

next few months, you have Republican votes, because no longer is the legislation that gets put before us a partisan agenda. It is now a people's agenda.

And for someone who spent the last 2 years in my district campaigning to come here, talking to people that were so utterly frustrated with what was happening in Washington, yes, people were angry about the agenda here from issue to issue. They were upset that people were not listening to them about their concerns on rising energy prices, rising health care prices, why they could not send their kids to college. But they were maybe more overarchingly concerned with the tone this place had taken, and I think that is our lasting legacy, because, as I think I said the first time that I got to talk with you both on this floor, our legacy as a Congress may be that we have some small role in restoring people's faith in government.

When we go around and talk to elementary schools, we are talking to some of the most cynical 10-year-olds you have ever seen, because all they think government is is a bunch of people fighting with each other, yelling at each other, disagreeing instead of agreeing.

So what we do here is we are going to start putting those middle-class families first. That is what this budget will be about. If we can do it with Republicans, and when you do it with Democrats, in the end we make people believe a little bit again in government.

And for those of us who are in this 30-something caucus who might be around long enough to hopefully see government do a few more good things over the next 10, 20, 30, 40 years, that could be one of the most important things we can do.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. I appreciate that. As we are wrapping things up, I found it interesting, I saw as we are talking about budget priorities and the kind of investments that we want to make as a country, looking at what the Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke has to say and what he said yesterday and was quoted in the Wall Street Journal and a lot of other media outlets.

Focusing on, and I will say, and I will quote, he said, Ben Bernanke said, The best way to narrow the gap between high-income and low-wage workers in the U.S. would be to strengthen education and training programs.

That is our call, and that is the mission for us, to make sure that average people have the skills and the tools and the opportunity with the increase in the Pell Grants, with what we already did by cutting student loan interest rates in half for both parent and student loans, cutting that in half and giving thousands of dollars back to those families. Those are the kinds of things that we need to continue to do, and No Child Left Behind and everything else.

So we need to make sure that as we reform these systems, we also provide the resources, as we started this, for

the local level to make sure they can get the job done.

We are just wrapping up. We only have 1 minute. I want to give out Speaker PELOSI's e-mail, 30-Something Working Group e-mail, 30somethingdems@mail.house.gov, or you can come to our Web site, www.speaker.gov/30something.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. I thank Mr. RYAN for doing such an outstanding job. I thought Mr. MURPHY had the assignment, but I can see you have taken responsibility to do that.

Madam Speaker, we would like to thank the Speaker and the majority leader and majority whip and others for allowing the 30-Something Working Group to come to the floor once again. It was an honor to address the House of Representatives.

REPUBLICAN STUDY COMMITTEE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. SOLIS). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentleman from California (Mr. CAMPBELL) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. CAMPBELL of California. Madam Speaker, I would like to take this first moment to recognize my colleague from Iowa (Mr. KING).

Mr. KING of Iowa. Madam Speaker, I thank Mr. CAMPBELL for yielding to me, and I appreciate Mr. RYAN sticking around after the Special Order and the work that you have done. Over the last 2-plus years, we spent a lot of hours here on the floor together. It occurred to me as I arrived on the floor—

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Not necessarily together, but on the floor. Not necessarily together.

Mr. KING of Iowa. I would concede that point that not necessarily together, but on the floor. We have been together in some other things as well.

But the point that occurred to me as I arrived here on the floor this afternoon is we often do not commingle our policies. We have an argument that is set separate on this side and on that side, and it occurred to me that Lincoln and Douglas had some effective debates that were very, very instructive, and it helped the people understand the distinctions between the policies.

So as I mull this around in my mind, it occurs to me to offer an invitation that if our side could set aside an hour Special Order, and if your side would be interested in setting aside an hour Special Order, we could merge those together and then perhaps three from your side, three from our side, and we could spend 2 hours with an open debate type of a format so that we could have a free exchange with the best of attitude and comity. I think that would be a very good thing to do for the people across this country as they review what is going on here on the floor.

I would ask your opinion on that.

□ 1715

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. I appreciate the gentleman's opportunity. Those decisions are made above my pay grade, but I can honestly say that we have numerous debates on this floor, which I think have been significant and monumental, especially in the first 100 hours, as we have talked about here. I don't exactly know how to respond to you. I think we do have adequate debate here, depending on what the issue of the day is, both sides getting an opportunity to do that.

We get our hours and talk about the things that we want to talk about, and you get your hour to talk about what you want to talk about. There can be, I am sure, some discussion. If there is room for us, as we push certain policies, that is what we are here to talk about. That is the issue of the day.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Reclaiming my time.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. You are welcome to respond to that.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Reclaiming my time. If the gentleman would be interested, I would suggest you take it up above that pay grade and see if you come back with a positive response. I didn't check with anybody above me. I happened to be able to claim some time on the floor and make that decision.

I offer that openly with the best intentions. I think 2 hours would be a very good thing for all of us to have that discussion. The offer is there. I leave it on the table, and I thank the gentleman.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. I appreciate the gentleman making the offer. Last year or 2 years ago, we were asking for opportunities to speak on the floor. We weren't given that opportunity, but I will take it to the leadership, and we will take that under consideration.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Reclaiming my time, I would point out that, as we have had exchanges here during special orders, I am one who has yielded, especially to Uncle BILL from Massachusetts. I would point that out. That is a matter of record. We can continue in that vein, I would hope.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. In spite of your age discrimination, we will take it under consideration.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Thank you very much, Mr. RYAN.

I yield back to the gentleman from California.

Mr. CAMPBELL of California. Thank you, Mr. KING.

We are talking about the budget this evening, and a number of things about the budget. The problem out there: We have a deficit. The problem is not that people are taxed too little; it is the government is spending too much.

I didn't just make that up. I didn't come up with that now. I am paraphrasing the words of President Ronald Reagan and comments he made several decades ago. But it is every bit as true today as it was then. The reason that we have a deficit, the issues with our government budget, are not that people

are taxed too little; it is that government spends too much.

Why, as a matter of fact, since 2003, revenues to the Federal Government, income to the Federal Government, have increased by 46 percent, assuming that this year it continues at the rate that the increases have begun this year, 46 percent since 2003.

