

would help clear the dealer backlog and immediately put people to work. It also would allow taxpayers to get great bargains on new vehicles.

Some have suggested that Chapter 11 is the only viable option for the Big Three. But it would create an economic avalanche in which dozens, if not hundreds, of suppliers and dealers would be forced into bankruptcy. No institution other than the federal government is now able to provide the billions of dollars necessary for the industry to operate during reorganization. And at the very moment that these auto giants need to act quickly and be flexible, they would be constrained by a federal judge and trustees to get approval for even the most basic decisions. Those who advocate bankruptcy need only look at the cumbersome and costly Delphi experience, which is now in its fourth year.

But rescuing the American auto industry will require more than vast sums of public monies. Basic policy changes in trade and tax laws are essential. One of the most difficult, but unavoidable, challenges will be to end the Value Added Tax discrimination faced by the Big Three in both their domestic and foreign markets. Soon after World War II ended, U.S. trade negotiators agreed to allow the rebate of Value Added Taxes on their exports and the imposition of VAT equivalents on their imports of U.S. goods and services. Europe was rebuilt decades ago, but 153 nations now have a VAT, and its average rate is 15.5 percent. Japan has a 5 percent VAT, China's is 17 percent, Germany's is 19 percent, and France imposes 19.6 percent. The economic consequences to the Big Three and other U.S.-based manufacturers have been devastating.

When a German automaker exports a vehicle into the U.S. that costs \$50,000, for instance, it receives from the German government a 19 percent VAT export rebate, worth about \$9,500. But when one of the Big Three exports a \$50,000 vehicle to Germany, it must pay the German government a 19 percent, \$9,500 VAT-equivalent tax at the dock. Thus the Big Three products are price disadvantaged in both markets. Moreover, these discriminatory VAT rules provide a powerful incentive to outsource production from the United States. In the Tokyo, Uruguay, and Doha trade negotiations, the U.S. Congress instructed American trade negotiators to eliminate this tax disadvantage, but other governments refused to discuss the issue.

In addition to pressing for the adoption of new global trade rules to end VAT discrimination against U.S. manufacturers, the incoming administration should focus on eliminating the many protectionist national tariff and non-tariff trade barriers crippling the Big Three. India, for example, imposes a 100 percent tariff on imported U.S. vehicles. China's tariff rate is 25 percent. Korea has long-run national anti-import campaigns that include targeting for tax audits anyone who buys a foreign car. Unless foreign economic protectionism is confronted immediately and at the highest levels of the U.S. government, the American auto industry cannot survive.

Three other principles are essential to the rescue. First, taxpayers should receive substantial equity in these ventures, plus long-term warrants, whose purchase price is set at today's stock values. After all, we are taking the risk. When any public loans are repaid, the terms and conditions should require a sale of those stocks, hopefully at a substantial public profit. Taxpayers made almost a 30 percent profit on the Chrysler loans three decades ago.

Second, demands for a reduction in worker pay should be eschewed. The UAW and its members have already made massive wage

and benefit concessions in recent negotiations. Delphi is only one example. Almost a century ago, Henry Ford paid his workers a then unheard of \$5 per day so they could buy the products they were making, and the auto industry led the way in creating an American middle class. This rescue should not undermine broader efforts to provide secure jobs and benefits, nor should it allow the pitting of well-paid American workers against the penny-wage labor of other countries.

Without question, the UAW has often been smug, arrogant, and inflexible. But rather than punishing it by requiring reduction in its members' pay, we should expect the union to contribute to the rescue. It should enter into a no-strike agreement until the federal loans are paid and invest its \$1 billion "rainy day" reserve, commonly called its "strike fund," in the preferred stock of the Big Three until the loans are satisfied. The rainy day has come, and if taxpayers are putting up money to save UAW jobs, so should the union.

While U.S. antitrust laws allowed the UAW to target one company at a time, those same laws prevented the Big Three from negotiating together on an industry-wide contract. Any rescue should permit the Big Three and UAW to negotiate an industry wage and benefit package.

Third, executive pay at the Big Three should be capped at some simple multiple of the average annual pay of Big Three workers, such as 10 or 15 to 1, with any bonuses being provided in corporate stock, at least until any federal loans are paid off. Also, the Big Three executive pension funds should be required to have at least a majority of its capital invested in Big Three stock. The goal, of course, is to create a common incentive for labor and management to work together.

As of mid-November 2008, the U.S. Treasury and the Federal Reserve had advanced \$2 trillion to salvage the financial wreck created by Wall Street. In late November, the FDIC announced that it was ready to loan another \$1.4 trillion to stabilize the banks. The Bush administration and Congress seem to have no limits to their concern about Wall Street.

The Big Three automakers, their suppliers, and dealers are on Main Street. They employ millions of workers and provide essential goods for American consumers. If the Big Three fail, an economic tsunami will quickly roll across the United States, destroying jobs, incomes, and national confidence at historic levels. The challenges faced by the new administration at that point would be similar not to those faced by Franklin Roosevelt, but to those that confronted Herbert Hoover in the first years of the Great Depression.

In this instance, what is good for General Motors is good for America.

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

(Mr. CASSIDY 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 California (Mr. BACA) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BACA 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 gentle-

woman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) is recognized for 5 minutes. (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN 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 California (Mr. SHERMAN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. SHERMAN 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 Kansas (Mr. MORAN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. MORAN of Kansas 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 Arizona (Mr. FLAKE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. FLAKE 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 New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

THE ECONOMIC SITUATION WE NOW FACE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. AKIN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. AKIN. Mr. Speaker, I come here this evening to the floor to talk about a subject that is arresting the attention of Americans everywhere. It arrests their attention because it very much involves their futures, their future hopes, and the hopes of their children and grandchildren: that is, the economics and the economic situation that we now face.

Over the past, we have, over the past 6 and 7 years, heard repeatedly in our media the tremendous cost, particularly of the war in Iraq. We were told every day not only of people that were dying there but also of how it's just draining and siphoning money from the American economy.

And so, we come today in a curious situation. If you were to add all of the money that was spent in Iraq in the war there, add it all up for 6 years, and then take the money that was spent in the war in Afghanistan, add it up for 7 years, and you put those two sums of money together, you would come up with less money than this U.S. Congress spent in the first 5 weeks that we

were in session when we passed the supposedly stimulus bill.

That, perhaps, casts a certain amount of light and helps to put in perspective what \$840 billion in taxes that we actually don't have, but \$840 billion dollars in spending that we approved here on this House floor.

□ 1845

What has happened since that time is we have spent other money, and there have been other large chunks of change, and I think it gets a little bit confusing in people's minds exactly how much is the Congress spending.

And so I have here immediately to my left a chart that talks a little bit about some of the money that we have spent in the past, and we do this on the eve of the fact that we have the new budget coming up which will be discussed and debated tomorrow. That budget is a whopper of a budget, but first, let's put it into context.

