

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MCCARTHY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

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

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

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

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

30-SOMETHING WORKING GROUP

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MEEK) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to come to the floor. Mr. RYAN and I have spent a long time, Mr. Speaker, when it was just Mr. RYAN

and I on the floor. This goes back to the 108th Congress and a little of the 109th Congress, and I am so glad we are having the opportunity to come to the floor to talk about not only the budget but what we were able to do last week, last Friday, moving in a new direction as it relates to the emergency supplemental.

Mr. Speaker, as you know, the 30-Something Working Group comes to the floor to not only share facts but to also do away with the fiction that many of the Members on the other side of the aisle come to the floor many times sharing information that I guess someone gave them some information and said, go on the floor and say this, or what have you.

□ 2200

I can't help but watch some of this debate on the floor and question where some of the information comes from.

The good thing about the 30-something Working Group, we actually have third-party validators for information that we share here on the floor. We want to make sure that every Member is able to make a sound decision and that the American people are able to get great information from what we share here on the floor.

As you know, every time we come to the floor, we talk about a number of issues. But tonight, again we are going to talk about the budget. We are also going to talk about the ongoing issue of Iraq and the courageous step we took just last week, and the Senate has taken a step in that direction also in accountability measures within the emergency supplemental.

Mr. RYAN, I don't know if you had an opportunity to see the President's press conference today, but it was quite interesting. It was like he was trying to sell something to the American people. He was speaking to the Cattlemen's Association, and he took that opportunity not to talk about beef, but to talk about what the Congress is doing in the area of making sure that we bring about accountability.

He was saying he is going to veto what we actually passed. What he is trying to do, and there is a word on the street that is used, flipping the script. He is trying to flip the script and trying to fake the American people out in saying that the Democratic Congress is standing in the schoolhouse door of the funding getting to our troops.

Mr. Speaker, I beg to differ and I think we have prima facie evidence here to show that the emergency supplemental, everything in the emergency supplemental is a true emergency, making sure that we fund our troops beyond what the President has called for, making sure that we stand up on behalf of our veterans, an unprecedented commitment to Veterans Affairs and to the VA in the history of this country.

Because we already had a system that needed work and needed funding,

this Congress stepped forth and put forth, the 110th Congress, the Democratic controlled Congress stepped forward and made sure we did what we needed to do for the veterans, and we are just getting started.

At the same time, Mr. RYAN, we have to look at the issue of Hurricane Katrina. The President said there is other funding in there. We are doing things in the emergency supplemental for the people on the gulf coast that have been waiting on the President. They don't want lip service, they want action. If the President wants to veto that, that's on him. But I guarantee you that the American people will see through what our President is saying as it relates to and as he continues to explain how he is going to veto an emergency supplemental.

He is saying if the money runs out, and it is on the back of the U.S. Congress. Well, I can tell you this: The American people are on the side of the U.S. Congress. They have asked us to lead, and we are leading. They didn't ask us to balk at the first threat that the President makes. Or I am going to veto. Well, okay, that is something that you are going to have to live with. That is something you will have to explain. But we are going to continue to do what we need to do here in providing the kind of leadership necessary.

America said in November they want to move in a direction. They said they want accountability. They no longer want a rubber stamp. They want a do-something Congress and not a do-nothing Congress. We will talk about that tonight.

Mr. RYAN, I am so glad you are here as we continue to share this information with the Members so they can make an accurate decision tomorrow when we vote on the budget, on our priorities, making sure that we give every child in the United States health care, and making sure that we move in the direction that the U.S. mayors have asked us to move in, making sure that we move in the direction that governors have asked us to move in, and giving the necessary dollars to homeland security to protect the homeland.

We are going to make sure that the Members know exactly what they are voting on so when we go on a 2-week break, Mr. Speaker, Members can't go home and say, I didn't really understand what was in the budget.

I yield to Mr. RYAN.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. I appreciate what you are saying, and there are a couple of points I would like to add.

When the President says he is going to veto the supplemental bill, he is going to veto a \$1.7 billion understand increase for veterans. We have seen Walter Reed and heard the stories from across the country. We know we have more veterans coming back. He is going to veto a \$1.7 billion increase from his recommendation. And then he is going to veto a \$1.7 billion increase for defense health care for our troops, not yet veterans but still needing access to care. And \$500 million is for

post-traumatic stress disorder. And \$500 million is for brain injuries.

Those of us who have been to Walter Reed have seen these veterans who are more affected than any of us. They are the ones that are hurt. They are the ones with the brain injuries, and we get in and we try to put in \$500 million in addition to what the President wants for brain injuries, and the President threatens to veto it.

That is \$500 million for post-traumatic stress disorder, and the President threatens to veto it. We put in this supplemental bill, Mr. Speaker, rules that the Department of Defense and the Pentagon say we need. That if you don't have the proper equipment, you shouldn't go off to war. If you don't have the proper rest, you shouldn't go off to war. If we can't put the proper armor on your Humvees when you are on patrol in Baghdad, you should not go. The President said he is going to veto that.

So the President is saying he is okay with sending our American troops to Baghdad to drive in a Humvee that is not up armored, to send the soldiers out in the field without the proper body armor, and to sending kids back when they have only been home for a few months, sending them right back. That is what the President is saying he is going to veto, Mr. Speaker.

