax cuts come from that bill that is waiting in the wings for this bill to be passed; and it will come along a little bit later, the Tax Extension Reconciliation Act of 2006, 20005. It entails tax cuts for \$56 billion over 5 years passed by this House, \$80 billion over 10 years. Then there is the so-called Stealth Tax Relief Act, patching the alternative minimum tax for this year so that it affects no more taxpayers than it affected last year. The cost for 1 year: \$31.2 billion. Covers only 1 year.

The Tax Revision Act of 2005 is just a sundry assortment of tax measures; but it has a revenue cost too, \$153 million over 5 years. And finally there is the Gulf Opportunity Zone Act of 2005, revenue impact: \$7 billion.

Now, add all of these together and you will see that the total revenue impact entailed by these tax policies comes to \$110 billion. So this reconciliation bill offsets about \$40 billion of that amount, leaving an additional debt of around \$80 billion. That is the net effect of this reconciliation bill. That is why we say it does not decrease the deficit when you pair it up with this other reconciliation bill, the tax cuts. It increases the deficit. But that is not all. That is not the worst of it.

As we have shown, in patching up the AMT last year and again this year, it has to be fixed or it is going to raise the taxes of middle-income taxpayers for whom it was never intended. If we do basically in future years what we have done this year, the revenue impact of patching the AMT is shown right here, \$167 billion. That makes the revenue impact of all seven tax cuts \$307 billion. Offset your 40 billion against that, you have still got \$267 billion in tax reduction over the next 5 years. That is why I say it is myopic. You are looking for solutions to this problem and overlooking one of the bases of the problem, ignoring the fact that if we are going to tackle a deficit worth 320 and rising, we have got to have action on the spending side of the ledger and on the tax side of the ledger as well.

That is the problem here, and that is why I say if you leave here thinking, after voting for this bill, that you have begun a series of fiscal actions that will bring the budget to heel, that you will finally reduce the deficit of \$320 million, you are badly, badly disillusioned. Once again, let me show you a chart the CBO did for us last September when we asked them to take the budget that they had just portrayed out over a 10-year period of time and apply to it the President's budget policy as enunciated in his July mid-term review.

This is what happened. They said, you are going to follow this path right

here that takes you to 640 billion total deficit, a doubling of the deficit over 10 years. You are going to increase the debt service in the United States from \$182 billion to \$458 billion 10 years from now, and you are going to double the national debt. That is the path we are on, and this bill tonight will not divert us 1 inch. Indeed, it will aggravate that path and that is the plea that I am making to you. That is why you should vote against this bill. Reject it now. Come back next year. Let us do something realistic about deficit reduction.

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

Mr. NUSSLE. Mr. Speaker, on the heels of reducing the deficit over the last 2 years by \$200 billion, this year we Republicans passed a good budget plan, and it is continuing to work. This year, and we just completed the work, but the House of Representatives, under the leadership of chairman Jerry Lewis, passed its bills for appropriations on time and under budget. We just completed that work, and it is the first nondiscretionary freeze in over a generation.

□ 0545

We also committed that we were not going to allow an automatic tax increase on the American people, and Chairman Bill Thomas delivered.

We want to continue the strong economic growth and job creation, and it is working. And tonight we pledge to reform the automatic spending programs to get rid of waste, fraud, and abuse, and eight committees stepped forward to do the hard work to bring us here tonight.

Mr. Speaker, we have a plan. They do not. It reforms important government programs and saves money for the hardworking American taxpayers.

Let us pass our plan, finish our work, and let us go home.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, we have before us perhaps the most important piece of legislation that we will vote on all year, the Budget Reconciliation Spending Cuts Act. This \$40 billion of spending cuts have turned everything we believe in as a country on its head. The Republicans are actually asking the poor, the downtrodden, the disabled and the young to sacrifice on behalf of the rich. I want to emphasize that these cuts are not meant to free up money to rebuild the gulf coast, or reduce the deficit. In fact, many of these proposed cuts will actually hurt those affected by Katrina. Overall, the plan before the House, when combined with the tax cuts for the rich, will increase the deficit and the national debt.

From a healthcare perspective, there are 45 million Americans living today without any health insurance at all, but this budget cuts \$6.9 billion over 5 years from Medicaid and State Children's Health Insurance Program, SCHIP. Among other provisions, this bill increases cost-sharing for Medicaid beneficiaries and permits States to reduce benefits. Most of the billions of dollars of savings over 5 years is passed directly on to you, the constituents. This bill decimates health care funding for children, the elderly, and people with disabilities and making it even harder for families to afford nursing home care.

The conference report includes provisions that will reduce spending on Medicare by a net total of \$6.4 billion over 5 years.

As founder and co-chair of the Congressional Children's caucus, as a person who understands the value of our Nation's youth, and as a mother of two children, I really want to bring focus on the effect this bill will have on our Nation's children. If you have children who are in, or who are considering going to college, I want you to listen to this: this Republican spending cut will place an added burden of \$12.7 billion directly on our students over the next 5 years. This is accomplished through added fees on students, and increases of interest rates. Students borrowing money for college will pay thousands of dollars more on their students loans! This is in the face of college costs up over 7 percent this past year alone. Further, this bill targets child support funds as a wasteful government program, cutting \$1.5 billion from collections programs for dead-beat dads. It accomplishes this by ending the Federal match on child support spending that States finance with incentive payments.

Another important aspect of this bill is the addition of \$600 million for Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program. I appreciate the addition of this money in to the conference report, but am concerned that this will not be sufficient. Especially around the gulf coast and in my district of Houston, we are experiencing abnormally high energy costs after the damage caused by Katrina and Rita, and many of the infrastructures of homes in the area has been damaged. I hope we can consider subsidizing this LIHEAP program further in this upcoming session.

