

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION ON
THE BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR
2013

SPEECH OF

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 28, 2012

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union had under consideration the bill (H. Con. Res. 112) establishing the budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2013 and setting forth appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2014 through 2022:

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Chair, the Republican budget is yet another missed opportunity to confront America's challenges in a balanced and responsible way. A budget is a statement of values. This budget makes it crystal clear that Republicans value tax cuts for the wealthy and special interests, even at the expense of America's middle class, our children, the elderly, and even our economic recovery. The values supported by several other budgets—the Democratic budget, the Progressive budget, and the Black Caucus budget—would restore fairness to our broken tax system, invest in rebuilding and renewing America, and maintain America's commitment to providing for our most vulnerable citizens. The bipartisan budget offered by Reps. COOPER and LATOURETTE fell short of the balanced approach required to address America's challenges that was contained in the Simpson-Bowles proposal.

The Republican budget cuts taxes by an additional \$4.6 trillion over the next decade and extends the Bush tax cuts, totaling \$10 trillion, the vast majority of which benefits the top one percent of Americans. Republicans are not serious about deficit reduction in their call to pay for this tax cut by eliminating tax expenditures and loopholes that they refuse to identify. Would they eliminate the mortgage interest deduction for middle class families? Or the employer-provided health care deduction? Independent analysts have determined it is necessary to cut the mortgage interest deduction, the health care deduction, and most other expenditures in order to pay for their \$10 trillion tax cut.

Instead of making hard choices, Republicans choose to shift the burden even further onto low and middle-income families, seniors, and the next generation.

The Republican budget would cut Medicaid services for disabled individuals, children, and low-income families and seniors by \$810 billion over the next decade. It would also cut \$122.5 billion from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, SNAP, that lifted 3.9 million Americans, including 1.7 million children, out of poverty in 2010. This would mean 1,771 fewer jobs and 189 million fewer meals for hungry families in Oregon alone.

For decades, Medicare has guaranteed quality and affordable health care to seniors. The Republican budget ends the Medicare guarantee and would force seniors to choose to either pay thousands more dollars for their existing Medicare plan, or to buy plans with meager benefits that will ultimately put their health at risk.

Independent analyses show that infrastructure investment is one of the best ways to put people to work and to strengthen the econ-

omy, while giving families transportation options and making our communities more livable. The Republican budget would cut transportation funding by a staggering 46 percent, including for projects that have already begun, putting thousands of people out of work and stifling the fragile economic recovery. This budget is another missed opportunity to put people to work, to strengthen the economy, and to rebuild and rebuild America.

In contrast, the budgets offered by Democrats, the Progressive Caucus, and the Black Caucus take a responsible and balanced approach to putting America's finances back on a sustainable path. These budgets address the infrastructure deficit and expand access to education and job training to build a stronger America and to prepare the next generation to be the innovators that will lead us through the 21st century. These budgets restore tax fairness by asking the most well off to pay a little more. Recognizing the need to bring our troops home, eliminate wasteful weapons programs, and right-size our military, these budgets will help reduce the defense budget in a responsible way that maintains the world's strongest military and supports our troops without threatening our economic security.

I am saddened that Republicans produced a political document that continues their belief that massive tax cuts for those who need them the least will move America forward, even while they slash funding for transportation and infrastructure investment, nutrition assistance, Pell grants, and health care. The American people have rejected this unbalanced and unfair approach and so do I.

EMISSARIES OF MEMPHIS MUSIC

HON. MARSHA BLACKBURN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 30, 2012

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, the Tennessee 7th Congressional District is full of great land, great people, and great music. From the annual Fiddler's Convention in Clarksville to the Horseshoe Riverbend Festival in Clifton, this area of the country is known for its "noted" legacy. I rise today in celebration of another great tribute to our distinct sound, the Emissaries of Memphis Music.

In its fourth year, the Emissaries of Memphis Music honors those who grow the creative and musical culture of Memphis. From Estelle Axton at Stax Records, to the women being honored this year by the Memphis and Shelby County Music Commission, the function that women play in our musical legacy cannot be overlooked. Through writing, producing, recording, performing, or leading, women have long dedicated their time, talents, and treasures to expanding excellence in the music industry.