I am not okay with that. And the Democratic Congress is not okay with that. And the Senate is not okay with that. And the American people are not okay with sending our troops to Baghdad to ride in Humvees that don't have the proper armor on them. Period. That is the debate. That is what the President says he is going to veto.

Let's be very, very clear about what the Democratic Congress has passed and put in front of the President and what he is threatening to veto. Now, we have even given him a few months to get done what he wants to get done. Many of us want our troops home now, I'm one of them, but I recognize there are a lot of us here, and we need to have some level of compromise.

All we are saying is if there is not progress by July, we start bringing our troops home. The war has already been longer than World War II. If you haven't done it by now, it can't be done. Bring them home.

But if there is progress, we will give them until October. If they don't meet the benchmarks that the President set out, Mr. MEEK, in January, and these are the President's benchmarks. These aren't the Speaker's benchmarks or Senator REID's benchmarks; they are not Kendrick Meek's benchmark. They are not mine. These are the benchmarks the President of the United States set out in his speech of January 10.

All we are saying, is you have been able to say one thing and not live up to it. You have certain goals, and then not get there, and we just all go on our merry way. What we are saying, is you've got to be accountable for the

benchmarks you have set out. If they don't meet those benchmarks, we are coming home. We are bringing our troops home.

So I think it is very important that the American people understand what is going on. You mentioned Katrina. Everybody wants to talk about there is pork in this bill and this and that; the majority of this goes to the troops, and the next biggest chunk goes to Katrina relief. We are trying to free up money to rebuild the gulf coast.

And the hold-up the whole time has been that the President and the Republicans want a 10 percent match from a local community in order to draw down 90 percent of the Federal money. And we wonder why the coast isn't getting rebuilt, it is because the towns have been completely destroyed. They don't have the 10 percent match, Mr. Speaker. They are wiped out. They don't have police, they don't have fire, they don't have roads, sewer, anything.

And the former leadership in our last Congress was so ideological they said no, you have to have your 10 percent match, and then billions of dollars did not get down to the gulf coast. That is what the President is also going to veto. I feel strongly about this.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. RYAN, they don't say 10 percent match for the special interests. When it comes down to big oil and some other big guys and gals here in this town, Mr. Speaker, they don't say you have to match us halfway. They say just, we will give you what you need. As a matter of fact, we will give you technical assistance to be able to take the U.S. taxpayer dollar and do what you want. And guess what, we will not even look. We will cover our eyes. We won't even have hearings.

Get my hearing chart, Mr. RYAN. I want to get down to the nitty-gritty here.

Mr. Speaker, we come to the floor 10 minutes past 10, 12 minutes past 10, and there are some things that we could be doing, but this is serious business.

We come with the facts. These numbers are from the Clerk of the House of Representatives. It is not from the DNC, and it is not from my cousin back in Miami that said hey, this looks good, maybe you want to take that to the floor and talk about it. This comes from the Clerk's Office. I actually like the Clerk's Office. These are the facts. The 107th Congress, 108th Congress, this is the 109th Congress that many media outlets have called the do-nothing Congress.

At this point in March of 2005, compared to March of 2007, the new Democratic Congress, the new direction Democratic Congress, the Congress only had 90 roll call votes. We have already had 189 roll call votes and counting for this month.

When you look at suspension bills that are coming over from the Senate what have you, kind of agreed upon, 26 votes that took place by this time; 72 we have done here in this new direction Congress, Mr. Speaker.

When you look at bills passed under a rule, 11 votes by this time in the last Republican-controlled Congress; 24 in this Congress.

We are here to do business. Days in session, 26 days in the Republican-controlled Congress; 48 days under this new direction Congress, Democratic-controlled Congress.

We bring these facts to the floor to make sure that not only Members, but the American people understand we are here to carry out the business of the American people. Mr. RYAN has some numbers when it comes down to accountability on Iraq because some Members would lead you to believe, a small number, would lead other Members to believe that there was some backroom decision that was made about accountability in Iraq, and all of the things that we are learning about Iraq, all of the accountability measures that we come up with as it relates to Iraq and policing the U.S. taxpayer dollars and all of the protection measures that we have in for the troops and men and women in uniform, they just think it happens in some backroom here in the capitol.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Here is the difference we are starting to see. When Members turn on the television, Mr. Speaker, and they see what is happening with the Attorney General's Office, when they hear about \$10-12 billion in Iraq that nobody knows where it is, and now all of this information that is coming out, hearing about the gulf coast, hearing about Halliburton. If a truck blows a tire, Halliburton puts in for another truck instead of putting a new tire on the truck.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. If the gentleman would suspend, is this the company where the CEO is moving to Dubai?

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Yes, just moved to Dubai. You would think that with all of the taxpayer money they get, they would at least stay in the country.

But all of this is not just coming out by coincidence.

□ 2215

There have been 104 hearings related to the Iraq War. Oversight and accountability. One of the key responsibilities of the United States Congress is to provide oversight to the executive branch agencies, and we did not hear about any of this stuff for 6 years when the Republican House and the Republican Senate sat on their hands while all of this was going on. This is not stuff that is on the news. This is not stuff that just happened. This is stuff that happened when the Republican Congress was in charge.