Let me put that in a way maybe that folks listening can understand even more clearly. If you are making \$50,000 a year in 2003, in order for your income to keep up with what the Federal Government's income has been, you would have to be making over \$72,000 today, not bad. I bet most of you out there listening, if you were making \$50,000 back in 2003, would be pretty happy if you had gotten raises to be at \$72,000 or \$73,000 today. But that is where the Federal Government is.

But what's interesting is, that is not because taxes were increased. That 46 percent increase in revenue is because taxes were decreased, because there were tax cuts in 2003.

Because there were tax cuts in 2003, a whole bunch of good things happened: More people are working. The unemployment rate is down. Business investment is up. Gross domestic product is up, and millions and millions of new jobs have been created. All that since these tax cuts that are so demagogued by the other side. Now, the people who spoke in the hour before me here were talking about tax cuts for the rich, and I think they said super billionaires or something like that.

Let us talk about what these tax reductions were. One of them was a reduction in the tax on capital gains and dividends. Let's see. Over 50 percent of Americans now own stocks or have been investing in the stock market. So I guess over 50 percent of Americans must be hyper billionaires because capital gains and dividends tax cuts saved them money.

Almost 70 percent of Americans own homes. When you sell your home at some point, you might be subject to a capital gains tax. I guess almost over 70 percent of Americans are hyper billionaires or the super rich.

Or perhaps the marriage penalty reduction, which saved money for every married taxpayer. I guess that means everyone who is married is a hyper billionaire type of rich.

Not true, but what is particularly interesting is that these tax reductions, these tax rate reductions, saved Americans at all income levels money, and it resulted in the economy growing, which is why you have had this 46 percent increase in revenue.

But even with that 46 percent increase in revenue, we still have a deficit, because we are spending too much. Now, the other side does have a tax that they don't like, which is interesting. It is the alternative minimum tax.

Now, I stand before you as a Member of Congress, yes, but also as a certified public accountant and an individual

with a master's in business taxation. So I do have a little bit of knowledge in the area of taxation. The alternative minimum tax is pretty complicated. But basically you figure your tax on a regular tax, and then there is another tax, and you pay whichever one is greater.

The alternative minimum tax only kicks in if it results in more tax than the regular tax. The reason that would happen is because you pay a high rate. By definition, if you are not in one of the highest tax brackets, the alternative minimum tax cannot apply to you.

If you were to compare the capital gains tax, alternative minimum tax, and look at which one is more for the rich, it would certainly be the alternative minimum tax. Yet you just heard the Democratic colleagues on the other side of the aisle just say that the capital gains, the dividends, all these tax reductions that were in 2003 are terrible and are hurting the economy, and they are hurting people, and they are only for the super billionaires. But, yes, they insist on doing something to get rid of the alternative minimum tax, which, by definition, can only hit people in the highest tax brackets, can only create more tax for them.

You can't have it both ways, Democrats, you cannot have it both ways. If eliminating or reducing the alternative minimum tax is good policy, then so is reducing the tax on capital gains and on dividends and on the marriage penalty and all the other rate reductions that we did back in 2003.

Now, the President released a budget this week. The budget he released balances in 5 years without raising taxes. The other side of the aisle, the majority here spent the last 2 days saying how terrible it is. I am trying to figure out what is so bad. Is balancing the budget in 5 years bad? I would rather balance it in 2; I would rather balance it in 1, sure.

I don't think balancing the budget in 5 years is that bad of an objective, and it balances it without raising taxes. Ah, that is really the part they don't like, balancing the budget without raising taxes. They don't want that to happen because they want to raise taxes, because a 46 percent income growth since 2003 is not good enough, because increases in jobs, increases in the economy, increases in gross domestic product, that is not good enough, because they want to spend more, more and more and more. They want to tax, and they want to spend.

The new Democrats are the same as the old Democrats. You are seeing it on this floor, in this hall, today, this week and this month. Unfortunately, I am afraid you are going to see it in the months going forward.

So what is the problem with balancing the budget without tax increases? That is what we want to do. That is what the President wants to do. But, unfortunately it is not what the other side wants to do.

Let me take a moment, and if I may, and yield to the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING). Would you like to speak on some of these matters for a few moments?

Mr. KING of Iowa. I thank the gentleman from California for yielding to me both times here this afternoon.

Mr. Speaker, taking up the issue of the budget that is coming before us and this sense of responsibility and debates that I have had this year and debates that I recall I had in the national media that I had with members of the other party, and some of them took the oath that they would be willing to support a balanced budget without raising taxes; I don't hear any of that talk here on the Democrat side of the aisle. Nobody is stepping forward, and saying, yes, I remember what I said, I didn't mean it, or even, I remember what I said. They seem to have forgotten what they said.

They do say they want to balance the budget. But we also know from listening to Mr. RANGEL, there isn't any one of the Bush tax cuts that he would not want to eliminate, which would result in a tax increase.

Yet we have the strongest economy that we have had in my lifetime, the most consecutive quarters of growth. We have a very healthy unemployment rating of about 4.5 percent, and that has been staying low. Inflation has been staying low. Interest has been staying low. Every economic indicator that is low when it is good is low. Every economic indicator that is high when it is good, it is high. The stock market has reached any number of all-time highs.

These Bush tax cuts, the 2001 cuts and the 2003 cuts were essential and necessary to keep us out of a depression and a recession at a time when the dot.com bubble had burst, when our financial centers were attacked on September 11, and we had to go to war and spend hundreds of billions of dollars to protect the American people, of which there has been no significant attack against Americans by terrorists in our country since that time.

Who would believe that our economy would be this strong, our safety would be this good, that there are so many things sitting where they are today? But we need to step forward and make progress. I can tell you frankly that I was not thrilled by the proposal here several years ago, 3 years ago, that we were going to cut the deficit in half in 5 years. That was not enough for me.

Now, I believe that President Bush has offered a budget, and I think that we will see the House Republicans offer a budget that will reach balance within 5 years. That is a balance without dynamic scoring, and the increase that we are seeing in the revenue because of this dynamic economy indicates that could well happen within the next 3 years. I expect it will happen in the next 3 years.

I am an individual, though, who would be willing to sign on to a budget

that would balance the budget this year. I will not go very far into that for these purposes, because I recognize, practically speaking, there aren't enough votes to pass a budget like that. It would be a bit too Draconian.