First of all, in the fall of last year, as Wall Street was becoming weaker and as there were demands for money to bail out Wall Street, the Congress approved \$700 billion for the Wall Street bailout. The first \$350 billion were spent last year, with an additional \$350 billion this year.

Theoretically, this money was supposedly offered with transparency, so we could know what it was going to be used for and how we were getting something good from it. However, in spite of the fact that we spent the first \$350 billion, we saw the stock market sliding and sliding. Then we spent the second \$350 billion, and people continued to ask whether this money was really an effective tool.

As we asked many questions, even last fall on this subject, what we found was that particularly some people that worked on the savings and loan crisis some more than 10 years ago said that there was a way to help deal with our financial crisis, and particularly the toxic mortgage and bad loans that had been made, there was a way to deal with that without spending a lot of money. In fact, during the savings and loan crisis, we did not spend any of this kind of money, even though the situation was not dissimilar. That involved things like mark-to-market and other accounting kinds of principles that could have been followed rather than going into the American taxpayers' pocket for \$700 billion.

Well, this year we spent \$350 billion of that. Moving forward to this economic stimulus—I call it the porkulus bill—we spent another \$787 billion. Let's put that into perspective. In an area that I work, which is on the sea force committee, sea power committee, and one of the big ticket items that we deal with are aircraft carriers. People that know something about the Navy know that aircraft carriers are expensive, and we protect them by putting other ships around them. We only have 11 of them currently in service, and they average about \$3 billion historically. That's what we paid for them.

And so if you were to divide the \$3 billion into this \$787 billion, what you'd find out is that you have got, you know, over 200 aircraft carriers. Picture 200 aircraft carriers tied end-to-end. That's a whole lot of money that we're spending that we don't have. Or if you want to put it another way, just the interest and the debt service on this money that we don't have that we're spending would be enough to buy nine new aircraft carriers every single year.

And what is there in this economic stimulus package that's so important? Well, as it turns out, it isn't even the good old Keynesian, the good old FDR, "government spend its way out of trouble" kind of package. It doesn't have those kinds of things in it. You'd think it would have in there hard manufacturing kinds of jobs, building ships, pouring concrete to make hydroelectric plants or nuclear power plants. You would think it might have a lot of money for roads, something for small businesses to get them going. It turns out it's not. It turns out what it is, it's a whole lot of spending on items that are just budgetary items of the Federal Government. It's just a whole lot of spending on social programs.

It does include some money to protect an endangered mouse in Speaker PELOSI's district. It contains things about education for HIV. It has some money for ACORN and things like that. These are regular old social government programs, but nothing that's really stimulative particularly.

And so this tremendous amount of money added to the debt is something that has very much captured people's attention, but we haven't stopped there unfortunately. We have seen no sign in the economy or in the stock market that this money is doing any particular good. In fact, all of the evidence economically would suggest that it won't. In fact, when you take a good look at the people that came up with this whole idea of stimulating the economy by government spending money, it doesn't even make much common sense.

Think about your average American family. Hey, we've got hard trouble with the budget this year, what are we going to do? Oh, let's go buy a brand new car and spend a whole lot of money. Nobody's that dumb in our country except for the Federal Government, and of course, we want to spend a lot of money. There isn't any economic justification. In fact, Henry Morgenthau, who was the Secretary of the Treasury under FDR, after they did this lovely theory of spending tons and tons of money—and this is all through the 1930s and 1939—Secretary Morgenthau comes before the House Ways and Means Committee. He said, We have tried spending a whole lot of money and it doesn't work. He's pretty straightforward. It doesn't work. Our unemployment is as bad as it's ever been, and we have a tremendous amount of debt to boot.

So, so much for little Lord Keynes' theory. It was tried by the Japanese back in the 1990s, and the Japanese economy was sick because they just kept spending more and more government money, and it didn't help their economy at all.

So, so much for the theory of a whole lot of government spending is going to make the economy go well. Actually, considering the number of trillion dollars in debt, if the government spending was what made things went well, why we would all be millionaires ourselves if that theory worked. Of course, it doesn't work, and this of course, does not work.

Then we have the appropriations for 2009 which was another \$410 billion, and you start putting this together, and it starts to add up to real money. And now we have the new budget that has been proposed, a \$3.6 trillion budget, and that includes some different, interesting items.

One that I think is of significance, the President promised us while he was in this very Chamber, he promised us that if you were making under \$250,000 you didn't need to worry about taxes because he wasn't going to raise your taxes any. I thought, I'm glad because I don't make \$250,000 a year, so I don't need to worry about tax increases.

Well, you better hang on to your wallet in Washington, D.C., because what is this cap-and-tax? This is a tax on electricity and heating fuel, propane, natural gas, things like that. And what's that going to mean? Well, some economists took a look at what that was going to cost, and this is a very credible organization. I believe it was MIT. I forget which university it was. Their estimate was \$3,100 for every household in America. So, so much for the \$250,000. Sure, we're going to tax those guys that own small businesses, but we're going to tax every household in America on an average of \$3,100 every year.

I see a good friend of mine from Indiana, a very respected statesman on this floor, and I would yield to my good friend, Congressman BURTON.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Well, I really appreciate you saying that, and I just hope everybody in my district in Indiana heard you say that because I want to make sure they appreciate me. So thank you very much for saying those nice things.

The thing that I wanted to mention is you're absolutely right. The amount of money that this is going to cost the average homeowner is just unbelievable, and it's going to be a tax increase that's going to be borne by every single person in this country.

But in addition to that, the inflationary pressure that's going to be created by all this printing of all this money is unbelievable. They're talking about something like over the next decade 7, 8, 9 trillion dollars in spending, and that's going to result in a tremendous amount of printing presses being run over at the Treasury Department. And when that money gets into

circulation, it's going to cause a tremendous amount of pressure as far as inflation is concerned.

As a matter of fact, I know my colleague knows this, but just in the last couple of weeks we found out that the money supply in this country has been almost tripled in the last couple of years. And because of that, we already have a built-in inflationary pressure that will be taking place I think in the next couple of years. So I think there's going to be a spike in inflation.

But I'd just like to add one more thing.

Mr. AKIN. If I could reclaim my time, you talk pretty fancy words about how this is going to create all this inflation and stuff. I want to just see if that connects to what I'm saying.

Back in my district, the poor people are investing in lead, and the more well-to-do people are investing in gold. The poor one, it's the lead shells for different types of rifles, pistols and shotguns; the other one is gold coins. Maybe they're thinking along the same lines as you are, with inflation, you have got to do something to protect yourself, and the government is just running the printing presses.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. If the gentleman will yield, there's no question that the inflationary pressure is very real, and the taxation that people are going to face is very real, and it's not something that we're just making up for political purposes. It's going to happen, and it's going to happen very quickly on the tax issue, and the inflation issue is going to come in just the next couple of years, in my opinion.