Now, I understand that we are all loyal to our political parties, but at some point, when it begins to hurt the American people, you need to provide the oversight of their tax money and the kind of inadequacy that has been going on in Iraq.

Now all of the sudden they want to change course. Now all of the sudden

the commander in the Middle East is running around saying that we do not have time. You know why they do not have time? Because we are putting the heat on them to get things done. 104 hearings on oversight. That is our responsibility.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. One last point before we recognize Ms. JACKSON-LEE because I know we want to get to our next discussion, get into the budget.

Mr. Speaker, to hear the President say even the word "veto" is something we have never heard since he has been President of the United States. He has never vetoed anything. Spending out of control, foreign debt, record numbers, passing tax cuts for the superwealthy and for the special interests, President never said a mumbling word. Cricket sounds of special interest subsidies and tax breaks, rolling through this floor, Members held hostage here on the floor, voting for special interest legislation for hours upon hours, the board is left open, not a mumbling word out of the President, not a mumbling word.

And now legislation happens to pass that he no longer has his rubber stamp Congress, he no longer has a Speaker who says, hey, this is the way I want it or no longer has President, this is the way we want to do it over in the Senate, so shall it be written, so shall it be done, his original thoughts are not followed through here in the Congress. Since that no longer exists, now all of the sudden, the President wants to get animated when it comes down to I am going to veto what they send and they are blocking money.

We are not blocking money for the troops. Matter of fact, we are giving them more than what he asked for. We are dealing with the issue of the VA. We are dealing with the issue of the crisis that we have here in the United States of America. It is an emergency. The children do not have health care. This is not an emergency for Iraqi children. It is an emergency for kids in Alabama. It is an emergency for the kids in Georgia, and it is an emergency for the kids in the Midwest and in Florida.

This chart here, and I am going to leave it alone and I am going to recognize Ms. JACKSON-LEE, I have over 12 percent of uninsured. This is my State here in Florida. Over 12 percent of the children in the State of Florida, more than 12 percent are uninsured. That is my State. Texas, hello, President of the United States, he has a house there. It is where the West White House is. Over 12 percent of the children in that State do not have health insurance. This is an emergency to the American families. This is an emergency here in this country. It cannot be Iraq, Iraq, Iraq, and that other issue, Iraq.

We have to care about our own country, and if we cannot put that in an emergency supplemental without the President threatening a veto, if he vetoes that bill he is denying U.S. children, need it be Republican, Democrat,

Independent, concerned citizen thinking about voting in the next election, yes, your children, too; yes your State, too; yes, your community, too, will be without health insurance because the last Congress decided not to do it. They decided not to do it, and I think it is important when you look at this, as we move into the budget, if we were to follow what the President wants to do as it relates to vetoing this emergency supplemental, \$2 billion for what we call the State insurance plan for children. In the budget resolution that we have, \$50 billion to make sure that we cover the costs of that as we look in the projection as the years go out.

So I am glad that Mr. RYAN is bringing these issues up, and as we now segue into the budget, the next thing you know, Mr. Speaker, I guess when we pass this budget tomorrow, we will probably end up being a bipartisan vote just like the emergency supplemental was a bipartisan vote in the House and Senate, that the President will probably have a press conference tomorrow and say I am going to veto the budget, too. So, if he now believes in vetoes, after 6 years of being President of these United States, out-of-control spending, record borrowing from foreign Nations, and now there are accountability measures in the budget and in the emergency supplemental, I do not even want to tell the President to have at it because, as an American, I am going to do everything I have to do to stop him from doing it.

I yield to Ms. JACKSON-LEE.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, let me first of all thank the distinguished gentleman from Ohio and distinguished gentleman from Florida for allowing me to join you this evening. We do this on occasion, and I thank you for setting the record straight.

I just want to say this brief comment on this question of the Iraq War and the veto. Usually there is a phrase that says if you break it, fix it. Well, this government was broken. Nobody in the last several Congresses wanted to fix it, and it is now our task to fix it. That is why you had a board that showed accountability and oversight, and that is why it is imperative that we took the vote last Friday and the Senate took the vote yesterday to go forward and make a difference with a framework in Iraq that the American people asked us to do.

I frankly thought that when we won the election that this President would do what many Presidents do in a divided government, sit down with the Speaker and the majority leader and work to save lives in Iraq. Unfortunately, that was not the case, and so I applaud you for bringing to the light the idea of accountability.

I just want to quickly move forward with a couple of points about the budget vote and the budget that we have to engage in, and when I look at this particular board that talks about the economy and jobs, I think of places

like Texas, Ohio, Florida, the Midwest, New York. I think of the time of the past presidency under President Clinton, a Democratic President, when there were 236,000 jobs created per month. Now, we are at 68,000 jobs per month.

Clearly, the Bush economy job growth is among the slowest of any administration in over 70 years, and this literally shows Presidents Hoover, Roosevelt, Truman, Eisenhower, Kennedy, Johnson, Nixon, Ford. Ford had, of course, inflation. It shows Carter. It shows Reagan. It shows Bush I, Clinton and now this President.

The balancing of the budget that we intend to do with a vote taken tomorrow clearly speaks to energizing the economy.

Now, let me just talk to those who say that we are raising taxes in this budget. That is false. That is not true. This budget does not contain a single penny of tax increases, period, and the Republicans have been misdescribing this budget because they have had the largest tax cut in the history of the United States. But who benefits the most when the tax cuts are fully enacted? As usual, it is those making over \$1 million.