But had we have been able to slow some of this growth, we could be at balance today, except that we have been facing the war, and we took the hit from the burst in the dot.com bubble. So we are pulled together here now, and the principle needs to be, slow this growth in discretionary, non-defense discretionary spending. We are doing that, and we have effectively done that. We have kept it at below the rate of inflation or at the rate of inflation.

The biggest problem we have is the constant growth in entitlements called Medicare, Social Security, Medicaid to a lesser degree, and, of course, the interest that goes up on that. You will see a budget comes from Republicans that gets us to a balanced budget within 5 years. I am grateful that that is coming out.

But, again, I believe that if we can give the investors the confidence that we can continue the Bush tax cuts, the 2001 and the 2003 tax cuts, then I think that you will see this economy continue to grow, and you will see the budget balanced before the 5 years are up.

But if we turn this over to the other side, if we turn it over to the Chairman of the Ways and Means Committee, who wants to see the end of all of those tax cuts, we will see the goose that lays the golden egg slaughtered and on the field of class warfare.

Now, we know that what you tax you get less of. The Federal Government has the first lien on all taxation in America. We tax everything that moves, that produces. We tax labor. We tax interest, investment, dividends capital gains, you name it, all the way down the line. Then the alternative minimum tax sits there and sneaks up on people and grabs people, and it is creeping down into the lower brackets over and over again.

So to make this call, I would say this, extend those tax cuts. The American people need to clamor in order to extend the Bush tax cuts. If that can happen, the confidence in this economy will continue. We will get this budget balanced.

The other side wants a balanced budget, too, because they called for one. But they want to raise your taxes to do it. I guarantee you, that is the only way that they can balance this budget, and that is the effort that they are down on. I stand with the remarks made by the gentleman from California, and I appreciate very much him taking the leadership to come to the floor and yielding to me.

Mr. CAMPBELL of California. Mr. KING, one second, before you leave, figures, we talk about the progress we have made on this budget so far. The 12-month budget deficit, the last 12

months, is \$188 billion. Remember, some time ago, we were talking about nearly half a trillion dollars. That \$188 billion is down 38 percent as a rolling 12-month budget deficit from what it was a year ago.

For 22 straight months now, the budget deficit has declined by about 18 percent, year on year. There is a lot of progress happening on this budget deficit because of the growth in the economy, because of those tax cuts, and because we, the prior couple of budgets, were beginning to start to control spending. It is something we haven't done, well, frankly, a lot, lately. But we are starting to in the last couple of years. Isn't that right, Mr. KING?

Mr. KING of Iowa. It is interesting to me, the statistics that you put out on that data, that if you believe in a free market economy, you understand that description intuitively. You understand there is going to be dynamic growth that is stimulated because there is a return on investment.

If you don't believe in the free market economy, then you think somehow that people that make money and create jobs are evil, and they should be punished for their productivity. When you punish productivity and tax it, you get less of it. That was another Reagan statement. What you tax you get less of. What you subsidize you get more of.

We are going to see productivity more highly taxed. We get less productivity, and this economy will slow down.

□ 1730

I point also that if we could freeze our spending at current levels, sometime in the middle of fiscal year 2010 we would be looking at a surplus. That is something else to consider.

Mr. CAMPBELL of California. Mr. Speaker, we all understand how much we would rather have the private markets than us making decisions, than some nameless, faceless bureaucrat somewhere close to where we are all sitting right now, someone here in Washington. Someone who fully understands that is my colleague who will be speaking next, Dr. PRICE from the State of Georgia. Dr. PRICE.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I thank my good friend from California for yielding and for organizing this and his leadership on this issue. I appreciate your perspective and your expertise as a CPA practicing before you came to Congress. I know that you have the knowledge that all of us should utilize as we talk about budget and the economy.

You know, I was sitting over in my office and listening to our good friends on the other side of the aisle as they were discussing their issues before. I could not help but being amused by their comments. And you sense that they are trying to lay the groundwork now for a budget that they are going to propose, and they are going to propose it obviously with more spending, because that is what our friends on the other side of the aisle do.

But I could not help but just be reminded of the Orwellian sense of how the folks on the other side of the aisle seem to govern. You know, they just seem to think that if they just say it, that it is so. All you have got to do is say it, then it is so. They passed a bill last week that they said did not have any earmarks or any special projects. In fact, it had hundred of millions of dollars of earmarks that they could have taken out; in fact, voted against taking them out.

But I did want to review very briefly, before I mentioned a word or two about the budget and the economy, these wonderful Six for '06 programs that they passed. And of course they are celebrating them as if they were law. However, the Senate has not acted on any of these, so, in fact, they have not become law. And thank goodness they have not become law, because what this highlights is the hypocrisy of our good friends on the other side of the aisle.

They talk about passing all of the 9/11 Commission recommendations. In fact, that is not what they did. That is not what the bill did that they brought to the floor. In fact, they did not pass some of the most important recommendations that allow for communication between committees here that make it so all America would be safer.

They talk about the minimum wage increase. In fact, what they would do if they increased it in the way that they wanted to is to decrease the number of jobs on America and propose this unfunded mandate on American small businesses, which actually cuts the level of employment in our Nation. The Senate has recognized that, and they are working to try to correct the damage that the Democratic House has done.

They denied completely the proven results. I am a physician, practiced medicine for over 20 years before coming to Congress. And the Democratic majority here denied the proven results of adult and cord stem cell research on a bill that they passed here earlier. I suspect the Senate will have to correct the damage that they have done there as well.

As a physician I recognize the importance of doctors and patients making health care decisions by themselves without governmental intervention. And what our good friends on the other side of the aisle did was, in fact, work to fix prices in the area of Medicare prescription drugs, which would decrease the number of drugs available for seniors and, in fact, harm seniors, I believe, in the health care that they receive. And consequently I think the Senate is going to have to work on fixing that.

One of the remarkable hypocritical things that they did in their discussion points about decreasing student loans, in fact that is not what they did at all. What they did was pass a bill that kind of tracks down, decreases the interest on student loans, and then for 6 months

cuts the interest on student loans in half, not for students, though, for graduates; cuts it for 6 months, and then, bam, at the end of that 6 months, the interest rates pop right back up.

