

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION ON
THE BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR
2009

SPEECH OF

HON. JOHN D. DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 13, 2008

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 312) revising the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2008, establishing the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2009, and setting forth appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2010 through 2013:

Mr. DINGELL. Mr. Chairman, today I rise in support of H. Con. Res. 312, the House Budget Resolution for fiscal year 2009.

There are a number of reasons why the President's budget was considered "dead on arrival" by Members of this House. I can think of five off of the top of my head—(1) \$200 billion in cut funding over 5 years from Medicare and Medicaid; (2) \$570 million in cut funding from the Low Income Home Heating Assistance Program; (3) \$800 million cut from the Federal-Aid Highways Administration; (4) \$85 million from the Manufacturing Extension Partnership and 5) \$59 million cut from the Migration and Refugee Assistance. The icing on the cake—the President proposed freezing spending for the Consumer Product Safety Commission and the National Institutes of Health.

If this is not a sign that this President is out of tune with the American people, then I would advise this President that he spend more time reading the mail that comes to his office and less time on his ranch in Crawford.

With today's budget resolution, the House is holding true to its commitment to the American people and the priorities of our families. Frankly, there is no excuse to continue to neglect the families that need help from their government.

Recently the Congressional Budget Office projected that under the current policies of this administration the budget deficit will reach \$396 billion in 2008 and \$342 billion in 2009. These are the second and fourth largest deficits ever. I would remind my colleagues that when this administration took office we were fortunate to have a projected \$5.6 trillion 10-year surplus. For a President who continues to advocate for fiscal responsibility, it appears to me that he has not followed his own advice.

Currently, 80 cents of every dollar of new debt since 2001 is owed to foreign investors. This is not a trend that we will let continue. Unlike the Bush administration, the Democratic Budget will be balanced by 2012 and will remain in balance in 2013. Furthermore, we will reduce the deficits over the next 5 years while continuing to follow pay-as-you-go.

The Democratic Budget also holds true to its commitment to our veterans by increasing funding for 2009 by \$3.6 billion above the current level. At the same time that the administration is demanding more and more from our troops, they have also shamefully proposed \$18 billion over 5 years in new fees for veterans and military retirees. Our troops have served in Iraq and Afghanistan honorably and dutifully and they deserve to come home to quality health care and strong education bene-

fits. This budget will allow the VA to treat 5.8 million patients in 2009, 333,275 of which are Iraq and Afghanistan war veterans.

On January 20, the Commission on the Guard and Reserve issued a report announcing that the military is not ready for a catastrophic attack on the country. More worrisome is the conclusion that the National Guard is ill-trained and ill-equipped to handle the job. The Democratic budget addresses this issue by focusing on improving military readiness and enhancing the pay and benefits for our troops in order to improve their quality of life.

In the last 7 years, this Administration has failed to support our first responder programs, firefighter assistance grants and the Community Oriented Policing Services. The Democratic budget proposes to reverse this trend by placing a high priority on restoring funding. It is imperative that while we are assisting those abroad with their security needs, that we are also supporting our own domestic security needs.

I am proud to say that this budget proposal will also follow through on our commitment to expand children's health insurance coverage by providing a \$50 billion increase to the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) so that we can provide healthcare to millions more children who otherwise would go uninsured. As we all witnessed last year, the President vetoed legislation expanding SCHIP on two occasions. In my home state of Michigan we have seen the number of uninsured increase to 10.7 percent of Michigan's population. Rather than making healthcare coverage less accessible, Congress must be doing everything it can to ensure that every individual who wants healthcare coverage has the means to get it.

The Democratic budget also rejects the proposed \$500 billion in cuts to Medicare and Medicaid. There is no doubt that this President does not place the health of our families on the top of his priority list, however, his budget did ensure that his fat cat friends in the insurance industry would still receive the overpayments to private managed care plans. I am pleased to say that the House has proposed \$1.9 trillion in mandatory spending programs, including Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security.

As we have seen college costs and tuitions skyrocket, this President has proposed freezing funding to the Department of Education. The President has again failed to provide funding for No Child Left Behind (NCLB), providing only \$24.6 billion for 2009, making the cumulative shortfall for NCLB \$85.6 billion. On top of this, the President has proposed cutting Teacher Quality State Grants by \$100 million. At a time when we are asking our teachers and schools to meet rigorous standards of NCLB, how can we cut funding from a program designed to assist with professional development?

The Democratic budget rejects these cuts by providing \$7.1 billion for education and job training above the President's proposal. If we want to turn our economy around we must have workers that are well-trained and equipped to compete in the global market. However, to do so we must address rising college costs. In the last year the average tuition and fees to attend a four-year in-state public college increased 6.6 percent to \$6,185, and for a four-year private college families are fac-

ing a bill of \$23,712. This budget resolution will help parents and students pay for college raising the maximum Pell grant and continuing Perkins Loans and Supplemental Opportunity Grants.