I would also like to express my concern over the loss of \$400 million from the house bill to the conference bill of funding that would go to Katrina health care relief. The \$2.1 billion towards Katrina health care relief is a small part of what should be a much more substantial recovery package for the region. I again hope we can find it in our budgets next year to further help the damaged gulf coast and its inhabitants.

Allow me to cite some of the specific cuts I, and our constituents across the country, will find so objectionable in this conference report:

Medicaid—The bill cuts Medicaid spending by \$6.9 billion nationwide.

Medicare—The bill cuts Medicare spending by \$6.4 billion nationwide.

Student Loans—The bill cuts spending on student loan program by \$12.7 billion over 4 years.

Child Support—The bill cuts \$1.5 billion from child support programs over 5 years by ending Federal incentives to states for collections.

This is not how we take care of our own in Texas, and this is not how we do things in the United States. This bill launches an unabashed attack on the American way by slashing funding towards those that are most vulnerable. And don't you be fooled! These spending cuts aren't meant to offset the costs of rebuilding the gulf coast, these spending cuts are meant to offset tax cuts that will benefit the rich.

Mr. Speaker, we cannot allow the burden of the \$50 billion in tax cuts to be placed on the backs of our Nation's neediest families. The decision to vote up or down on this legislation isn't a blurry line involving political ideology; it

isn't a debate of republican vs. democratic philosophy. This is black and white. This cut hurts the children, it hurts the poor, it hurts the old and it hurts the young. I am strongly opposed to this legislation, and I implore my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to vote against these unreasonable cuts.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to the so-called Deficit Reduction Act of 2005. Let's be clear about this: the majority is moving this bill to make way for tax cuts in the order of \$106 billion over five years. To make room for those tax cuts, we have to cut programs that help middle-income and low-income Americans. That's correct: this morning, we are cutting nearly \$40 billion over five years from important domestic initiatives. The net result will be a double-whammy on most Americans: an increased deficit that will fall on the shoulders of every man, woman and child and painful cuts to our neediest citizens. Let's take a closer look at who is targeted by this misguided legislation. First, college students. The conference report cuts \$12.7 billion to student loan programs. Students will have to pay higher fees for their loans, parents will have to pay higher interest rates. The barriers to higher education just got higher.

Next, America's farmers. This bill cuts important farm conservation programs by \$934 million. It cuts the Conservation Security Program by \$649 million, it zeroes out the Watershed Rehabilitation Program; and it cuts the Environmental Quality Incentives Programs by \$75 million.

Next are America's uninsured families. Even though the number of uninsured Americans at an all-time high of 45 million, this Congress has decided to decimate their safety net, the Medicaid program.

The conference report increases Medicaid cost sharing and will make it far more difficult for families to get the care they need. The Senate-passed bill had not included any provisions cutting health care benefits or increasing families costs to see their doctor. In addition, under this bill, States may provide any child, without regard to income, with a lesser benefits package than they have today. States may supplement this reduced level of coverage with additional benefits if they choose, but the requirement for a basic level of care is eliminated by this bill. As a result, low income children are no longer guaranteed vision screenings, therapy services, medical equipment, or other key benefits. From now on, States may offer a choice of coverage to beneficiaries between a "benchmark" package or a so-called Health Opportunity Account, eliminating any requirement that individuals are covered for needed benefits. This bill sharply increases cost sharing for prescription drugs and would allow States to charge up to 20 percent of the cost of each medication. Medicaid beneficiaries who take many drugs will have to forgo some needed medicines. It also lifts limits on emergency room copayments for all but the poorest beneficiaries.

Last but not least are our seniors and persons with disabilities who rely on Medicare. It has been 8 years since the Balanced Budget Act of 1997, a bill that Republicans said would "slow the rate of Medicare growth" by \$130 billion, but in truth slashed more than \$260 billion hurting nursing homes, home health agencies, hospitals, doctors, and most importantly, beneficiaries. Two years after BBA's enact-

ment, Congress began passing a series of "fix" bills to repair the unanticipated damage from several provisions; to this day, some of the more egregious mistakes, such as outpatient therapy caps and the flawed "sustainable growth rate" formula for the physician fee schedule have still not been fixed. That is why it is so disappointing as we review this bill to see that Congress has not learned its lesson. Today, with the needs of children, the elderly, and persons with disabilities even greater than in 1997, the 109th Congress is back with a bill that ignores the urgent needs of those who care for Medicare beneficiaries and fails to address serious problems with a Medicare drug plan that has befuddled and frustrated millions of seniors and their loved ones.

I am deeply disappointed that the House did not even try to address needed reforms in Medicare. Now we are looking at \$8 billion in Medicare cuts that were not considered in the Ways and Means or the Energy and Commerce Committees. We now have a band-aid physician payment fix; unjustifiable arbitrary caps on rehabilitation therapy services, no improvement in payments for lifesaving cancer screenings, higher Medicare Part B premiums for many seniors, no reduction in the unnecessary "stabilization fund" for Medicare HMOs. This was a flawed process and it led to an even more deeply flawed bill. I urge my colleagues to reject this conference report and return in the new year to consider real improvements to these vital programs.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to the conference report on H.R. 4241. This will be the third time this year I have voted against an irresponsible Republican budget plan to cut spending on programs important to the poorest Americans in order to pay for a tax cut for the wealthiest. Frankly, I'm tired of it, and Rhode Islanders are too. We need to return our budget to balance, but not on the backs of those who can least afford it.

