

NEAR-MISS A BIG HIT FOR UNIVERSITY OF
LOUISVILLE, CITY

(Eric Crawford)

The game had ended in a flurry of breath-taking near-misses for the University of Louisville men's soccer team. Akron's players now were filling the TV screens at Molly Malone's in St. Matthews, celebrating their national title. Then the applause started. Fans at other locations reported something similar. The mood hardly matched the disappointment of the U of L players as they flashed onto the screen following their 1-0 loss to Akron.

"What a great season," said Silas Boyle, a former Louisville Thunder player and the goalie for the 1975 Kentucky Country Day state championship team. "What a great job they did. There's no way not to be proud." No, there isn't. Not with Louisville sports bars turning their attention to another kind of football on an NFL Sunday.

Snow fell outside the bar for most of No. 1-ranked and previously unbeaten U of L's loss, just as it did in the final home game. As the game clock wound down, you could see out the windows the wet reflection of traffic and streetlights in the middle of a busy holiday scene.

It was a nice reminder that while the experience of a national championship game is something that coaches and players earn, for fans and program and city, it is a gift. It's a gift U of L teams have given twice in the past three seasons.

And as with the run to the national title game in women's basketball in 2009, this soccer run was designed by a coach who's hard not to respect, one who manages to coach the team without becoming its focal point.

David Horne, player and general manager for the Louisville Lightning professional team, said U of L coach Ken Lolla's reach extends far beyond his program, that he has quietly become a mentor for local coaches—"I read every book he mentions," Horne said—and a resource for players and clubs.

"To me, he could become a [John] Wooden-like influence," Horne said. "I know that's a big name, but that's how he carries himself and how he coaches. He's going to keep winning, and he does it the right way."

Akron, after controlling possession in the first half, exerted itself still more in the second. By the time the Zips scored in the 79th minute, U of L keeper Andre Bordeaux already had put together a highlight reel of saves.

Still, the Cardinals had some golden opportunities in the end, the last when two-time last-minute hero Aaron Horton's strike into a goal whose keeper had strayed was deflected on the ground by a defender's leg.

Another foot or two higher, and the score would've been tied. But after Horton's last-minute game-winners in back-to-back NCAA games, how much magic does one player's foot possess?

Instead, U of L comes home with a runner-up trophy and a new profile in college soccer. If you know athletic director Tom Jurich, you can go ahead and put a soccer facility expansion or enhancement on the stopwatch.

For soccer in Louisville, there's added energy—and perhaps some momentum in building the kind of much-needed soccer complex that a city this size already should have, one that would keep local clubs from having to travel to Bowling Green and other places for big tournaments.

For U of L, it's another NCAA championship chance in a sport that not long ago wasn't anywhere on the national landscape. "You just have to believe it's only the beginning for that program," Horne said as fans headed home Sunday night. "It's a really exciting thing for the sport in this city."

It's pretty rare around here for another kind of round ball to grab any part of the spotlight in December. For the local sports scene, it was a holiday gift. For Lolla and the Cardinals, the goal is to make it a holiday tradition.

NOTICE OF INTENT

Mr. DEMINT. Madam President, I submit the following notice in writing—"In accordance with rule V of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby give notice in writing that it is my intention to move to suspend rule XXII for the purpose of proposing and considering the following amendment to the Senate amendment to the House amendment to H.R. 4853:

Strike all after the first word and insert the following:

1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Tax Relief Certainty Act".

TITLE I—PERMANENT TAX RELIEF

SEC. 101. REPEAL OF EGTRRA SUNSET.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 901 of the Economic Growth and Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2001 is repealed.

(b) SUNSET MAINTAINED FOR EXPANSION OF ADOPTION BENEFITS UNDER THE PATIENT PROTECTION AND AFFORDABLE CARE ACT.—Subsection (c) of section 10909 of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act is amended to read as follows:

"(c) SUNSET PROVISION.—All provisions of, and amendments made by, this section shall not apply to taxable years beginning after December 31, 2011, and the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 shall be applied and administered to such years as if such provisions and amendments had never been enacted."