The Democratic budget provides funding that is crucial for job creation. As we have seen here at home, our economy is heading towards a recession. From 2001–2006 alone, Michigan lost 235,000 jobs, many of them high-paying manufacturing jobs. With the rising unemployment rate, it is clear that we need to invest in our workers and new industries that would promote job creation here at home.

This budget provides critical funding for the America COMPETES Act increasing funding for math and science education and research. The Manufacturing Extension Partnership, which was drastically cut under the President's budget, will receive continued funding which will help to retain 37,000 jobs. It also supports the trade adjustment assistance program, which would provide 130,000 workers with both income support and access to training.

In the past year we have witnessed the danger of our neglected infrastructure in the tragedy of the Minneapolis bridge collapse. Until the next surface transportation bill, we must ensure that our roads and bridges are receiving the funding and support needed to be safe and secure for our communities. We must also address the negative effects of the rising costs in fuel. Congestion on our roads has resulted in 26 gallons of wasted fuel per person, costing our constituents \$78 billion annually.

Over the years we have heard time and again from the President that we must decrease our dependence on foreign oil, yet he has proposed cutting funding for our highway and transit programs, mass transit expansions and Amtrak by \$2 billion below authorized levels. The Democrats will not stand for this and instead propose increasing the investment in transportation infrastructure by \$41.2 billion for highway programs, \$10.3 billion for transit, \$1.3 billion for highway safety and \$3.9 billion in airport improvement grants. This will save our constituents delays on the roads and in the airports and reduce pollution and fuel needs.

Just this week it was announced that Michigan is sixth in the nation for foreclosures; nationally almost 2.8 million homeowners are at risk of losing their homes to foreclosures. Last year the House passed legislation that would create an affordable housing fund, which is currently awaiting Senate consideration. This budget takes a step forward by providing needed funding for the \$2.8 billion shortfall for the project-based rental assistance program at the Department of Housing and Urban Development and provides funding for tenant-based rental assistance.

The Democratic budget would also help those that are struggling with home heating costs by rejecting the President's cut to the Low-Income Home Energy Assistant Program. Since 2001, home heating costs have gone up by 80 percent. There is no reason our families should be choosing between groceries and heat during the tough winter months.

While the President can propose cutting funding, Congress will continue to provide funding for bipartisan programs such as our water and natural resources programs. This budget rejects the proposed \$2.9 billion in cuts and instead invests in water infrastructure that

will promote and protect our clean and safe drinking water supplies.

The Democratic budget provides tax relief for the middle class families that need it most. The Democratic budget will continue the tax cuts for the middle class, while also preventing 20 million families from being subject to the alternative minimum tax.

Finally, earlier this year, I wrote a letter to Chairman SPRATT requesting that he keep in mind the plight of the millions of Iraqi refugees and internally displaced persons when preparing the budget priorities for this year. I am happy that he was able to include language in the Committee Report accompanying the budget document recognizing this humanitarian crisis.

Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to say that not only have we received the last budget proposal from this Administration, but it is also the last budget of empty promises. I look forward to passing the Democratic budget resolution proving Congress's commitment to our American families. More importantly, I look forward to working next year with my colleagues and the next Administration to develop a fiscally responsible budget that will finally put the needs of our country first.

IN REMEMBRANCE OF JUANITA
SERRANO

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 14, 2008

Mr. KUCINICH. Madam Speaker, I rise today in remembrance of Juanita Serrano, who dedicated her life to serving as a community organizer on behalf of Women's Rights and social justice.

Juanita Serrano was born in Cayey, Puerto Rico in 1930 and moved to Cleveland in the 1960's. A single mother of seven sons, she dedicated her life to advocating on behalf of women and the poor. Her commitment to the welfare of others manifested itself in various ways. She participated in many marches and demonstrations in Washington, D.C. and served as the President of the Cleveland chapter of the National Welfare Rights Organization. Juanita was also one of the founding Board members of the May Dugan Multi-Service Center and served on the steering committee which helped create the Thomas F. McCafferty Health Center in Cleveland.

A tireless advocate for women and the poor, Juanita also dedicated her time to improving the life of Cleveland's Spanish speaking community. She served as a board member of the Spanish American Committee and was instrumental in the founding of Cleveland's first Hispanic Catholic Church, San Juan Bautista. Recognized for her life of serving the community, she was the recipient of Cleveland State University's Cervantes Award and was honored as the Grand Marshall of Puerto Rican Friendly Day Parade in 1993. For years Juanita volunteered as a Eucharistic Minister for terminally ill patients at MetroHealth and in 1995, was awarded Volunteer of the Year by the Cleveland Mediation Center.

Madam Speaker and colleagues, please join me in celebrating the life of Juanita Serrano, who committed her life to serving her church, her community and her family.