That is why Democrats are focusing on middle class taxes. That is why we are cutting middle class income tax. That is why we are focusing on fixing the alternative minimum tax, to shield middle income taxpayers. That is why we have relief for the child tax credit, the marriage penalty relief, and we do something about the estate tax, because any tax cut by this administration, \$17,500 would go to those making over \$1 million. I would simply say to the gentlemen, who are we representing, the special interests, the rich, or are we trying to represent the working middle class?

Now, there are many budgets that will be on the floor tomorrow, and I just want to comment on one. The Congressional Black Caucus budget improves the deficit by \$107 billion even over our Democratic budget and \$339 billion over the President's budget. There will be a number of budgets, but I am very proud of this budget which really improves the deficit, and when we improve the deficit, being that when we lower the deficit, we work on the high interest rates. Many of us have been hearing unfortunately about large numbers of foreclosures. Part of that is because of reverse mortgages and poor people being plagued upon, if you will, by predatory lending, which are some challenges that fell into this administration, where there was no oversight and accountability of our financial industry. I am delighted that we have a new chairman of the Financial Services Committee to begin to look at the massive foreclosures, and I would encourage those who are tragically in the jaws of foreclosure, get on the phone and call your Members of Congress to speak out against predatory lending and asking for some relief because you are deserving of it.

My attentiveness on what Mr. RYAN and Mr. MEEK were speaking about drew me to bring to the attention of our listeners and to my colleagues on the floor this whole question of why not only do we need this budget but why it is I think ludicrous for the President to have a veto threat on the emergency supplemental.

Who is going to respond to the emergency conditions at Walter Reed? Who is going to respond to the emergency conditions of large numbers of Iraqi veterans who are returning, along with the veterans from Afghanistan, with brain injury, post-traumatic stress, the need of prosthetics, the need of outpatient clinics and the need of family resources and health resources?

Well, I hate to tell you that I think over the last 8 years, last 6-years, this administration has, in fact, been poor to poor veterans. January 2003, this lays out how the Bush and the Republican budget funding for veterans has been poor and the veterans have been doing poorly. The Bush administration cuts off veterans' health care for 164,000 veterans.

Why do you not walk in your veterans hospitals like many of us have done? I did a couple of Sundays ago, visited with veterans who are paraplegic, paralyzed from the neck down, paralyzed from the legs down, and you ask the question, how can you can cut off veterans' health care for 164,000 vets? Our budget fixes these problems.

In March 2003, Republican budget that cut \$14 billion from veterans' health care passed by Congress with 199 Democrats voting against it. We voted against the cut of \$14 billion from veterans' health care.

March 2004, Republican budget that shortchanged veterans' health care by \$1.5 billion passed by Congress with 201 Democrats voting against it. Our record is very clear.

And in March 2005, President Bush's budget shortchanged veterans' health care by more than \$2 billion for 2005 and cut veterans' health care by \$14 billion over 5 years but passed with 201 Democrats voting against it.

But what I would also say is that it was Democrats who had to come back on this floor and pressure this Congress to put more money back in the budget and back into the resources for our veterans.

Let me just say this as I wind down on this budget. Tomorrow there will be a number of substitute budgets. If I could write my own Sheila Jackson-Lee budget, I would have all of it for domestic spending, for housing and health care. Though we have done a great job on the SCHIP program, and I thank Mr. MEEK for holding up the embarrassment that we have across America, with States that have as high as 12 percent of our children uninsured, when we could, in fact, have universal health care for all of our children if we were more responsible and we had a more responsible government, I am grateful for the fact, even with a bud-

et that I would have written differently, with more money for health care, as I said more money for housing, and probably more money for the gulf region because we think of Katrina, but the whole gulf region was undermined by this terrible hurricane and it has remained so, so it needs a boost in its economy, but I am grateful that this budget includes a \$50 billion reserve fund to expand the State children's health insurance to cover more of the 9 million children without health insurance in this country.

So we tried to fix what was broken. We did not break it, but the fact is it is broken, and therefore, I am very proud to stand with Democrats in this budget to be able to come to an Ohio or to be able to tell you that we are going to stop the bleeding on jobs leaving this country, and stop the bleeding of jobs not being provided for Americans.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I am excited and I called my mom on the way over here, and I was just saying, this is really great because we are actually getting things done to help people. That is what is exciting about this is that next year at this time, all of us are going to be able to go back home and campaign about how many thousands of kids in your congressional district now have access to health care because of what we are going to do through the SCHIP program.

□ 2230

All of are going to be back home. We are going to be able to talk about the increase in the Pell Grants, and how many more kids have access to higher education. We are going to be able to go into the VFW and the American Legion and talk about the highest increase in the history of the Veterans Administration, who supports the troops. I am excited about the opportunities that we are going to have over the next year to go out, and as our Speaker said, this is a movement of hope for the American people.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. RYAN, it is very good, interesting, because I have a lot of veterans in my district. As a matter of fact, I was just talking to a group of veterans yesterday that came to this capital. We had an opportunity to talk. You know, veterans, why are you giving the President a hard time about funding, the President loves us. The President loves veterans. We all do. Who doesn't? Who is running around here saying I don't like veterans? No one.