SEC. 102. REPEAL OF JGTRRA SUNSET.

Section 303 of the Jobs and Growth Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2003 is repealed.

SEC. 103. TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.

The Secretary of the Treasury or the Secretary's delegate shall not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, submit to the Committee on Ways and Means of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Finance of the Senate a draft of any technical and conforming changes in the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 which are necessary to reflect throughout such Code the purposes of the provisions of, and amendments made by, this Act.

TITLE II—PERMANENT INDIVIDUAL AMT RELIEF

SEC. 201. PERMANENT INDIVIDUAL AMT RELIEF.

(a) MODIFICATION OF ALTERNATIVE MINIMUM TAX EXEMPTION AMOUNT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Paragraph (1) of section 55(d) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (relating to exemption amount) is amended to read as follows:

"(1) EXEMPTION AMOUNT FOR TAXPAYERS OTHER THAN CORPORATIONS.—In the case of a taxpayer other than a corporation, the term 'exemption amount' means—

"(A) the dollar amount for taxable years beginning in the calendar year as specified in the table contained in paragraph (4)(A) in the case of—

"(i) a joint return, or

"(ii) a surviving spouse,

"(B) the dollar amount for taxable years beginning in the calendar year as specified in the table contained in paragraph (4)(B) in the case of an individual who—

"(i) is not a married individual, and

"(ii) is not a surviving spouse,

"(C) 50 percent of the dollar amount applicable under paragraph (1)(A) in the case of a

married individual who files a separate return, and

"(D) \$22,500 in the case of an estate or trust.

For purposes of this paragraph, the term 'surviving spouse' has the meaning given to such term by section 2(a), and marital status shall be determined under section 7703."

(2) SPECIFIED EXEMPTION AMOUNTS.—Section 55(d) of such Code is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

"(4) SPECIFIED EXEMPTION AMOUNTS.—

"(A) TAXPAYERS DESCRIBED IN PARAGRAPH (1)(A).—For purposes of paragraph (1)(A)—

"For taxable years beginning in—	The exemption amount is:
2010	\$72,450
2011	\$74,450
2012	\$78,250
2013	\$81,450
2014	\$85,050
2015	\$88,650
2016	\$92,650
2017	\$96,550
2018	\$100,950
2019	\$105,150
2020	\$109,950.

"(B) TAXPAYERS DESCRIBED IN PARAGRAPH (1)(B).—For purposes of paragraph (1)(B)—

"For taxable years beginning in—	The exemption amount is:
2010	\$47,450
2011	\$48,450
2012	\$50,350
2013	\$51,950
2014	\$53,750
2015	\$55,550
2016	\$57,550
2017	\$59,500
2018	\$61,700
2019	\$63,800
2020	\$66,200."

(b) ALTERNATIVE MINIMUM TAX RELIEF FOR NONREFUNDABLE CREDITS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (a) of section 26 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended to read as follows:

"(a) LIMITATION BASED ON AMOUNT OF TAX.—The aggregate amount of credits allowed by this subpart for the taxable year shall not exceed the sum of—

"(1) the taxpayer's regular tax liability for the taxable year reduced by the foreign tax credit allowable under section 27(a), and

"(2) the tax imposed by section 55(a) for the taxable year."

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(A) ADOPTION CREDIT.—

(i) Section 23(b) of such Code, as in effect on December 31, 2009, is amended by striking paragraph (4).

(ii) Section 23(c) of such Code, as in effect on December 31, 2009, is amended by striking paragraphs (1) and (2) and inserting the following:

"(1) IN GENERAL.—If the credit allowable under subsection (a) for any taxable year exceeds the limitation imposed by section 26(a) for such taxable year reduced by the sum of the credits allowable under this subpart (other than this section and sections 25D and 1400C), such excess shall be carried to the succeeding taxable year and added to the credit allowable under subsection (a) for such taxable year."

