

Mr. HOYER. Last week, as I have been doing for a number of weeks, I have been speaking about our budget and the crisis that confronts us and the challenge that confronts us.

Last week, former Republican Congressman Joe Scarborough said this about the hard work of getting America out of debt: "The belief of some on the right that America can balance the budget by cutting education, infrastructure, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, and home heating assistance to the poor is tantamount to budgetary witchcraft." That was Joe Scarborough, a former conservative Republican Member of Congress from northern Florida.

Last week, Budget Committee Chair PAUL RYAN expressed a similar thought when he said this: "If you literally think you can just balance the budget by cutting waste, fraud, and abuse, foreign aid, and NPR, it doesn't work like that," said PAUL RYAN, chairman of the Budget Committee.

Both Congressman Scarborough and Congressman RYAN are exactly right. Last week I explained why Republicans' spending plan, even as it cripples America's competitiveness, barely makes a dent in our debt. That is because the spending targeted by Republicans, non-security discretionary spending, only amounts to 14 percent of the entire budget. Should we focus on that? Yes. Can we get to where we need to be from there? No.

If you want to meet an arbitrary goal of cutting \$100 billion and you confine yourself to just 14 percent of the budget, you severely damage investments in education, in innovation, and in competitiveness without making our fiscal condition significantly healthier.

That is why, to really get our debt under control, we have to go beyond that 14 percent. We have to stop making the cuts that, while reckless, are politically easy. We have to start doing what is in the best interests of our country even though it is politically hard.

That means addressing the defense spending that takes in more than one quarter of our budget. It means making hard choices that can keep our entitlements strong for generations to come. But we also need to pass deficit-reducing tax reform.

Our Tax Code is a monumental collection of rules and regulations riddled with loopholes and preferences which are a drain on job creation and, frankly, exacerbate the deficit.

□ 1010

Many of those loopholes, or tax expenditures, as they are also called, are popular with all sorts of special interests. But they exact a high price from the rest of us: billions of dollars and more than 225 million collective hours spent on tax preparation, money and time that could be invested in more productive activity.

Just as importantly, when the Tax Code is full of loopholes, businesses and

families start making decisions on maximizing tax breaks, not on their economic common sense. Closing those loopholes in return for lower tax rates frees us all to make more economically sensible choices; in other words, fewer preferences, lower rates.

Closing those loopholes can also reduce the deficit. In the spending bill on the floor this week, total discretionary spending for fiscal year 2011 adds up to \$1.1 trillion, an awful lot of money. How much do our tax expenditures cost for the same fiscal year? Coincidentally, \$1.1 trillion. This chart reflects that reality: \$1.077 trillion in expenditures, \$1.068 trillion, almost exactly the same sum, in tax expenditures. How much do our tax expenditures cost for the same fiscal year? Just as much as we spend on non-security discretionary spending and security spending.

Clearly, tax expenditures must be part of the answer. The two commissions that met to try to focus on getting our deficit under control, making sure that we are economically viable into the next century and making sure that our children are not left in a deep economic hole, that they will have the resources necessary to meet the challenges of their time and will not look at our generation as the generation of debt, said as much.

It must be part of the answer, tax expenditures, because if we attempt to solve our debt without addressing defense, entitlements, and revenues, we are fighting with one hand and four fingers behind our back.

HONORING THE WORK OF THE PIEDMONT WOMEN'S CENTER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. DUNCAN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor life and the work of a ministry that is literally saving lives in the State of South Carolina. But before I begin, let us pause to recognize our friends in Japan and the tragic loss of life there.

The Piedmont Women's Center is a Christian ministry in the Upstate, providing love and compassion to literally thousands of young women each year who face unplanned pregnancies. By offering free pregnancy tests, limited ultrasounds, and confidential counseling, they have protected the most innocent among us, the unborn.

The doors of this life-affirming ministry opened 20 years ago this day next door to the largest abortion clinic in South Carolina. In 1991, a group of Christians came together and decided to collectively start a ministry funded by individuals, churches, and businesses to offer real alternatives to those in crisis.

The staff and volunteers of the Piedmont Women's Center can hold newborn babies who have been given the gift of life because of their ministry.

