

for GEN David Petraeus to be confirmed as our Nation's top military commander in Afghanistan. I want to say I have had a great experience with General Petraeus and also watching him from afar. When he introduced the concept of the counterinsurgency in Iraq, and embedding our troops with Iraqi troops to try to train the Iraqi troops to do the security for Iraq as we were leaving, I had grave concerns about embedding our troops and the counterinsurgency, because I feared for the safety of our troops and troop protection. I did not want to publicly ask questions of his judgment or disagree with him, but I did ask him to come see me and explain this to me so I would feel more comfortable, which he did. He came to my office. He walked me through it. He gave me confidence that it could work.

Then later, when he was in Iraq, and I was taking one of the trips I have made to Iraq, the first place that General Petraeus sent me to see was the Iraqi police station with our embedded troops. He never said a word to me about my questioning of how it would work, but he sent me in.

Later that night I was able to have dinner with him and Ambassador Crocker. I said: I know why you sent me to the police station, because I had questioned how you were going to protect our troops. I became a complete believer in General Petraeus and certainly how they do protect our troops as we are also teaching the foreign forces to take on their own security.

So I do have complete confidence in this man. What I do not have confidence in is the mission he is being given, because I sense a mixed message. I sense a mixed message from the President, and a division in what our Members of the Senate are saying, even as they questioned General Petraeus yesterday.

Here is my concern. We know you cannot set a hard and fast deadline and say, our troops are leaving no matter what the conditions are, and gain the confidence of the people on the ground that you are going to see the mission through.

It seems our mission should be clear, that we are going to prepare the Afghans for the security of their country, and also assure that the Taliban and al-Qaida cannot get a stronghold that would allow the export of terrorism to America and other freedom-loving countries in the world. That should be the clear mission.

I believe that is the mission General Petraeus understands, and I think that is what President Obama is saying. But my concern is this questioning of General Petraeus by members of the Armed Services Committee about the withdrawal date.

The President has said firmly the withdrawal is going to be July of next year. General Petraeus is very careful in every answer that he makes to say, conditions on the ground will dictate when we withdraw. July is the date. We

acknowledge that, he says. But it will also depend on conditions on the ground.

I hope we will have a united view in the Senate, a united view in the House of Representatives, and the President acknowledging that we must have the confidence of the people on the ground in Afghanistan and also the confidence of the enemy, the Taliban, and al-Qaida, that we are not going to leave in July if there are not conditions on the ground for the Afghans to repel the evil forces of the Taliban and al-Qaida.

As we vote today on the confirmation of General Petraeus, I am voting for this general because I believe in him. I believe in his creativity. I believe in his judgment. I want to make sure he has everything he needs to do the job we are asking him to do. He has proven he can do the tough jobs.

He changed the atmosphere in Iraq and he did it the right way. He protected our forces as he was doing it. So we must assure that we give him the same level of confidence and support in Afghanistan to do the job there, because it is clear that the place where al-Qaida and the Taliban are operating from is that area of Pakistan and Afghanistan, and we cannot allow them to strengthen their efforts to be able to export terrorism to our country again.

At the same time, we have got to make sure there is not a bull's-eye on the back of our troops in Afghanistan because the enemy thinks we are leaving no matter what. Conditions on the ground are the prerequisite. I hope the President has given General Petraeus the level of confidence that I feel in him, and that I think our Senate will show to him today to do the job as he sees fit, because he is going to have the boots on the ground in Afghanistan.

I have been to Afghanistan, as have most of my colleagues. I know how tough it is, the terrain, the type of government they have had throughout their centuries, and it is not adaptable easily to our concept of governance. So we have to work within a framework that is very difficult both geographically as well as in the governance structure.

I am voting for General Petraeus today because I know this man can do the job. I hope the President will give him the free rein to do the job we are asking him to do, and, in the process, protect our troops and protect him as they are doing this very tough job with everything he asks us to provide to him to finish this job and make the Afghan people say—give them the ability to create their governance in a way that works for them and to protect the people of the United States from any further terrorist attack.

That is when we will be able to say "mission accomplished." And General Petraeus can do this job. We must give him the backup so he can be successful.