The Republicans claim this bill is necessary to offset the enormous costs of Hurricanes Katrina, Rita, and Wilma, but their actions show the majority's true motives. Shortly after H.R. 4241 passed the House in November, Republicans voted for more than \$50 billion in tax cuts, much of which benefit the top earners in the country. These tax cuts cost more than the savings in this bill. However, these paltry savings will come at a high cost, namely higher costs for health care, education and other important services.

I urge my colleagues to join me in rejecting this irresponsible conference report and instead focusing on real debt reduction based on fairness and shared sacrifice.

Mr. BACHUS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the Chairman for yielding time, and I rise in strong support of the Deposit Insurance Reform legislation included in the conference report to S. 1932, the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005.

I want to begin by thanking Financial Services Committee Chairman OXLEY for his relentless efforts on moving this deposit insurance reform legislation. He has shown tremendous leadership in steering this complex bill through the legislative process, and I am deeply grateful that he gave me the opportunity to work on this landmark piece of legislation. I also want to thank the Ranking Member of the Committee, Mr. FRANK for his support. This was truly a bipartisan effort, and I

believe we have a better legislative product because of that. Senator SHELBY and the other Senators on his committee are also to be commended for their fine work.

Deposit insurance reform has been thoroughly discussed and debated over several years. During both the 107th (H.R. 3717) and 108th (H.R. 522) Congress, I introduced comprehensive deposit insurance reform legislation. The legislation was a byproduct of recommendations made by the FDIC in early 2001, a series of hearings held in my Subcommittee on proposed reforms to the Federal deposit insurance system, and broad-based bipartisan cooperation. H.R. 3717 passed the House in the 107th Congress by a vote of 408–18, and H.R. 522 passed the House in the 108th Congress by a vote of 411–11. During this Congress, Congresswoman HOOLEY and I introduced this same legislation—H.R. 1185—with Chairman OXLEY and Ranking Member FRANK. On May 4, 2005, H.R. 1185 passed the House by a vote of 413 to 10. The legislation is supported by the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) as well as all of the banking a credit union trade associations.

Federal deposit insurance has been a hallmark of our Nation's banking system for more than 70 years. The reforms made by this legislation will ensure that this system that has served America's savers and depositors so well for so long will continue to do so for future generations.

What does the legislation do? First, it merges the separate insurance funds that currently apply to deposits held by banks on the one hand and savings associations on the other, creating a stronger and more stable fund that will benefit banks and thrifts alike.

Second, the bill makes a number of changes designed to address the "pro-cyclical" bias of the current system, which results in sharply higher premiums being assessed at "down" points in the business cycle, when banks can least afford to pay them and when funds are most needed for lending to jumpstart economic growth. By giving the FDIC greater discretion to manage the insurance funds based on industry conditions and economic trends, the legislation will ease volatility in the banking system and facilitate recovery from economic downturns.

Third, the legislation makes monumental changes to law with regard to deposit insurance coverage levels. The system has gone 25 years without such an adjustment—the longest period in its history—and the increases provided for in the legislation are critical if deposit insurance is to maintain its relevance. The conference report establishes a permanent indexation system to ensure that coverage levels keep pace with inflation by indexing coverage from its current level of \$100,000 every five years. The indexation, which begins in 2010, applies to all accounts, including retirement and municipal accounts. Without these changes, deposit insurance will wither on the vine, which is an unacceptable outcome for the millions of Americans who depend upon it to protect their savings.

The legislation also immediately increases deposit insurance coverage available to retirement accounts, including IRAs and 401ks, from its current level of \$100,000 to \$250,000. Particularly in light of volatility on Wall Street and other developments that have shaken confidence in the markets in recent years,

senior citizens and those planning for retirement need a convenient, conservative, and secure place for their retirement savings. With the higher coverage levels provided for in this bill, the American banking system will give seniors that safe haven. That is why the AARP has enthusiastically endorsed the coverage increases in this bill.

All of us have heard from community bankers in our districts about the challenges they face in competing for deposits with large money-center banks that are perceived by the market—rightly or wrongly—as being "too big to fail." By strengthening the deposit insurance system, the conference report will help small, neighborhood-based financial institutions across the country, particularly in rural America, continue to play an important role in financing economic development. The deposits that community banks are able to attract through the Federal deposit insurance guarantee are cycled back into local communities in the form of consumer and small business loans, community development projects, and home mortgages. If this source of funding dries up, it will have devastating consequences for the economic vitality of small-town America.

I want to again commend Chairman OXLEY for the tremendous leadership he has shown in steering this complex bill through the legislative process. I also want to thank Ranking Member FRANK and Congresswoman HOOLEY for all of their work on this legislation.

Let me also take this opportunity to thank the staff members on the House Financial Services Committee who worked on this legislation. Both Chairman OXLEY and Ranking Member FRANK are to be commended for assembling such a talented group of staff to work on Deposit Insurance Reform legislation. On the majority side, I would like to thank Bob Foster, Carter McDowell, Peggy Peterson, Tom Duncan, Peter Barrett and Dina Ellis who serves as my designee on the Committee. I want to give a special thanks to Jim Clinger who recently left the Committee to work at the Department of Justice. Without Jim's hard work, dedication and knowledge we would not be here today, and I am grateful for all of his efforts. I would also like to thank Larry Lavender, Warren Tryon and Kim Olive of my staff for their work on this issue. On the minority staff, I would like to thank the following staff members: Jeanne Roslanowick, Jaime Lizarraga, Erika Jeffers, Ken Swab and Matt Schumaker of Congresswoman HOOLEY'S staff.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, let me just say that this legislation will promote the stability and soundness of the banking system. It is also provide assurance to working families, retirees, and others who place their hard-earned savings in U.S. banks, thrifts, and credit unions that their FDIC-insured deposits are safe and secure.

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, this Budget reconciliation spending cut bill asks those with the least to sacrifice the most, while providing the most fortunate with even more.