But it is not what you say, it is what you do.

Mr. RYAN, I think you pointed it out. I just want to share this information and the sources from the House budget committee, and also from the Office of Management and Budget, and the Congressional Budget Office, and this is from the president's budget office and the Congressional Budget Office, and it is from the House Budget Committee. So you have three, third party validators to these numbers.

As we look at the President's budget as he proposed for the United States of America, when you look at the veterans, the Democrat budget is \$32 billion above what the President's budget over the next 5 years. You can see the numbers going across. But let's just get all the way over to 2010. The President's budget is \$39.7 billion. We have \$48.3 billion.

All right, what do these numbers mean? It means shorter waits at VA hospitals. It means better care for our veterans. It means that we will have a system set up for when these men and women come home, and those that are in the system now. Doctors will be able to receive the kind of training they need. Medical professionals will be able to receive the training. VA medical facilities will better. There will be oversight because we have made an investment there. It won't just be the same old thing over and over again. These are the facts.

Politically, you know, if someone just says, I am with the President, that is fine. But have the facts, have the facts.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Let me first of all thank Mr. MEEK and Mr. RYAN for yielding to me and allowing me just to join what I think has been an enormously instructive discussion.

The point that I want to leave on is, and I love what your display is saying, the budget would not raise taxes, but what I do want to just acknowledge, all that you have said, is because we are choosing people over special interests, because I leave you with this large brown bar that shows you that if the taxes that the President wants to keep in his budget, and the Republican budget, were to go forward, all the work that we are trying to do, whether it is the emergency supplemental and SCHIP and Pell Grants and more jobs being created, go down the tube, with the \$17,500 tax relief to those making over \$1 million. This is what put us in this enormous deficit.

Of course, the Iraq war with no oversight and control, \$12 billion lost in Iraq somewhere, contracts not accounted for, but I am glad that we have got one in emergency supplemental that will get us out of Iraq and will help people in this country. We have got a budget that will not focus on special interests, but we will focus on veterans and children and health care.

Mr. MEEK, you know, you were saying about that, hours-long vote, that was Medicare. As you well know, we are still paying for that Medicare prescription drug benefit now.

Let me thank both of you. I am proud to be part of the fix-it Congress after we have been walking through the muck, if you will, of a broken Congress.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Thank you so much, Ms. JACKSON-LEE. Thank you so much for coming down and sharing information that you shared with us. I think it is also important to note in the budget resolution that we have, it

will not change the tax structure that the taxes, the President's tax cuts will sunset 2010. It doesn't change that.

So as we start to move along. But I just want to make this point. I think it is very important. I am just going to ask the question, since we have three Members on the floor, and I know, Ms. JACKSON-LEE, you are about to leave. Here at the Capitol, when we are walking across the street to come over here to vote, and even when we have groups come up to visit with us, and even in my district office, in the 5 years, 5, going on 5 years that I have been in Congress, Mr. RYAN and I have been here 5, you have been here longer than us, that not one millionaire or billionaire came to me and said, please protect my tax cut. Not one billionaire wearing Polo shoes walked up outside of the Chamber and said, Congressman, I am a billionaire, you know, with a pinky with diamonds and everything on it. Please protect my tax cut. Done give my tax cut to kids without health insurance, not one. Not one.

I am just trying to figure out, but I can tell you, people from the State of Florida, that is in government, say please help insure our children. There have been veterans running in here saying, I can't wait 6 months to see the ophthalmologist any more. Can you help us?

Back in the District, Congressman, have you been to the VA hospital recently, or the clinic? Do you have to pin your nose when you walk in because of the conditions there?

I have seen that. I haven't seen a billionaire or millionaire run up and say, please, fall on your knees, Congressman, whatever you do, do not take my tax cut away that I didn't even ask for.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. You know what I have heard? Do you know what I have heard from folks around the Capitol, people who don't make a lot of between, \$100,000, between \$50,000 and \$100,000. Do you know what I heard them say? I don't mind paying taxes. But if I am going to pay taxes don't give it to the oil companies and corporate welfare. If I am going to pay taxes out of the \$50,000 I make a year, living in D.C., very expensive town, don't spend \$2 billion of it a week in Iraq. I don't mind paying, but if I am going to pay, give it to the poor kids who need health care. Make college more affordable. Make investments in our economy. You know, I think most people recognize they have got to pay their own fair share. But what they get frustrated about is where it goes.

Now, are you telling me Halliburton is going to get billions and billions and billions of dollars out of a guy or a woman who makes \$50,000 a year, who is paying those taxes? And then that same company moves off, out of the country? No respect for anything. But I want to make a point here as we begin the wind down.

Mr. Speaker, many people have made comments on this floor over the past several hours that our budget somehow raises taxes on the American people.

Now, we are big on third-party validators here. I am going to give you three, this is the Hamilton project at the Brookings Institution. "The budget would not raise taxes."

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Just stop right there, Mr. RYAN. Brookings Institute.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Would not.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Would not. Now this is the Center on Budget and Policy, statement, March 28 "This claim about raising taxes is incorrect. The House plan does not include a tax increase." That is a third-party validator.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Third party validator.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. We have one more. This is the Concord Coalition. This is the gold standard of the budget hawks. This is bipartisan, this is deficit hawks, Republicans, Democrats. In an issue brief of March 28, quote, "Thus, to be clear, the budget resolution does not call for or require a tax increase." That was three, separate, third-party validators.