(iii) Section 23(c) of such Code, as in effect on December 31, 2009 amended by redesignating paragraph (3) as paragraph (2).

(B) CHILD TAX CREDIT.—

(ii) Section 24(d)(1) of such Code is amended—

(I) by striking “section 26(a)(2) or subsection (b)(3), as the case may be,” each place it appears in subparagraphs (A) and (B) and inserting “section 26(a)”, and

(II) by striking “section 26(a)(2) or subsection (b)(3), as the case may be” in the second last sentence and inserting “section 26(a)”.

(C) CREDIT FOR INTEREST ON CERTAIN HOME MORTGAGES.—Section 25(e)(1)(C) of such Code is amended to read as follows:

“(C) APPLICABLE TAX LIMIT.—For purposes of this paragraph, the term ‘applicable tax limit’ means the limitation imposed by section 26(a) for the taxable year reduced by the sum of the credits allowable under this subpart (other than this section and sections 23, 25D, and 1400C).”.

(D) SAVERS’ CREDIT.—Section 25B of such Code is amended by striking subsection (g).

(E) RESIDENTIAL ENERGY EFFICIENT PROPERTY.—Section 25D(c) of such Code is amended to read as follows:

“(c) CARRYFORWARD OF UNUSED CREDIT.—If the credit allowable under subsection (a) exceeds the limitation imposed by section 26(a) for such taxable year reduced by the sum of the credits allowable under this subpart (other than this section), such excess shall be carried to the succeeding taxable year and added to the credit allowable under subsection (a) for such succeeding taxable year.”.

(F) CERTAIN PLUG-IN ELECTRIC VEHICLES.—Section 30(c)(2) of such Code is amended to read as follows:

“(2) PERSONAL CREDIT.—For purposes of this title, the credit allowed under subsection (a) for any taxable year (determined after application of paragraph (1)) shall be treated as a credit allowable under subpart A for such taxable year.”.

(G) ALTERNATIVE MOTOR VEHICLE CREDIT.—Section 30B(g)(2) of such Code is amended to read as follows:

“(2) PERSONAL CREDIT.—For purposes of this title, the credit allowed under subsection (a) for any taxable year (determined after application of paragraph (1)) shall be treated as a credit allowable under subpart A for such taxable year.”.

(H) NEW QUALIFIED PLUG-IN ELECTRIC VEHICLE CREDIT.—Section 30D(c)(2) of such Code is amended to read as follows:

“(2) PERSONAL CREDIT.—For purposes of this title, the credit allowed under subsection (a) for any taxable year (determined after application of paragraph (1)) shall be treated as a credit allowable under subpart A for such taxable year.”.

(I) CROSS REFERENCES.—Section 55(c)(3) of such Code is amended by striking “26(a), 30C(d)(2),” and inserting “30C(d)(2)”.

(J) FOREIGN TAX CREDIT.—Section 904 of such Code is amended by striking subsection (i) and by redesignating subsections (j), (k), and (l) as subsections (i), (j), and (k), respectively.

(K) FIRST-TIME HOME BUYER CREDIT FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA.—Section 1400C(d) of such Code is amended to read as follows:

“(d) CARRYFORWARD OF UNUSED CREDIT.—If the credit allowable under subsection (a) exceeds the limitation imposed by section 26(a) for such taxable year reduced by the sum of the credits allowable under subpart A of part IV of subchapter A (other than this section and section 25D), such excess shall be carried to the succeeding taxable year and added to the credit allowable under subsection (a) for such taxable year.”.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to taxable years beginning after December 31, 2009.

UNSUSTAINABLE FISCAL PATH

Mr. VOINOVICH. Madam President, since I joined the Senate almost 12 years ago, I have worked to ensure that Congress deals with our country's unsustainable national debt and budgets that are not balanced as far as the eye can see; to do this, we must undertake tax, entitlement and spending reform. As most of my colleagues know, since 2006, I worked conscientiously to create a commission that would undertake this task. My partner in the House was Congressman FRANK WOLF, and we introduced legislation we called Saving America's Future Economy, SAFE, which got 118 House co-sponsors. In the 111th Congress, JOE LIEBERMAN and I introduced the Senate bill and were gathering co-sponsors, then later combined our efforts with Senators CONRAD and GREGG, chair and ranking member of the Senate Budget Committee, to introduce a similar debt and deficit commission bill, which eventually did receive a vote in the Senate.