They have countless stories of real people, like Liza and her boyfriend, Peter, who came into their center early one Saturday morning with the intent of ending their pregnancy at the abortion clinic next door, a story that I would like to submit and share with you today.

Minutes before this young couple came through the door, the four volunteers at the center joined hands and prayed that God would do a work of redemption in someone's life that morning. Their "Amen" had barely been voiced when the door opened and Liza and Peter, mistaking the center for an abortion clinic, entered and announced they were there for their appointment. In 10 minutes, the life of their 12-week-old unborn child was scheduled to end.

Realizing that they were not at the abortion clinic, they started to leave. The director boldly stepped up and asked them to use the 10 minutes before their appointment to talk about their decision. They agreed.

Alone, Liza went into the counseling room with the director while a volunteer talked with Peter about their unborn child. Later, Peter was invited to join Liza, who had made the decision to trust our director and have an ultrasound. This decision would change their lives forever.

Our volunteer nurse sonographer silently prayed, and with her highly skilled touch, the cold steel of the ultrasound machine came alive with activity. Liza and Peter were mesmerized as they observed the antics of the little life they had conceived. They both melted at the sight of their precious child and completely changed their minds about their abortion.

They wept as they tried to contain their excitement. Not only had a baby been saved, but before their eyes the King of Kings, the Lord of Lords had penetrated their hardened hearts and allowed them to see past their fears and enabled them to accept their child as God's creation.

Liza shared that she was an adopted child, and Peter said his family had offered to help financially so they could continue their college education. They walked out of the center teary-eyed and full of joy, their shining countenance giving evidence to the change that had taken place in their hearts.

Lenna Fox Neill, the CEO for the past 20 years at the Piedmont Women's Center, said she is continually encouraged as she sees more and more in her community who are giving of their time, energy, and resources to see that all life is protected and respected.

Piedmont Women's Center helped establish the South Carolina Association of Pregnancy Care Centers 10 years ago for the purpose of providing a network across the State of compassionate ministries to care for women in need. The abortion rate through collaborative efforts of ministries and legislation has reduced the rate of abortions in my home State of South Carolina almost 50 percent in the last 20 years.

While Congress is fighting to defund Planned Parenthood and protect life at conception, the staff and volunteers at the Piedmont Women's Center are on the front lines every day literally saving lives.

I would like to congratulate the Piedmont Women's Center and their CEO, Lenna Neill, on reaching their 20th anniversary. I thank them for their commitment to protecting the most innocent among us and wish them God's blessing as they continue to spread their ministry across the Palmetto State.

May God bless you, the unborn, and may God continue to bless America.

STOPPING THE ASSAULT ON PUBLIC BROADCASTING

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Madam Speaker, the Republican assault on public broadcasting continues. We are told that tomorrow we will be considering H.R. 1076, which really goes further than anything that we have considered to date. It would prohibit the purchase of any content for public broadcasting resources using Federal money.

Now, I think we are going to see in the course of the debate some unfortunate, and I hope unintended, consequences.

It is ironic that my Republican friends who came to Congress this time with a pledge of regular order, that everybody would have 72 hours to review legislation online, that we are going to have the committee process working in a robust fashion, have again decided to violate their own rules by rushing this to the floor without extensive committee work and without being available for Americans to review this legislation for 72 hours.

I don't understand why, but I can guess that if they really want to try to pass this, they would be far better off rushing it, not having it carefully examined.

First and foremost, the whole point of public broadcasting is the development and broadcast of content that doesn't have commercial value, that doesn't inspire the networks, the channels, radio and television, to be able to sell advertising for this particular type of program.

You will search in vain reviewing the thousands of commercial radio and television stations, cable channels and networks, to find the type of educational programming that we rely on PBS for, for example, to supply to our children. There is no content for our children on the vast commercial sea of broadcasting that doesn't come from people who are trying to sell something to our kids, not educate them.

□ 1020

You're at a time when news is shrinking in the commercial arena.

Newspapers are getting thinner. Broadcast networks are withdrawing correspondence from overseas at precisely the time that the American public needs to know what is happening in the Middle East, in Japan. At precisely the time commercial coverage is shrinking, public broadcasting has actually expanded coverage and, in fact, at times devotes a lot of time and attention to boring news—boring news which often we find is some of the most important for us to understand.