I am just going to make this statement, and I am going to kick it to one of my friends. The same people that are saying we are raising taxes are the same people that said we would be greeted as liberators. They are the same people that said, you know, we use the oil money for reconstruction, the same people that said it would only cost us \$50 billion to run the war in Iraq, the same people that said we are in our last throes, the same people that said mission was accomplished, those are the same people that are saying that the Democratic budget is going to raise taxes, which three third-party validators have not say. All I am going to say is this. Let's ask the American people to reserve judgment.

Next January and February, when you file your taxes, you compare them to the taxes you filed this year, and you will see that the Democrats have not raised your taxes. Reserve judgment, keep your sheets, keep your forms from this year, and you will see next year that we have not done it, and that will be one more that you could add to the list of inaccuracies that have been levied towards the American people.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Don't get too far from the rhythm here. Don't go anywhere.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. I am not going anywhere.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. On this potent point, first of all, Mr. MEEK, let me say the people that have come to my office say can you provide for funding for child care so I can be at work. I have not heard, Warren Buffett has not been in my office, but Warren Buffett himself has said he would rather see an investment in the domestic economy as opposed to the enormous tax cuts for the rich.

The reason why I think this is important, let me have you see something else in 12 months besides the filing of your taxes, an economic engine that

may see an increase in jobs just because the Democrats had enough courage to stand up to the President's budget and do our own budget that doesn't have tax increases, but invests in the economy.

Maybe we will also see more students going to college. Maybe we will also see more children getting SCHIP money based upon the appropriators and the budget coming together. Maybe we will see, you know what, my country cares for me. They actually care about what I need, because they have brought down the deficit. That is what this President would sign this budget and work with this Congress, maybe we will see what it means to care about Americans as opposed to putting forward special interests.

I thank the gentlemen. I would just like to read that as I go, thus, to be clear, the budget resolution does not call for or require a tax increase. That is the Democratic budget resolution.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. I think it is important that we continue to say this. Mr. RYAN, you said something that I thought was very interesting, very interesting.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Thank you.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. You are welcome. Again, third-party validators, and I have here Congressional Budget Office numbers here, there is nothing it is nothing like the truth, and it is nothing like the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. I can tell you when we look at, these are the same individuals in the White House, and some of the same Members on this floor that were left over from the days of just spend, spend, spend, borrow, borrow, borrow, don't worry about it, we are not going to be here to fix it, but here is the truth, \$5.6 trillion surplus was here when the President got here, President Bush.

We have had an \$8.4 trillion swing, deficit, from a \$5.6 trillion surplus, which means, projection, we had money, and these numbers were based on 2002 to 2011 projections, to now, a \$2.8 trillion deficit. Republican policies and this, you know, that got us there, \$8.4 trillion.

Let me just share this with you. The amount of foreign debt held more than doubles under the Bush administration. He didn't do it by himself, that is why we have a Democratic Congress, because the American people caught on to what he was doing and what the rubber stamp Congress was doing last Congress. We are talking about accountability. We are talking about being responsible with U.S. tax dollars, foreign-held debt. Look at it skyrocket, going straight up.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Those are trillions of dollars.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Trillions of dollars. Trillions of dollars. We have kids now, growing up, can't even get to the trillion part. Who are we getting the money from? That is interesting, a list of countries. Mr. RYAN has been to a few of these countries.

Japan has \$644.3 billion of our debt. They bought that debt because of Republican policies and because of the rubber-stamp Congress. We have to have a paradigm shift here. We want to change.

China, \$249.8 billion, I think it is important to also understand that. The UK, \$239.1 billion. You can see it goes across, and all of these countries have a part of American apple pie now.

□ 2245

This is the same group, the same folks that are saying that we are going to continue to raise taxes and we don't manage. We are the party and we are the majority, back when we had the majority 12 years ago, that balanced the budget and took us into surpluses. So who has the track record as relates to doing the right thing on behalf of the country?

Budget resolution reaches balance by 2010. The numbers come from the Congressional Budget Office. And this is the House resolution, our bill. The Bush budget is projected to be \$31 billion under, still in deficit. We are going to be at a surplus. These are the projections by 2010, \$1.53 billion. These are the facts, Mr. RYAN. And I know they hurt for some Members, but they are educational to others, and they give them what they need to be able to come here and make sound decisions.

Mr. RYAN, the bottom line is this. We are not by ourselves. Let's talk about why we are not by ourselves. And I just want to read a couple of the folks that are with us on this issue. And I think it is important, and there are so many, I had a list here, Mr. RYAN, that kind of a little cheat sheet here.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. I have got it right here, Mr. MEEK.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Tell you what. You start naming off a few, and then I will name off. Because we need to make sure the Members know that this not just something that came out the back room.

Oh, I have my list here now. There is so much information, Mr. RYAN, that we have to share.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. I would like to ask to submit this for the RECORD, Mr. Speaker.

So this will be listed and memorialized in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, the organizations who have endorsed the 2008 budget.