I yield the floor and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. LEVIN. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF DAVID H. PETRAEUS TO BE GENERAL

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to consider the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of David H. Petraeus, Department of the Army, to be General.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will now be 20 minutes for debate with respect to the nomination, with the time equally divided and controlled between the Senator from Michigan, Mr. LEVIN, and the Senator from Arizona, Mr. MCCAIN, or their designees.

The Senator from Michigan.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I yield myself 8 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is recognized.

Mr. LEVIN. The Senate will soon vote on the nomination of GEN David Petraeus, who is once again stepping forward to render invaluable service to our Nation, as he has so often in the past. Certainly the events that bring General Petraeus to this moment were unforeseen. But we can be certain that when confirmed, he will bring highly experienced leadership and a profound understanding of the President's strategy in Afghanistan which he helped shape as Commander of the U.S. Central Command.

General Petraeus confirmed yesterday before the Armed Services Committee that he fully supports the President's strategy. That strategy includes a surge of U.S. combat troops who will be in place later this year.

That strategy includes a counterinsurgency campaign focused on securing the safety of Afghanistan's population and pursuing the insurgents who threaten that safety. The President's strategy, which General Petraeus supports, includes the setting of a July 2011 date to begin reductions of U.S. combat troops as a way of focusing the attention of the Afghan Government and military on preparing Afghan forces to take greater responsibility for the security of their own people. I have long believed that focusing on building the capacity of the Afghan security forces to secure their nation's future is

critical to the success of our mission in Afghanistan. General Petraeus agrees. He told our committee yesterday:

We want Afghan ownership of Afghan problems, whether it's security problems, political problems, economic problems, you name it.

That is what the Afghans want as well. That is what we were told. A number of us were there a year ago in Afghanistan when 100 or so elders gathered at a shura in southern Afghanistan. When we asked them what they wanted the United States to do, they told us we should train and equip the Afghan Army to provide for their country's security and then depart. And the 1,600 delegates to Afghanistan's Consultative Peace Jirga, which occurred at the beginning of June, adopted a resolution calling on the international community to "expedite" the training and equipping of the Afghan security forces so they can gain the capacity "to provide security for their own country and people."

The Afghan Army fields about 120,000 troops, including 70,000 combat troops. They should, wherever possible, be leading the fight against the insurgents. The Afghan Army enjoys the support of the Afghan people. That means that Afghan troops leading the fight would be the Taliban's worst nightmare. It would demonstrate that insurgent propaganda, which portrays us as out for domination and for our own ends, is a lie. If the Afghan people are to see this as their fight, it should be a fight led by their own soldiers with our support and not the other way around.

I wish to read an exchange from yesterday's hearing on this issue. I asked General Petraeus the following question:

The urgent increase in the size and capability of the Afghan army and having Afghan forces leading operations more and more is bad news for the Taliban. Now, I've described that as the Taliban's worst nightmare, because their propaganda that they are fighting against foreign forces who want to control Afghanistan will ring more and more hollow with the Afghan population [if] the Afghan army, which has the support of the Afghan people, [is] leading the effort to defeat the insurgents.

Then I asked General Petraeus: Is that something you would generally agree with? His answer was that he agreed with that statement.

I am also encouraged that General Petraeus committed at our hearing to a review of deployments by the Afghan Army to see how more Afghan troops might be deployed to the south where operations are the most intense and to ensure that Afghan leaders are leading operations in the south wherever possible.

General Petraeus also reiterated to the committee his support for the July 2011 date to begin reductions of U.S. combat troops. As he put it:

I saw [setting that date] most importantly as the message of urgency to complement the message of enormous additional commitment.

As the Presiding Officer well knows because he is an esteemed member of our committee, General Petraeus literally wrote the book on counterinsurgency. He led the effort to write our military's manual on counterinsurgency. As commander of U.S. forces in Iraq and the U.S. Central Command, he has served his country with great distinction at a time of great need. We are fortunate that once again he has answered his Nation's call, and we are grateful for the sacrifices he, his wife Holly, and his family are willing to once again accept.