But one of the things I wanted to mention—and I appreciate my colleague taking this time—and that is, that there's a book out called "The Forgotten Man," and it's a book that I hope everybody who's interested in what happened during the Great Depression and how that correlates to what's happening today, if they're interested in that, they really ought to read it because there's tremendous parallels between what happened between 1929 and 1941 with what's going on here today. And that depression that we went through in this country lasted for over 10 years, and that's something that we don't want to see happen in the United States.

Mr. AKIN. Reclaiming my time, I have heard great things about that book. My own father read it, and he just said it's something you can read on an airplane. It's fascinating.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Well, I do read it on the airplane.

Mr. AKIN. Fascinating. So I appreciate you mentioning it. "The Forgotten Man"?

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Yeah, but the thing about it that's important is we're making the same basic mistakes we've made in the past during the 1920s and the 1930s that led to the Great Depression and caused a tremendous amount of unemployment and heartache for the people of this country.

And the thing that really bothers me is that we went through a very large recession back in the late 1970s. When Ronald Reagan, your hero and my hero, came into office in 1980, he immediately moved to cut taxes across the board, and because of that, even though that economic problem we faced back then was worse than it is now, we came out of that and had the longest period of economic growth that we've had in my memory, and that's because he cut taxes. He didn't raise spending like this. He cut taxes so people and businesses had disposable income that they could use to invest and buy things. That's what we need to be doing today.

Mr. AKIN. Just reclaiming my time, what you're talking about, Ronald Reagan, a lot of times people say that Republicans, well, all we do is say "no," we don't have any answers. But the fact of the matter is that this idea that Keynes had and Morgenthau had about the government spending lots of money to fix the economy, it doesn't work, it's never worked. So we vote "no" on what doesn't work.

But what does work? Well, what you're saying is, one, you want the government to spend less money, but the other thing is certain types of tax cuts, not every tax cut, but certain types, particularly the tax cuts that put liquidity into the pocket of those small businessmen—that's 70 percent of the jobs in this country are created by these entrepreneurs, these investors, the small businessmen that get their things going. So that's what Ronald Reagan did, and boy, did it work. He wasn't the only one that did it. JFK did it, didn't he?

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. That's right. He did it, and Reagan did it. Reagan cut taxes for business, as well as for individuals, and today, if we cut the capital gains tax in half or cut it out all together for maybe a year and if we cut the income tax out for just two or three months, that would cost a great deal less than we're spending, and I have no doubt that it would stimulate a real rapid growth in the economy of this country.

So I'd just like to say to my colleague and my other colleague that just showed up on the floor, I want to thank you both for taking this Special Order. The American people really ought to appreciate what you're doing by explaining what in the Dickens is going on around this place, and I'm very happy that you're doing that.

Mr. AKIN. Just reclaiming my time for a minute, let me ask you: on this chart this is the historic budget in balance. Everything below this line, we spent more money than we had. Anything above the line, we spent less than we had. Every single bar is a year going back to the 1980s and 1990s. You come across here. Does it strike you as being a little bit odd that in 2009 we have this tremendous level of spending? Does that look like a good sign to you? You know something about economics. I yield.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. There's just no question in my mind that the tremendous amount of spending that we're doing right now is going to be very bad, not only for us but for the future generations. The kids and the grandkids that we're going to be having are going to be bearing the burden of higher taxes and inflation, and it's not necessary if we did the right thing today by cutting taxes across the board.

And I see both my colleagues are here, and I really appreciate. And I'd just like to say one more thing before I yield the floor to my colleague, and that is, everybody ought to take a hard look at what happened in the Great Depression and what happened in the 1970s and the 1980s with Ronald Reagan. And you will see a real contrast between trying to spend our way out of a problem instead of cutting taxes and let the American people spend the money the way they want to spend it and the way business wants to spend it. Because if the American people have more money to spend and if business has more money to invest, then they're going to start doing the things that will stimulate economic growth and make the economy work; whereas, government trying to control everything and trying to spend our way out of these problems we're facing, it only leads to disaster.

It did in the 1920s. It did in the 1970s, and they will do it again right now if we don't get real and start cutting taxes instead of increasing spending across the board.

□ 1900

With that, let me yield to my colleague, and I really appreciate you taking the time tonight to do this.

Mr. AKIN. I sure appreciate my colleague from Indiana and his wisdom. He's been in the Chamber for some number of years, keeps an eye on these things, and Congressman BURTON is a great leader down here.

Mr. Speaker, Congressman SCALISE is somebody who hasn't been here as long but is readily and rapidly earning the respect of his colleagues on the floor, particularly for the fact that he is paying immediate attention to the number one top priority, which is what's going on fiscally.

Mr. Speaker, I'm going to yield the remaining time for this hour and would hope that Congressman SCALISE could then pick that up.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentleman from Louisiana will control the balance of the time.

There was no objection.

Mr. SCALISE. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank my friend from Missouri for participating in helping lead this hour-long debate on the issue that is right now most important facing our country, and that is not only how to get out of this economic crisis that we're in, but how to sustain and get our country back on footing in terms of budget policy.

In many ways, we've got problems in our financial systems, but we've got big problems here in Washington as it relates to spending and borrowing and taxing.

This week, we're going to be voting on the President's budget. His budget resolution is on the floor later this week. It's a budget that causes us great concern because of its record levels of spending, record levels of borrowing, and record levels of taxing not only small businesses but every family in this country that uses energy on the energy cap-and-trade plan that just got filed yesterday—the President's cap-and-trade policy that adds a \$646 billion tax increase which will fall on the backs of every American family.

So when we talk about all of these policies, let's look graphically at just what this means in terms of spending as it's relating to the past decades in our current national debt.

Right now, if you look at the trend over the last few years, the budget deficit was actually going down. It was still too high. For those of us who do not support deficit spending, it was still too high, but at least it was trending down towards getting back to a balanced budget.

Unfortunately, the first budget that President Obama filed increases deficit spending—actually, record levels. Next year would be a \$1.9 trillion national deficit added to a record level of debt.

When we talk about the level of debt—and I think you're seeing across the country this budget has got a lot of people concerned, not only for what it does in the first year of spending, but this comes on top of the stimulus bill, that massive spending bill, over \$800 billion of deficit spending that the President signed in his first few weeks in office. But then this budget thrown on top of that, when we look at what this means to future generations, this is where the real concern comes in.

This is a chart that actually shows since the history of our country since 1789, when George Washington took the oath of office, through the period of time that George W. Bush left the White House in January of this year. This country accumulated \$10 trillion of national debt.

Now it's a level that I'm not comfortable with and many people are not comfortable with. But when you compare that with President Obama's budget, he mushrooms the national debt from \$10 trillion, which is the national debt he inherited, to \$23 trillion, when his budget that is going to be voted on late this week is taking effect.

Now, obviously you see graphically why so many of us oppose this record level of spending and borrowing. The fact that one President in just one budget resolution can double the national debt to do what it took 43 other Presidents to do in 220 years of our country's history, this President will double that number, to go from \$10 trillion in national debt that all 43 pre-

vious President's accumulated, to going up to \$23 trillion when President Obama's budget is fully implemented—if it's fully implemented.