The Conrad-Gregg bill stipulated that if its commission's recommendations were supported by 14 of its 18 members, it would be fast-tracked for an up-or-down vote in both the House and Senate. One of my biggest disappointments in the Senate is that the Conrad-Gregg bill failed. I believe the reasons for that failure are already known by my colleagues, so I won't revisit that vote. And in any event, as I look back, even if it had passed the Senate, I am not so sure it would have passed the House because many in the Democratic leadership opposed it. Thankfully, sometimes there is good that blows in an ill-wind, and the President created his own debt commission by Executive Order with promises from Speaker PELOSI and Majority Leader REID that they would allow a vote in Congress if 14 of the 18 commissioners supported this commission's recommendations.

As you know, the President's commission, chaired by Alan Simpson and Erskine Bowles, recently released its final report. I am supportive of the commission's proposal, understanding that there would have been a tremendous amount of negotiation if the report they released had been adopted and sent to Congress.

I am encouraged by the fact that 11 of 18 panelists endorsed the report, including my Senate colleagues TOM COBURN, MIKE CRAPO, JUDD GREGG, KENT CONRAD and DICK DURBIN. As far as I am concerned, they and the other commission members who voted in favor of the proposal are true patriots who had the courage to do what is right for our country, and for the future of our children and grandchildren.

As my colleague TOM COBURN said just before the commission's vote, “The time for action is now. We can't afford to wait until the next election to begin this process. Long before the skyrocketing cost of entitlements cause our national debt to triple and

tax rates to double, our economy may collapse under the weight of this burden. We are already near a precipice. In the near future, we could experience a collapse in the value of the dollar, hyperinflation or other consequences that would force Congress to face a set of choices far more painful than those proposed in this plan.” Fast-tracking the commission's proposal for a vote during this lame-duck session would have shown Americans and the world that the Federal Government is, in fact, deeply concerned about the direction we are headed and is not oblivious.

The thing that is of grave concern to me is that in spite of the commission's hard work, it may be for naught. I think back to the Mack-Breaux Tax Overhaul Commission that President Bush created at my urging. I was pleased to see that many of their recommendations were incorporated by the President's current commission, and I urge my colleagues to look at the executive summary of the Mack-Breaux commission that was given to President Bush in 2005.

Frankly, I thought President Bush would review, tweak, and then send the Mack-Breaux recommendations to Congress. Unfortunately—and I have a great deal of respect for our former President—Congress never received a Presidential tax reform package for its consideration. I am anxious to read his book to see if he explains why he didn't do so. It was a missed opportunity for his administration, but more importantly it was a missed opportunity for the country. In my opinion, we would not be in the predicament we find ourselves in now had we addressed these issues in 2005 or 2006.

And so, here we are in a situation where we are on an unsustainable fiscal course caused by explosive and unchecked growth in spending and entitlement obligations without adequate funding. We have got an outdated tax code that does not sufficiently encourage saving and economic growth, and a skyrocketing national debt that puts our credit-rating in serious jeopardy and should give all of us great pause.

I believe that the American people get it. They recognize that our fiscal situation is in the intensive care unit—on life support.

When speaking, I always ask the audience two questions: First, “Is your standard of living better than that of your parents?” They answer yes. The second is, “Do you believe your children's standard of living will be better than yours?” The overwhelming answer is no. Sometimes, I also ask whether they think they will see their Social Security when they retire. Almost no one raises their hand, unless they have grey hair like me.

In all of my 74 years I have never seen such fear, uncertainty, and concern about the future. I would also point out that it is not only the American people who think we are oblivious to the looming fiscal crisis; just ask the Europeans, the Chinese, and others