I strongly support his nomination. His nomination was unanimously supported by the Armed Services Committee yesterday. I hope our colleagues will give General Petraeus an overwhelming vote of support.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona is recognized.

Mr. McCAIN. Mr. President, how much time remains?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona has 10 minutes.

Mr. McCAIN. I thank the Chair.

Mr. President, I rise to speak on behalf of the nomination of GEN David Petraeus to be Commander of the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan, and Commander of U.S. Forces-Afghanistan. General Petraeus is quite simply one of the finest military leaders our country has ever produced. And we are all grateful for his willingness to answer the call of service in yet another critical mission—a mission that will once again take him far away from his family, especially his beloved wife Holly, whose support and sacrifice over many decades, both for General Petraeus and for our men and women in uniform, can never be overstated. General Petraeus is an American hero, and I urge my colleagues to confirm his nomination.

Before I go further, let me say a word of praise for another American hero: GEN Stanley McChrystal. He is a man of unrivaled integrity, and what is most impressive about his long record of military excellence is how much of it remains cloaked in silence. Few understand fully how General McChrystal systematically dismantled al-Qaida in Iraq, or how he began to turn around our failing war in Afghanistan. These achievements, and others like them, are the true measure of Stanley McChrystal, and they will earn him an honored place in our history.

We are calling on General Petraeus at a critical moment for the war in Afghanistan. I agree with the President that success in Afghanistan is "a vital national interest," and I support his decision to adopt a counterinsurgency strategy, backed by more troops and civilian resources. This is the only viable path to true success—which I would define as an Afghanistan that is increasingly capable of governing itself, securing its people, sustaining its own development, and never again serving as a base for attacks against America

and our allies. In short, the same results we are slowly seeing emerge today in Iraq, thanks in large part to the work of General Petraeus and the forces he commanded.

Before heading out to Iraq 3 years ago, General Petraeus told the Armed Services Committee that the mission was "hard but not hopeless." I would characterize our mission in Afghanistan the same way. Afghanistan is not a lost cause. Afghans do not want the Taliban back. They are good fighters, and they want a government that works for them, and works well. And for those who think the Karzai government is not an adequate partner, I would remind them that, in 2007, the Maliki government in Iraq was not only corrupt; it was collapsed and complicit in sectarian violence. A weak and compromised local partner is to be expected in counterinsurgency. That is why there is an insurgency. The challenge is to support and push our partners to perform better. That is what we are doing in Iraq, and that is what we can do in Afghanistan. But we need to make it clear that, as long as success in Afghanistan is possible, we will stay there to achieve it.

I appreciate the President's statement last week that July 2011 is simply a date to "begin a transition phase" to greater Afghan responsibility. And for those who doubt the President's desire and commitment to succeed in Afghanistan, his nomination of General Petraeus to run this war should cause them to think twice. I know that General Petraeus will do everything in his power to help us succeed in Afghanistan. I know that if he believes he needs something he does not have, or if he thinks that changes should be made to our war effort, he will not hesitate to offer his best professional military advice to the President and to Congress. I am encouraged that this is the man the President has given his confidence. And I believe this should be an opportunity for the Senate to join together, on a broad bipartisan basis, not just to support the nomination of General Petraeus, but to demonstrate to the Americans we represent, as well as to our friends and allies abroad, that we are fully committed to the success of our mission in Afghanistan.

We must give General Petraeus every opportunity to succeed in his new command. And I believe that means stating clearly that the withdrawal of U.S. forces from Afghanistan must be determined solely by conditions on the ground. What we are trying to do in Afghanistan, as in any counterinsurgency, is win the loyalty of the population—to convince people who may dislike the insurgency, but who may also distrust their government, that they should line up with us against the Taliban and al-Qaida. We are asking them to take a huge risk, and they will be far less willing to take that risk if they think we will begin leaving in a year. In a news report yesterday, one U.S. marine described the effect of the

July 2011 date on the Afghans she encounters: "That's why they won't work with us," she said. "They say you'll leave in 2011, and the Taliban will chop their heads off."