That's what brings us here tonight—the fact that this budget resolution has not passed yet. It's a proposal. It's a proposal by the President that I don't support, that many of us don't support, and I'm not sure that a majority of us don't support it, because we will have a vote and there is a chance that this budget will pass. That's why we're trying to lay out these facts.

These are facts. These haven't been disputed. These are verified by the Office of Management and Budget, the Congressional Budget Office. Everybody that's looked at this has confirmed that the President's budget will more than double the national debt. Yet, we are presented with this vote later this week.

Those of us on the Republican side have presented an alternative budget. In fact, we've laid out a plan to get us back to surpluses; a plan that pays down, goes down on deficits—brings our deficits back down to where we're only spending as much money as we're taking in.

Just like American families across the country during these tough economic times—they are cutting back, they are making do with what they have—this Congress should do the same. This President should do the same. The Republican budget that we have laid out now will do just that.

It doesn't add new taxes. In fact, it cuts taxes so that small businesses can go out and hire more people. But then it responsibly spends to a level where we will finally have a balanced budget, something that is critical—for our country to spend within our means.

So my friend from Missouri I know has been talking about this same thing. I want to yield back to him some time so that he can further expound on it.

Mr. AKIN. I appreciate the gentleman yielding. There are a couple of things. In spite of how deadly serious this is and the tremendous impact it's having in terms of lost jobs and just hammering people's pensions and people struggling with their payments, one of the things that is so odd about what we do in the government sector is we pass these laws and they have unintended consequences.

I'm just thinking about. Here we go again. We're just about to pass another silly law. And I'm thinking about how are my people in the great State of Missouri going to react.

We've got this cap-and-tax tax increase that you're talking about. That tax increase is going to be not on people over \$250,000, but what this is going to be is a tax increase on the use of energy—of electricity, natural gas, propane, or whatever you're heating your house with.

So just think about it a minute. This has been estimated to be \$3,100 per family in America per year. That is a pret-

ty big tax increase. That is like my entire property taxes on the house that I have now.

So I'm picturing, Congressman, if you think about it a little bit, and all of a sudden your energy is going up at such a tremendous rate and you're having to pay \$3,000 more in taxes, what in the world are you going to do?

Well, people in my State are going to get that steel chain saw out, they're going to be cutting up firewood, they're going to get themselves a wood-burning stove, and they're going to start burning firewood instead of natural gas. What's the effect of that going to be? Well, not as complete and clean a combustion.

So we're going to put more CO₂ and other types of gasses in the air by passing this bill and it's going to have the exact opposite effect of what it's supposed to do.

It's like when some brilliant genius put this MTBE in our gasoline to make the air cleaner and people figured out that it was ruining the water and the water table because it was washing out of gasoline that was spilled and poisoning the water. So we do something that is supposed to be making the environment better—and we make it worse.

Here we go. We're going to tax everybody's use of home energy. And what's going to happen? They're just going to get wood-burning stoves. It's going to smell nice like a barbecue going on all the time. But this is just another really bad idea, particularly in these hard times, to be laying one more heavy tax burden.

Now we heard a lot about President Bush spending too much money. As a Republican, I voted against some of those proposals. But let's do a comparison here of exactly where we are because you talk about trillions and billions of dollars, it makes my head spin. But I can do a simple comparison.

Here the average annual deficit under President Bush is \$300 billion, and what is being proposed by the current President is \$600 billion. I can understand the difference. There's twice as much spending going on here as there was under Bush.

Here's the highest deficit. George W. Bush, when the Democrats ran the House, that was when there was the most spending going through—\$459 billion. Under President Obama, he's looking at \$1.2 trillion. That's two times more deficit spending.

Increase in the national debt. Under all of the years of President Bush, \$2.5 trillion. Well, that's not good. Again, President Obama has got him beat two to one.

So I think it's helpful to try and put numbers in perspective. What we are talking about is unprecedented spending—and guess what the result of that is going to be? You guessed it. Something that none of us like. Jobs lost. That's what's happening.

When you start spending too much money, taxing too much, borrowing too much, you start to lose jobs. Small

businesses shrink down. The guy that made \$250,000, now he's getting taxed and not putting that money back in his business.

It's making all Americans across our country hurt. This is something we can talk about numbers. But we're also talking about people, Congressman.

I appreciate your yielding some time here because this isn't the way we should be going. What we should be doing is tightening the belt in government like everybody else is tightening their belt.

Understand that this is not government money, this is hard-earned dollars not of ours, not of our children. It's our grandchildren's hard-earned dollars that are being spent. We just can't allow this to go on.

I'm going to stand here, I know you're going to stand here, and we're going to fight until every American understands what is at stake. I believe when America wakes up to what's happening here, they're going to say: No more spending, no more taxes. Back off, Washington, D.C., and let us do what we have always done so well and that is let America free enterprise and the American Dream pull us out of this mess.

I yield back.

Mr. SCALISE. Reclaiming my time, I want to thank my colleague and friend from Missouri for laying out not only the stark realities but the optimistic tone that this is not something that has happened yet. This is an issue that the American people are recognizing when they see the concerns that they have, which are the same concerns that we have, that the President's budget spend too much, taxes too much, and borrows from our children and grandchildren—money that we don't have.

So why is this bad? Because the numbers that you showed, the numbers that we show right here on this chart, the fact that President Obama is doubling the national debt, something that took over 220 years and 43 Presidents to accumulate. He is more than doubling that with his record level of spending.

What's interesting is right now, just today, they started a summit in Europe. The President went to Europe today and he is going to be meeting with other world leaders in Europe.

Just last week, European leaders—now we're seeing American people all across the country speaking out against this record level of spending, recognizing the problems and dangers that it's going to pose not only to them in terms of higher interest rates, lost jobs, inflation, but also in terms of what we will be leaving to our children and grandchildren. All of this debt that would be saddled on the backs of future generations.

So Europe is actually taking notice. In fact, the Czech prime minister and the current European Union President, Mirek Topolánek, said last week that "the biggest success of last week's EU summit was its refusal to copy the U.S. example. We need to read the history

books and the lessons of history. And the biggest success of the EU is the refusal to go this way."

You had the head of the European Union telling the President that he's spending too much money and that he's concerned about President Obama's spending. It's almost like when Otis, the town drunk, tells you he's concerned about your drinking problem.

I think you need to take notice when leaders in Europe are telling the United States that this President is spending too much money. I think that's very riveting. In fact, it's a major concern that a lot of us have.

That's why those of us on the Republican side and we invite our Democrats to join us in a bipartisan way to join with our budget resolution, not a budget that spends too much, borrows too much, and taxes too much, but a budget that actually balances the Federal budget, that does not raise taxes that will actually create jobs.