The following organizations have endorsed the 2008 Budget Resolution:

American Academy of Pediatrics, March 27
 American Association of People with Disabilities, March 26
 American Association of School Administrators, March 27
 American Association of University Women, March 27
 American Farmland Trust, March 28
 American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees, AFL-CIO, March 27
 American Hospital Association, March 28
 The American Legion, March 21
 American Public Transportation Association, March 23
 The ARC of the United States, March 26
 Association of Child Support Attorneys of Los Angeles County, March 27

Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities, March 27

Association of Public Television Stations, March 27

Audubon, March 27

Catholic Charities USA, March 27

Child Support Directors Association of California, March 27

Coalition on Human Needs, March 27

Committee for Education Funding, March 27

Computer & Communications Industry Association, March 28

Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities, March 26

Catholic Health Association, March 27

Council on Competitiveness, March 28

Defenders of Wildlife, March 22

Disabled American Veterans, March 21

Electronic Industries Alliance, March 28

Emergency Campaign for American's Priorities, March 27

Environmental Coalition (including American Rivers, Audubon, NRDC, Sierra Club, Wilderness Society and many others), March 26

Families USA, March 26

Food Research and Action Center, March 27

Independent Budget, March 21

Information Technology Association of America, March 27

Information Technology Industry Council, March 27

Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers, Inc., March 27

Leadership Conference on Civil Rights, March 28

League of Conservation Voters, March 27

Military Officers Association of America, March 26

National Child Support Enforcement Association, March 27

National Low Income Housing Coalition, March 26

National Women's Law Center, March 27, 2007

Fight Crime: Invest in Kids, March 27

National Association of Counties, March 27

National Association of Federally Impacted Schools, March 27

National Association of Police Organizations, Inc., March 28

National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare, March 27

National Council of La Raza, March 27

National Council of Social Security Management Associations, March 27

National Council of SSA Field Operations Locals, American Federation of Government Employees, AFL-CIO, March 27

National Education Association, March 26

National Head Start Association, March 27

National School Boards Association, March 27

Ohio Child Support Enforcement Agency Directors' Association, March 27

OMB Watch, March 26

Semiconductor Equipment and Materials International North America, March 27

Student Aid Alliance, March 27

Symantec, March 28

Technet, March 28

Transportation Construction Coalition, March 23

Trout Unlimited, March 26

The Trust for Public Land, The Conservation Fund, The Nature Conservancy, and Land Trust Alliance, March 27

United Cerebral Palsy, March 26

United Spinal Association, March 27

US Action, March 27

U.S. Public Interest Research Group, March 27

Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States, March 21

Wider Opportunities for Women, March 23

Mr. MEEK of Florida. The Members who are in their offices, those that may

be on the floor, I don't want them to have to wait to read the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD tomorrow, the next day or what have you. I just wanted to name a few of these folks. I think it is important.

Military Officers Association of America wrote a letter in support of this budget. The National Child Support Enforcement Association, the National Low Income Housing Association, the National Women of Law Centers Association, Fight Crime, Invest in Kids.

The National Association of Counties. Who are they? These are counties throughout the country and parishes that are saying enough is enough.

The National Association of Police Organizations, Inc. Who are they? They are our law enforcement community that is looking for the COPS program to come back.

The National School Board Association, the National Head Start Association, the Ohio Child Support Enforcement Agency Directors Association. I thought I would mention that, Mr. RYAN, since you were here.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Appreciate that.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. The Trust for Public Land and Conservation Fund endorse. The Trust Alliance endorse what we are doing here. The U.S. Public Interest Research Group endorse what we are doing here. Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States endorse what we are doing, because they are seeing the largest increase in commitment that so many Members of Congress have talked about over the years.

The American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees. These are the folks that work every day. These are the individuals that come in before we get here and leave after us. These are the works folks that know what it means to punch in and punch out.

The Audubon Society, Catholic Charities, the Committee for Education Funding, the Computer and Communications Industry Association, Catholic Health Association, Defenders of Wildlife, Disabled American Veterans.

These are the individuals, Mr. RYAN, and that is just, I can't go through all of the letters. We have the letters right here. I am not just reading from a sheet, just saying, well, I am just going to read. Anybody want to see this, they can stop by 1039 Longworth, and I will give them several copies of this. And, Mr. Speaker, they can run and take a look at them.

My Republican colleagues, some that I believe that will vote with us on this budget resolution, since it is so good and it is doing the right thing and it is not just about Iraq and Iraq and the other issue, Iraq. It is about domestic priorities. It is about making sure that our children have health care. It is about protecting the homeland. It is about all of the things and all of the reasons why we came to Congress. Not just to hear from the President and say, so shall it be written, so shall it be done.

So, Mr. RYAN, for you to get passionate about this, not that I am not passionate about it, but I think it is important that we share this accurate information with the people, with not only Members of Congress but the American people. So I am glad that you entered it into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. Those that may be able to get on-line or even get a copy of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD will be able to see these great American organizations that will endorse.

And I know, Mr. Speaker, as this budget resolution, when we start moving through the process and the Senate product and we go into conference and we send it to the President of the United States, there will be a true momentum of the American spirit that will be rolling over to the White House on Pennsylvania. It will go right down the street here.