In addition to being harmful, the July 2011 withdrawal date increasingly looks unrealistic. That date was based on assumptions made back in December about how much progress we could achieve in Afghanistan, and how quickly we could achieve it. But war never works out the way we assume. Secretary Gates said last week, "I believe we are making some progress. [But] it is slower and harder than we anticipated." I agree. Marjah is largely cleared of the Taliban, but the holding and building is not going as well as planned. Our operation in Kandahar is getting off to a slower and more difficult start than expected. The performance of the Afghan government over the past 7 months is not as even or as rapid as we had hoped. Some of our key allies plan to withdraw their forces soon, and it looks increasingly unlikely that NATO will meet its pledge of 10,000 troops.

None of this is to say that we are failing, or that we will fail, in Afghanistan. It just means that we need to give our strategy the necessary time to succeed. This is all the more essential now with General Petraeus assuming command, pending his confirmation. He has proved that he can lead our forces to success. He has proved that he can work effectively with local partners in counterinsurgency. He has proved that he is an ideal partner for our many allies and friends, who are so critical to success in Afghanistan. In short, David Petraeus has proved that he is a winner, and we need to give him every opportunity and remove every obstacle so that he can help the United States and our allies to win in Afghanistan.

General Petraeus has my full support, and I urge my colleagues to vote to confirm his nomination so he can take up his new mission as soon as possible.

I yield back the remainder of my time.

Mr. FEINGOLD Mr. President, it is my general policy to defer to Presidents on executive branch nominations. General Petraeus is clearly qualified for this position and, accordingly, I will vote in favor of his confirmation. But regardless of who is in command, the President's current strategy in Afghanistan is counterproductive. We should set a flexible timetable for responsibly drawing down U.S. troops, not just a start date, so that we can pursue a sustainable, global campaign against al-Qaida and its affiliates.

Mr. REID Mr. President, with 100,000 troops fighting on the front lines of our battle against terrorists in Afghanistan, the stakes could not be higher. That's why I was pleased that President Obama chose a proven leader for our forces in Afghanistan in GEN David Petraeus.

General Petraeus is the right choice to lead this mission in Afghanistan. He has demonstrated that he can effectively carry out a counterinsurgency strategy and prepare local forces to take over the U.S. combat mission.

The resounding bipartisan support that General Petraeus received in the Armed Services Committee and on the Senate floor sends the right message to our forces on the ground in Afghanistan, our allies who share our mission of defeating terrorism and the enemies who seek to harm us.

It says that we are committed to success in Afghanistan and we will continue to take the fight to the Taliban. And it also says that we will continue to work to transfer responsibility to Afghan forces—with the recognition that our commitment in Afghanistan is not open-ended.

As our Commander in Chief, President Obama must have a military and civilian team that has his full confidence, and with General Petraeus' confirmation, he now has that team in place.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan is recognized.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, is there any time remaining?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is 3 minutes.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, first of all, let me say I very much join Senator McCain's comment about General McChrystal. I spoke about his heroics yesterday, his integrity yesterday at the Armed Services Committee in my statement, and I reiterate them today. General McChrystal is someone who has the deep respect of all who know him. And while fate took a strange bounce in his life, he has the strength and integrity of character that he is going to be able to deal with it very well.

We all want success in Afghanistan, and setting a date, as the President has done and General Petraeus supports, to begin reductions of our forces is critical to that success, because it is the Afghans who must succeed, with our support. It is the Afghan Army that must grow and get stronger because it is that way where the people will be supportive of this effort, where they will take the risks if they know the Afghan Army is large. They know already it is on their side. They will take the risks to tell that army where the bad guys are, where the insurgents are, and not be afraid.

General Petraeus was asked yesterday whether he backs the President's approach with respect to a deadline, and his answer was clear: "Not only did I say that I supported it, I said that I agree with it."

President Obama has made a decision. General Petraeus is very much a part of that decision. He agrees with that decision that we need to begin reductions in July of 2011 of our troops as a way of sending a powerful message to the Afghan leadership about their responsibility to provide security for

their own country. And when they do take the lead—whether it is in operations in Kandahar or elsewhere—that is the way the people will rally behind the government, will rally against the hated Taliban.