Then the most amazing thing that they have done is to tax domestic oil companies, not foreign oil companies, Mr. Speaker, not foreign oil companies. They tax domestic oil companies so that domestic oil costs more, foreign oil costs less. So what will happen is that Americans will be more reliant on foreign oil.

So it is a remarkable, remarkable culture of hypocrisy and misinformation, disinformation, I call it Orwellian government, that our good friends on the other side of the aisle have promoted.

I do want to mention some of economic issues that you had talked about before, the good news, remarkable news in the economy: economic growth, 3.4 percent growth in GDP over the last year; business investment up for 14 straight quarters; job growth of 7.2 million new jobs since the summer of 2003; low unemployment rate, 4.5, 4.6 percent unemployment rate. That is a rate lower than the average of the 1960s, 1970s, 1980s and 1990s combined.

Tax revenues, tax receipts are up. Deficit reduction you mentioned, Mr. CAMPBELL, the latest numbers that are out on the 12-month rolling deficit, the budget deficit, down to \$188 billion. That is the lowest that it has been since 2002. And a steady increase in labor productivity.

So one would think that if our friends on the other side of the aisle were interested in a good economy, they would look at this economy and they would say, well, how did that happen? What made that happen? Were there actions that were taken by the Federal Government and Congress that resulted in those good numbers?

Well, in fact, there were. And they happened in 2001 and 2003, as my friends know, and those were the tax reductions, the appropriate tax reductions on the American people, capital gains, dividends, tax reductions, and a decrease in income tax for the vast majority of Americans. What that did, as it did under President Reagan and as it did under President Kennedy, what that did was to stimulate the economy in a way that resulted in the numbers that we have seen.

And so our good friends on the other side of the aisle would do well to study history. They would do well to study history. They would do well to learn from history as they try to formulate their budget and make certain that they appreciate, as we do on this side of the aisle, that Washington does not have a revenue problem, it has got a spending problem.

We look forward to working with our good friends on the other side of the aisle in decreasing Washington's spending, solving those difficult challenges that we have, as my good friend from Iowa mentioned just a little bit ago, in

the area of Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid, all of those automatic spenders that are comprising more and more of the budget.

I look forward to working with him, I know that my friend from California does, and again I appreciate his leadership and the information that he has been bringing to the floor of the House today and to the American people. Because we are challenged with solving these problems and difficulties that we have as a Nation, we ought to do it together. We are proposing the kind of positive and uplifting messages that I think all America can embrace. I appreciate the time.

Mr. CAMPBELL of California. Thank you, Dr. PRICE.

It is as though the people on the other side, the Democrats, the facts of what is going on in the economy, what is going on in the budget, what tax cuts do, what they do not do, it just does not fit with what they want to do, which is tax more and spend more.

You know, I could put all of you here, keep you in this room where there is no windows, and tell you tomorrow morning that the sun did not rise. Now, you would have no proof that the sun did not rise, but it is very likely that it, in fact, did rise. And the fact that I keep you in this room and do not let you see it does not mean that the sun did not rise.

That is what they are doing. And we are trying to open the windows so people can see, no, you know what, the sun did rise this morning. Tax cuts do stimulate the economy. The budget is moving towards balance. But the problem is spending.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Exactly. I appreciate the gentleman's comments because they are absolutely true. That is why I call it Orwellian politics, bumper sticker politics, because just because they say it is so does not make it so. I appreciate your comments. I know we have got some other colleagues who are interested in shedding light and bringing truth and facts to the issues regarding the budget and the economy.

Mr. CAMPBELL of California. Well, we do have other speakers. The next one is from Georgia (Mr. WESTMORELAND).

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Mr. Speaker, before I begin my remarks, I would like to call on my fellow Members to keep the gentleman from Georgia, Congressman CHARLIE NORWOOD, in your thoughts and prayers. As many of you know, CHARLIE has suffered from cancer for some time and has fought valiantly, just as he did when he recovered from a lung transplant several years ago.

Today CHARLIE announced that he is going to decline further treatment and return home to Augusta, Georgia, where he will receive hospice care in his home. CHARLIE NORWOOD has served the people his entire life. He has served his Nation as a soldier in Vietnam. He served Augusta, Georgia, but also as a dedicated father to his children, and a husband to his loving wife Gloria.

Since 1995, he has ably and some would say tenaciously represented the people of eastern, northern Georgia, but his service and his wisdom has benefited us all. To me he is not just a great Georgian and a great American, he is a great friend. He served as a mentor to me and to many others in this House. And I know that everyone, Mr. Speaker, here has CHARLIE and Gloria in their thoughts and prayers.

He said today that he is turning it over to the Lord's hands, and I know that he can be in no better place than that. I look forward to working with CHARLIE again. I look forward to him getting back.

Mr. Speaker, it is appropriate that we are talking about the budget and the economy here today, because CHARLIE was a great champion, is a great champion, for the taxpayers of this country, fighting for smaller government, less spending and lower taxes.

In these hallowed halls we hear the word "compassion" when we are talking about spending other people's money, when we are talking about disbursing the hard-earned tax dollars of American workers.

Mr. Speaker, we talk about how important this spending is, how much it is going to help people. Certainly there is no end to the good and well-meaning projects that we could fund. We all want well and qualified students to have the resources they need to go to college. We all want to find an answer to cover the 47 million people who do not have health insurance. We all want to see the benefits that come from new roads, expanded public transportation, infrastructure improvements and economic development projects. We all scrape and fight to ensure that our constituents get their fair share of the Federal pie.

But as we consider the massive spending obligations that our government faces in coming years, everyone in this House, Republican and Democrat, liberal, moderate, conservative, can agree that we cannot stay on our present course.

Mr. Speaker, as the baby-boomers near retirement, we will soon face a scenario where there will not be enough workers to support the entitlement spending slated for Medicare and Social Security. We have talked often in recent years about the funding shortfall that Social Security faces. We know that Social Security will run out of money in less than 50 years.

Perhaps we have focused on Social Security because it seems to be the more manageable problem. As dire as the Social Security situation is, our shortfall in the Medicare program is eight times larger. That should concern not just Members of Congress, but all Americans.

The Medicare shortfall will affect not just retirees and those retiring in the next 10 years, it also is of concern to the younger generations. How will they pay for their parents' health care and long-term care without the guarantees of Medicare?