We filed this bill in a bipartisan way. We're reaching out to our Democratic colleagues to reject the path of doubling the national debt. So, hopefully, they'll join with us.

Somebody that is joining with us is my friend from Ohio, Mr. JORDAN, who's on the Budget Committee and has been participating in some of these discussions and helping draft this alternative plan. So I yield time.

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Mr. JORDAN of Ohio. I thank the gentleman from Louisiana and our colleague from Missouri for this Special Order hour, and appreciate the chance to be with you.

You know, you hear "tax and spend" politicians. I would argue it is actually the opposite, it is spend and tax. Spending always drives the equation. Spending requires the increase in taxes. Spending requires the increase in borrowing. Spending is what hurts the future of our kids and our grandkids. And I know this has been pointed out because I see the chart that the gentleman from Louisiana has displayed.

This budget, the Obama Democratic budget in the next 6 years adds more to the national debt than it took the previous 43 Presidents to accumulate. So, from George to George, from Washington to Bush, we didn't pile up as much debt as this administration is going to do in the next 6 years. And I would argue this: When you pile up that much debt, when you borrow and spend and spend and borrow and spend and tax that much, it is actually an attack on freedom.

When you tax that much, it is obviously an attack on the freedom of taxpayers today, because we no longer have as much money, as much purchasing power, as much of our income to use on the goals and dreams and those objectives that we have as individuals and families. But probably more importantly, when you spend and

tax and spend and borrow as much as this budget does, it is an attack on the future freedom, the freedom of future generations of Americans.

And I read this in Budget Committee last week, Congressman, and it I think captures what is at stake here and why this is actually a moral question, in my mind. About 2 weeks ago in our district, Andrew and Emily Beck from Carey, Ohio gave birth to their first child, their son, Olen, nine pounds, three ounces, 19½ inches long, named after his grandfather. Little does Baby Olen know, but he already owes more than \$30,000 in debt; and, if this majority's budget is passed, that debt will go to \$70,000 by the time he is able to write his name. I mean, Baby Olen already with that kind of debt, and in just a few years it will reach \$70,000 that every single person in this country is going to owe when you think about the amount of spending, the amount of taxing, the amount of borrowing that takes place in the majority's budget.

Americans get it. I know the gentleman from Louisiana, my friend and colleague, was talking about the optimism that we heard from our friend from Missouri as well. Americans get it. It is why you are seeing all across the country these taxpayer tea parties, where people are showing up and expressing their outrage at this kind of spending, this kind of behavior from their government, their Congress.

In fact, we had just 3 weeks ago in Ohio, on the first nice spring Sunday afternoon in Cincinnati, Ohio, we had over 4,000 people show up in Cincinnati to say: Enough is enough. Stop the craziness, stop the insanity, stop this ridiculous level of spending. Exercise a little discipline, exercise a little fiscal restraint. Make those tough decisions that we sent you to Washington to make.

And it is always easy, I think I related this story another time on the floor. I had a coach in high school who talked about discipline every single day in practice. He talked about it in the classroom, he taught chemistry and physics, he would talk about it in the wrestling room, he talked about it every day: Self-discipline is the key. You have got to have self-discipline. He would talk about it all the time. And he had a great definition. I got sick of hearing him talk about it, as many teenagers would, but I am glad he did. He had a great definition. He said: Discipline is doing what you don't want to do when you don't want to do it. Basically, that meant doing things his way when you would rather do them your own way. It meant doing things the right way when you would rather do them the convenient way.

And that is what we need around here. The easiest thing in the world for politicians to do is to get ahold of the taxpayer wallet and spend the money. The tough thing to do is usually the right thing to do, and that is to say, you know what, we are going to have

to prioritize. We can't spend and spend and spend. We are going to have to slow down this spending, quit borrowing, quit mortgaging the future of Baby Olen and other kids around this country and say we are going to do the right thing, which is get spending under control.

That is why this budget is wrong. That is why we will have an alternative that will have some fiscal restraint, will lower taxes on the American families that are already overtaxed, and do those things that we think will help improve the future economic situation of this country.

With that, I yield back to my colleague. And I appreciate, again, his hard work on this Special Order hour and this hard work in the Congress, along with our colleague from Missouri.

Mr. SCALISE. I want to thank my friend from Ohio. And when he talks about the hard work and doing the hard work, doing the right thing even when the easy way out might be more appealing, he has got a little bit of humility but he did that hard work and was a two-time national champion wrestler. So, somebody who has been wrestling with the budget. But he has got some good experience, and he speaks I think some very poignant words.

And when my friend from Ohio talked about those tea parties that are going on, when we talk about tea parties nowadays, it is not a couple people sitting around in sun dresses drinking hot tea; it is something that hearkens back to the days of our Revolution, the founding of our country when the Boston Tea Party was that symbol, that tipping point that many people had where they said enough is enough. And then they revolted against taxation.

What we are seeing today in the country is a similar revolt against the spending, not just the taxing, but the spending and the borrowing, where thousands of people—and these are events that are organized not by community organizers, not by government institutions. It is just regular citizens on their own, in many cases without much media attention, that are saying: We want to speak out against this spending. And thousands of people show up at these rallies.

In fact, on April 15, on tax day, which for many of us is not our most pleasant day we look forward to, but on that day we have got two of those tea parties in my district, in Covington, Louisiana, and in Metairie, Louisiana, because citizen activists said we want to speak out against this spending that is being proposed in Washington, D.C.

And I think the real sign of encouragement that they have is that since much of this hasn't happened, some of it has happened but much of this debt hasn't been added yet to the rolls; and before it does, they want to speak out so that we here in these halls in Congress hear those voices.

And we are hearing them here, and we are proposing an alternative. It is

not just a matter of being opposed to something that we think is bad; we proposed an alternative and a balanced budget, a budget resolution that, unlike the President's, brings us down a road to increased national debt, doubling of the national debt, higher taxes. We actually have a budget that has no taxes, that actually cuts taxes for small businesses to create good middle-class jobs at a time when we need to be creating jobs, and actually gets spending under control, brings us to a balanced budget. That is something that we should all support, Democrats and Republicans.

And this is what the two proposals look like right here. President Obama's budget is in red, and you can see the graph continuing to go up in record spending and debt that is going to be increasing. And then you can see the Republican Budget, actually getting the spending under control and bringing it back down, bringing us to a balanced budget.

With that, I yield back to my friend from Missouri (Mr. AKIN).

Mr. AKIN. I appreciate the gentleman yielding. It has been such a beautiful day here, we have got the cherry blossoms in full bloom in Washington, D.C., and yet we are talking about a very, very serious and very difficult problem with a government that is really out of control in spending. And I appreciate the gentleman from Ohio, Congressman JORDAN, talking about the discipline. We don't have the discipline.

But, you know, part of it is that we have forgotten some of the lessons that the founders that came to this country understood. And I have thought back a little bit, how is it that we got off track? And if you will allow me to just wax a little bit philosophical.