Today's Bill: This Budget reconciliation trade is such an affront to working and lower-income families that our nation's religious leaders have stepped in to say 'enough is enough.'

The Lutheran Bishops sent a letter saying this bill is contrary to Biblical teachings.

The Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church has said this reconciliation bill is "tantamount . . . to blasphemy."

And the Conference of Catholic Bishops have said they are "deeply disappointed" with this legislation, especially "its lack of concern for children."

The conference report before us includes a number of cuts that would hurt children, the disabled and poor Americans.

This bill picks on our most vulnerable citizens who depend on Medicare, Medicaid, SSI, child support, welfare and a host of other critical programs.

Some of the most egregious items in the conference report include:

Unfunded Welfare Policies: includes new work requirements in the TANF program without providing adequate funding for child care. According to CBO, the bill is far short of the nearly \$11 billion needed to implement the new work requirements and keep child care funding even with inflation.

Cuts Child Support Enforcement: CBO tells us that the reductions in child support collections will reduce collections being sent to families by \$8.4 billion over the next 10 years.

Cuts Assistance to Relatives Caring for Abused Children: the report eliminates Federal foster care payments to grandparents and other relatives with limited incomes who are caring for abused children.

Delays Assistance to the Disabled: the report delays the payment of past-due benefits to low-income disabled individuals who are eligible for back payments.

Medicaid and Medicare cuts: the legislation before us makes extraordinary cuts in Medicaid that will raise health care costs and reduce benefits for our nation's most vulnerable children and individuals. It also contains more than \$6 billion of Medicare cuts, including premium increases.

Protects Special Interests: this agreement protects special interests at the expense of struggling families. Yet, the conference did not have to pursue these Dickensian cuts. It could have accepted Senate language that reduced overpayments to private insurance companies. Or it could have gone further, and completely eliminated these overpayments, which would negate the need for most of the pain and raise more than \$20 billion over five years. Instead, it's gifts for the greedy, and cuts for the needy.

I don't know what the poor, elderly, disabled, and foster children have done to deserve this. And I don't know why the Republicans would wait until the wee hours of the morning, just a few days before Christmas, to show just how mean-spirited they can be.

For the Republicans to deal this heavy blow to the poorest among us at the same time they reduce taxes for the very rich is not only wrong, but it smacks of being immoral.

Future Tax cuts (February?):

The \$56 billion Republican tax bill overwhelmingly benefits the very wealthy.

Nearly 50% of the benefit from the extension of capital gains and dividend rate cuts goes to households with incomes over \$1 million

This tax bill grants these wealthy households an annual benefit of more than \$32,000.

In contrast—Middle-income families receive only 2 percent of the benefit of the capital gains and dividend rate cuts, resulting in an average annual benefit of only \$7.

So the rich get richer, the poor get poorer, and the middle class gets left behind. That's Republican economics.

I urge a "no" vote on this shameful conference report.

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise this morning to address a particular provision included in Title VI of S. 1932, the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005. This provision, Section 6055, is very important to my district, to my constituency, and to the Members of this body who represent one of the U.S. territories. Over the past two years, since arriving in Congress, I have worked to address the serious concern relating to the application of the Medicaid program to Guam and the other U.S. territories vis-à-vis the application to the 50 States.

In the 50 States, Medicaid is an individual entitlement. There are no limits on the Federal payments for Medicaid in the 50 States as long as the state is able to contribute its share of matching funds. However, annual Federal Medicaid payments in Guam and in the other U.S. territories are subject to different rules and may not exceed a certain amount specified in law. These limitations are set under Section 1108 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1308(g)).

The reality is that Medicaid claims and expenditures in Guam and in the other U.S. territories exceed the limited amounts or ceilings set in U.S. law. Even if the Government of Guam is financially prepared, able and willing to meet its share of the matching requirement, U.S. law will not allow for Federal Medicaid payments to be made beyond the specified limit. Fortunately, to account for inflation, the law was previously amended to provide for increases beginning in 1999 to the ceilings based on the annual percentage change in the medical care component of the Consumer Price Index. Indexing the ceilings for inflation was a needed and important improvement in the Medicaid program for the U.S. territories. However, even with the inflation indexing, the ceilings provided for in current law fall far short of meeting actual Medicaid-eligible claims in the territories.

Apart from the fundamental and more inherent issues associated with the disparate treatment of the territories in this entitlement program, are the practical and public health problems caused by the seemingly arbitrary and budget-driven federal funding limitations placed on the territories. Medicaid is an important Federal safety net and it is essential that the program be operated efficiently and to the fullest extent needed in the territories.

I am pleased that the Senate receded to the House position and accepted Section 3141 of H.R. 4241, the House version of this budget reconciliation legislation, in the conference committee. This provision will provide for adjustments to the Medicaid payments for the U.S. territories under Section 1108 of the Social Security Act. These Medicaid adjustments address critical health care needs in the territories.

Specifically, Section 6055, as included in the conference report, will provide annual increases for Fiscal Years 2006 and 2007 in the ceilings placed on Federal funding for the Medicaid program in Guam, the Virgin Islands, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and Puerto Rico. The total adjustment for all territories in Fiscal Year 2006 is \$20 million and in Fiscal Year 2007 the adjustment is \$28 million. For Fiscal Year 2008 and subsequent fiscal years, the funding for the Medicaid program in the territories will be calculated by increasing the Fis-

cal Year 2007 amount by the percentage change in the medical care component of the Consumer Price Index, in the same manner as currently provided in law. The Congressional Budget Office has estimated that these adjustments will amount to additional \$140 million in Medicaid payments for the territories over the next five years, and \$323 million over the next ten years.

