

And so I got today the figures on the Baucus bill coming out of the Senate, \$487 billion in new taxes, and probably a couple of trillion dollars over the next 10 years. So I'd just like to say to my colleagues on the Democrat side of the aisle, let's get together and figure out a way to balance the budget. And if we can do that, then we could solve the problem of health care.

All of us who are privileged to serve in this Chamber are deeply involved in the nationwide debate on health care.

Currently, the Democrat Majority in Congress is trying to craft a single health insurance reform bill from the bits and pieces of four competing alternatives not to mention President Obama's "plan" which has never been put on paper.

At the moment we do not know what, if anything, the House of Representatives will vote on. I have made my views clear. I have said over and over on this Floor and in my town hall meetings that I will not support, and I will strongly work to defeat the House Democrats' government take-over.

Here are some straightforward reasons why I oppose the bill:

Health care costs will go up for the government and everyone else.

As many as 2 out of 3 Americans will lose their current health coverage and be forced into the government-run plan.

Raising taxes on small businesses is the wrong solution for an economy in a recession.

The new government run plan will lead to fewer choices and rationing.

I support health care reform that would expand opportunities for small businesses to band together to purchase high-quality health care for their employees at more affordable prices, and medical liability reform legislation to eliminate expensive defensive medicine.

Unfortunately these proposals have been blocked. If either of these two proposals were law today, we would be starting at a very different place with health reform.

What the House Democrats are proposing goes far beyond fixing the problems we all know need to be addressed. The House bill is a complete upheaval of our current system. That is why the bill lacks bipartisan support.

As the Democrats in Congress choose to focus the debate about health care reform on creating a government run health plan, they are ignoring another important issue that directly relates to health care reform.

That is the issue of balancing the budget, which has not been given much attention in this debate by the Democrat Majority. This has not gone unnoticed in my Congressional District.

Earlier this week, one of my constituents named Jim Byers stopped me to talk about what we are doing here in Congress to balance the budget.

Sadly, I did not have an answer for him. For now, it looks as if this Congress has decided to take the issue of balancing the budget off the table.

The non-partisan Congressional Budget Office on Wednesday said that the deficit for fiscal year 2009 totaled about \$1.4 trillion, a \$950 billion increase over the shortfall posted in fiscal year 2008.

The deficit now represents 9.9 percent of the gross domestic product.

While revenues were down nearly \$420 billion (17%) below receipts in fiscal year 2008,

outlays increased by over \$530 billion (18%), in fiscal year 2009. About \$245 billion of the spending increase resulted from outlays for TARP.

Since the fall of 2008, Congress has spent: TARP—Original Cost: \$700 Billion.

Democrat Stimulus: Base Cost = \$787 billion; Stimulus: Cost with Interest = \$1.1 trillion. FY 2009 Omnibus: Total Spending: \$410 billion.

FY 2009 Defense Supplemental: \$105.9 Billion.

State Children's Health Insurance (CHIP) Reauthorization: \$73.3 Billion.

This time around, the Majority is trying to ram through a health care reform bill that—by some estimates will cost upwards of \$1 trillion over the next 10 years. How does this level of spending square with the goal of balancing the budget?

It can't be done, unless of course, we are prepared to raise taxes or cut Medicare to the tune of \$500 billion.

I agree with Mr. BYERS. We have to start taking concrete steps to balance the budget. I sincerely believe that if the Democrats commit to balancing the budget then a bipartisan agreement on health care reform can be achieved.

If not, and they continue to walk down the path of dismantling our Nation's current health insurance system without any regard to the Federal budget and future deficits, I will fight them every step of the way.

We need to start talking about the other half of the health care debate—the budget. If we move forward on health care reform without any solid commitment to balancing the budget we are most certainly doomed to a future of uncontrollable deficits.

GAY RIGHTS AGENDA

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

Mr. GOHMERT. Well, we've done it. Today was a landmark day. This body took the body of our military and attached to that body, as they were fighting, a gay rights agenda. I say "gay rights agenda" about this hate crimes bill because there is already a hate crimes bill. It was part of the 1968 Civil Rights Act. It included things like race, creed, color, national origin. So that was there already.