Mr. Speaker, how would their generation afford a pay-as-you-go system for their parents' generation when there are only two workers supporting every retiree? And finally they must ask themselves, will Medicare be there for me when it is my time to retire?

These are serious questions that demand serious answers. That is why I think we need to refine what we consider compassionate in this House. I would argue that it is compassionate for us to do a much better job of making tough decisions on spending in today's Congress to save programs not only for present generations, but for the future generations of Americans.

Quite frankly, to maintain current benefits after the baby-boomers retire would require crippling levels of taxation that would grind our economy to a halt and put all of our Federal programs at risk. In our effort to be compassionate today, we are spending tomorrow's money. At our present rate we are going to leave future generations with nothing but IOUs.

The best thing that we can do to save Medicare and Social Security for future generations is to reduce the growth of the programs and maintain the growing economy that allows us to sustain tax revenues and keep these important entitlements afloat.

The tax cuts of the past 6 years have served this purpose. I think the gentleman from California and the gentleman from Iowa have explained that very well. Last year the Federal Treasury took in more money than it ever has before, because our tax policies have allowed Americans to keep more of their money, and they have allowed U.S. businesses to flourish and expand despite the strain caused by the technology bubble, the tragedy of September 11, and the cost of the war on terror.

Mr. Speaker, the tax cuts boost the economy. In order to preserve the tax cuts, we have to reduce our spending. Certainly we have to cut back on earmarks and local projects, and I certainly hope we heed President Bush's call to cut the number of earmarks in half.

But that is not going to be enough. We must curtail the growth of entitlement spending, or else cuts elsewhere in the budget will never offset those exploding costs. We have to fund our national priorities, but we must be more selective in what we consider priorities.

□ 1745

We took an important step last year when we saved \$40 billion in the Deficit Reduction Act. That legislation required courageous leadership, and we are going to need more of that kind of leadership in the future.

So to sum it up, the tax cuts boost the economy. A strong economy fills Federal coffers, and tax revenues allow us to fund programs important to all Americans so long as we learn to live within our means.

I would like to thank the gentleman from California for leading this important discussion. In his time here in the House, he has proven to be a leader on these issues, and I appreciate his experience as a CPA, as a businessman, and one who has furnished jobs and helped this economy grow. I appreciate this time he has yielded me.

Mr. CAMPBELL of California. I thank very much the gentleman from Georgia for his remarks, with which I can fully associate. But there are people who have been in Congress less time than I have, and one of them will be our next speaker here, Mr. DAVIS, the gentleman from Tennessee. I would like you to yield time to Mr. DAVIS from Tennessee, one of our freshmen.

Mr. DAVID DAVIS of Tennessee. Thank you, Mr. CAMPBELL. Thank you for your leadership and bringing this important debate.

And thank you, Mr. Speaker, for allowing me to rise. One of my favorite people in Washington all through history was President Ronald Reagan. Most of us know that the anniversary of his birth was just this week; 96 years ago President Reagan was born. And he once said, we don't have a \$1 trillion debt because we haven't taxed enough. We have a \$1 trillion debt because we spend too much. And I think that is important for this Congress to understand. I think that is a commonsense approach that the people of America can understand. It is about spending. It is not about taxing. We overspend, we don't overtax. I think that is very important.

As a matter of fact, if we continue on the pace that we have today, our revenues are outpacing us, and we continue to do that, we have our revenues outpace our spending over the next 5 years. President Bush's budget will be balanced by the year 2012, and we can do that without raising taxes. Now, to me, that is an exciting prospect to be able to balance the budget without raising taxes. And we do that at the same time maintaining the successful pro-business economic policies that we put in place. I think that is very important. And it is not just Republicans saying that. It is the Congressional Budget Office. It has actually given us data to support the data that we have in front of us. Just last week, the CBO supported the fact that tax cuts of 2003 helped boost the Federal revenues by 68 percent. Cut taxes, bring in more revenue, allow people across America and from the First District of Tennessee to keep more money in their pockets. As they do that, they spend it back in their districts. It circulates through the economy. It helps the Federal Government. You do it by keeping taxes low, not overtaxing. And we need to do that at the same time we keep fiscal restraint in place. Our economy has actually grown through 21 straight quarters. That is a good thing. We don't want to go back on that. We want to make sure that we stand strong, keep our tax cuts in place, keep our econ-

omy humming along and see that we could go from 21 straight quarters to 22 to 23 to 24.

In the period between 2004 and 2006, Federal tax revenues rose by the largest margin in 40 years. You do it by keeping taxes low, not by raising them.

Another exciting fact about our economy, the deficit has been cut in half 2 years ahead of schedule. And we did it by keeping taxes low. I think that is what the people of northeast Tennessee, good commonsense, hard-working people, want to have happen. Keep our taxes low. Let us keep the money in our district. Let us provide for our families. And as we do that, the economy will grow. As the economy grows, we take care of the Federal Government.

I think we need to look at government much like we look at a family sitting around a family table back in east Tennessee. People do have tight budgets. Unlike the Federal Government, though, people back in east Tennessee have to make tough decisions. When they have a tough budget, they can't say, well, I will just go out and raise my taxes and have somebody send me some more money so I can spend more. What they do in east Tennessee and across America is they have to make decisions about, well, I can't spend as much as I used to. And if we continue to do the right things, they will have that money back home.

The President, once again, in his budget is calling for making the 2001 and the 2003 tax relief provisions permanent. The administration projects total revenue growth to grow 5.4 percent per year if we keep those tax cuts in place.

Tax cuts are critical to maintaining our present healthy economy. We simply have a choice. We have a choice of a bigger economy or bigger government. That is the choice we have. And I certainly hope that my colleagues here on the House floor will understand how important it is to allow people back home to keep more of their money and keep government small and allow families to take care of themselves.

To reach the goal of a balanced budget, we need to hold the line on spending. We need to reduce earmarks. And I think we need to pass line item vetoes to crack down on worthless pork barrel spending. I don't think the Congress has done a good enough job on that.

I know there was a bill passed just last week and said there was no earmarks. Well, reading through the data, I am from east Tennessee, and I didn't realize we had a rainforest in Iowa. That is interesting for me to know. I didn't study that back in school in east Tennessee. Maybe someone else can explain that to me when they get up to speak. But that is an earmark that was in the resolution that passed last week.