The Taliban has no love among the people of Afghanistan. The Afghan Army does, and it is that army which must take the lead for the sake of success in Afghanistan. That is what setting this date is all about. That is why General Petraeus supports setting that date, not for withdrawal of all of our troops but for the beginning of reductions of our troops, as that powerful signal about what is at stake here and what the Government of Afghanistan must do to achieve success for them and for us.

A few final words about the July 2011 date set by the President for the beginning of reductions in our combat presence in Afghanistan. That decision also made clear that the pace of those reductions would be dependent on circumstances at the time, and that the United States would continue a strong strategic commitment to Afghanistan.

That July 2011 date imparts a necessary sense of urgency to Afghan leaders about the need to take on principal responsibility for their country's security. We saw in Iraq the importance of setting dates as a way of spurring action. President Bush in November 2008 decided to move all U.S. forces out of Iraqi cities and towns by June 2009 and to withdraw all U.S. forces from Iraq by the end of December 2011. That decision helped focus the Iraqi Government and military on the need to take principal responsibility for the security of their country. The Afghans' success, and ours, depends on that happening in Afghanistan as well.

We have already seen a positive effect of setting the July 2011 date to begin reductions of our troops. Lieutenant General Caldwell, who commands our training efforts in Afghanistan, told us that when President Obama announced the date, the Afghan leadership made a greater effort to reach out to the local leaders and elders, resulting in a surge in recruits for the Afghan army.

General Petraeus has said he agrees with the President's policy setting that July 2011 date, and told me that if he ceases to agree he will so advise his Commander in Chief, which he, of course, has a responsibility to do as a military commander.

Mr. President, I yield back the remainder of my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona is recognized.

Mr. McCain. Mr. President, this is not the time for debate over strategy. I would point out that no one follows an uncertain trumpet, and for us to assume the Afghan people will now rally to the side of democracy and freedom, when they think we are leaving and unable to sustain a counterinsurgency on their own, is the same kind of thinking that opposed the surge in Iraq, the

same kind of thinking that would have doomed us to failure, the same kind of rhetoric that was voiced during our debate on Iraq 3 years ago. They were wrong then; they are wrong now.

I would hope they would have learned the lesson of our success in Iraq: that we must show our friends and allies alike that we will be there to complete the mission; not as a young soldier said the other day: that they fear the Americans are leaving and the Taliban will cut their heads off.

It is a fundamental of warfare that you have to see the mission through to completion or failure. To announce a date of withdrawal is to announce a date for defeat.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I would also now reclaim the remainder of my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent for 30 seconds to respond.

Mr. MCCAIN. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of GEN David H. Petraeus to be General?

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

The result was announced—yeas 99, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 203 Ex.]

YEAS—99

Akaka	Ensign	McConnell
Alexander	Enzi	Menendez
Barrasso	Feingold	Merkley
Baucus	Feinstein	Mikulski
Bayh	Franken	Murkowski
Begich	Gillibrand	Murray
Bennet	Graham	Nelson (NE)
Bennett	Grassley	Nelson (FL)
Bingaman	Gregg	Pryor
Bond	Hagan	Reed
Boxer	Harkin	Reid
Brown (MA)	Hatch	Risch
Brown (OH)	Hutchison	Roberts
Brownback	Inhofe	Rockefeller
Bunning	Inouye	Sanders
Burr	Isakson	Schumer
Burris	Johanns	Sessions
Cantwell	Johnson	Shaheen
Cardin	Kaufman	Shelby
Carper	Kerry	Snowe
Casey	Klobuchar	Specter
Chambliss	Kohl	Stabenow
Coburn	Kyl	Tester
Cochran	Landrieu	Thune
Collins	Lautenberg	Udall (CO)
Conrad	Leahy	Udall (NM)
Conrad	Leahy	Udall (NM)
Corker	LeMieux	Vitter
Cornyn	Levin	Voinovich
Crapo	Lieberman	Warner
DeMint	Lincoln	Webb
Dodd	Lugar	Whitehouse
Dorgan	McCain	Wicker
Durbin	McCaskey	Wyden

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motion to re-

consider is considered made and laid upon the table.