So what we have done indicates this body has no shame. You know, we will take our military fighting for us, and attach a gay rights agenda to get it accomplished. You know, what's next? Where else do we go? What shame is there left? I guess there's more to be seen.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. MARKEY of Colorado). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentle-

woman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

HOMEBUYER TAX CREDIT PROGRAM

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

Mr. MCDERMOTT. Madam Speaker, my hometown newspaper, The Seattle Times, published a front page story the other day under the headline, "First-time Buyers Ignite Home Sales." The bottom line is that the \$8,000 tax credit for first-time homebuyers is working and should, at a minimum, be extended before it expires at the end of November. Some experts even suggest expanding the program to anyone buying a home. And that's worth considering.

The tax credit was included in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act that the President signed into law in February. It had an almost immediate and positive impact on the U.S. housing market, and the data proves it. This chart shows that in March, the housing was still in free fall. But in April, when the tax credit began to take hold, we see the beginning of a steady increase in home sales through August, the last month for which figures are available. The tax credit has made homeownership a reality for thousands of decent, hardworking Americans. Extending it makes financial sense, economic sense, and it especially makes middle class sense.

Across America, prices are stabilizing, and the inventory of homes for sale is trending downward toward a point where market forces do not favor either the buyer or the seller. When people buy homes, they purchase appliances and curtains and a whole list of durable goods, so the positive impact of the local economy is more than just the actual purchase. It supports other jobs.

The program is working for America's families and for America. During the Congressional debate last winter the National Association of Realtors forecast that the first-time homebuyer tax credit would generate a half a million homes. The actual number is 1.4 million homes. And that benefits local governments too because of real estate and other local taxes that help pay for vital community services like police and fire.

If the program is extended and possibly expanded, there is new forecast of the impact, and it's very impressive. The second chart shows what can happen if we keep going a little longer and jobs and wages across the country, including my State, and the congressional district, the U.S. would expect 347,000 jobs with wages of \$16 billion; Washington State, 8,000 jobs, with \$375 million in wages.

The first-time homebuyer credit has nurtured a fragile housing market to better health in just 6 months. Even if you're not buying a house, you benefit because the housing market is one of the underpinnings of our entire economy and is the largest asset for families. So rebuilding the housing market helps us rebuild the economy.

As you can see, there are pending home sales. In this last chart you can clearly see that the tax credit is taking the housing market and America in the right direction. But this positive news will be threatened if we don't take action now. If it takes 60 days for a mortgage application to be processed, we are nearing the end by November 30. The tax credit is the foundation of the fragile housing market recovery that we are expecting to see across this country.

Now is not the time to mess with success. The homebuyer tax credit works, and it keeps it working by extending the program into the next year. The Congress should act immediately on this because the slow-down is just around the corner if we don't keep the tax credit there.

AMERICAN CREDIBILITY, POLAND AND MISSILE DEFENSE

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Madam Speaker, the United States Government plans to abandon our current missile defense plan in Europe. That will leave this country more vulnerable. Why would we want to do that? With Iran in a race to get the nuclear bomb and testing long-range missiles, America and Europe are at risk.

But the American Government decided to abandon the current missile defense shield to be installed in Poland and the accompanying radar system in the Czech Republic. This system was to protect Europe and the United States from a missile launch from Iran. The whole world knows that the little man from the desert, Ahmadinejad, is building nuclear weapons and intercontinental ballistic missiles that could send nukes to the Middle East, Europe, and the United States. We have agreements with Poland and the Czech Republic for defensive missile systems. Don't we have an obligation to protect America from the threats of tyrants like Ahmadinejad? We should not break our word with our allies. America loses its credibility with our allies by failing to live up to our commitments.

Madam Speaker, America and Poland have a special relationship. This body just voted to grant honorary U.S. citizenship to Casimir Pulaski, the Father of the American Cavalry. He was born in Poland, and he was essential to our victory in the American War for Independence. Congress commissioned this Polish individual, Pulaski, as a brig-

dier general with the command of all the American Cavalry; and after training American troops for a year, Washington approved the formation of an independent corps of cavalry, and Pulaski's Legion became the training ground for American Cavalry officers like "Light Horse" Harry Lee, the father of Robert E. Lee. Once a British officer called Pulaski's Legion simply, "the best damn cavalry the rebels ever had."