We are being disingenuous with the American people. And the American people are smart. They will catch on to

what is going on. They will not be fooled.

Another thing that I heard before I came over, I was sitting in my office, and I heard the other side speaking. And they talked about the Medicare cuts and what we are doing to health care. The reality is, under President Bush's budget, Medicare will grow 5.6 percent. Now, back in east Tennessee, that is not a cut. That is a growth of 5.6 percent in Medicare. So please, do not be fooled. Do not be fooled. There is not a rainforest in Iowa, and Medicare is not being cut.

I think if people continue to use common sense, they will support the Congress. They want the Congress to do the right thing. It goes right back to what Ronald Reagan said. We don't have a \$1 trillion debt because we haven't taxed enough. We have a \$1 trillion debt because we spend too much. And I ask my colleagues to make sure we don't spend too much in this Congress. Thank you for allowing me to take part.

Mr. CAMPBELL of California. I thank the gentleman from Tennessee. And, you know, we don't have a rainforest in Iowa right now. But if the budget passed by the Democrats in this House, when was it, last week, were to become law, then we will have a rainforest in Iowa, and it will be built with \$50 million of your money. That is you people watching. It will be tax money taken from you to pay to build a rainforest in Iowa.

Now, Democrats have only been in charge for a little longer than 30 days, and already they have made it easier to raise taxes. They raise taxes on domestic oil and gas producers. I mean, I totally don't get that when here we are trying to become less reliant on foreign oil, and we have gas prices where they are, and they are going to tax domestic oil and gas producers. And, of course, when they tax them, they spend the money on an entirely new program, and then on top of that then they pass this budget which allows this rainforest in Iowa to go through and spends another \$10 billion, which increases the deficit not reduces it.

But I don't need to explain any of this to our next speaker, the gentlelady from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN). I would like to yield to the gentlelady from Tennessee.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, how pleased I am to join the gentleman from California and my Republican Study Committee colleagues in this special order hour. As we talk about the budget and we really begin to focus on some of the components in this budget, you know, I think that many of my Republican Study Committee colleagues are interested in digging into this document, and their constituents are well served by that, like the gentleman from Tennessee talking about his First District constituents who are logging on to his Web site, who are looking at this budget. And certainly we want to direct people to the Repub-

lican Study Committee Web site. Here it is: RSC@mail.house.gov. We will be happy to point out some of the fallacies.

Our colleagues across the aisle like to talk about fiscal responsibility, but then they don't practice it. They don't practice what they preach. And we have appropriately dubbed the work that the Democrats are doing as the "Hold on to your wallet Congress" because they are definitely coming to a pocket near you. And they want more of your money. That is one thing that you can basically take that IOU to the bank. They are going to try to cash it in. It is in the form of your hardearned dollars. So RSC@mail.house.gov. We invite everybody to work with us through this process. We want to be certain that we have your ideas. And we know, as the gentleman from Tennessee was saying, as Ronald Reagan, so many times has said, government doesn't have a revenue problem. It has a spending problem. Government never gets enough of your money. You know, one of the things that I have repeatedly done in my town hall meetings is to say, how much is enough? How much is enough for government to tax? What is the ceiling? When are they going to say, we have got it, we are flush with money? We all know that, and I will yield to the gentleman for comment.

Mr. CAMPBELL of California. As you say, one of the great differences between us and them, we talked about it being your money, their money, the People's money, the taxpayers' money. Your money, watching on television, they talk about it like it is their money, like it is the government's money.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. If the gentleman will yield, that is an excellent point, because every dollar we spend is not ours. It is not the government's. It is the taxpayers'. And this is a government of, by and for the people. It is not a government of the government.

And our friends across the aisle, through the New Deal, through the great society, putting all of these programs that sound good, that really answered a lot of questions and needs, you know, they put these in place, and then it grows and grows and grows. And then you have a big, big bureaucracy, and the bureaucracy becomes unresponsive. And the constituents want accountability with that.

I had at one point said, you know, it reminded me very much of The Little Shop of Horrors, that stage play that we have all seen. And the plant grows and grows and grows, and then finally it says, feed me more, Seymour, and it envelops everything because that is what the government is saying to the American taxpayer, feed me more.

We have an expert who is with us on so many of our family budget matters, our Republican Study Committee, RSC, chairman, Mr. HENSARLING of Texas, and I will yield to the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. HENSARLING. Well, I thank the gentlelady for yielding, and I want to

thank her for all the great communications work that she does for the conservative caucus in Congress, the Republican Study Committee. Thank the gentleman from California, our Budget and Spending Task Force chairman for the excellent work he does in helping bring this debate to the American people. And you know, the gentlelady is so right. This debate really reduces down to a very fundamental issue. Do you want more government and less opportunity, or do you want more opportunity and less government?

People in this institution need to remember that every time they vote for more money for some government program, they are taking money away from some family program.

In many respects, Mr. Speaker, this isn't a debate about how much we are going to spend on health care or how much we are going to spend on education. It is a debate about who is going to do the spending. Republicans want families to do the spending. We want small businesses to do the spending. And yet, our friends on the other side of the aisle, the Democrats, they want government to do more of the spending.

Now, as I am fond of saying, people are entitled to their own opinions, but they are not entitled to their own facts. As a member of the Budget Committee, I just came from a hearing earlier this morning on our annual budget that was quite instructive. We heard accusations of massive tax cuts.

Well, it is kind of interesting, because when you look at the record, when we have provided tax relief to the American people, guess what? We have ended up with more tax revenue. We have the greatest amount of tax revenue that we have ever had in the history of the United States of America. And in 2004, after the pro-growth tax relief, tax receipts were up 5.5 percent. Well, how did that add to the deficit, Mr. Speaker?

In 2005, tax receipts were up 14.5 percent. Well, how did that add to the deficit? In 2006, 11.8 percent. And now in the first quarter of the first quarter of 2007, they are up approximately 7.2 percent.

Now I am not here to tell you that every time you engage in tax relief, you get more tax revenues, but, guess what? Facts don't lie.

You are entitled to your opinion. You are not entitled to your own facts. When you allow small businesses and American families to keep more of what they earn so that they can save and invest and create more jobs, guess what? They go out and do it. So that is myth number one that somehow by allowing American people to keep more of what they have earned, that somehow that is adding to the deficit.