Their accomplishments differ from woman to woman, but their influence on and dedication to their craft remains steady. I rise to congratulate Ann Peebles, Wendy Moten, Anita Ward, Alexis Grace, Bethany Paige, Bev Johnson, Anita Makris, and Anne Pitts on their being named the 2012 Emissaries of Memphis Music. I ask my colleagues to join with me in celebration of the unique contributions each of these women offers to the great musical heritage of Tennessee.

HONORING KIRK ROHLE

HON. ROBERT HURT

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 30, 2012

Mr. HURT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Kirk Rohle, a student at Hampden-Sydney College who displayed extraordinary courage on January 25, 2012 when he re-entered his burning house to rescue his childhood friend, Ben Rogers.

Kirk and Ben grew up across the street from one another in Mechanicsville, Virginia, played Little League together, graduated from Hanover High School, and are currently both hard-working student-athletes at Hampden-Sydney.

While Kirk has achieved much in the classroom and on the football field at Hampden-Sydney, today I rise to commend him for his bravery and loyalty as he attempted to save his best friend's life.

Kirk's actions that day represent the kind of selflessness and loyalty that we all aspire to have, and the courage found in true heroes.

As Kirk rejoins Ben and the rest of his classmates at Hampden-Sydney, and continues to recover from serious injuries sustained on that day, I ask my colleagues to join with me today in honoring Kirk Rohle for his display of selflessness, loyalty, and true heroism, and in wishing him a speedy recovery.

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION
EXTENSION ACT OF 2012

SPEECH OF

HON. BETTY McCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2012

Ms. McCOLLUM. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to H.R. 4281. This three-month transportation authorization extension does nothing to address the long-term needs of America's crumbling infrastructure.

The National Governors Association is arguing against this unnecessary, shortsighted approach, saying: "a string of short-term extensions will only increase uncertainty for state and local governments and the private sector." Likewise, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce said earlier this week: "Frankly, there is no length of extension adequate for the construction industry, its workers, and the business community in general."

Earlier this month, the Senate passed a two-year transportation authorization with an overwhelming bipartisan vote of 74–22. This Senate bill will save or create over two million jobs, including 28,100 jobs in Minnesota according to the U.S. Department of Transportation. If the Republican House leadership brought this legislation to the floor today it would pass with bipartisan support and reach the President's desk for signature prior to the expiration of the current authorization on Saturday.

However, the Republican majority is rejecting this bipartisan opportunity, which is guaranteed to authorize federal transportation programs at current levels for two years. Republican leaders refuse to even bring the Senate bill to the floor for a vote. Instead, they continue wasting time in negotiations with extreme Tea Party Members in their own caucus in an

effort to bring a hyper-partisan, job-destroying transportation bill to the floor. The Republican transportation bill, H.R. 7, would cut funding for 45 states, including over \$313 million in cuts to Minnesota, and eliminate over 500,000 jobs nationwide. U.S. Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood, a former Republican Congressman from Illinois, told Politico that H.R. 7 "is the most partisan transportation bill that I have ever seen." He added, "It's the worst transportation bill I've ever seen during 35 years of public service."

I agree with Secretary LaHood. Minnesota's economy and workers would be significantly harmed by H.R. 7. The construction industry in my state suffered the most significant job losses of any sector during the recent recession. Construction jobs are again being added in Minnesota but, as of March, only one quarter of the 46,000 construction jobs lost in the recession have been recovered. This Republican transportation bill would reverse the positive momentum for Minnesota's economy and throw thousands of workers back on the bench.

These devastating economic consequences are unacceptable and completely avoidable. I urge my colleagues to reject H.R. 7 and this short-term extension so the House can instead vote on the bipartisan Senate reauthorization to put Americans to work rebuilding our nation's infrastructure.

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION ON THE BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2013

SPEECH OF

HON. ELIJAH E. CUMMINGS

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 28, 2012

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union had under consideration the bill (H. Con. Res. 112) establishing the budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2013 and setting forth appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2014 through 2022:

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Chair, I rise in strong opposition to the Republican Budget proposal.

More tax breaks for the wealthy and ending the Medicare guarantee for our nation's seniors are the wrong policies for America, particularly as millions are still suffering the effects of our worst financial crisis since the Great Depression and as we are struggling to restore economic growth.

As Ranking Member of the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, I also want to highlight the effect this budget would have on our Federal workers—the backbone of our government.

They support our troops in the battlefield and provide care to our veterans. They protect our borders, safeguard our food supply, and ensure that our seniors get their Social Security checks.