The President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will resume legislative session.

AMERICAN JOBS AND CLOSING TAX LOOPHOLES ACT OF 2010

Mr. DEMINT. Mr. President, what is the pending business?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the pending business.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to concur in the House amendment to the Senate amendment with an amendment to H.R. 4213, an act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend certain expiring provisions, and for other purposes.

Pending:

Reid motion to concur in the amendment of the House to the amendment of the Senate to the bill, with Reid amendment No. 4425 (to the amendment of the House to the amendment of the Senate to the bill), in the nature of a substitute.

Reid amendment No. 4426 (to amendment No. 4425), to change the enactment date.

Reid motion to refer in the amendment of the House to the amendment of the Senate to the bill to the Committee on Finance, with instructions, Reid amendment No. 4427, to provide for a study.

Reid amendment No. 4428 (to the instructions (amendment No. 4427) of the motion to refer), of a perfecting nature.

Reid amendment No. 4429 (to amendment No. 4428), of a perfecting nature.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Carolina.

CONGRATULATING THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

Mr. DEMINT. Mr. President, I rise today to congratulate the University of South Carolina men's baseball team for making history by winning the NCAA College World Series last night.

Whit Merrifield's clutch hit in the 11th inning brought home the winning run and gave USC its first ever national championship for any men's team at the university.

In spite of losing their first game in Omaha, the team persevered through multiple elimination games. They were motivated by the courageous spirit of one young fan, Bayler Teal, who at age 7 may have been the biggest Gamecock fan in America. He suffered from a rare form of cancer and died last Thursday during the Gamecock's come-from-behind victory over Oklahoma. He wore his Gamecock ball cap the day he died.

Fortunately, Bayler's parents and 5-year-old brother were able to be in Omaha last night to see the Gamecocks win the final game of the College World Series.

So today I join all South Carolinians and Gamecocks fans everywhere to congratulate the players, Coach Ray Tanner, and his staff for an outstanding victory.

Now all America knows that USC means the University of South Carolina. Go Gamecocks.

FIRST-TIME HOME BUYER TAX CREDIT

Mr. President, I want to speak in objection to the majority's latest attempt to secretly push through another extension of the first-time home buyer tax credit—the third time the Senate has modified or extended this credit since July of 2008, when it was originally included in the majority's Housing and Economic Recovery Act.

Home buyer tax credits have several flaws, and I opposed them in the past because I believe they are a temporary infusion of capital into the marketplace and simply increase the government's grip on our Nation's economic growth.

As often happens when the government becomes involved in attempting to grow a portion of the Nation's economy, we only create a bubble that will eventually burst. As the National Association of Realtors said in late April, shortly before the expiring of the tax credit on April 30:

It is time for the housing market to stand on its own feet.

It is time for the government to stop picking winners and losers in the housing market based on arbitrary dates and arbitrary qualifications. For the people who haven't closed on their homes by today, it is not that they won't get their house; it is only that they won't get a taxpayer subsidy for having bought a house now rather than later. This taxpayer subsidy has been funded by their neighbor, who may not have had the opportunity to buy on the government time line.

We have watched this majority push through big spending bills and targeted government credits. What we have learned is that government spending does not grow economic prosperity; rather, government spending grows deficits. It creates economic bubbles. Without a doubt, it increases taxes.

For 18 months, this majority has created a false sense of hope for consumers and markets while increasing taxes on small businesses and the most productive and hard-working Americans. Rather than creating tax equality and predictability for all Americans, this Congress has tried to force taxpayers to subsidize the purchasing of cars, homes, and even appliances.

We know what works. When American businesses have the predictability of low tax rates, they in turn invest in job creation and create real economic growth.

The enormous amount of spending this Congress has taken on is unsustainable and will eventually lead to the highest tax increases in our Nation's history.

This bill is no different. I ask my colleagues, how many times do we need to extend this home buyer tax credit? What do we tell the people who bought their homes just before it started, and the ones who bought their homes right after it expired? Do we say their mortgage rates will be higher for the whole time they own their home, and their