□ 1800

The deficit has dropped. The American people are not overtaxed. Government spends too much.

Now, we have another myth in the debate that I heard in the Budget Committee this morning, and that is talk

about all the massive budget cuts. Well, Mr. Speaker, people have to be very careful. I took the liberty of looking up the word "cut" in Webster's dictionary. It means to reduce. Ninety percent of the time somebody in Washington talks about cutting a budget, what they mean is that the budget isn't growing quite as fast as I want it to grow, and so, therefore, that is a cut. I mean, that is like somebody's child coming up to him and saying, Dad, I would like an extra dollar a week in allowance. And you say, Well, you know what? Maybe you deserve an increase in your allowance, Daughter. I will give you 75 cents. And they say, Gee, Dad, that is a 25 percent cut. I wanted a dollar extra a week, and you are only giving me 75 cents. Well, the point is you are getting 75 cents more.

So we are going to hear the usual misleading rhetoric about all these budget cuts. But guess what? Since President Bush came into office, and I know we will hear about this one, total antipoverty spending is up 41 percent, one of the most dramatic increases in the history of America. That is assuming that you think that somehow government is ultimately going to solve this problem. And if you look at almost every major budget area and don't just look at what has happened under the Bush administration, as long as Republicans have been in control of Congress, look for the last 10 years, you can see energy up almost 200 percent; education spending, elementary and secondary education, 100 percent. So, again, you are entitled to your own opinions, but you are not entitled to your own facts. That simply does not equate into a cut.

So we will have increased debates as we go through and talk about this budget. But what is most exciting is that because of the economic progrowth tax relief provided by a Republican Congress, we have over 7 million people who now have paychecks who used to not have paychecks. We have one of the highest levels of homeownership in the history of America. We have the highest stock market we have had in a long time. And these people want to raise taxes on the American people.

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. HENSARLING. I would be happy to yield.

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate those latter points. And it gets to the question of people who hear our discussions of why is this all-important to me? Over the last several days, as we have begun to look at the President's budget as he submitted it to Congress, we have heard from the experts, we have heard the debates, we have heard the speeches, we have heard talk of the CBO, the OMB, dynamic scoring, static scoring, a whole list of other acronyms and technicalities and the like. But you have to really at some point in time step back from all the Byzantine make-

up that Congress is when it comes to a budget and say is there some sort of common principle that we can base all this on that underpins this almost \$3 trillion endeavor that we are all engaged in?

For all the complexities of this process, the fact of the matter is that what we are doing is nothing different than what every family in America has to do every day of their lives. They have to look at the amount of money that they expect to have and get over the next 12 months and decide what are their priorities, where are they going to spend it, how are they going to spend it. Now, there are some differences, of course. I guess there are three of them between what we are doing and what the average family budget is. First of all, it is on the scale. We are doing things here on a mammoth scale compared to the average homeowner.

Years ago there used to be a \$1,000 bill. I don't think there is a \$1,000 bill anymore. I think they did away with that. But if you took a \$1,000 bill and you stacked them up, you would need 1,000 of those \$1,000 bills just to get up to \$1 billion; and then if you had that stack of \$1,000 bills, you would need 1,000 of those stacks to get up to \$1 trillion. And we are looking at a \$3 trillion budget. So we are looking here at a size that is different.

Also, families realize that their family budget has a finite amount of money that they deal with, whereas we look at it slightly differently because we know we can always borrow and spend and print more money.

And, finally, one other major difference in what we do here than the family budget is that we are spending other people's money. So many times people come down to the floor and say we have to be compassionate for this program or that, but we have to realize at the end of the day it is not our money we are taking out of the pocket. It is the American taxpayers' dollars that are coming out of the pocket to pay for these programs. So that is where the difference is.

But at the end of the day, it is all the same in the sense that we have to live within the boundaries, just like a family should. At least that is what the American taxpayer is looking at and asking us why we don't. Why don't we live within a confined budget like they do? And why don't we go one step further, as many families do? Just as many families save for their children's education for the future, why can't we get to the point of actually having a balanced budget where we can set aside some dollars for the future generations?

Now, I, like my colleague from Texas who just spoke, also serve on the Budget Committee. And I have to be honest with you that what we have heard there from the other side of the aisle is that they are laying the groundwork, from their comments at least, to do two things, to attack the budget on the point of taxing and spending. They are

laying this groundwork on spending saying that we are not spending enough and on the side of the taxes that we are not taxing enough.

And on that latter point I will just close on this point. The budget cuts that this Congress, Republican Congress, has done in the past have been progressive budget cuts. That means it helps the average-income family more than anybody else. And I get the static information not from the CBO or these other experts. I get this information from nobody else but the New York Times. And they have looked at the budget cuts that we have done, and they proved the point for us; that if you are making less than \$50,000, that you saw the percent change in your average tax bill by a 48 percent reduction. So the lowest incomes under the progressive tax cuts help the lowest-income people the most. If you are making between \$50,000 and \$100,000, a 21 percent reduction; \$100,000 to \$200,000, a 17 percent reduction; \$200,000 to \$500,000, it flows into a 10 percent reduction. So you see the trend.

What we have done in the past is help the average taxpayer in the State of New Jersey around \$200,000. What we must do now is make those tax cuts permanent and do as a family budget, live within our means.

Mr. CAMPBELL of California. I thank the gentleman from New Jersey. Wow, what a shock. The other side says they are tax cuts for the rich, and they are not, unless making under \$50,000 makes you rich.

Now if we can go to the other side of the country, I yield to a great defender of taxpayers and taxpayers' rights, Mr. JEFF FLAKE, the gentleman from Arizona.

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding and putting together this Special Order. And I just have a minute, but I would like to submit a statement for the RECORD and to point out how important it is.

I am glad so many are making the distinction between tax relief and spending, overall government spending. You simply can't assume that spending money on a teapot museum ought to be treated the same as leaving money in people's pockets. You simply can't equate them the same. You can't score them the same. Whenever we have tax relief, we have increased revenue. As the gentleman from Texas correctly pointed out, those are the facts, and it has happened again and again and again.

So I am glad that so many are saying that tonight, and, again, I will submit a statement for the RECORD.