WOMEN IN THE TEXAS PETRO-
CHEMICAL INDUSTRY: KATH-
LEEN JACKSON

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 14, 2008

Mr. POE. Madam Speaker, today I am proud to pay tribute to Kathleen Jackson, Public Affairs Manager of ExxonMobil Corporation, who is in the elite club of women in the male dominated petrochemical industry.

A graduate of North Carolina State University, Ms. Jackson holds a Bachelor of Science Degree in Chemical Engineering and Pulp and Paper Science & Technology. She attended college on a Pulp and Paper Foundation scholarship, and became their first woman graduate in 1975. She was a North Carolina Leadership Institute Fellow and recipient of the W.E. Cauldwell Fellowship for Chemical Engineering studies.

For more than 30 years, Ms. Jackson has held various positions at the ExxonMobil Beaumont, Texas Refinery in engineering, operations, and environmental departments—including Operations Supervisor of the refinery's natural gas liquids processing facility.

Kathleen has been responsible for the refinery's Capital Budget Planning Program, Environmental Audit Program, and Water Quality issues. She is currently responsible for managing Public Affairs and Community Relations for Exxon Mobil Corporation's Refining & Supply, Chemical, and Lubricants & Petroleum Specialties business in Beaumont, Texas. She is a Texas Registered Professional Engineer and past Chairman of the Southeast Texas Section of the American Institute of Chemical Engineers.

Kathleen serves on the Lower Neches Basin Water Quality Assessment Program; the Beaumont Chamber of Commerce's Education Committee; the Southeast Texas Workforce Development Board; and is the past Chairwoman of the Southeast Texas Industry Public Relations Association, chartered by the Southeast Texas Plant Managers Forum.

In 1994, Ms. Jackson received Mobil Oil Corporation's prestigious Chairman's Award and Team Venture Award. She is also a recipient of ExxonMobil Chemical's Responsible Care Award, and the American Institute of Chemical Engineer's Outstanding Presentation Award. Kathleen is active in numerous community activities including Lamar Institute of Technology's Foundation Board of Directors; Beaumont Independent School District's Educational Improvement Committee; Young Audiences of Southeast Texas Board of Directors; Junior League of Beaumont; Rotary Club of Beaumont; JASON Alliance of Southeast Texas' Board of Directors; and is past President of the American Cancer Society.

Kathleen was appointed to the Governor's Focus on Reading Task Force by former Texas Governor George W. Bush in 1997. She currently serves as an appointee of Texas Governor Rick Perry as President of the Board of Directors for the Lower Neches Valley Authority.

Madam Speaker, Kathleen Jackson is a pioneer in the male dominated petrochemical industry, and I am proud to celebrate her accomplishments.

TRIBUTE TO POCA VALLEY BANK

HON. SHELLEY MOORE CAPITO

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 14, 2008

Mrs. CAPITO. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the Poca Valley Bank as it celebrates its 100th anniversary this year.

Poca Valley Bank's first branch opened in 1908 in Walton, West Virginia, situated along the Pocatalico River in Roane County. Since then, it has expanded its banking services to Clendenin, Elkview, and Sissonville in Kanawha County and Winfield and Poca in Putnam County and opened its latest branch location in Spencer located in Roane County in 2005.

Poca Valley Bank gets its namesake from the Pocatalico River that originates in Roane County. Many of the branch locations are located along the Pocatalico River that flows through Kanawha and Putnam Counties.

The bank has found its success in catering to West Virginia's rural communities with a strong foundation built upon personal attention and customer service. With its modest roots in serving small towns and its rural outlying communities, Poca Valley Bank has grown into one of West Virginia's larger banking institutions.

It is an honor to pay tribute to Poca Valley Bank, a financial institution that represents the best of America's small town banks. I wish congratulations to Poca Valley Bank as it celebrates one century of banking in the Mountain State.

CONGRATULATING GARY K. SUNG
AS THE 2008 YOUNG ENTRE-
PRENEUR CHAMPION OF THE
YEAR FOR GUAM

HON. MADELEINE Z. BORDALLO

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 14, 2008

Ms. BORDALLO. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Gary K. Sung on being named the U.S. Small Business Administration 2008 Small Business Young Entrepreneur Champion of the Year for Guam.

Gary Sung is the sole proprietor of Ideal Advertising. With his knowledge of technology and web development, combined with his determination and business sense, Gary transformed Ideal Advertising from a home-based business to a successful advertising agency with nine full-time employees.

Gary was also named Regional Young Entrepreneur Champion of the Year in 2007 from a pool of young business owners from California, Nevada, Arizona, and Hawaii.

I congratulate Gary K. Sung on his business success, and I join our island in celebrating his regional and national recognition as the U.S. Small Business Administration 2008 Small Business Young Entrepreneur Champion of the Year for Guam.