Then later, when World War II began, Hitler first invaded Poland. That happened 70 years ago this past September. Poland was occupied by the tyranny of Nazism. The horror that was Auschwitz was in Poland at a place where Jews, musicians, writers, Poles and other peoples died horrible deaths. There were many concentration camps in Poland, Auschwitz being the largest and most infamous of these extermination camps. Jews and others were worked to death. This policy was called the Vernichtung durch Arbeit, or as we say in English, the annihilation through work. My father was one of the Americans to liberate the concentration camps in Europe at the end of World War II. He was a teenager and still recounts the inhumane treatment of humans by tyrants.

As America celebrated the end of World War II in 1945, Poland then was occupied by the tyranny of communism and for decades the people of Poland lived under the tyrants of communism.

So the Polish people understand more than anyone the terrors of living under tyranny. They have a special love for freedom and liberty, and they have a special love for America. Now Poland has partnered with the United States to put a missile defense system in their nation, and we must not desert them, Madam Speaker. They even stand with us in fighting terrorists in Afghanistan, and I got to meet numerous Polish soldiers at Camp Bagram in Afghanistan earlier this year. They are our friends and our partners and our allies. We stand shoulder to shoulder in this fight against the war on terror.

I also had the opportunity to meet with the Polish people in Poland earlier to discuss missile defense and other matters, and they are friends to America. They have shown their dedication to independence and loyalty to the United States since the American War for Independence. They heeded our call when we needed them with their General Pulaski, and we showed Poland our loyalty in World War II and the Cold War. Now, when liberty and freedom are in danger once more, it is unwise to abandon them and our missile defense system in Europe. After all, Madam Speaker, tyrants still roam the globe looking for the opportunity to snuff out freedom.

And that's just the way it is.

ONE TEAM—ONE FIGHT—ONE NAME

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gen-

tleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. JONES. Madam Speaker, in each Congress since 2001, I have introduced legislation aimed at giving the Marine Corps the recognition it deserves as one of the official branches of the military. This year I introduced H.R. 24, a bill to redesignate the Department of the Navy as the Department of the Navy and Marine Corps. With much support, 309 Members of the House joined me in this effort. The language was passed earlier this year by the House as part of the House version of H.R. 2647, this year's National Defense Authorization Act.

I must say that I am very pleased and honored by the group of people that have supported this legislation. The Fleet Reserve Association, the VFW, the National Marine League and the Marine Corps Parents have been so busy urging their Senators to support this bill, and I want to thank them for their hard work.

Madam Speaker, I have been contacted by many members of the Marine Corps and Navy that support this bill and agree that this is all about the fighting team, the team named the Navy and Marine Corps. In this year's conference with the Senate, I had a Senator say to me that he had never received a letter from a marine supporting this bill.

Madam Speaker, I would like to read you a letter that a former Marine Corps general wrote to this particular Senator at the beginning of this month: "I am writing to ask for your support in passing H.R. 24 and S.R. 501, which have been referred to the Committee on Armed Services and would redesignate the Department of the Navy as the Department of the Navy and Marine Corps.

"For many years I have been an advocate of the Navy and Marine Corps team and believe this team is without parallel in any of the Armed Forces in the world. I proudly served alongside my Navy brothers-in-arms in both peace and conflict for 40 years. I would not recommend any action that I feel would belittle either partner of the team.

"Changing the name of the Department as proposed by this legislation would not demean the Navy, but would recognize marines as full partners in this team and would be a strong boost to their morale. In fact, the Department and the Secretary represent both services, the Navy and the Marine Corps, and this legislation would provide a name that mirrors the fact.

"Thank you for your consideration and for your continued and valuable service to our Nation."

□ 1615

After 8 disappointing years, I hope one day the Senate will join me in supporting and bringing proper respect and acknowledgment to the fighting team of the Navy and Marine Corps. I want the supporters of this bill to