I applaud the President's commitment to balancing the budget by 2012 without raising taxes. I also support the attention given to cutting entitlement growth. Mandatory entitlement spending eats up 50 percent of the almost \$3 trillion budget and is growing at an alarming rate.

However, I am concerned that Members will erode these savings by proposing to increase entitlement programs and, in order to adhere

to the new PAYGO rules, claim that the increases will be offset by eliminating some of the important tax relief Congress has passed over the last 5 years.

This rationale assumes that a tax cut is simply a straight-out loss of revenue for the Federal Government. This is why it is extremely important to consider how tax cuts have actually affected revenues over the last couple of years.

For example, the Joint Committee on Taxation estimated that the cost of the 2003 and 2004 tax cuts would equal \$296 billion in lost revenues for fiscal years 2003 to 2005.

However, tax revenues actually finished fiscal year 2005 at \$124 billion above the adjusted baseline, meaning that 42 percent of the projected revenue loss had been recouped. That number still continues to grow each year.

It is irresponsible to assume that by eliminating tax relief the government will see an increase in revenues. I believe the opposite is true.

We must take into account the increased capital that tax relief produces, which translates into more investments and savings, more jobs, and, ultimately, more income tax revenues.

This is why I will soon reintroduce my bill to require the CBO and Joint Committee on Taxation to include dynamic scores in their analysis of all revenue bills, and encourage my colleagues to cosponsor it.

We cannot continue to make policy decisions based on predictions that simply do not take into consideration fundamental economic principles that have been proven time and again.

Mr. CAMPBELL of California. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Arizona.

And now from the great desert Southwest to the South, I yield to Dr. GINGREY, the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from California for yielding.

And I want to take just a second to join my colleagues from Georgia and particularly the two that are on the floor tonight, Dr. PRICE and Representative WESTMORELAND, in saying to our colleague CHARLIE NORWOOD that we are praying for you, buddy. All of us from Georgia, but every Member of this body on both sides of the aisle are praying that the miracle of God's healing will deliver you back to us soon, and we think about you constantly.

Mr. Speaker, this hour is a great opportunity for us to discuss the budget. And I had an opportunity this morning to be on the C-SPAN program, and the host said to me, Congressman, are you aware of the fact that one of the Members of the other body has recommended that maybe we need something called a war tax to pay for our Operations Iraqi and Enduring Freedom? And I said to the host, I know that has probably been done in the history of this country. Maybe it was necessary to fund a previous war. But the thing about this President and this administration is because of these economic principles of cutting taxes and growing revenue, fortunately, Mr.

Speaker, we have been able to do this without raising the people's taxes. And I certainly commend President Bush for that foresight and wisdom and the former majority party as we supported those tax cuts when it was predicted that it would cost the economy over a 10-year period something like \$1.3 trillion.

So what I would like to say to my friends on the other side of the aisle in particular as I wrap up quickly, and I know time is limited, on the defense budget, please, please do not cut future combat systems. Don't cut our missile defense system to pay for some social programs when the defense of this Nation is so important at this time of war.

With that, I really appreciate my colleague giving me the opportunity to weigh in tonight.

Mr. CAMPBELL of California. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Georgia. And I would just like to say to everyone who is watching and listening, you have been listening for the last hour to members of the Republican Study Committee. You will be hearing a lot from us because we want to watch out for your money and your interests, not the government and the government's interests.

To close things I would like to yield to another new Member of Congress, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. JORDAN).

Mr. JORDAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from California for yielding.

I just want to follow up on the gentleman from Georgia's comments. He is exactly right about the defense portion of this budget. It is critical at this time with the terror threat that we face that we do what is right by the defense budget. In 1945, 38 percent of gross domestic product was spent on the defense. Today it is 3.8 percent at a time, as I said earlier, where we have terrorists around the world who want to do our families and our country harm.

Normally when we talk about budgets, and folks have pointed this out, we get focused on the numbers, on the data, on the policy, and I think all too often we forget about the people, the families out there who are impacted by our decision. And I am hopeful over the next few weeks that we really focus on the impact our decisions are going to have on families and taxpayers and business owners.

I am reminded of a story of a constituent of ours a few years ago who wanted to meet with our U.S. Senator. And our constituent is a successful businessman in the manufacturing sector, and we were discussing the whole issue of trade and competing with China and India. And we sat down with our United States Senator, and our constituent took the piece that they make, and he had taped to that piece two pennies, and he took that manufactured piece of steel and he slid it across the table to our Senator, and he said, Senator, those two pennies, those

2 cents, represent our labor costs in that piece. He said, we can compete with anybody on labor. We are so efficient, our processes, our systems. What we do in our business, we are so good at it, we can compete with anybody. He says, what makes it tough for us to compete is the things you guys do, and he pointed right to our Senator.

It is the things the politicians do. It is the high taxes. It is the high regulation. It is the ridiculous spending we have heard others talk about here over the last hour. Those are the things that make it tough on the families and taxpayers of this great country to compete; to start their business; to go after their goals, their dreams; to pursue those things that have meaning and significance to them as a family.

And I am hopeful, as we proceed on this debate over the next weeks, several months, that we will remember the business owners and the families out there who are making it and doing the things that make this country the greatest Nation in the world.

I appreciate the time we have had here. I appreciate the gentleman from California and this opportunity to share with the American people.

HEALTH CARE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HILL). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, this evening I am joined by some of my colleagues who are new Members, and we are going to talk about the President's health care proposals and also what he articulated both in his State of the Union Address, and more recently last Monday when he gave us his budget message.

And my concern, as always, is that President Bush has prioritized, or says he wants to prioritize, health care as an issue and particularly deal with the problem of the uninsured. And we certainly recognize that under his watch as President for the last 6 or 7 years that the problem of the uninsured has grown greater in this country. There are more uninsured than ever. But at the same time the proposals that the President puts forward, in particular the amount of money that has been allocated in his budget for some of these health care needs, does not go along, essentially, with the rhetoric that he has been using, saying that he wants to cover the uninsured and prioritize the concerns of the uninsured.

And, again, I always say my effort is not to chastise the President. I appreciate the fact that President Bush is prioritizing health care and talking about it, because he has the bully pulpit, and to the extent that he is out there talking about health care, it gives us an opportunity in the Congress to address the issue.

□ 1815

But it is unfortunate that the proposals in the budget that he proposes