This country was put together, and unlike any other country in the world America is a Nation that was founded on a creed. There are many things that are distinctive about America. We have the oldest Constitution. We have won a number of wars and ceded no territory. We have named no emperors, crowned no kings. And what we did was we taxed ourselves to rebuild.

America is a very unique place, and there are many reasons why Americans could be proud of this country. But America also is a Nation that has, if you will, a political or religious creed, and that is stated in our own Declaration of Independence, why we went to war. And the sentence says: We hold these truths to be self-evident that all men are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights. And it goes on to say: Among these is life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Earlier versions of Jefferson's documents were life, liberty, and property.

And then it goes on to say: Governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers essentially to do, what? To protect life, liberty, property; life, liberty, pursuit of happiness.

So if you take a look at that formula, what it is saying in simple terms

is, there is a God. God grants all human beings certain basic rights, and the job of the government is to protect those rights now.

Now, fast forward from 1776 to 1944, to the inaugural address by FDR. He said, well, that first Bill of Rights—which wasn't a Bill of Rights; it was a Declaration of Independence, life, liberty, pursuit of happiness—was okay for a while. But it wouldn't be any good if Americans are hungry or if an American needs a coat, or if some American is not secure. So we propose a second Bill of Rights, and that is that the government should give you jobs and education and health care and things like that.

You note the clever twist here. The first rights are things that naturally occur to all people under God, the right to free speech, the right not to be killed, the right to own some property. These other kinds of things we are talking about now have a strange, strange parallel.

We laughed some years ago in my past when we watched the Berlin Wall fall down and we said, we knew those commies or the USSR, that system would never work, communism, socialism. It won't work. Why was that? Well, because the government is going to give you your health care, the government is going to give you your food and your housing, the government is going to provide a job, the government is going to provide an education. And don't talk about God, because if you talk about God then you know you have natural rights from God, not rights that come from a government.

So what we are doing in America with this kind of budget? What we are doing in America is the government is going to give you health care, the government is going to give you a job, the government is going to give you food and a place to live. The government is going to give you an education. How are we so different from the system we just watched fail?

That is why the Europeans are laughing in their beers, looking at us and saying, has America been smoking those funny cigarettes or what? What are we doing? And I think that is the question we are trying to raise.

I don't mean to be too philosophical, but where did we get off track? We got off track on the road to socialism, to the idea that the government is going to be all things to all people. And it does a lousy job of doing that.

What we should be doing, quite simply, is protecting life and protecting people's basic liberties. And what are we talking about doing? We are talking about saying we are going to have a bureaucrat in D.C. to monitor what you put on your radio program. We are going to call that The Fairness Doctrine.

We are going to take away your right to be able to vote without being compelled or feeling pressure, because we are going to get rid of the secret ballot election when it comes to joining a union or not.

We are talking about taking away people's freedom to own a piece of property because some local government wants to take it and turn it into a strip mall so you don't have any private property rights.

I mean, what is going on? How come we are giving up freedom? I don't think we are on the right track.

I appreciate the gentleman with this hour, and I just felt like it was important to get back to what is basic in America, which is limited government that provides and protects our life, our liberty, and our property, instead of doing this institutionalized theft.

Mr. SCALISE. Again, I thank my friend from Missouri. And when you talk about the Founding Fathers and that great document, the U.S. Constitution, which I would argue is the second most important document ever written, next to the Bible. And when the Founding Fathers really talked about and articulated the foundation of our country when they were forming it, they really did believe in those things, and they sacrificed tremendously for that liberty, for that freedom, to create what has been the greatest experiment in democracy in the history of the world. And we still are that great democracy. And the reason we are here tonight is because we want to preserve that democracy, not just for ourselves, but for our children and for our grandchildren.

Every generation in this country has a fine tradition of passing on a better Nation than the one that they inherited. And many of us feel that if we go down this road, we would be in jeopardy of leaving a worse Nation behind. And so it is well worth fighting for those principles that our Founding Fathers talked about are critically important. It is why we were elected. It is why we took the oath of office here in this Chamber in January, to uphold the principles that that document articulates.

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And when you look at this budget, when you look at the contrast, go back to World War II, and you will see this massive spike in public debt held as a percentage of GDP. And of course we were fighting a world war. We won World War II. And it was expensive. And as soon as World War II was over, we came out of it, and we got back to a regular level of spending. Then you see this massive spike, this red spike, which is representative of President Obama's budget contrasted by this green line, which is the Republican alternative.

This bill, this is an alternative budget resolution that we filed. Too often we hear, and some of our friends on the other side like to reinvent history and they say, "the Republicans have no alternatives. They are just against the President's budget." I guess they don't know how to read this document. We have copies right here on the House floor, and we are distributing to them

to anybody who wants to see it. In fact, it is on the Internet. You can go and look it up on the Internet and read the details of what we propose. And that is a budget that is balanced. That is an interesting concept here in Washington, D.C. these days. But it is a budget that we actually balance.

We don't raise taxes. In fact, we cut taxes for middle-class families and for small businesses to create jobs, to get our economy back on track, and so we can get control again on this runaway spending that so many people are speaking out about.

One of the other points that this budget does that concerns many of us is it borrows from Social Security. So what do these policies, what does "deficit spending" really mean? Well, first of all, last week when the Treasury Department went out to sell debt—on occasion, a few times a week, the Treasury Department actually goes out and sells debt. And last week they had a hiccup. There was a problem because some people weren't buying the debt at the levels they were expecting. And you saw the stock market tank that day. Unfortunately these days, we see a lot of tanks in the stock market as reactions to some of the things happening here where you have the Federal Government, literally the government trying to tell private companies like GM whom to hire as their corporate CEO. These are not healthy signs for our country. But that debt had a cost.

Another cost to that borrowing and deficit spending is that in just the first 4 years, in President Obama's first term, he will actually raid the Social Security trust fund of \$910 billion taken away from Social Security. That is a cost of this deficit spending. That is why so many of us are speaking up against this deficit spending, because senior citizens out there who are on fixed incomes expect that obligation to be met by the Federal Government. Young people that are working today are paying in, paying those Social Security taxes. Some may be cynical and think they are not going to get anything for it. But it is an obligation that is made to them because they pay taxes into that system for that system to be there for them. And how is that system going to be there for them if this President in just 4 years raids the Social Security trust fund of \$910 billion? These are real consequences to this runaway spending.

So as we talk about these things, I'm going to yield back to my friend from Ohio to share his thoughts.

Mr. JORDAN of Ohio. I appreciate the gentleman yielding.

Mr. Speaker I wanted to talk about the point we were on earlier, the greatness of this country and the freedom that we have enjoyed for over two centuries. My friend from Louisiana made the point about one of the things that makes us special, that makes us the greatest nation in history, is this idea that parents make sacrifices for their

kids so they can have life a little better than they did. And then that generation in turn, when they become parents, does the same thing for the next. And it has been that continuation that has led to the amazing standard of living we enjoy in this country and prosperity and wealth over the years. It is a fascinating principle that parents make the sacrifices to help their next generation. Unfortunately, what you see in this budget is exactly the opposite. We are taxing and spending and borrowing and mortgaging the future of our children and our grandchildren in exactly the wrong direction that we need to proceed.