This provision has been included in this conference report as a result of bipartisan negotiations. On September 8 and 9, 2004, in the 108th Congress, I offered an amendment to H.R. 5006, the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2005 that would have provided an additional \$8 million in Medicaid funding that year for Guam, the Virgin Islands, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. A point of order was raised and sustained on the amendment the first time it was offered. However, a modified and second amendment filed to the bill for the same purpose, was debated the following day. This amendment led to a serious and direct discussion for the first time on the House floor on the issue of Medicaid payments to the territories. Ultimately, I withdrew the amendment at the request of the gentleman from Texas, Mr. BARTON, who pledged to work with me, my colleagues from the territories, and the gentleman from Indiana, Mr. BURTON, on this issue. The gentleman from Texas, Mr. BARTON, the Chairman of the House Committee on Energy and Commerce, kept his word. The gentleman and his professional staff and counsel have worked patiently and diligently with us to address this issue.

The language included in Section 6055 of S. 1932 is a result of this close collaboration and cooperation. I want to thank the gentleman from Texas, Mr. BARTON, the gentleman from Indiana, Mr. BURTON, who has been an ally and leader on this issue, and the leadership of the budget committees, for their work on this provision.

In the case of Guam, the adjustment made to the ceiling by this bill will bring the Federal Government, closer to meeting the actual amount of recent annual Medicaid costs. This is especially the case when factoring in Federal grants received under mandatory appropriations made for annual Compact-impact assistance. Guam currently receives \$14.2 million every year from the Department of the Interior to defray costs incurred as a result of increased demands placed on health and social services due to the residence in Guam of citizens of the Freely Associated States. This funding was authorized by the Compact of Free Association Amendments Act of 2003 (Public Law 108-188).

However, despite the adjustments made to the ceilings set under Section 1108 of the Social Security Act by this bill, a significant and outstanding issue remains with respect to the application of the Medicaid program in Guam and the other U.S. territories. The Federal Medicaid matching rate, which determines the share of Medicaid expenditures paid for by the Federal Government, is statutorily set at 50 percent for the territories (42 U.S.C. 1396d(b)(2)). However, a formula is used to determine the matching rate for the States. If qualified for the formula the territories would receive rates as high as 77 percent. I hope that at some point in the future the rate for the

territories could be set by the same formula as used for the states or at minimum adjusted to be on par with the rate statutorily set for the District of Columbia.

With the increase in Medicaid payment authorization provided by this legislation, the territories can more effectively address health care needs within the fiscal constraints of the Medicaid program. As has been stated, the Medicaid program in the territories is significantly different from the program in the states, and these differences present unique challenges to the territorial governments.

I thank the conferees for their attention to and acceptance of this important provision for the territories. This adjustment to Federal funding for Medicaid in the territories will have a significant impact in helping to address health care disparities between the states and the territories. I look forward to continuing to work with my colleagues from the territories, and the leadership of both chambers, to effectively address and eliminate disparities in federal health care financing between the states and the territories.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the conference report for the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005.

Several months ago, when the Committee on Agriculture was given instructions to find savings within the programs under our jurisdiction, we took the task seriously and reported to the Budget Committee a total package that exceeded our original instructions. We did so without the support of our colleagues from across the aisle and found ourselves in a similar situation when the Deficit Reduction Act was brought to the House Floor several weeks ago.

Our efforts to try to gain control of mandatory spending have been politicized and demonized by Members of the other party who claimed that this was the wrong time and the wrong way to rein in mandatory spending. If not now, then when? If we continue to stand by and play the passive observer role, in 10 years mandatory will grow to consume 62 percent of the federal budget. I will also note that throughout this process, we have yet to see a comprehensive proposal from the minority. This bill will not solve all of our problems and it isn't a magic solution, but it is a step in the right direction. It is unrealistic to think we can meet the pressing challenges facing our Nation without reducing federal spending and redirecting priorities.

Additional costs associated with recent disasters further necessitate the need for budget reform. The Agriculture Committee has worked with our counterparts in the Senate to come up with a compromise that contributes to the deficit reduction while maintaining the interests of American agriculture. Our producers rely on our domestic agriculture policy. The 2002 Farm Bill, provided our producers with a foundation they could base their decisions on through 2007, which is when we will re-examine the Farm Bill for reauthorization. It would be irresponsible to rip the rug out from our producers midway through the Farm Bill and I am pleased that this legislation keeps the policies of the 2002 Farm Bill intact.

Mr. Speaker, it is not easy to limit or reduce funding for any program, but it is imperative that instead of cowering away from the problem, we take a stand and vote yes to reducing the deficit and vote yes to responsible spending.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, I want to raise my concerns about the Medicaid provisions in the House-passed budget reconciliation bill and, in particular, the provision that imposes new documentation requirements on individuals and on states.

There are many, many problems with the Medicaid bill. It would shift costs and take away benefits from those who need assistance the most: children, pregnant women, people with disabilities and frail senior citizens. The House-passed bill would do real harm—30 million Americans could face higher cost-sharing, 2 million children could lose coverage altogether, and 26 million individuals could lose benefits according to an analysis by the American Progress Action Fund.

One of the most disturbing provisions in the bill—Section 3145—would impose strict new documentation requirements on Medicaid applicants. Instead of allowing self-declaration of citizenship—as 47 states do today—applicants have to show documentation of citizenship status—such as a birth certificate or a passport. The authors are Section 3145 are apparently concerned that some ineligible immigrant pregnant woman, children or seniors—will slip through the cracks and get health care. Out of that unjustified and undocumented concern, they have created a provision that will actually penalize citizens and state Medicaid programs.

First, there is no reason for Section 3145. It is a measure that seeks to address an illusory problem. Eligible immigrants already have to provide proof of their legal status when they apply for Medicaid, and states take steps to verify that status. Current law is working.