In return, the majority has rewarded these middle-class Americans with an unprecedented assault on their compensation and benefits, including proposals to extend their current two-year pay freeze, to arbitrarily eliminate positions, and to slash their retirement benefits.

Federal workers have already done more than their share to help address our nation's fiscal woes.

They have contributed \$60 billion to deficit reduction as a result of the existing two-year pay freeze, and they are contributing an additional \$15 billion in higher pension contributions to help fund the unemployment insurance extension.

But House Republicans aren't finished.

The Republican budget directs the Oversight Committee to take an additional \$80 billion out of the pockets of these middle-class workers in the form of additional cuts to their pay and pensions.

That would more than double what they have already given to date.

These continued efforts to end Medicare, to cut our social safety net, and to slash the pay and benefits of middle-class federal workers are simply shameful, especially when this budget would use these savings to give unprecedented tax breaks to the millionaires and billionaires.

I oppose the Ryan budget and will oppose all bills that would take money out of the pockets of middle-class Americans before asking the wealthiest among us to contribute their fair share.

TRANSPORTATION ORIENTED JOBS INITIATIVE

HON. THOMAS E. PETRI

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 30, 2012

Mr. PETRI. Mr. Speaker, today, along with Representative LIPINSKI, I am introducing legislation to stimulate the financing of passenger rail development from revenues generated from transportation oriented development.

The National High Performance Passenger Rail Transportation Oriented Development Act aims to capture some of the increasing value of commercial development around station areas, which in turn would help finance rail corridor infrastructure and operational expenses. Besides providing a funding stream for intercity and passenger operations, the initiative places emphasis on intermodal connectors to create vibrant communities along the corridor. The legislation aims to begin a major public private partnership initiative that will revitalize America's rail infrastructure to create a true third passenger transportation option to highways and aviation while at the same time creating intermodal access communities.

Under the proposal, the U.S. Department of Transportation will retain a Planning Developer who will establish guidelines for transportation oriented development programs, including special assessment districts or similar mechanisms to capture revenues from increasing commercial value. Rail corridor development funds will be established at the regional level to capture increasing real estate values. A stream of those revenues will be directed to support rail passenger operations.

The proposal permits qualified projects to apply for federal incentives to finance construction and produce jobs. These incentives will include direct access to existing Federal Railroad Administration and Federal Transit Administration programs, including a high priority for federal transportation grant applications. The initiative will be staffed by existing employees and remain revenue neutral in that all program activities, including the work of the

Planning Developer, will be repaid once the high performance rail service and commercial development is implemented and generating revenues.

I hope that this bill will open a discussion on the possibilities and potential promise of passenger rail development in the U.S.

MR. ROBERT DILLMAN, PRESIDENT EAST STROUDSBURG UNIVERSITY

HON. LOU BARLETTA

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 30, 2012

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Robert Dillman, who will be retiring as President of East Stroudsburg University on June 30, 2012, after sixteen years of serving the university and our region. East Stroudsburg University is one of the fourteen state universities that compose the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education. It offers 7,387 students a world class education. President Dillman came to East Stroudsburg University after several years of experience in higher education and undoubtedly left his mark. President Dillman, a native of Brooklyn, NY, demonstrated extraordinary leadership at East Stroudsburg University. By recognizing the importance of science and technology, he positioned the university as a key economic development force in Northeastern Pennsylvania. During his tenure, East Stroudsburg University became the first university in the United States to offer an undergraduate degree in computer security. The university also established its award-winning Business Accelerator Program, which joined the Ben Franklin Business Incubator Network and the University City Science Center's Port of Technology. In addition, President Dillman led the expansion of the Division of Research and Economic Development, which serves as a vital educational resource for technology-based entrepreneurs. Furthermore, he spearheaded the establishment of the university's world-class Science and Technology Center, which houses the departments of computer security and biotechnology, accommodates other sciences with classrooms, equipment, and labs, and is home to a state-of-the-art planetarium and a soon-to-come natural sciences museum.

President Dillman made substantive changes to the campus environment at East Stroudsburg by giving numerous faculty, staff, students, and community members the opportunity to take the world-renowned professional development workshop titled Seven Habits for Highly Effective People, which he brought to the university. As a result, university administrators are better equipped to effectively reach out to students, while the students themselves are more prepared to enter the professional world upon graduation.

Mr. Speaker, today, President Robert Dillman stands as important bearer of change to Northeastern Pennsylvania and the nation. I commend him for his years of committed service to East Stroudsburg University, his state, and country.