Our colleague from Missouri talked about the loss of freedom. And if you think about this budget, I want to just talk about four things. There is an attack on liberty. There's an assault on freedom, as our friend from Missouri pointed out. The tax increases contained in this budget, when you tax people more and take more of their money, you are taking away their ability to go after their goals and dreams, to pursue those objectives and those initiatives that have meaning and significance to them and to their kids and their family and their small business. When you increase spending at this rate, we talked about this before, when you have this kind of spending and this kind of debt piled up, you limit the liberty and freedom of future generations of Americans. And when you impose in this budget, which is in the document, this tax on energy that we have called the cap and trade or cap and tax, this cap-and-trade concept which places a tax on all the energy in our economy, when you do that, you limit the freedom of the entrepreneur and the small business owner out there to get the energy he or she needs to grow their business and help our economy improve. It is a direct attack on freedom for small businesses owners.

Probably the one that gets Americans the most is this idea that in this budget we are going to create this national health board which is going to be in the business of determining what kind of health care you and your family get. Instead of you and your doctor and your family sitting down and figuring out what kind of health care treatment you're going to get, we are going to have this national board. Money is set aside in this budget to pursue this advancement of nationalized health care. I think, just what we need, the Federal Government determining how we get our health care. That is a direct attack on freedom for families across this country.

One of the things I know about Americans for sure, it is just part of who we are as a people, we hate being told what to do. We hate this concept. Our colleague from Missouri was talking about the folks who settled this place. They came here because they wanted to practice their faith in the way they felt was most appropriate. They didn't like the idea they were

told what they were going to be taxed and what they were going to do and didn't have representation. Americans hate being told what to do. My friend from Louisiana may have heard the old line, for most Americans when they are traveling down the highway and they see the sign that says "55," for most Americans that is not the limit. That is the challenge. That is just the way we are. It is part of being an American. And this budget tells so many Americans, "we are going to take away your freedom. We are going to tell you how things are going to be. We are going to take more of your money. We are going to mortgage your kids' future. We are going to impose a cap and trade on this economy which is going to hurt the ability of our economy to recover and make it tougher for business owners to get the energy they need to grow their business and improve and create jobs. And we are going to tell you and your family what kind of health care treatment you're going to get."

Americans aren't going to stand for it. Again, we keep coming back to this. But consistent with the American tradition, it is great to see families and Americans and taxpayers all over this country, and they are all going to do it again on April 15 at these taxpayer tea parties, they are going to stand up and say "do you know what? We are not going to take it." Just like we have done for over 200 years, we are going to tell our elected officials, we are going to tell the government, we are going to tell the Congress that we don't want our liberties attacked, and we want things done right. And it is great to see that again.

I appreciate the leadership of our colleague and friend from Louisiana and our friend and colleague from Missouri for making these points and letting me join them this evening. I yield back to our friend from Louisiana.

Mr. SCALISE. I thank my friend from Ohio for joining us tonight. And the things he said are so true, that great entrepreneurial spirit that makes this the greatest country in the world where people literally envision the American Dream, where industrialists like Henry Ford revolutionized the auto industry and the manufacturing industry with the assembly line and changed the way Americans can get around and can see the country, people like Bill Gates who dropped out of college to pursue a dream and change the way all of us communicate, literally, our day-to-day lives. That entrepreneurial spirit is still out there. But people don't want it taken away by government literally coming in and trying to control all of these areas of our life with this cap-and-trade energy tax which would put a \$600 billion tax on the production of energy in the United States, which would equate, by most estimates, to more than \$3,000 per American family in higher energy costs.

That is part of this budget that we are talking about that spends too

much, taxes too much and borrows too much. It is why we are opposing it. It is why we are proposing an alternative budget, a budget that actually balances the Federal budget, that cuts taxes and that gets Americans back to work. We actually have this online. It is at gop.gov. We put it out there so that people can go see the details and compare it to what President Obama has proposed, which is a doubling of the national debt.

We have just a few minutes left. I want to have a final word shared with us by my friend from Missouri.

Mr. AKIN. Well, I thank you very much. And I appreciate your calling attention to the fact that we are on the wrong track financially here. It is true that doing the wrong thing financially impacts our freedom in America. And particularly it impacts something that is precious to every red-blooded American, and that is the American Dream. If you think back in the beginning of our country there were all these crazy people that came to America, starting with a group called the Pilgrims. They came to this land, and they had the idea of building an entirely new civilization on a different set of principles. And after they had been here about a month, half of them died. And the captain of the Mayflower comes to them and says, "Things haven't gone too well. Maybe it is time for you to go back to jolly old England with me." So he gives the commands. The boatswain squares the yardarms, the anchor cable is wound up from Plymouth Harbor, at first large and then small, that Mayflower sails out and beyond sight. And here on the shore, with the wind blowing across the pine trees, is a little group of 50-plus people that had a dream of a new country based on new principles.

It has been that way all the way along. There have been these crazy people that came to America with some crazy idea, and then it became maybe a vague possibility. And then they wrote something down, and eventually it became actually reality. And it happened so often that we gave it the name the "American Dream." But it happened because there was a rarified environment of freedom in America where people could succeed. But they could also fail. They understood that there was a discipline that the gentleman from Ohio was talking about. Congressman JORDAN understands discipline. There is a discipline. If you want to have freedom, you also have to have responsibility. And that is part of the American Dream. And that is being stomped out by this budget.

We won't take it. And I appreciate your taking the leadership and scheduling this hour and particularly your leadership financially here on this floor, Congressman. Thank you.

Mr. SCALISE. Thank you, again. I appreciate my friend from Missouri joining us in this hour debating and talking about what is at stake with this budget, the President's budget,

that will be voted on here in this House Chamber later this week. The fact that one President with one budget, one 10-year budget proposal, can double the national debt what it took 43 Presidents in over 220 years in our country's history to rack up \$10 trillion in debt, this President, one President with one budget proposal will more than double that. That is what is at stake here. That is why we are joining in this debate. That is why American people all across the country are going to these rallies, these tea parties, to speak up.

We all understand that there is a role government must play. But it has to be a limited role. It has to be a role that is based in fiscal responsibility, not just for us, but for future generations, for our children and grandchildren who want the same things, who want a better life. And that is why people come to this great country.

Again, when we talk about what is happening in Europe right now, the President is over there, it is very ironic that the Czech leader, the head of the European Union last week was lashing out, lashing out at the President on his spending proposal, expressing concern. And it must say a lot when leaders in Europe are concerned about the spending that is going on here.