The Office of the Inspector General (OIG) looked at this issue and reported last July that they found no substantial evidence that immigrants are falsely claiming citizenship to qualify for Medicaid. OIG did not recommend eliminating the opportunity for self-declarations. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services has found no evidence that there is a problem and state Medicaid administrators have “not seen a problem with self-declaration of citizenship” based on the results of their quality control review systems.

Second, Section 3145 would have a disastrous effect by erecting Medicaid barriers for U.S. citizens. These new requirements will mean that those who have no money to obtain these documents or no time to wait for care will be unable to receive medical services. The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities has concluded that the “bulk” of the \$735 million, 10-year savings from Section 3145 would come from reducing or delaying enrollment for U.S. citizens.

Many citizens—particularly low-income citizens—do not have birth certificates in their possession and do not have passports. And getting those documents is neither easy nor cheap. Getting a birth certificate can take weeks and cost up to \$23. People born at home may not even have a birth certificate—a particular problem for people in some rural areas and elderly African Americans. According to information reported in Population Studies, as many as one-fifth of African Americans born around 1940 don’t have a birth certificate. Getting a passport is even more expensive and takes even longer. Passports cost about \$90. Just think about how these provisions will affect older women, living alone, possibly cognitively-impaired.

Third, at a time when we are cutting federal Medicaid funds and states are struggling to pay their share of Medicaid costs, Section 3145 would impose a brand new and costly administrative burden on them. The OIG surveyed state Medicaid directors who allow self-declaration. Twenty-five said that they were encouraged by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to simplify their application processes in order to reduce barriers to health care access. 28 said the requirement for documentations would delay eligibility determinations, twenty-five said it would increase personnel costs, and 21 said it would be burdensome and expensive for applicants.

This provision is not necessary but it is dangerous. It should be rejected.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HASTINGS of Washington). Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the conference report.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the conference report.

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

Mr. SPRATT. 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, this 15-minute vote on adoption of the conference report will be followed by a 5-minute vote on the motion to suspend the rules and agree to H. Con. Res. 275.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 212, nays 206, not voting 16, as follows:

[Roll No. 670]

YEAS—212

Aderholt	Cubin	Harris
Akin	Culberson	Hart
Alexander	Davis (KY)	Hastert
Bachus	Davis, Tom	Hastings (WA)
Baker	Deal (GA)	Hayes
Barrett (SC)	DeLay	Hayworth
Bartlett (MD)	Dent	Hefley
Barton (TX)	Diaz-Balart, L.	Hensarling
Bass	Diaz-Balart, M.	Henger
Beauprez	Drake	Hobson
Biggert	Dreier	Hoekstra
Bilirakis	Duncan	Hulshof
Bishop (UT)	Ehlers	Hunter
Blackburn	Emerson	Inglis (SC)
Blunt	English (PA)	Issa
Boehmert	Everett	Jenkins
Boehner	Feeney	Johnson (CT)
Bonilla	Ferguson	Keller
Bonner	Fitzpatrick (PA)	Kelly
Bono	Flake	Kennedy (MN)
Boozman	Foley	King (IA)
Boustany	Forbes	King (NY)
Bradley (NH)	Fortenberry	Kingston
Brady (TX)	Fossella	Kirk
Brown (SC)	Foxo	Kline
Brown-Waite,	Franks (AZ)	Knollenberg
Ginny	Frelinghuysen	Kuhl (NY)
Burgess	Galleghy	LaHood
Burton (IN)	Garrett (NJ)	Latham
Calvert	Gerlach	Lewis (CA)
Camp (MI)	Gibbons	Lewis (KY)
Campbell (CA)	Gilchrest	Linder
Cannon	Gillmor	LoBiondo
Cantor	Gingrey	Lucas
Capito	Gohmert	Lungren, Daniel
Carter	Goode	E.
Castle	Goodlatte	Mack
Chabot	Granger	Manzullo
Choccola	Graves	Marchant
Coble	Green (WI)	McCaul (TX)
Cole (OK)	Gutknecht	McCotter
Conaway	Hall	McCrery
Crenshaw		

McHenry	Putnam	Sodrel
McKeon	Ramstad	Souder
McMorris	Regula	Stearns
Mica	Rehberg	Sullivan
Miller (FL)	Reichert	Sweeney
Miller (MI)	Renzi	Tancredo
Moran (KS)	Reynolds	Taylor (NC)
Murphy	Rogers (AL)	Terry
Musgrave	Rogers (KY)	Thomas
Neugebauer	Rogers (MI)	Thornberry
Northup	Rohrabacher	Tiahrt
Norwood	Ros-Lehtinen	Tiberi
Nunes	Royce	Turner
Nussle	Ryan (WI)	Upton
Osborne	Ryun (KS)	Walden (OR)
Otter	Saxton	Walsh
Oxley	Schmidt	Wamp
Pearce	Schwarz (MI)	Weldon (FL)
Pence	Sensenbrenner	Weldon (PA)
Peterson (PA)	Sessions	Weller
Petri	Shadegg	Westmoreland
Pickering	Shaw	Whitfield
Pitts	Shays	Wicker
Platts	Sherwood	Wilson (SC)
Poe	Shimkus	Wolf
Pombo	Shuster	Young (AK)
Porter	Simmons	Young (FL)
Price (GA)	Simpson	
Pryce (OH)	Smith (TX)	