This proposal would prohibit not just purchase of NPR, which is the target. Ironically, National Public Radio has a miniscule level of support from the Federal Government. Most of this money flows to provide content and programming to smaller stations in rural and small-town America, where they don't have the financial base to be able to provide robust public broadcasting.

We're always going to have public broadcast stations in New York and San Francisco, Los Angeles. Even Portland, Oregon, a medium-size city, will have that resource. It will be diminished if we don't have the program support, but it will be there. In rural Burns, Oregon, where it costs 11 times as much to send a signal, that's where it's going to be hit.

Now, denying the ability to purchase content doesn't mean just NPR. It's "Car Talk." It's "Prairie Home Companion." And most significantly, in my mind, it is some of the special programs that have been developed for the Pacific Northwest. Again, no commercial station would do it because no advertiser will pay for it. But it serves a market for important news that people need to have about their communities. It's not just in the Pacific Northwest. It's in the Rocky Mountain States, in the Upper Midwest. In fact, some of these stations are the sole source of programming. And so by prohibiting the use of this resource, it's going to cut them off at the knees.

Well, that's unfortunate because public broadcasting is the most trusted name in American media. It's why Republicans and Democrats alike don't want it cut. In fact, some would even increase it. I hope my colleagues will listen to what the American public wants and reject this legislation.

GENERAL PETRAEUS AND "THE CHARLIE SHEEN COUNTERINSUR- GENCY STRATEGY"

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Madam Speaker, the American people are rapidly losing confidence in the Nation's Afghanistan policy. Public opposition has reached an all-time high. According to the new ABC News/Washington Post poll, nearly two-thirds of Americans, or 64 percent, say this war isn't worth fighting. I wonder if any of the programs that my Republican colleagues want to cut

have sunk to that level of nonsupport. And yet this charade goes on.

The July drawdown, the date we should be leaving Afghanistan, is rapidly approaching; and there are precious few signs of preparations for a massive military redeployment. In fact, top officials have been "walking back" the July 2011 commitment from almost the moment the President made it.

General Petraeus has returned to Capitol Hill this week to pat us on the head and tell us the same things he's told us before. During testimony he gave last year, he offered up this—I call it a doozy—describing the July deadline as "the point at which a process begins to transition security tasks to Afghan forces at a rate to be determined by conditions at the time." With all due respect to the general, Madam Speaker, that's an awful lot of weasel words.

His testimony in the Senate yesterday didn't inspire much confidence either. He continues to offer the same bland and tone-deaf talking points—a lot of vague reassurances about progress we've supposedly made, while being sure to say that challenges remain so he can continue justifying a substantial troop presence. He's over here on the House side today. I hope my colleagues on the Armed Services Committee will hold his feet to the fire, demanding the clarity and candor that the American people deserve.

With everyone hanging on General Petraeus' every word, even though he is the symbol of a discredited and unpopular policy, I thought some of us should speak for the overwhelming majority opinion—for that 64 percent. So yesterday, the Congressional Progressive Caucus Peace and Security Task Force held a briefing with a fascinating group of panelists. We heard from Robert Pape, the suicide terrorism scholar, who posed an interesting analogy—if suicide bombings are the lung cancer of terrorism, then foreign occupation is the smoking habit, the lethal but preventable addiction that's feeding the illness.

Matthew Hoh, the former marine captain and State Department official, noted that we're laying off police officers here at home while building up a corrupt and ineffective police force in Afghanistan. And Rolling Stone contributing editor Michael Hastings, who recently broke the story about the Army using psyops propaganda on U.S. Senators, was also there; and he made this observation. He said General Petraeus is giving us "the Charlie Sheen counterinsurgency strategy, which is to give exclusive interviews to every major network and keep saying you're winning and hope the public actually agrees with you."

Madam Speaker, it was a compelling briefing. I hope all of us in the 112th Congress will listen to people like Professor Pape, Mr. Hoh, and Mr. Hastings. But, most of all, I hope we'll listen to the American people, who are angry,