But it is not just leaders in Europe. It is people all across this country. And some people have talked about the fiscal irresponsibility of Congresses past, both Republicans and Democrats, those of us who weren't there back then, those of us who didn't vote for those budgets. A lot of us came up here to fix those problems because we don't think it is responsible to spend money we don't have.

That is why I am the cosponsor of a balanced budget amendment to our Constitution so that we can force fiscal discipline in a place where unfortunately it doesn't exist right now. But it is not too late because this budget resolution hasn't passed yet. The vote will occur on this House floor later this week. And everybody will have to take a position. I know I will be voting against that budget because of what it does, not only to our generation, to our freedoms, but to future generations. And that is why I'm supporting the alternative, which is a budget that is balanced, a budget that actually cuts taxes to help get our economy back on track. These are proven principles. These are things that have not been tried and failed before. The only thing that we know that has been tried and failed in the past is massive spending. And you can go back to the Great Depression in the 1940s when the Federal Government spent and spent and spent. And even the Treasury Secretary under FDR said the spending didn't work, 8 years of spending, and there was higher unemployment.

Ultimately, we can fix this problem. But it starts with this vote on this budget resolution that we are trying to defeat later this week.

I yield back. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

THE POPULIST CAUCUS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. BRALEY) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. BRALEY of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I'm excited to be here tonight to talk about the Populist Caucus and to spend some time with members of that caucus talking about issues that are important to the people of America.

One of the things that I think is important to talk about is why we decided to start this caucus and what it is going to do. So it is important for people to understand that populism is not a bunch of people walking around with pitchforks. It is people who care about middle-class economic values and how those values are translated into public policy that is set here in Congress and at the White House.

And to give a brief history lesson, this is not the first Populist Caucus that has ever been organized in Congress. In fact, the very first Populist Caucus that we have been able to identify was formed in February of 1983. And I think it is striking because of some of the members who were part of that first Populist Caucus. Most of these members were Midwest Democrats. They included my Senator from Iowa who was a representative at the time, TOM HARKIN. It also included Berkley Bedell, an entrepreneur from Spirit Lake, Iowa, my friend Lane Evans from Rock Island, Illinois, former Senate majority leader Tom Daschle, former Vice President Al Gore, Senator BYRON DORGAN from North Dakota, our good friend JIM OBERSTAR from Minnesota, who is Chair of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, and the current Governor of New Mexico, Bill Richardson.

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Now, one of the things that drew these members together, back in 1983, was an economic crisis that was having a profound impact in farm country out in the Midwest. And the first Chair of the Populist Caucus was TOM HARKIN. And the caucus was organized to fight for economic goals like fairer tax structures, lower interest rates and cheaper energy, because we were experiencing an energy crisis in 1983. And one of the first things that that Populist Caucus did was ask constituents from their districts to mail them their gas receipts to show the rising price of gas and how it was affecting their ability to take care of their families.

Even though the new Populist Caucus is organized on a very broad coalition, with members from all over the country, with representatives of the Blue Dogs, the New Democrats, and the Progressive Caucus, with members from the Congressional Black Caucus, the Congressional Asian Caucus and the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, we wanted to bring a laser beam focus to

the types of economic issues that affect middle class Americans and people struggling to get into the middle class. And one of the reasons we chose to do that is because we know that this country has been strongest when it is focused on promoting values through public policy that are going to protect and expand the middle class. And that's why we were very excited when we formed the caucus this year.

I'm going to be introducing some of my friends tonight who are members of the caucus, including some of the vice chairs. But let's talk about why now is the time and now is the place for this caucus.

We know that the middle class is the economic engine that drives America's growth. We know that when policies in Washington reflect middle class values, it does more to expand economic opportunity throughout this country. And we know that when there are gross disparities in income between the middle class and the upper class, which we've seen played out over and over in this current economic crisis, it creates conflict that divides us as a country, rather than bring us together.

And so what we're going to be talking about tonight is some of the values that we think are critical for the American people to be focused on in this economic crisis, values that our members reflect every day back in their district, values that their constituents live every day back in their districts.

And one of the things that I want to do is talk briefly about how we take this philosophy of strengthening and expanding the middle class, and translate it into action.

One of the first things we did as a caucus was talk about what our founding principles were going to be. And again, we wanted to go back to these shared values that reflect the entire diversity of our Democratic Caucus and how that is translated into the people we represent in diverse districts all over America. And some common themes kept coming back to us, and those themes are, good jobs, middle class tax cuts, affordable health care, quality education, fair trade agreements, and consumer protection and corporate accountability.

Now, we've heard a lot lately about corporate accountability. We're going to be spending some time talking tonight about how corporate accountability isn't just a restriction on how corporations operate, but it's part of their fundamental compact they make with the American people to be responsible stewards of their investors' assets and to provide value to all Americans, not just to their shareholders, in the way they conduct their business, the way they hold themselves out, and the way they lived responsibly under the protections and legal opportunities that they are allowed to operate under in each State of the United States.

So I'm going to start now by introducing one of the vice chairs of the

caucus, my good friend from the State of New York, and his name is MIKE ARCURI. And MIKE is going to talk a little bit about what motivated him to be one of the founding members of the Populist Caucus, and where he sees this caucus moving in the future as we focus with a laser beam on these economic values to help our constituents.

Mr. ARCURI. I want to thank my good friend for yielding, and I want to thank him for having the idea and for bringing this to fruition. It's taken, certainly, a lot of work and a lot of effort, not only on your part, but on the part of your staff, to bring this together, and I want to thank you for that, because, I thank you on behalf of, not just my constituents in New York State, but for constituents and middle class throughout the country.

The things that I think the Populist Caucus stands for are the issues that are important to middle class. And also, I think it's critically important that there is a grain of truth that the middle class gets. They need to have someone out there defending them, looking out for their interests and, most importantly, telling them the truth.

And you know, I was listening with interest, as I know you were, just a couple of moments ago to my colleagues on the other side of the aisle talk about some of the budget proposals of President Obama, and some of the points that I think we'll probably end up talking about at some point during the evening. But they talk about the fact that the numbers in the budget are the largest that they've seen, that there has been in years.

The thing that they don't tell you about that, however, is the fact that, for the first time in our history, the cost of the war is actually put on the books so that the American people get the truth. They actually know how much is being spent. In past administrations that was never on there. We just borrowed the money as we went along and, as we say it, funded the wars off the books. So the American people never knew actually how much it was costing for our war, how much all of these things were costing. This is an honest, this is a true budget.

But the thing about it, and I think the thing that's most important is this is really not just a budget. This is a long-term plan for the future of America, for the future of America's middle class.

And I listen to my colleagues, and I hear them talk, and I hear them criticize, but I did not hear a single alternative proposal with respect to what they were proposing to make the life of the middle class, to make the life of Americans better, to help Americans find jobs, to help Americans improve their quality of life. That's what we're looking for. That's what we, I think, as populists, look for and try to promote.

During the height of the Depression, Franklin Roosevelt once said some words that now adorn the monument to