NAYS—206

Abercrombie	Green, Al	Moran (VA)
Ackerman	Green, Gene	Murtha
Allen	Grijalva	Nadler
Andrews	Hastings (FL)	Napolitano
Baird	Herseth	Neal (MA)
Baldwin	Higgins	Ney
Barrow	Hinchev	Oberstar
Bean	Hinojosa	Obey
Becerra	Holden	Olver
Berkley	Holt	Ortiz
Berman	Honda	Owens
Berry	Hooley	Pallone
Bishop (GA)	Hoyer	Pascarell
Bishop (NY)	Inslie	Pastor
Blumenauer	Israel	Paul
Boren	Jackson (IL)	Payne
Boswell	Jackson-Lee	Pelosi
Boucher	(TX)	Peterson (MN)
Boyd	Jefferson	Pomeroy
Brady (PA)	Johnson (IL)	Price (NC)
Brown (OH)	Johnson, E. B.	Rahall
Brown, Corrine	Jones (OH)	Rangel
Butterfield	Kanjorski	Ross
Buyer	Kaptur	Rothman
Capps	Kennedy (RI)	Ruppersberger
Capuano	Kildee	Rush
Cardin	Kilpatrick (MI)	Ryan (OH)
Cardoza	Kind	Sabo
Carnahan	Kucinich	Salazar
Carson	Langevin	Sánchez, Linda
Case	Lantos	T.
Chandler	Larsen (WA)	Sanchez, Loretta
Clay	Larson (CT)	Sanders
Cleaver	LaTourette	Schakowsky
Clyburn	Leach	Schiff
Conyers	Lee	Schwartz (PA)
Cooper	Levin	Scott (GA)
Costa	Lewis (GA)	Scott (VA)
Costello	Lipinski	Serrano
Cramer	Lofgren, Zoe	Sherman
Crowley	Lowey	Skelton
Cuellar	Lynch	Slaughter
Cummings	Maloney	Smith (NJ)
Davis (AL)	Markey	Smith (WA)
Davis (CA)	Marshall	Snyder
Davis (FL)	Matheson	Solis
Davis (IL)	Matsui	Spratt
Davis (TN)	McCarthy	Stark
DeFazio	McCollum (MN)	Strickland
DeGette	McDermott	Stupak
Delahunt	McGovern	Tanner
DeLauro	McHugh	Tauscher
Dicks	McIntyre	Taylor (MS)
Dingell	McKinney	Thompson (CA)
Doggett	McNulty	Thompson (MS)
Doyle	Meehan	Thompson
Edwards	Meek (FL)	Tierney
Engel	Meeks (NY)	Towns
Eshoo	Melancon	Udall (CO)
Etheridge	Menendez	Udall (NM)
Evans	Michaud	Van Hollen
Farr	Millender-	Velázquez
Fattah	McDonald	Visclosky
Filner	Miller (NC)	Wasserman
Ford	Miller, George	Schultz
Frank (MA)	Mollohan	Waters
Gonzalez	Moore (KS)	Watson
Gordon	Moore (WI)	Watt
		Waxman

Weiner Wilson (NM) Wu  
Wexler Woolsey Wynn

Green, Gene McCotter  
Grijalva McDermott  
Gutknecht McGovern  
Harris McHenry  
Hart McIntyre  
Hastings (FL) McMorris  
Hastings (WA) Meehan  
Hayworth Meek (FL)  
Hefley Meeke (NY)  
Hensarling Melancon  
Herger Menendez  
Herseth Mica  
Higgins Michaud  
Hinchey Millender-  
Hobson McDonald  
Holden Miller (MI)  
Holt Miller (NC)  
Honda Miller, George  
Hooley Molohan  
Hoyer Moore (KS)  
Inglis (SC) Moore (WI)  
Inslee Moran (VA)  
Israel Murphy  
Issa Musgrave  
Jackson (IL) Nadler  
Jackson-Lee Napolitano  
(TX) Neugebauer

Sanders  
Saxton  
Schakowsky  
Schiff  
Schmidt  
Schwartz (PA)  
Schwarz (MI)  
Scott (GA)  
Scott (VA)  
Sensenbrenner  
Serrano  
Sessions  
Shadegg  
Shaw  
Shays  
Sherman  
Shimkus  
Shuster  
Simmons  
Simpson  
Skelton  
Smith (NJ)  
Smith (TX)  
Smith (WA)  
Snyder  
Sodrel  
Solis  
Souder  
Spratt  
Stark  
Stearns  
Strickland  
Stupak  
Oliver  
Sweeney  
Tancredo  
Tanner  
Tauscher  
Taylor (MS)  
Terry  
Thomas  
Thompson (CA)  
Thompson (MS)  
Tiahrt  
Tiberi  
Tierney  
Towns  
Turner  
Udall (CO)  
Udall (NM)  
Upton  
Van Hollen  
Visclosky  
Walden (OR)  
Walsh  
Wamp  
Wasserman  
Schultz  
Watson  
Watt  
Waxman  
Weiner  
Weldon (FL)  
Weldon (PA)  
Weller  
Westmoreland  
Wexler  
Whitfield  
Wicker  
Wilson (NM)  
Wilson (SC)  
Wolf  
Woolsey  
Wu  
Wynn  
Young (AK)  
Young (FL)

Johnson, Sam  
Jones (NC)  
Kolbe  
Larson (CT)  
LaTourette  
Leach  
Lewis (CA)  
Lynch  
McCrery  
McHugh  
McKeon  
McKinney  
McNulty  
Miller (FL)  
Miller, Gary  
Moran (KS)  
Murtha  
Myrick  
Neal (MA)  
Obey  
Ortiz  
Pearce  
Peterson (PA)  
Petri  
Pitts  
Pryce (OH)

Radanovich  
Rangel  
Reyes  
Rohrabacher  
Roybal-Allard  
Ryan (WI)  
Sherwood  
Slaughter  
Thornberry  
Velázquez  
Waters

NOT VOTING—16

Baca Hyde Myrick  
Davis, Jo Ann Istook Radanovich  
Emanuel Johnson, Sam Reyes  
Gutierrez Jones (NC) Roybal-Allard  
Harman Kolbe  
Hostettler Miller, Gary

□ 0607

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas changed his vote from “yea” to “nay.”