If the President wants to veto domestic priorities and things that are going to help Americans every day and be able to make sure that our military is strong and make sure that our veterans get better service that we promised them when they signed up as volunteers to protect this country, then we have to continue, Mr. RYAN and Members, to persuade the President to do otherwise. If he wants to veto it, we have to persuade him not to do it.

I am not going to say have at it. It would be okay if it wasn't the budget of the United States of America. It would be okay if it wasn't an emergency supplemental to make sure that our troops and men and women have what they need and accountability measures are in that emergency supplemental to hold the Iraqi government's feet to the fire, and what the administration has said, and making sure that our troops have what they need when they are sent into harm's way and make sure when they come back home that they are able to even go to their son or daughter's school without coming back in 6 weeks and 2 months being shipped back to Iraq for another 14-month tour. Because the administration, it takes them so long to admit that they have a problem. They just admitted 2 weeks ago, the Defense Department just called the conflict in Iraq a civil war after a year of the media and Members of Congress saying it was a civil war. They just got there, Mr. RYAN.

So the good thing about it is that, and in the last Congress we used to talk about if we had the opportunity to do. Now we have the opportunity to do. Now we are doing, and I would just want the majority of this House to join us in the leadership opportunities that the American people have provided us. And I am not just talking to Democrats, Mr. Speaker, I am talking to my Republican colleagues.

Because, guess what? Maybe not this November but next November is going to be another opportunity for the American people to stand in judgment. And I guarantee you this: People are

going to vote their personal priorities over their politics.

The President got out there today. They are going to get us. Terrorists are coming. We have to fight them there so we don't have to fight them over here. Well, guess what? When we passed and fully implemented the 9/11 recommendations, we are ready to protect America. That is what this budget reflects, and that is the way we protect the homeland, not continuing to stay in the middle of civil war.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Exactly. Budgets are priorities. They are blueprints for what you stand for and what you believe. And the Democrats and the Democratic budget is something that I think really is going to invigorate the country. It is not going as far as a lot of us want it to go, but the fact of the matter is we are left holding the bag of a Republican-led Congress and President that added almost \$3 trillion in debt to this country, and we have got to deal with that. That is the stark reality of the budget situation.

But, again, I would like to say this. This President has threatened to veto the supplemental bill that adds an additional \$1.7 billion for veterans, an additional \$1.7 billion for defense health care, \$500 million for post-traumatic stress, \$500 million for brain injuries. That is what the President is going to veto when he says he is going to veto the supplemental.

The American people are way ahead of us on this war, and the national intelligence estimate said that the war in Iraq has created more terrorists and has made the terrorist situation worse, Mr. MEEK. This war has created more enemies for us, has created more terrorists that are gunning for the United States. So to say that by coming home that that somehow is going to make us less safe is inaccurate and inconsistent with the national intelligence estimate and the basic common sense of most Americans.

So as we move forward in a new direction in Iraq and the budget blueprint that we have that is going to move the country in a new direction domestically, without raising taxes, as the Concord Coalition said, the Democratic budget is not raising taxes. And the Center on Budget and Policy is saying the Democratic budget is not raising taxes. I will say, and another third-party validator, the Brookings Institute, says the Democrats are not raising taxes in their new budget.

I want to repeat this. I am asking, Mr. Speaker, for the Members of this House who know the facts, who will vote on this bill, they know we are not raising taxes, and that is why we are going to get broad support on it.

But for the American people to compare this year's tax returns that they get, reserve judgment on the Democratic tax policy, compare this year's to next year's, and you will see that your tax rates are the exact same, the exact same. And you will have one more piece of evidence to put in the

column of we will be greeted as liberators, the same thing, the same column as we are in the last throes, the same column as mission accomplished. You will be able to put the Democratic budget and the Democratic tax policy in that same list.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Very quickly, while you get the chart to give the Web site, Mr. RYAN, I just wanted to say in this letter that Senator REID, the leader in the Senate, and also the Speaker here in the House wrote to the President saying that we will no longer move in the old direction but, rather, a bipartisan majority of the House and Senate believes strongly that the U.S. mission should transition to a counterterrorism force protection and training equipment of the Iraqi forces. Phasing redeployment of U.S. troops should commence.

So this is the stage that we want to move in now. It won't be a total withdrawal but definitely will be making sure that there are accountability measures there, that their troops get trained and that we get our men and women back home more sooner than later.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. We just want them to meet the benchmarks that the President set on January 10 of this year. We are going to hold the administration's feet to the fire.

30somethingdems@mail.house.gov.
For any e-mails you may want to send, www.speaker.dot.gov/30something. All of the charts that Members may want to look at are all available on these Web sites. www.speaker.gov/30something.

THE DEMOCRAT BUDGET

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

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I always come over here with the intentions of using my prepared remarks, and then I hear things being said by the other side and they usually grab my attention.

I want to talk tonight a little bit about the Democrat budget, but something that one of my colleagues said just a few minutes ago needs to be repeated.

He said, budgets are what you stand for and believe. Well, what the Democrats stand for and believe is greater government spending, taking more of your money and giving to the government.

And he also said, this budget doesn't go as far as some wanted. Well, that is the truth, I am sure. I am sure there were many Democrats who wanted to raise taxes a whole lot more and spend a whole lot more of the American people's money than they are going to do, but they are going to do plenty of damage, even not going as far as some of them want to go.

So the truth is, they told it to you tonight. The budget is what you stand