So the conference report was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

EXPRESSING SENSE OF CONGRESS REGARDING EDUCATION CURRICULUM IN SAUDI ARABIA

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HASTINGS of Washington). The pending business is the question of suspending the rules and agreeing to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 275.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 275, on which the yeas and nays are ordered.

This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 351, nays 1, answered “present” 2, not voting 79, as follows:

[Roll No. 671]

YEAS—351

Aderholt Butterfield Dicks  
Akin Camp (MI) Dingell  
Alexander Campbell (CA) Doggett  
Allen Cannon Doolittle  
Andrews Cantor Drake  
Bachus Capito Dreier  
Baird Capps Duncan  
Baldwin Capuano Edwards  
Barrett (SC) Carnahan Ehlers  
Barrow Carson Emerson  
Bartlett (MD) Case Engel  
Bass Castle English (PA)  
Bean Chabot Eshoo  
Beauprez Chandler Etheridge  
Becerra Clay Evans  
Berkley Cleaver Farr  
Berman Clyburn Fattah  
Berry Cole (OK) Feeney  
Biggart Conaway Ferguson  
Bilirakis Conyers Filner  
Bishop (GA) Cooper Fitzpatrick (PA)  
Bishop (NY) Costa Foley  
Bishop (UT) Costello Ford  
Blackburn Cramer Fortenberry  
Blumenauer Crenshaw Foxx  
Boehlert Cubin Frank (MA)  
Boehner Cuellar Franks (AZ)  
Bonner Culberson Frelinghuysen  
Bono Cummings Gallegly  
Boozman Davis (AL) Garrett (NJ)  
Boren Davis (CA) Gilchrest  
Boswell Davis (FL) Gibbons  
Boucher Davis (IL) Gilchrist  
Boustany Davis (KY) Gillmor  
Boyd Davis (TN) Greig  
Bradley (NH) Davis, Tom Gohmert  
Brady (PA) Deal (GA) Gonzalez  
Brown (SC) DeFazio Goode  
Brown, Corrine DeGette Goodlatte  
Brown-Waite, DeLauro Gordon  
Ginny DeLay Green (WI)  
Burgess Dent Green, Al

Jefferson Ney  
Jindal Northup  
Johnson (IL) Norwood  
Johnson, E. B. Jones (OH)  
Jones (OH) Nussle  
Kanjorski Oberstar  
Kaptur Oliver  
Keller Osborne  
Kelly Otter  
Kennedy (MN) Owens  
Kennedy (RI) Oxley  
Kildee Pallone  
Kilpatrick (MI) Pascrell  
Kind Pastor  
King (IA) Payne  
King (NY) Pelosi  
Kingston Pence  
Kirk Peterson (MN)  
Kline Pickering  
Knollenberg Platts  
Kucinich Poe  
Kuhl (NY) Pombo  
LaHood Pomeroy  
Langevin Porter  
Lantos Price (GA)  
Larsen (WA) Price (NC)  
Latham Putnam  
Lee Rahall  
Levin Ramstad  
Lewis (GA) Regula  
Lewis (KY) Rehberg  
Linder Reichert  
Lipinski Renzi  
LoBiondo Reynolds  
Lofgren, Zoe Rogers (AL)  
Lowey Rogers (KY)  
Lucas Rogers (MI)  
Lungren, Daniel Ros-Lehtinen  
E. Ross  
Mack Rothman  
Maloney Royce  
Manzullo Ruppersberger  
Marchant Rush  
Markey Ryan (OH)  
Marshall Ryun (KS)  
Matheson Sabo  
Matsui Salazar  
McCarthy Sánchez, Linda  
McCaul (TX) T.  
McCollum (MN) Sanchez, Loretta

NAYS—1

Paul

ANSWERED “PRESENT”—2

Abercrombie Taylor (NC)

NOT VOTING—79

Ackerman Choccola Graves  
Baca Coble Gutierrez  
Baker Crowley Hall  
Barton (TX) Davis, Jo Ann Harman  
Blunt Delahunt Hayes  
Bonilla Diaz-Balart, L. Hinojosa  
Brady (TX) Diaz-Balart, M. Hoekstra  
Brown (OH) Doyle Hostettler  
Burton (IN) Emanuel Hulshof  
Buyer Everett Hunter  
Calvert Flake Hyde  
Cardin Forbes Istook  
Cardoza Fossella Jenkins  
Carter Granger Johnson (CT)

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). Members are advised 2 minutes remain in this vote.

□ 0614

So (two-thirds of those voting having responded in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the concurrent resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

THANKS TO THE STAFF

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

Mr. NUSSLE. Mr. Speaker, I want to first thank all of the staff that worked so hard to bring us to this point in time and the leadership on the Budget Committee, and I would like to pay a special thanks to the floor staff and the official reporters and the clerk staff and everyone who stuck around with us on this very late day and night and into the morning. The sacrifices that everyone makes for us we really do deeply appreciate, and we give you our heartiest thanks and best wishes these holidays.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. NUSSLE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on S. 1932, the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005 just passed.

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

There was no objection.

JUNIOR DUCK STAMP REAUTHORIZATION AMENDMENTS ACT OF 2005

Mr. POMBO. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Resources be discharged from further consideration of the bill (H.R. 3179) to reauthorize and amend the Junior Duck Stamp Conservation and Design Program Act of 1994, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

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

There was no objection.

The Clerk read the bill, as follows: