

Staff Sergeant Romesha serve me and our Nation in ways we can't even imagine. May God bless Mr. Romesha and his family and all of our American heroes who serve the cause of freedom around the world.

CONGRATULATING THE BALTIMORE RAVENS

(Mr. RUPPERSBERGER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. RUPPERSBERGER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the world champions of football, the Baltimore Ravens. On February 3, the Vince Lombardi Trophy returned home to "Charm City." Like Coach Harbaugh said, the win wasn't pretty, it wasn't perfect, but it was Baltimore.

We overcame the doubts of a Nation. Baltimore was just an afterthought, playing against a 3½-point favorite.

We overcame injury. Bernard Pollard, our safety, played with not one, not two, not three, not four, not five, but six broken ribs throughout the season.

We overcame an agonizing 34-minute delay, when we seemed to lose not only power in the stadium but the wind in our sails.

We overcame a second-half surge that left us screaming at our televisions, from Dundalk to Havre de Grace.

I watched the game with my family and my 92-year-old mother, and even she was fired up. The team stuck together and got it done.

I want to congratulate the owner, Steve Bisciotti, a class act who does so much for our city on and off the field. Also, Ravens President Dick Cass and General Manager Ozzie Newsome, who has the greatest mind in football. And, of course, the players—especially No. 52, Ray Lewis, and No. 5, Joe Flacco, who won the MVP of the game.

Last Sunday, the lights were out in the Superdome for awhile, but at the end of the day, it was just lights out for the 49ers. Baltimore cannot be more proud to welcome our players and the Vince Lombardi Trophy back home.

I also want to say that our leader, NANCY PELOSI, who is homegrown Baltimore, now a 49ers fan, did accept the defeat with her regular class and dignity.

CONGRATULATING THE BALTIMORE RAVENS

(Ms. PELOSI asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. PELOSI. I rise, Madam Speaker, to congratulate Congressman RUPPERSBERGER and the other members of the Maryland delegation and, more importantly, join them in congratulating the Ravens. They beat a mighty champion at the Super Bowl.

As a proud 49ers fan who grew up on Johnny Unitas in Baltimore and going to those games as a teenager and rais-

ing my own children on Joe Montana and Steve Young, you can just imagine how exciting this game was for me.

Mr. RUPPERSBERGER quoted Coach Harbaugh. I will quote him in another way. They asked him after the game, Was it hard coaching against your very own brother in the Super Bowl? He said that it was very hard. The only thing that would have been worse is if one of us were not coaching in the Super Bowl.

So while it was hard to lose to the Ravens, it would have been even harder to lose to someone else. If someone had to beat the 49ers, I congratulate the Ravens on a game well played.

I was in the stadium. I wondered who on the Baltimore side decided to pull the plug on the electricity. They were wondering who on the 49ers' side did. In any event, there was good spirit. I think if you were there and you saw that delay in the game and you saw the mood of the people, it was a real tribute to the people of New Orleans, who had extended such gracious hospitality in every way. People were in a good mood and they rode out that time.

I want to join you in commending the owner, Steve Bisciotti, in his leadership of the Ravens, but I also want to acknowledge the wonderful leadership of Art Modell. He passed away in the fall after being such a great leader in the Baltimore community, bringing the Ravens to Baltimore and in being a part of the city in philanthropic and other ways. He was a great man. It was wonderful to see the Ravens and everyone else, including Governor O'Malley and Mayor Rawlings-Blake, with "Art" on their lapels throughout the weekend.

So to Art Modell's family, to the ownership of the Ravens, congratulations. To the people of Baltimore, I know how exciting it is and what it means to Baltimore. I extend my congratulations. And I didn't have a bet, because I said while I'm rooting for the 49ers, I would never bet against Baltimore. So congratulations to all concerned.

REQUIRE PRESIDENTIAL LEADERSHIP AND NO DEFICIT ACT

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WILSON of South Carolina). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Georgia?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 48 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill, H.R. 444.

Will the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) kindly take the chair.

□ 0918

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill (H.R. 444) to require that, if the President's fiscal year 2014 budget does not achieve balance in a fiscal year covered by such budget, the President shall submit a supplemental unified budget by April 1, 2013, which identifies a fiscal year in which balance is achieved, and for other purposes, with Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN (Acting Chair) in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The Acting CHAIR. When the Committee of the Whole rose on Tuesday, February 5, 2013, 30 minutes remained in general debate.

The gentleman from Georgia (Mr. PRICE) and the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN) each has 15 minutes remaining.

Who yields time?

□ 0920

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Madam Chair, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCLINTOCK).

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Madam Chairman, a family that earns \$27,000 but spends \$36,000 and has run up a credit card debt of \$165,000 is obviously on the brink of financial ruin. Proportionally, that is exactly where our Federal Government is today.

Now, if that family went to see a credit counselor, the first thing he's going to tell them is we've got to sit down and draw up a budget. Now, that family is going to have to make some very difficult choices. It may take several years to work its way back to solvency. But our Senate has not passed a budget in nearly 4 years, and our President has offered only entirely un-serious budgets that continue to spend recklessly and that never balance.

This bill simply requires that if the President can't balance the budget this year, he tell us how long it will take and what needs to be done to do so. We would expect that from any family. We should demand it from our government.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Madam Chairman, as we debated yesterday, the bill before us is unfortunately nothing more than a political gimmick at a time when we're facing huge issues with respect to jobs and the economy.

It's very unfortunate that we did not have an opportunity to vote on an amendment that we proposed to replace the sequester—which is now less than a month away and which will do grave economic harm—our proposal to replace that sequester with a balanced mix of cuts and revenue from closing loopholes. But in this body, which says it wants to be transparent in the people's House, we were denied an opportunity to take a vote on something that's very important to the American

people, as opposed to playing the political games we've been playing with this bill.

With that, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished Democratic leader, the Representative from San Francisco and the daughter of Baltimore, the home of the Super Bowl champions, the Ravens.

Ms. PELOSI. Well, if the Ravens' and the 49ers' fans can come together, hopefully so can the Democrats and the Republicans on an issue of this grave concern to our country, our budget, which should be a statement of our national values. Instead, as Mr. VAN HOLLEN said, we see the Republicans playing games with the budget. Playing games—that's what they have been doing and that's what they continue to do as we go into this spring, when we need to find solutions; playing games that give new meaning to the term "March Madness" because that's what will result if we have to face a sequester. It's a very bad idea. A sequester should be out of the question, and we should be talking about how we find a solution instead of a sequester.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN offered a solution. Here we have a debate on the budget, the blueprint for how we go forward. And the Rules Committee, dominated by the Republican majority, has said we won't even let your proposal come to the floor, not in the form of an amendment or a substitute or in any other way. What are they afraid of? They're afraid of common sense because that is what Mr. VAN HOLLEN'S proposal is about.

It recognizes that we need to have spending cuts. In fact, we've already agreed to \$1.6 trillion in spending cuts in the Budget Control Act. It recognizes that we must address the entitlement issue. In fact, Democrats have already agreed to more than \$1 trillion in Medicare savings to strengthen Medicare and to protect beneficiaries. So with that as a basis, we go forward with the Van Hollen proposal, which is a very commonsense solution. It is a plan to replace sequester. It makes further spending cuts in a responsible way. It ends tax breaks for Big Oil, and it ensures that millionaires pay their fair share. Who could be opposed to that?

So let's get serious. It's time for us to get serious. We have a serious challenge. We should be working in a bipartisan way to find a solution. Instead, again, the Republicans are playing games leading up to what will make "March Madness" a term that would be inadequate for the consequences to our children, millions of whom will be affected in terms of their education and their wellbeing; to our seniors, to our veterans, to our safety industry in terms of cops on the beat. The list of cuts across the board and a meat-ax approach with no common sense given to it is ridiculous. It's ridiculous.

Let's stop this march to folly, this "March Madness." Let's get serious. Let's accept the President's challenge that he put forth. If we can't have a

big, bold, and balanced solution now, let's at least do something that is balanced and bold as we go forward to the end of the fiscal year, as Mr. VAN HOLLEN has proposed, so that we can do what is right for the American people instead of what is wrong for our economy.

What the Republicans are proposing is a blueprint for a downward spiral in our economy. It's irresponsible. It does not have value in terms of being solution-oriented.

I might add, in conclusion, Madam Chair, that I'm listening attentively to this debate and I hear my colleagues on the Republican side talking about how important it is to reduce the deficit—and we are in total agreement on that subject. I think we have a moral obligation to reduce the deficit. I think we have a moral obligation to create jobs, to put people to work because growth, in addition to spending cuts and revenue increases, growth is what's going to help us reduce the deficit.

But I didn't hear one "boo" out of any of the people, not one little hoot, one little peep, or any other sound an endangered species of a deficit hawk would have made during President Bush's term when most of this deficit was amassed—tax cuts for the wealthiest people, which did not create jobs but increased the deficit; giveaways to the pharmaceutical companies with an ill-advised pharmaceutical plan; and two unpaid-for wars. Just not fair to investments that we should be making in America's future, whether it's biomedical research to create cures and to keep America preeminent in terms of science, whether, again, it's invested in the seed corn and the education of our children. The list goes on and on. The list goes on and on of all of the initiatives that are important to growth, to making our future brighter, to keeping America competitive, to keeping America number one.

So I urge a strong rejection of what the Republicans are proposing. It's, frankly, silly and, as I said before, unworthy of the challenge that our country faces and the bipartisan solutions that we should be trying to achieve.

I urge a "no" vote.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Madam Chair, it is probably appropriate to refocus ourselves on the bill that we're discussing today, that's before us today, H.R. 444. It simply does one thing. It says to the President: when you bring a budget to Congress, tell us when it's going to balance. That's all it does.

Now, the sequester is an important issue, there's no doubt about it. President Obama's sequester is an important issue. House Republicans have passed two times spending reductions that prioritize in a much more responsible way. We agree that it ought to be much more responsible. The ball is in the Senate's court. The ball is in the President's court.

This bill, though, simply says to the President: when you bring your budget to us, just let us know when it bal-

ances. That's important because the last four budgets that the President has brought to this House, to this Congress, have never, ever balanced.

I'm pleased to yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. DESJARLAIS).

Mr. DESJARLAIS. I thank my colleague for his leadership on this issue.

This is the fourth time in 5 years that the White House has proven that it does not take trillion-dollar deficits seriously enough to submit a budget on time. In contrast, House Republicans, since taking the majority in 2010, have done that every year and will do so again in just a couple of weeks.

We still do not know when the President plans on actually submitting his budget. When asked, White House Press Secretary Jay Carney said that the administration favors substance over deadlines. Let me translate that for you: they don't have a solution to addressing the Nation's spending and debt crisis.

Today, the House will pass the Require a PLAN Act. I'm hearing comments that this is a gimmick, this is a ploy. Are you kidding me? We need to do our job. The American people get it. They want Congress to work together. They're not in love with Republicans or Democrats right now. They want us to solve this problem.

□ 0930

It's sad that we have to resort to a Require a PLAN Act to get the other side to work with us. Please work with us. We have submitted budgets. We need the Senate to submit a budget. Every missed deadline is a missed opportunity. We need to get serious about spending now. We cannot continue to delay choices that we need to make. We owe it to our future generations.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Madam Chairman, for those Members of this body who were not focused on this debate yesterday, let's make a couple of things clear. The President will introduce a budget, he is going to submit a budget, and he has submitted a budget every year. Our Republican colleagues don't like his budget because he takes a balanced approach to reducing the deficit, meaning that in addition to cuts, he also calls for additional revenue from taking away special tax breaks for special interests. That's number one.

Number two, what this bill does is, number one, require the President to submit his budget in a certain way; and number two, it criticizes the President for submitting his budget late.

Again, for those who weren't part of the debate yesterday, the reason the President's budget is late is because we had to pass the fiscal cliff agreement. We didn't get that done until January 2. And I have to say, Madam Chairman, we got it done despite the overwhelming opposition of House Republicans. We were pleased to get the overwhelming support of Senate Republicans, but House Republicans continue

to take the position that they were prepared to go over the fiscal cliff in order to protect tax breaks for very wealthy people.

That's why the President's budget is late, because as any American family knows, if you don't know what revenue is coming in, you can't put together your household budget. We didn't know what kind of revenue was coming in until January 2.

So, with that, Madam Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished ranking member of the Ways and Means Committee, Mr. LEVIN.

(Mr. LEVIN asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LEVIN. The Republican mantra is no revenues, cuts at any price, whether it damages health research, our kids' education, our national defense, or our national economy. So beneath their new talk of softening their image remains their hard edge.

Now we're less than a month away from a sequester—\$85 billion in arbitrary, across-the-board cuts just in 2013. Just yesterday, the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office warned us that allowing the sequester budget cuts to take effect would reduce GDP growth by more than 25 percent this year, wiping out hundreds of thousands of jobs—hundreds of thousands of jobs—and pushing the unemployment rate back up to 8 percent.

So I say to the Republicans, instead of opening your arms to the sequester and risking our Nation's economic recovery, Republicans should be opening their minds to a balanced, bipartisan solution.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Madam Chair, I'm pleased to yield 1 minute to our distinguished majority leader, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CANTOR).

Mr. CANTOR. I thank the gentleman.

Madam Chair, on Monday, the President missed the deadline for submitting his fiscal year 2014 budget. So, unfortunately, we haven't yet seen what the President will propose to address our exploding debt. But if the President's 2014 budget is similar to his plan from last year, it will never achieve balance, not next year, not in 10 years, and not even in 30 or 40 years. Apparently, the President does not believe we have a spending problem in America.

Unfortunately, the facts tell us that we do. Federal spending is 22 percent higher than it was in January of '09, and debt held by the public nearly doubled by the end of the President's first term after four consecutive trillion-dollar deficits.

The seriousness of this problem was underlined yesterday when the CBO told us that unless changes are made, Federal debt held by the public will reach 76 percent of our GDP by the end of this year, the highest level since 1950, when the bills were fresh from winning World War II.

The American people recognize that perpetual large Federal deficits threat-

en their economic security. That's why a recent Pew Research Center poll showed 72 percent of respondents said reducing the deficit should be a top priority for national leaders. That was second only to the 86 percent who cited strengthening the economy and improving the jobs outlook. Concern about the deficit has risen from ninth among 20 issues 4 years ago to third in last month's survey.

People are worried about what perpetual Federal overspending will mean to their future. Will taxes on low- and middle-income working families have to rise to pay the bills we're racking up? Will inflation kick in, eating away at the incomes of senior citizens living on fixed incomes who already struggle to pay for gas and groceries?

Will our economy stagnate as government demand for capital crowds out private-sector borrowers who want to expand their businesses? Will our kids be condemned to a lower standard of living once our overseas creditors become concerned we won't be able to pay them back? These are real concerns.

These are the reasons we brought the PLAN Act to the floor today. I thank the gentleman from Georgia for his leadership. Life teaches that if you don't have a plan, you're planning to fail. And this President does not have any plans to balance the Federal budget ever.

The House has developed a plan to balance the budget, and we voted on it twice. This year, we intend to improve on that plan and balance the budget even sooner than the 10 years our prior proposals called for. But we can't do it alone. We need to have the cooperation of the President and the other body to make any meaningful progress.

Last month, we enacted the No Budget, No Pay law which requires both Houses of Congress to adopt a budget by April 15. Now we are hearing that the other body is planning on producing its first budget since '09, so we're making some progress.

The PLAN Act is the next step in this process. It will require the President to tell us when he thinks a balanced budget can be achieved and how he'd get us there. If his budget submission does not balance, he'll have to submit a supplemental budget by April 1 telling us the earliest date when balance can be achieved, and he will have to show us the policies he will use to make that calculation.

This way, we can begin to develop a common destination. Until we are all headed in the same direction, we'll never get there. The public is telling us we need to reduce the deficit and balance the budget. The PLAN Act will help us do that, and I urge adoption of the bill.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Madam Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

This bill is entitled the PLAN Act. What we really need is a plan to avoid the sequester, these across-the-board,

indiscriminate cuts that are going to take place on March 1, which we all know are going to hurt jobs and the economy.

We just heard from the Republican leader. Last September, he made a very good point on the floor of this House. He said that if you allow those sequester cuts to take place, you're going to see more than 200,000 jobs lost just in the State of Virginia just in the defense sector. The across-the-board cuts are going to hurt jobs in defense, but they're also going to hurt other jobs as well as important national efforts, whether it's the FBI, whether it's border security, or whether it's medical research at the National Institutes of Health. All those things are going to be cut.

Now, the majority leader just made the point that when the American people are asked what their number one priority is, it's jobs and the economy. So why aren't we doing something about jobs and the economy? Why did the Republican leadership deny us an opportunity just to have a vote on a plan, a plan to prevent that sequester from taking place in less than a month, a plan that would replace that sequester with a mix of long-term, targeted cuts as well as revenues from, for example, getting rid of the taxpayer subsidies for the Big Oil companies?

That's the real plan we need, and yet we haven't seen any plan from our Republican colleagues in this 113th Congress. So, let's focus on what really is important to the American people. The deficit is, of course, important to the American people. As the Republican leader said, it ranked number two. There's no debate there.

The issue all along has been not whether we reduce the deficit but how we do it, making sure, number one, we don't do it in a way that hurts the economy, like some of the austerity plans in Europe, which apparently our Republican colleagues would like us to copy. That hurt the economy. We saw it didn't work in the U.K., and we believe we need to reduce the deficit in a balanced way—cuts but also revenue, by asking very wealthy people to contribute a little bit more and by closing those tax breaks that we heard about from the Republican Presidential and Vice Presidential candidate all last fall.

□ 0940

Those tax breaks are still out there. We propose to eliminate some of those for the purpose of reducing the deficit in a balanced way. That's the plan we need. That's the plan we've offered. Unfortunately, that's the plan we haven't had a chance to even get a vote on.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Madam Chair, how much time remains on each side?

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Georgia has 10¾ minutes remaining, and the gentleman from Maryland has 8 minutes remaining.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. I want to commend my friend from Maryland on the

other side for trying to change the subject. There's a lot of talk over here about the sequester. That's an important issue. There's no doubt about it. We look forward to that debate.

This is about having the President submit a budget to Congress that balances, and we're concerned about that because the last four budgets that this President has submitted to this Congress have never, ever balanced.

With that, I'm pleased to yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. WILSON).

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Chair, I would like to thank the gentleman for yielding.

I'm grateful to Congressman TOM PRICE and his tremendous leadership on this very important issue of balancing the budget. Congressman PRICE has a vision for fiscal responsibility which creates jobs.

Spending money that we do not have is irresponsible. For the past 4 years, the Federal Government has spent over \$1 trillion more each year than it receives. American families know better than spending beyond their means without consequences. The government should stop passing on depressing debt to our younger citizens.

House Republicans recognize that national security risks are at stake if we fail to get our spending under control. I hope the Senate and President will adopt actual solutions that will decrease the size of skyrocketing national debt.

The passage of Require a PLAN Act will be a significant act by requiring the President to propose a budget that balances over a 10-year period, and the American people will begin to restore their faith in Washington and believe that hope and prosperity are the future for our Nation. Balancing our budget not only protects and preserves entitlement programs for our seniors and future generations, it also provides economic certainty, which helps American small businesses create jobs.

As a grateful cosponsor of this legislation, I urge my colleagues and those across the aisle to put party politics aside and vote in favor of the bill.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Madam Chair, I'm pleased to yield 1½ minutes to a member of the Budget Committee and the Ways and Means Committee, the gentlelady from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACK).

Mrs. BLACK. Madam Chair, yesterday, the President took to the White House briefing room to lecture, as he has done before, on the virtues of the so-called "balanced approach" to budgeting. However, while he failed to mention that his balanced approach would never lead to a balanced budget, his last 4 years have made that abundantly clear. It's long past time for the President to level with Congress and the American people about when his so-called "balanced approach" will actually balance the budget.

Today, the House will take up the Require a PLAN Act, which will force the President to do just that. By requiring the President to explain when and how he would balance the budget, we can begin to have an honest and constructive discussion about what it is actually going to take to prevent a debt crisis. History and math tell us that our fiscal challenges can only be solved through responsible budgeting that cuts spending and reforms entitlements.

The President's incessant demand for higher taxes is not a solution to our fiscal problems but, rather, a deceptive rhetoric that cannot withstand the scrutiny of basic math or honest budgeting. No amount of tax hikes will ever be able to steer us away from the looming debt crisis we face.

Averting the most predictable crisis in U.S. history is not a question of how, but a question of if the President will have the courage and the foresight to work with the House Republicans to lead our country out of economic stagnation and away from a future limited by mountains of debt.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Madam Chairman, I think it's important to remind our colleagues that as part of the Budget Control Act and other measures we took over the last several years, we have already cut \$1.5 trillion over the 10-year budget period by placing a cap on spending. The President has been very clear, as have Democrats in the Congress. We understand we've got to make some important cuts. We did \$1.5 trillion. We can do more. In fact, the substitute amendment that I proposed would eliminate these direct payments for agribusinesses, over \$29 billion in unnecessary subsidies.

The question isn't whether we should do cuts. Yes, we should do them. We should do them in a smart way and not in an across-the-board way. But we should also generate revenue by closing the tax loopholes to reduce the deficit.

We heard again from our Republican colleagues throughout the last Presidential campaign about all these tax breaks that benefit very wealthy people. Let's close them to help reduce the deficit, and that's exactly what our substitute would do to help replace the sequester.

I'm now pleased to yield 2 minutes to someone who knows these issues well, a terrific new Member of Congress from the State of Maryland (Mr. DELANEY).

Mr. DELANEY. In my judgment, Mr. Simpson and Mr. Bowles are American heroes because they were given a job by the President of the United States. It was a very difficult job, and the assignment required significant vision. Their job was to work in a bipartisan way with experts and come up with a proposal that was in the best interest of the common good of American citizens.

That's exactly what they did. The fact that it was rejected by our government, in my judgment, is a tragedy. If you contrast what they did to what

we're considering here today with H.R. 444, it puts into context exactly the problems we have with this Congress. Because what Mr. Simpson and Mr. Bowles did is they came up with a specific proposal that had additional revenues and had important cuts to put the country on a better fiscal trajectory.

We're not here debating what proposal we should put in place to put this country on a better fiscal trajectory. That would be a worthy discussion. Nor are we talking about the things we need to do as a country to make our country more competitive, to create jobs. We're not talking about immigration reform. We're not talking about a national energy policy. We're not talking about investing in our infrastructure. What we're talking about is a gimmick that has nothing to do with the substance of the fiscal debate that we need to have in this country.

This proposal, this bill is a gimmick for career politicians in their game of chess. It has nothing to do with the substance of what the American people need us to do as a Congress. We need to adopt the framework that was put forth by the Simpson-Bowles Commission, where people actually did their job, and we need to use that as a framing document to deal with our fiscal trajectory. We then need to get on with the business of making this country more competitive so we can create jobs that have a good standard of living. To do that, we need to change important policies in this country around immigration, energy, infrastructure, and education. That's what the business of this Congress should be.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Madam Chair, I'm pleased to yield 1½ minutes to a new Member on our side of the aisle, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MEADOWS).

Mr. MEADOWS. Madam Chair, I thank the gentleman for yielding as I rise in support of H.R. 444, the Require a PLAN Act.

As a small business owner, I understand the importance of a balanced budget. Ensuring that you spend within your means is vital to your employees and the success of that business. Spending beyond your means could result in layoffs, mothers and fathers not being able to put food on the table, and it ultimately could mean the demise of that company.

I get it. Families from my district in western North Carolina get it. Just last week, Eric from Asheville wrote to my office saying:

To me it is just basic math. This is how most people that have a budget work. If you are in debt, you either need to spend less and cut back, or make more money. So I spend less, and I cut back on some of the things that are not essential. Why can't our government figure it out?

I agree with Eric from Asheville, North Carolina, and that's why I'm a proud cosponsor of Representative TOM PRICE's Require a PLAN Act, which will force President Obama to explain how he intends to balance our budget.

It's time for the Federal Government to do what hardworking, tax-paying Americans and some businessowners from across the country have to do: balance a budget and live within our means. The time is now.

□ 0950

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Madam Chair, I am pleased to yield 1 minute to another new member of our Conference, the gentleman from Texas, who knows a significant amount about budgets and who is a new member of the Budget Committee, Mr. WILLIAMS.

Mr. WILLIAMS. Madam Chair, I rise today in support of H.R. 444, the Require a PLAN Act. I am a small business owner, and I have submitted a budget to my bank for 41 straight years. It is astounding that the President has shirked his responsibility to submit a budget on time for 4 of the last 5 years.

Our Nation has trillion-dollar deficits. They are threatening the economic future of this great country, yet the President and his Democratic Party leaders in the Senate have made it a habit to ignore their budgetary obligations. Under President Obama, the national debt has increased faster than under any U.S. President in history. Now is not the time to sit back and continue racking up debt that our children and our grandchildren will have to shoulder, not to mention small businesses.

The American people deserve better leadership. They have made it abundantly clear that Congress should balance the Federal budget just like families and business owners do across the country, and they do it every single day. That's why I support the House bill requiring the President to submit a balanced budget and to get Washington's spending under control, so I urge my colleagues on both sides to vote "yes" on this bill.

I remember that Ronald Reagan's birthday is today. May God bless our country.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. I am pleased to yield 1½ minutes to another new member of our Conference, the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. BRIDENSTINE).

Mr. BRIDENSTINE. Madam Chair, I rise today to support H.R. 444, the Require a PLAN Act.

It is perfectly appropriate for the President to present a budget that balances within 10 years. If he does not, this bill would require him to tell us when his budget might balance. Trillion-dollar deficits for the foreseeable future are harming seniors, the poor, and middle-income families who are struggling to make ends meet. Here is how:

Our deficits are financed by Treasury bonds, most of which are being purchased by the Fed with newly created

money. This drives up the price of bonds and keeps interest rates artificially low. Seniors on fixed incomes, who have saved their whole lives, now cannot make a fair interest on their savings. In addition to squeezing the incomes of our seniors, creating money to fund deficits also drives up prices, which has a disproportionate adverse effect on the seniors, on the poor, and on middle-income families.

Creating money out of thin air to fund the President's spending must stop. The first step is to stop the reckless spending by having the President present a plan to balance the budget. This is a simple request with no reasonable excuse for opposition. I support H.R. 444, the Require a PLAN Act, to protect our seniors, the poor, and middle-income families.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Chairman, we've heard a number of the last speakers complain about the fact that the President's budget will be a little late this year.

Again, for the new Members joining us—and we welcome all of the new Members, those being Republicans and Democrats—in the last session of Congress, we were here until January 2 trying to put together an agreement to avoid the fiscal cliff. That was the President's priority—to make sure that we didn't hurt jobs and the economy by going over the fiscal cliff.

The overwhelming majority of our Republican colleagues in this House voted against that plan because they were more focused on protecting tax breaks for very wealthy individuals than about protecting jobs and the economy. That's their choice. Their Senate Republican colleagues made a different choice, but our House Republican colleagues can make the choice that they want.

Now, with respect to the budget, the President will submit a budget, and our House Republican colleagues can reject it or do what they want with it. The issue is not whether he'll submit a budget. He will. The issue is whether or not we would dictate to the President what the form of his budget should take, and that is wrong.

It is also a little curious to hear this newfound support for these sort of balanced budgets from our Republican colleagues. I would just remind everybody that the last time we had a balanced budget was at the end of the Clinton administration. Why? Because, in addition to economic growth, they asked the American people to contribute a little bit more in terms of tax revenue. The Bush administration came in and immediately squandered those surpluses. I think it's important to know that, since 1950, we've had a balanced budget on only eight occasions, unfortunately. The last time we had a Republican President who balanced his budget without inheriting it from a Democratic President was Dwight Eisenhower.

So we are pleased that our Republican colleagues are joining us in try-

ing to get back to fiscal responsibility. We see reducing the deficit as a very important part of that, but we disagree that we should do it by cutting important commitments we've made to seniors, by slashing our investment in our kids' educations, by cutting science and research and things that help power our economy and make us competitive. We think that's the wrong approach. We need a balanced approach that combines cuts with revenues from closing these tax breaks for the purpose of reducing the deficit. That's the kind of plan we need.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Sometimes in these conversations and debates, Madam Chair, it's important to set the record straight. My friend from Maryland says that the reason the President hasn't been able to submit his budget on time—by the way, the law is by February 4, the first Monday in February—is due to what happened at the end of last year.

I would remind my colleague that President Obama has missed the budget deadline more than any other President. In the 90 years since the President has been required to submit a budget to Congress by the first Monday in February, President Obama is the only President to miss the deadline 2 years in a row, and he's the only President to miss the deadline 3 out of 4 years in his first term. So that's just to set the record straight.

Secondly, I would remind my friend from Maryland that the last time this country had a balanced budget it was a Republican Congress that did it. In fact, President Clinton vetoed the budget twice and then signed it, but it was a Republican Congress, and we reduced taxes at that time.

I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to our policy chair on the Republican side, the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. LANKFORD).

Mr. LANKFORD. I thank the gentleman.

Back home last week, I had a gentleman who came up to me who said, "I make \$80,000 a year between my wife and me. That has always been enough until now. With the economy's slowing down and prices continuing to increase, it's not enough. What is going on?"

The simple statement that I can make to him is that the economy continues to slow down because the Federal Government continues to borrow more and more money for its own debt, taking that money out of the private sector's hands, which would typically increase the economy, increase jobs, increase economic activity; but instead, right now, it's all coming towards the Federal Government as we require more and more money, thus slowing the economy down more and more.

The unemployment rate under this President has been higher longer than any of the last 11 Presidents combined. There is something unique that I can

say to the college student coming out of college who can't find a job: This is not a typical American economy.

What's going on? We're borrowing too much money. We're slowing down the economy. It's not stimulating. It's hurting what's going on.

This simple bill just says this: as is already required by law for the House, the Senate, and the President to all put a budget out, this also says let's put a budget out because of the dire times that we are in. It says, at some point in the next 10 years, let's bring it to balance.

When the President sent his folks over last year to the Budget Committee in order to present the President's budget, I asked specifically, Does this budget balance at any point—10 years? 25 years? 75 years? Is there a point of balance? The response was, No.

We are just asking for things to balance sometime. Tell us when there is a proposed balance out there. Have a plan. Right now, we have no plan to plan, and that needs to change. The Senate hasn't had a budget for the last 4 years at all. The President presents a budget that never balances. After the fiscal cliff issues and after all of the things that have happened, our tax revenues estimated by the CBO will go up 25 percent next year. It is estimated that our revenues next year will be the highest revenues in the history of the United States, yet the President still comes back and says he needs more revenue.

We need to find areas to cut. We need a plan. We need to get into balance.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. May I inquire as to how much time remains on both sides.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Maryland has 2½ minutes remaining, and the gentleman from Georgia has 15 seconds remaining.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. I yield myself the balance of my time.

Madam Chairman, again, just to put all this into perspective, I appreciate the sort of newfound vigor with which our Republican colleagues are approaching this issue. I would just remind them that, in the budget they brought to the floor in the last 2 years, it did not balance, according to the CBO, until 2040. Even then, if you read what the Congressional Budget Office said, it wasn't as a result of the Congressional Budget Office's analysis of their policies; it was simply based on assumptions that our Republican colleagues provided to the CBO.

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So the real question here is: How do we reduce our deficits in a way that does not hurt the economy right now but does make sure that, as the economy improves, public spending and deficit spending does not squeeze out private investment? Actually, for the last couple of years, the problem has been the opposite. We have seen less private investment, and so the moneys the

Federal Government has spent have been very important to helping the economy from going into free fall. But there's no doubt that we have to come up with a balanced approach to dealing with this issue in the outyears, and that's where the debate lies, in how we should do that.

And again, our Republican colleagues have said "no" to the balanced approach; they've said "no" to the plan that we offered to prevent the sequester; and they didn't say "no," they wouldn't even allow a vote on the plan we offered to prevent the sequester that's going to hit on March 1 and which our Republican colleagues in statement after statement on this floor have said is going to hurt the economy, and which we know from the last quarter's economic report is already hurting the economy just because businesses are anticipating the possibility of these across-the-board cuts.

So that's the plan that we should be focused on. That's the plan that helps the economy, that will help save jobs. And it's just unfortunate that we've been denied an opportunity in the people's House to even have a vote on the one plan that's been submitted in this Congress, in this House, to prevent those job losses and prevent harm being done to our economy.

So I would hope, Madam Chairman, that we put aside this political gimmick. The President will submit a budget. Our Republican colleagues can do with it whatever they want, but let's put aside the political games and focus on jobs and the economy and let's have a vote on the plan that we have introduced to prevent that sequester from taking place and prevent the economic damage that it would do.

I yield back the balance of my time.
Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Madam Chair, this is pretty simple stuff. It's what families do across this country. It's what businesses do across this country, and that is to make certain that they don't spend more than they take in. All this bill does is say to the President, When you bring your budget to the Congress, Mr. President, let us know when it balances. And hopefully it's not never, as he's had for the last 4 years.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HOLT. I rise in opposition to this bill.

Madam Chair, it is already over one month since Congress temporarily avoided the so-called fiscal cliff, and the clock is ticking on sequestration: the across-the-board spending cuts triggered on March 1 that will devastate our economy. Yet the majority in the House is wasting time voting on an unnecessary bill (H.R. 444) which shirks their responsibilities, while pinning the blame on the President.

This legislation does nothing to address the urgent priorities of the American people—to create jobs, grow the economy, and reduce the deficit in a balanced way. It does not prevent the next self-imposed crisis, thereby threatening our recovery, risking job growth, and harming the middle class.

The majority calls this the "Require a PLAN" bill, but this bill is a stunt, not a solu-

tion. Now is the time to take action to avoid the harmful effects of sequestration, not for political posturing.

I urge my colleagues to reject this partisan gimmick and join me in voting against it.

Mr. POSEY. Madam Chair, a nation that does not operate on a budget is plagued by irresponsible spending with bloated budgets, unfathomable debts and jeopardizes its long-term sustainability. That's true of any family or business and it's true of governments as well.

Every state is required to have a budget and nearly all states are required to balance their budget. Sadly, the federal government has failed to operate on a budget for the past four years, and it's past time for that to come to an end.

In four out of the last five years, the President has failed to submit a budget to the Congress by the date required by law. Furthermore, each of those budgets, when eventually submitted, projected trillions of dollars in deficit spending as far as the eye could see. That is a recipe for national bankruptcy and it is morally wrong.

You would not steal from your children or grandchildren and we should not let Washington do it either.

That is why I rise in support of legislation that I have cosponsored, H.R. 444. This bill is really very simple. It requires the President to do what the U.S. House of Representatives has already done—pass a budget that balances.

I am also hopeful that the U.S. Senate will do something that it too has failed to do for the past four years—pass a budget. Any budget. That will enable the House and Senate to do what is required by law: establish a budget for the U.S. Government and live with it that budget.

The House and Senate can have disagreements, but the Senate and the Administration need to go on record with their spending priorities so our system can work.

In 1997, the Balanced Budget Amendment to the U.S. Constitution passed the House of Representatives, but fell one vote short of passage in the Senate. That year the national debt was \$5.4 trillion. Today it is more than three times that amount—\$16.5 trillion. The debt burden for each American citizen has grown from about \$20,000 to over \$52,000.

Back then, liberals in Washington said the same thing that they say today—that we don't need a Balanced Budget Amendment to control spending and responsibly manage the Nation's finances. There are eleven trillion reasons to prove they are dead wrong. Washington needs a spending intervention.

Earlier this week the Administration once again missed the statutory deadline for submitting a budget to Congress. It's been four years since the Senate approved a budget. All the while allowing billions of dollars in wasteful spending to slip through the cracks, further adding to our trillion dollar deficits.

We need a responsible plan to bring federal spending under control and ultimately balance the budget. Washington can no longer afford to fund itself on short-term stop-gap resolutions, last minute deals struck in the wee-hours of the morning and massive, "too big to read" 1,000 page omnibus spending bills.

Washington is literally charging away our children and grandchildren's futures, depriving them of the opportunities that were so readily available to current and previous generations.

Let's pass H.R. 444 and set the Nation on a more secure footing. Let's act today, before we are actually confronted with the inevitable debt crisis to come, which we have been warned about and can avoid if we get serious.

The Acting CHAIR. All time for general debate has expired.

Pursuant to the rule, the bill shall be considered read for amendment under the 5-minute rule and the bill shall be considered read.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 444

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Require Presidential Leadership and No Deficit Act" or the "Require a PLAN Act".

SEC. 2. PURPOSE AND FINDINGS.

(a) **PURPOSE.**—The purpose of this Act is to require the President to submit to Congress a supplemental unified budget if the President's budget for fiscal year 2014 does not achieve balance in a fiscal year covered by such budget.

(b) **FINDINGS.**—Congress finds the following:

(1) With this year's expected failure to meet the statutory deadline for submission of his budget, as stated by the Office of Management and Budget, the President will have only met the statutory deadline in one of his five budget submissions.

(2) Despite a promise to cut the deficit in half, the deficit doubled during the President's first year in office and has exceeded \$1 trillion for four years now.

(3) Since taking office, the President has allowed the Federal debt to grow by nearly \$6 trillion and total debt now exceeds the size of the entire economy of the United States.

(4) Under the President's most recent budget submission, the budget never achieves balance.

(5) The President's fiscal year 2013 budget submission includes the admission that under his own policies the Federal Government's "fiscal position gradually deteriorates".

SEC. 3. SUBMISSION OF A SUPPLEMENTAL UNIFIED BUDGET.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—If the President's budget for fiscal year 2014, submitted to Congress pursuant to section 1105(a) of title 31, United States Code, results in a projected deficit in every fiscal year for which estimates are provided in such budget, then the President shall submit a supplemental unified budget pursuant to subsection (b).

(b) **CONTENTS OF SUPPLEMENTAL UNIFIED BUDGET.**—Not later than April 1, 2013, the President shall submit to Congress a supplemental unified budget that includes—

(1) the information required under section 1105(a) of title 31, United States Code;

(2) an estimate of the earliest fiscal year in which the supplemental budget is not projected to result in a deficit;

(3) a detailed description of additional policies to be implemented in order to achieve such result; and

(4) an explanation of the differences between the President's budget for fiscal year 2014 and the supplemental unified budget referred to in this subsection.

(c) **DEFINITION.**—The term "unified budget" means the total level of outlays, total level of receipts, and the resulting deficit or surplus of the United States Government for a fiscal year.

The Acting CHAIR. No amendment to the bill is in order except those

printed in House Report 113-8. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report, equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question.

AMENDMENT NO. 1 OFFERED BY MR. TAKANO

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 1 printed in House Report 113-8.

Mr. TAKANO. Madam Chair, I have an amendment at the desk made in order under the rule.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Amend section 2(b)(3) to read as follows:

(3) Since the President took office, Congress has allowed the Federal debt to grow by nearly \$6 trillion and total debt now exceeds the size of the entire economy of the United States.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 48, the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

Mr. TAKANO. Madam Chair, I like to call this the "don't shift blame amendment." The bill before us today tries to blame President Obama for all our fiscal woes. Judging by the language of this legislation, I'm convinced the House Republicans live in a world where our entire national debt suddenly appeared on January 21, 2009. But let's be clear: Our debt was not created by the President alone. And while the President may be responsible for spending us a budget blueprint, it is ultimately Congress that holds the power of the purse. I think my colleagues on the other side of the aisle are forgetting a key part of our job: the President does not pass budgets, nor does he appropriate funds; Congress does.

My amendment makes a simple change to the findings section of the bill to clarify that Congress has the constitutional responsibility to fund the Federal Government.

I can guarantee that when the majority introduces its budget this month, it will be so extreme that it has no chance of passing both Houses. The Republican majority seems to be able to come together for meaningless proposals, but they know that when it comes to sensible legislation such as preventing us from going over the fiscal cliff or providing aid to Sandy victims, the 218th vote will come from a Democrat. The only thing allowing the House Republican caucus to govern is the House Democratic Caucus.

It is the majority's failure to negotiate in good faith on the budget that has gotten us here today. Year after year, the House Republican leadership has chosen to do anything within its power to discredit the President in-

stead of working to solve our Nation's challenges.

I urge my colleagues to support my amendment, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Madam Chair, I claim the time in opposition.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Georgia is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Madam Chair, I appreciate the gentleman's amendment, and although possibly well-intentioned, we're not saying at all that this is just on the President's watch, that this is simply this President that is culpable, but you'd have to ignore the President's fiscal issues that he's had over the past 4 years to think that he didn't have a hand in this.

On taking office, President Obama promised to cut the deficit in half. Madam Chair, the deficit, when the President entered office, was \$458 billion. We all know that the deficit last year was \$1.3 trillion—hardly in half, not even with new math.

Instead, he's presided over four straight trillion-dollar-plus deficits. Spending is 22 percent higher at the end of this President's first term than it was when he took office. Under his own budget, spending will be 40 percent higher at the end of his second term if Congress were to go along with the proposals he brings forward. And finally, the President is on track to double the national debt by the end of his term in office.

Now, my new colleague from California says that all you've got to do is pass a budget through the Congress and all things will be wonderful, and the House Republicans have passed a budget. And, Madam Chair, it's been a budget that has put us on a path to balance, yes, and we'll do that again this year. But I will remind my colleague that the Senate hasn't passed a budget in nearly 4 years, which is why 2 weeks ago this Congress, this House, passed a bill—No Budget, No Pay—where we finally got the Senate to admit that they hadn't passed a budget. And, oh, yes, by the way, they'll do one this year. We got their attention.

So, Madam Chair, though well-intentioned, trying to change the subject and the issue a little bit, this amendment doesn't—doesn't—assist in getting us to the point where it is the President's responsibility to tell the American people—in fact, it's only fair for the President to tell the American people when he brings his budget forward, when will it balance.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TAKANO. Madam Chair, the House Republicans have been more focused on passing budgets that message well than introducing a budget that both the House and Senate can agree on. These are budgets that don't stand a chance of passing the Senate simply because the GOP refuses to compromise on anything. How many of their budgets end Medicare as we know it? What makes them think that the

Senate would pass a budget that goes back on the promises we made to our seniors?

The budgets passed by House Republicans are less valuable than the paper they're written on. They do not bring both sides together and are a complete waste of time and the taxpayers' money.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Madam Chair, what time remains for each side, please?

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Georgia has 3 minutes remaining, and the gentleman from California has 2½ minutes remaining.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Madam Chair, I'm pleased to yield 1½ minutes to the vice chair of our conference, the gentlewoman from Kansas (Ms. JENKINS).

Ms. JENKINS. I thank the gentleman from Georgia for yielding me this time.

Today, there are still more than 12 million Americans unemployed. Parents are taking home lower wages to support their children, and families are paying more for everything from gas to groceries. For these Americans, the recession never ended.

If government spending was the key to economic growth and job creation, the economy would be booming right now. But instead, last week we found out things are getting worse. We all know the problem. For 4 years we racked up trillion-dollar deficits year after year, adding another trillion to the national debt. It's not a partisan issue. We all agree we need to fix it.

Serious problems call for serious discussions, and serious discussions require everyone to put their plan on the table. We took a solid step last week by requiring the Senate to pass a budget for the first time in 4 years, but we must continue moving forward by requiring not just a budget but a plan that actually fixes the problem.

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We need to pass the Require a PLAN Act so the House, Senate, and even the White House are all forced to step away from campaign rhetoric and short-term gimmicks. Unlike the President's previous budget proposals, the PLAN Act will require the President to finally tell the American people when and how his budget will achieve balance.

It's time to get serious. Americans deserve better than gimmicks and campaign rhetoric; they deserve a plan.

Mr. TAKANO. Madam Chair, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Madam Chair, I urge a rejection of this amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. TAKANO. Madam Chair, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 2 OFFERED BY MR. SCHRADER

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 2 printed in House Report 113-8.

Mr. SCHRADER. Madam Chair, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

At the end of section 2(b), add the following:

(6) The President created the National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform chaired by Erskine Bowles and Senator Alan Simpson, which recommended a balanced package of revenue and spending reforms to bring down projected deficits and stabilize the Federal debt as a share of the economy.

(7) These recommendations enjoy wide bipartisan support and should be considered the basis for meeting the requirements of this Act.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 48, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. SCHRADER) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon.

Mr. SCHRADER. Madam Chair, I yield myself 1 minute.

I'm very pleased to offer the only real bipartisan amendment to this bill, and maybe one of the few bipartisan amendments we'll see this Congress. I hope not.

This is actually an attempt to rectify some of the deficiencies in the underlying bill. I certainly don't agree with the findings. As has been pointed out, the lack of a budget at this point in time is because of the fiscal cliff negotiations. Congress, frankly, is to blame for that. The President usually starts his budget in November or December, and that was impossible.

Also, I think there's a little revisionist history regarding the debt that the President did inherit. Almost one-half to two-thirds of that \$1 trillion he inherited from the previous administration and previous Congresses.

Nevertheless, we do have a huge debt, and the deficit problem needs adjusting and addressing. The only bipartisan solution to that has been put forward by Simpson-Bowles. This has had widespread recognition by folks here in Congress, folks outside of Congress, businessmen and -women, as a possible solution to a long-term, unified approach to our debt and deficit. The tenants of that, of course, deal with the tax expenditures that we have and the health care costs that are going up.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Madam Chair, I claim the time in opposition.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Madam Chair, I want to commend my colleague from Oregon and the colleagues that came together to submit this amendment, as I believe it truly to be well-intentioned, but I think it misses the mark. I think for two reasons, specifically, that it ought not be adopted by this body.

First, it unnecessarily restricts the ability of the President to determine how he would balance the budget. Remember, the underlying bill doesn't tie the President's hands in any way. It simply says to the President when you submit your budget to Congress, just let us know when it's going to balance. And if it's not going to balance within the period of time that's defined by the budget window, then tell us when it's going to balance, and tell us what you're going to do to make it come into balance.

And the reason that balance is important, Madam Chair, is not just because it makes numbers, zero equals zero on a page somewhere. It's because it's about the economy, to get the economy rolling again and get jobs being created. That's why it's important.

Secondly, this amendment would have the President build his balanced budget around a foundation that never balances. A lot of talk about Simpson-Bowles, and I commend them for the wonderful work that they did. However, if you get down into the details of that, there are some things in there that just simply will not work. And the biggest thing is that it never gets to balance.

So the underlying bill again, Madam Chair, is crafted very carefully so that it gives the President the greatest amount of flexibility to propose how he believes the budget ought to be balanced.

And finally, maybe the most important thing about this, the inadequacy of this amendment, is that the President has already rejected the findings in the Simpson-Bowles commission. The President's already rejected it, his own commission; said never mind, that's not the way I want to do it.

So we would suggest that allowing the President the greatest amount of flexibility on how he would propose to balance the budget—something he's never done, but we want to leave him the greatest amount of flexibility, so we ought to retain the underlying bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SCHRADER. Madam Chair, I yield 1 minute to my respected colleague from New York (Mr. GIBSON).

Mr. GIBSON. Madam Chair, I want to thank my colleague, Mr. SCHRADER, for offering this amendment. I rise in support of it.

Madam Chair, we're only about 3 weeks away from the specter of sequestration, always meant to be a forcing function for us to come together to get a grand agreement. And what this amendment says is the President should use the framework, the Simpson-Bowles framework, as a starting point to get that conversation going.

You know, the President said, when he initiated that fiscal commission:

For far too long, Washington has avoided the tough choices necessary to solve our fiscal problems, and they won't be solved

overnight. But under the leadership of Erskine and Alan, I'm confident that the Commission I'm establishing today will build a bipartisan consensus to put America on the path toward fiscal reform and responsibility.

Madam Chair, last year, Cooper-LaTourette—we offered a bipartisan budget that was inspired by Simpson-Bowles, although we modified it some. What I'm asking the President to do is to come forward, to recognize this commission as a starting point, so that, once again, we can come together so we can address these unsustainable deficits.

So I'm proud to support this amendment, and ask my colleagues to support it.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SCHRADER. Madam Chair, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WOLF).

(Mr. WOLF asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WOLF. America is broke. America is in trouble, and the Simpson-Bowles plan is the only framework out there that truly reforms Social Security and saves it for our children and grandchildren.

When I go into high schools in my district and I ask the students, how many of you believe the Social Security system is sound, in the last 4 years, not one senior has raised their hand. The seniors know more than the Congress, both the Republican and Democratic Party, and more than the President.

Just yesterday, CBO Director Doug Elmendorf noted that the number of seniors receiving Social Security and Medicare benefits will increase by 40 percent over the next decade. In order to preserve Social Security and save it for our children, the President should use Simpson-Bowles as a starting point. He created the commission. It received bipartisan support, and then he walked away.

Some Members on both sides are afraid of this vote. You know what you ought to be afraid of? You ought to be afraid of facing your children and your grandchildren and your constituents when this country goes bankrupt and goes into decline.

I thank the gentleman for offering the amendment, and strongly urge a unanimous "yes" vote.

Madam Chair, I thank Mr. SCHRADER for yielding, and thank the other cosponsors of this amendment, Mr. COOPER and Mr. GIBSON, for their work.

I continue to believe that the only way to address our Nation's massive debt, which is crippling our ability to compete, is by adopting a comprehensive proposal along the lines of the Simpson-Bowles framework. It would put our Nation on a sustainable path by reducing deficits by 4 trillion dollars through a mix of spending reductions—both mandatory and discretionary—and comprehensive, pro-growth reform. By finding these savings, sequestration wouldn't even be necessary.

This amendment is simple. It adds a finding to this legislation that the president created

the Simpson-Bowles Commission and suggests using Simpson-Bowles as a starting point, to meet the underlying requirements of the bill.

Quite honestly, I am disappointed that an amendment is even necessary. As Alan Greenspan noted in May, "The worst mistake the president made was not embracing that vehicle [Simpson-Bowles] right away."

I am submitting for the RECORD letters I sent earlier this week to both the president and the speaker asking both to embrace bipartisan efforts to "turn off" sequestration. Simpson-Bowles is a valid approach to deal with this problem, even though the president walked away from his own commission's hard work.

I urge a "yes" vote on the amendment and a "yes" vote on the bill.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, February 4, 2013.

Hon. JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: I want to share the enclosed letter I sent to President Obama today urging him to immediately send a written proposal to the Congress to prevent sequestration. As has been widely reported, sequestration was originally proposed by the president's chief of staff and Treasury Secretary nominee, Jack Lew. Unfortunately, the bluntness of this policy's across-the-board cuts will lead to a hollow military force and a government unable to nimbly respond to the needs of its citizens.

Over the past two years, the House Appropriations Committee, on which I serve, has led the way in reducing discretionary spending by \$98 billion, which will result in \$917 billion in deficit reduction over the next decade. While these discretionary cuts have made a substantial impact, no similar reductions in spending have been made to entitlement programs or tax earmarks and other spending through the tax code. Unfortunately, the impeding sequestration would just continue the process of discretionary spending reductions, which have already been substantially reduced, while essentially leaving all other spending—the real drivers of the deficit—on autopilot. This is the area of the budget that must be reformed in order to preserve and protect them for future generations. These programs are broke. Everyone is to blame, and therefore we all need to be part of the solution. Simply put, if we do nothing, within 25 years, every Social Security recipient, regardless of age, will face an across-the-board cut of 25 percent.

That is why I have called on the president to support the bipartisan Simpson-Bowles proposal, which will "turn off" the need for sequestration by finding the necessary spending reductions. I therefore am offering an amendment with several of our colleagues to H.R. 444, Require a PLAN Act, which will be considered on the floor this week. This amendment simply adds a requirement that the president use this framework when submitting his budget request. It is disappointing that the president walked away from his own commission, and disappointing that he is again late in submitting his budget request to Congress. That is why, if the president continues to fail to advocate for this bipartisan solution to avert sequestration, the House must lead the way by adopting this amendment.

It is imperative that the Congress find a solution to avert sequestration before it hits at the end of this month. I ask for your support for the amendment my colleagues and I will offer today and for your broader support for the bipartisan Simpson-Bowles recommendations.

Best wishes.
Sincerely,

FRANK R. WOLF,
Member of Congress.

Enclosure.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, February 4, 2013.

Hon. BARACK H. OBAMA,
The President, The White House,
Washington DC.

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: During your October 23, 2012 debate with Governor Romney, you forcefully stated that sequestration "will not happen." Despite your assurance on national television to the American people, we are now less than a month away from sequestration and I am deeply concerned that your administration is failing to exhibit any urgency in addressing this issue.

Sequestration will lead to a hollow military force and a government unable to nimbly respond to the needs of its citizens. I hope that you will not stand by and allow this to happen. The idea of "sequestration" was proposed by your chief of staff and nominee to be Secretary of the Treasury, Jack Lew. I write today to ask that you immediately send a written proposal to the Congress to prevent sequestration.

I am not advocating that spending reductions scheduled for our discretionary military and non-military accounts simply be waived—far from it. Our nation is nearly \$16.5 trillion in debt, and, when added to our unfunded obligations and liabilities, we are facing roughly \$71 trillion in future unsustainable spending commitments. Unless we change course, every penny collected by the federal government will be consumed by spending on entitlements and interest on the debt by 2025. We are spending \$4.2 billion each week on interest payments to finance our debt, and this money is going to nations such as China, one of our strongest competitors which is actively spying on both our public and private sectors and has an abysmal human rights record. Our current path is simply unsustainable and is not the firm foundation our children and grandchildren expect and deserve.

I have repeatedly advocated and voted for the only bipartisan fiscal solution that has been proposed: the recommendations of the Simpson-Bowles Commission, which would have reduced the deficit by more than \$4 trillion, with two-thirds of the savings coming from spending reductions, and one-third through tax reform. More importantly, it would have reduced enough spending to completely "turn off" the need for the sequestration cuts. While you walked away from this bipartisan proposal, I was one of 38 bipartisan members of Congress to vote for it last year.

In addition to voting for bipartisan solutions like the Simpson-Bowles recommendations, I have worked to make the difficult but necessary cuts to our nation's discretionary spending. During the 112th Congress, as chairman of the Commerce-Justice-Science Appropriations subcommittee, I reduced spending from nearly \$64 billion to nearly \$52 billion for these agencies, nearly a \$12 billion reduction. The House Appropriations Committee recognized the need to lead by example and started the process of reducing unnecessary spending. As subcommittee chairman, I still managed to continue investing in our nation's critical counterterrorism and research and development programs. In fact, I am proud that I was able to make these substantial cuts while funding the National Science Foundation's basic research programs and the Federal Bureau of Investigation's national security work at all-time high levels. This is the type of thoughtful and deliberate allocation of resources we

can achieve through a careful process, rather than sequestration.

But a real fiscal solution cannot be reached by focusing only on reductions to discretionary spending accounts, which account for roughly 15 percent of all federal spending. Since Fiscal Year 2010, Congress has enacted \$95 billion in cuts from discretionary accounts, which has resulted in a 10-year savings of more than \$917 billion.

While these discretionary cuts have made substantial progress in reducing the deficit, no similar reductions in spending have been made to entitlement programs or tax earmarks and other spending through the tax code. Unfortunately, sequestration would just continue the process of discretionary spending reductions, which have already been substantially reduced, while essentially leaving all other spending—the real drivers of the deficit—on autopilot. This is the area of the budget that must be reformed in order to preserve and protect it for future generations. These programs are broke. Everyone is to blame, and therefore we all need to be part of the solution. Simply put, if we do nothing, within 25 years, every Social Security recipient, regardless of age, will face an across-the-board cut of 25 percent.

Fortunately, there are bipartisan solutions on the table proposed by your Simpson-Bowles Commission. One of the commission's suggestions to save Social Security was to gradually raise the full Social Security retirement age by one month every two years, to slowly raise the full retirement age from 67 to 69.

What 50-year-old in McLean wouldn't be willing to work just one more month to help ensure a sound program for future generations? And I know a 40-year-old in Winchester is willing to start planning now so that they can be prepared to make the commitment to work just six more months. And, since most 30-year-olds in Clarke County believe Social Security won't even exist when they're ready for retirement—I know they'd be willing to work 11 more months to ensure that they receive benefits. That's the same reason I believe parents in Manassas will work today to prepare their four-year-olds to retire at 69, instead of 67.

I have repeatedly advocated for this bipartisan Simpson-Bowles proposal, despite my misgivings with certain sections, because I believe it is the only proposal that truly can receive the bipartisan support and embrace by the American people. Large proposals of the magnitude that are necessary to address our debt must be bipartisan in order to receive support from the American people. For example, consider the national tone that erupted after your health care reform was signed into law on a party-line-vote. Imagine how different the discourse would be if this legislation would have incorporated minority views.

It has been frustrating that you have never fully embraced your own commission's recommendations. This commission was based on legislation introduced by Senators Conrad and Gregg, that, in turn, was based off of my bipartisan SAFE Commission Act, which I first introduced in 2006 during the Bush Administration, and since partnered with Democratic Representative Jim Cooper of Tennessee.

I agree with Alan Greenspan's analysis "one of the worst mistakes [you] ever made was not embracing the [Simpson Bowles] proposal right away." Your leadership would have made a difference. I still believe this proposal is the path forward. I will still advocate for many of the policies presented in this document, because it was a comprehensive approach that recognized that everyone, even the advocates of "political sacred cows," must be asked to contribute to deficit reduction efforts.

Today, I am offering a bipartisan amendment to H.R. 444, Require a PLAN Act. This amendment would require you to incorporate the Simpson Bowles recommendations into your budget submission to Congress. I am disappointed that this amendment is even necessary, as I would hope you would have done this on your own initiative. It is also equally troubling that, for the fourth time in five years, you have again failed to meet your statutory deadline for filing your annual budget request.

The threat of sequestration is already having an impact on our economy. The economy unexpectedly shrank in the fourth quarter for the first time since 2009, due in large part to reductions in federal defense spending. Contractors—not just the Boeings, Booz Allens and Lockheeds of the world, but the small, women- and minority-owned subcontractors—are already feeling the pinch.

In addition, federal agencies are already being forced to prepare for this uncertainty. For example, temporary workers are not being rehired, positions sit unfilled and federal employees face the threat of 22 days of furloughs. That's one day a week for the remainder of the fiscal year where they won't get paid.

FBI agents will be pulled out of the field off of active investigations. According to a recent Washington Post article, "New federal grants for medical research are being postponed, resulting in layoffs now and costly paperwork later. And military leaders, who are delaying training for active and reserve forces, are trying to negotiate millions of dollars in penalties that the Defense Department is incurring from canceled contracts."

These are the same federal employees who have already been asked to contribute \$103 billion to the deficit reduction efforts through your two-year pay freeze and decision to partially pay for a 10-month extension of a short-sighted payroll tax holiday by requiring new federal employees, and those with less than five years of credible experience, to spend the rest of their careers paying higher pension contributions.

Today, National Journal Daily reported that it appears that damning news articles may be the only hope to avert sequestration. This is not the way a great nation should act. I am willing to look at all options and find a solution—a solution that truly deals with entitlements and is a long term, not piecemeal, approach. Efficient contracts are not designed to be signed on two-month, six-month, or for that matter, one-year basis; they are multi-year endeavors.

Under the Constitution, there is only one person who is elected to serve all of the American people: the president. Unlike the Congress, which is elected just by one district or state, your office, as the chief executive, must strive to represent all Americans, including the parts of the country that will be devastated by the thoughtless cuts enacted through sequestration.

Yet over the last month, you have used your "bully pulpit" not to bring the American people and Congressional leadership together on a sequestration solution, but instead to start "national conversations" about guns and immigration. While there may be merit to addressing these issues, the looming sequestration deadline should make resolving this crisis the most important item on your agenda. But both your recent actions and your words do not represent the seriousness of the task at hand.

Mr. President, House Republicans are just a majority of the minority—we control one half of one of three branches of the government. Your leadership is needed. I have always strived to represent my constituents in an honest and open manner. Let's dispense

with the straw man arguments. We all bear responsibility for the situation before us, and thus must consider all options, even those that are not ideal. I know you appreciate the severity of the situation. I'm prepared to give full consideration should you propose a serious bipartisan solution.

I suggest you start with the recommendations of your own Simpson-Bowles Commission, which you have thus far failed to support. Its time has come and I hope you will embrace its bipartisan solutions and call on Congress to adopt it.

Best wishes.
Sincerely,

FRANK R. WOLF,
Member of Congress.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SCHRADER. Madam Chairman, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN.)

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Madam Chair, I thank my colleague, Mr. SCHRADER, and his colleagues for offering this amendment.

I support the overall framework of Simpson-Bowles. I've said that many times. If you look at the balance in Simpson-Bowles between the cuts and the revenue, it's something, I think, that is the model that we should be using in this body. And I do want to submit for the RECORD an analysis that was done by the Center For Budget Policy Priorities that shows exactly what that breakdown would be.

I don't support every single recommendation within Simpson-Bowles, but I think we have an obligation, if we don't like one of their cuts, to come up with an alternative cut. If we don't like their revenue, we should come up with alternative revenue.

But what the Simpson-Bowles proposal does is it creates a framework saying that we need to take a balanced approach to reducing our deficit.

I was listening to my friend, Mr. PRICE, explaining his opposition to this. He didn't want to impose requirements on the President; simply ask the President to consider these proposals. And as the President himself has said, he has incorporated many of the proposals from Simpson-Bowles into his own budget, the ones he submitted last year and the one that he will submit this year. So I support the framework, not every recommendation, but the overall framework.

SUMMARY OF UPDATED BOWLES-SIMPSON ESTIMATES

To assess Bowles-Simpson today so that policymakers can compare it with other plans, one must look at the Bowles-Simpson savings over 2013-2022, relative to a current policy baseline. One must also account for the \$1.5 trillion in discretionary spending cuts that policymakers have since enacted. When that is done, the results show that:

TABLE 1—SUMMARY OF ORIGINAL BOWLES-SIMPSON PLAN

	Total plan	Not yet enacted
Ten-year cumulative totals in trillions of dollars		
Revenue increases—	2.6–	2.6
Program cuts—	2.9–	1.4

TABLE 1—SUMMARY OF ORIGINAL BOWLES-SIMPSON PLAN—Continued

	Total plan	Not yet enacted
Interest savings—	0.8–	0.6
Total deficit reduction—	6.3–	4.6
Ratio, program cuts to revenue increases		
Not counting interest—	1.1 to 1.0–	0.5 to 1.0
Counting interest—	1.4 to 1.0–	0.8 to 1.0

Note: Covers 2013 through 2022; excludes Social Security solvency proposals; measured relative to current policy; may not add due to rounding.

Over 2013–2022, Bowles-Simpson called for \$6.3 trillion in deficit reduction—\$5.5 trillion in policy savings and about \$800 billion in in-

terest savings. (That figure excludes Bowles-Simpson’s Social Security solvency proposals, consistent with their presentation of the plan’s deficit reduction totals; see the box on page 2.)

The \$5.5 trillion in policy savings in the Bowles-Simpson plan consists of almost \$2.9 trillion in program cuts and almost \$2.6 trillion in revenue increases—that is, 53 percent from budget cuts and 47 percent from revenue increases, or almost a 1-to-1 ratio of program cuts to revenue increases.

This nearly 1-to-1 ratio does not include the interest savings. If one counted interest savings as a spending reduction, the ratio is 59 percent in spending cuts to 41 percent in

revenue increases, or a 1.4-to-1 ratio of program cuts to revenue increases.

Bowles-Simpson was typically described as having a 2-to-1 ratio, but that is because the co-chairs assumed the expiration of the upper-income tax cuts as part of their baseline and thus did not count the revenue savings in their ratio. They also estimated higher interest savings (which counted under their plan as a spending reduction) than our analysis does because the interest rates projected at that time were higher than interest rates now are projected to be.

Of the nearly \$2.9 trillion of program cuts in the Bowles-Simpson plan, about half—or just under \$1.5 trillion—have already been enacted. If one excludes the enacted savings:

TABLE 2—DEFICIT REDUCTION UNDER THE ORIGINAL BOWLES-SIMPSON PLAN (EXTENDED TO COVER 2013-2022; DOLLARS IN BILLIONS)

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	10-yr total
Revenue increases:											
Tax reform	20	40	80	90	105	120	150	180	215	250	1,250
Revenue increases built into baseline	49	62	89	99	110	121	130	138	148	157	1,103
Increase gas tax 15 cents	2	7	11	16	18	18	18	18	18	18	144
Chained CPI ^a : revenue effect	2	3	5	7	8	10	11	12	14	16	88
Subtotal	73	112	185	212	241	269	309	348	395	441	2,585
Mandatory health programs	19	31	33	37	43	49	58	65	70	75	480
Other mandatory programs/fees:											
Chained CPI ^a	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	55
Other mandatory programs/fees	10	13	18	22	25	29	32	36	38	40	263
Subtotal	11	15	21	26	30	35	39	44	47	50	318
Appropriated (discretionary) programs:											
Security	61	86	101	117	133	148	163	178	193	208	1,386
Non-Security	27	36	48	57	65	73	81	90	98	107	682
Subtotal	88	122	148	174	197	221	244	267	291	316	2,068
Total deficit reduction policies:											
Revenue increases	73	112	185	212	241	269	309	348	395	441	2,585
Program reductions	118	168	203	237	270	305	341	376	408	441	2,866
TOTAL	191	280	388	448	511	574	650	725	803	882	5,450
Resulting reductions in interest costs	1	3	6	17	38	72	107	144	187	234	807
Total: policies and interest savings	191	283	394	466	549	645	756	869	989	1,116	6,257
Addendum: Social Security solvency:											
Increase the “taxable maximum”	5	8	12	15	19	22	26	30	35	40	212
Chained CPI ^a	3	5	8	10	12	15	17	19	22	25	136
Benefit improvements	0	0	0	0	0	-5	-6	-5	-4	-3	-34
Subtotal	8	13	20	25	31	32	37	44	53	62	325
Resulting reductions in interest costs	0	0	0	1	2	4	6	8	11	14	45

May not add due to rounding. Sources: Moment of Truth Project, Updated Estimates of the Fiscal Commissions Proposal, June 29, 2011; author’s extension for 2022; adjustments for current policy revenue baseline and CBO’s 2010 discretionary baseline based on data from CBO and the Joint Committee on Taxation.

^aThe “chained CPI” refers to a proposal to alter the way the Consumer Price Index is measured; a number of analysts believe the proposal would measure inflation more accurately, slightly reducing the measure. Because the tax code, Social Security, and some other federal programs such as Supplemental Security Income are indexed to the CPI, the proposal would cut spending and raise revenues.

The Bowles-Simpson plan would achieve an additional \$4.6 trillion in deficit reduction over ten years. (This doesn’t include the small savings in the first ten years from the plan’s Social Security proposals.)

The majority of the remaining savings in the plan is on the revenue side: for every \$0.54 of additional spending cuts, there would be \$1.00 in new revenue under the Bowles-Simpson plan (or 35 percent budget cuts and 65 percent revenue increases), excluding interest savings.

If one counts interest savings as a spending reduction, then the ratio of the remaining savings would be 43 percent program reductions and 57 percent revenue increases, or \$0.76 of spending cuts for each \$1.00 of revenue raisers.

The figures in this summary are shown in Table 1.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Madam Chair, again, I think the intention of the amendment is sound. However, it’s important to appreciate that the Simpson-Bowles approach fails to address the primary driver of spending, and that’s health care. And maybe that was why the President rejected it. I don’t know.

□ 1020

But the fact of the matter is that the Simpson-Bowles approach leaves in place the President’s health care law with its \$1.7 trillion in higher spending, soon to be over \$2 trillion, and its trillion-plus dollars higher taxes. So I

think this amendment, again, ties the President unnecessarily and that it’s a step in the wrong direction. I would urge its defeat.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SCHRADER. Madam Chair, I yield myself the balance of my time.

I appreciate the discussion here. I hope that America would know this is a bipartisan amendment. America should be pleased that some Republicans and some Democrats are coming together to solve our country’s problems.

The good chairman from Georgia is unfortunately misinformed regarding Simpson-Bowles. It did include, of course, a great deal of discussion on health care and health care costs. The ACA, contrary to some misconceptions, actually saved over \$700 billion in taxpayer money over the long haul.

I think at this point in time, the President, whose own debt commission was Simpson-Bowles, would be pleased to have a little direction from the ultimate appropriating budget body, which is Congress, not the President. Give him some direction; enable his commission to guide us with that bipartisan balanced approach, including revenues, including through tax reform, making sure that our health care and safety net is there for our kids and

grandkids, as the gentleman from Virginia talked about.

This is a very important point in this Congress’ deliberations. We have to come together. I urge an “aye” vote on this amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Madam Chair, I commend the gentleman once again, but I would point out that there’s nothing in the underlying bill that precludes the President from using this as a model if that is what he so desires. But there isn’t any reason why we ought to constrain the President to hopefully bring to this Congress a budget that, for the first time in this administration, actually gets to balance. That’s what the underlying bill is all about. Mr. President, bring us a budget. Just tell us when it balances, because, oh, by the way, the last four budgets that you submitted have never gotten to balance.

I urge defeat of the amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. SCHRADER).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. SCHRADER. Madam Chair, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Oregon will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 3 OFFERED BY MR. FLEMING

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 3 printed in House Report 113-8.

Mr. FLEMING. Madam Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Section 3(b)(3) is amended by inserting after "result" the following: "(including an evaluation of duplicative agency functions and agency effectiveness, and proposals for consolidating duplicative functions and programs between agencies in the interests of cost-savings)".

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 48, the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. FLEMING) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Louisiana.

Mr. FLEMING. Madam Chairman, I rise today to offer an amendment to H.R. 444, the PLAN Act, introduced by my colleague, Dr. TOM PRICE.

Dr. PRICE's bill is straightforward: if the President's budget doesn't balance, tell us when it will and what policies he will use to get us there.

My amendment adds a requirement that the President's supplemental budget, as required by the PLAN Act, must include proposals to consolidate duplicative agency functions and programs.

Here's the good news: Reducing duplication in government is low-hanging fruit. There's bipartisan agreement on this. Even the President in his State of the Union address in 2011 talked about the desire to consolidate the different agencies that oversee salmon.

Now, it's true that the President does submit a document as part of the budget, called, Cuts, Consolidations, and Savings; but in last year's budget, these savings only amounted to \$24 billion, a tiny percentage, 2.2 percent, of our annual trillion-dollar shortfall. That is woefully inadequate.

My amendment would require the President to go back to the drawing board within the context of the PLAN Act, which asks the President to tell us when his budget will balance and how he will get us there.

We are now in receipt of two reports from the GAO that identify opportunities to reduce duplication and overlap in government programs, and we anticipate the third annual report to be released in just a few weeks. The first report identified 81 areas of duplication, and the executive branch and Congress responded with only limited action on many of those areas. The second report identified an additional 51 areas.

In addition, Senator TOM COBURN has produced a helpful report that points

out some very obvious ways we could consolidate government programs and reduce government spending.

Suggestions from both of these sources should be added to the President's proposals for cuts. Surely, we can come to some bipartisan agreement about cutting government programs that are duplicative, obsolete, or wasteful aspects.

Sometimes the cause of this is special interests: businesses or industry groups that are arguing for a particular program that benefits them, or a geographic area that benefits from a program that others can't take advantage of, or a group that is adept at leveraging identity politics to protect special preferences. Other times, Congress is its own worst enemy, bickering over jurisdiction and bringing goodies back home.

Regardless of where the problem is, we need to fix it. This is a start in the process, but unfortunately we can't actually force consolidations in this bill. I will be introducing legislation in the coming weeks to do just that: force the elimination or consolidation of duplicative agencies through a BRAC-like process that is fair and bipartisan.

The Realign and Eliminate Duplicative Unnecessary Costly Excess in Government Act, otherwise known as the REDUCE Government Act for short, creates a six-member, evenly split bipartisan commission selected by the congressional leadership and the President. The commission will use resources from GAO and standard program evaluation tools to come up with a list of duplicative, ineffective, and wasteful programs and a plan to consolidate or eliminate those programs. After submitting a list to the President, Congress will have 45 days to pass a resolution of disapproval. After that, the consolidation goes into effect.

This process mirrors the highly successful, nonpolitical Base Realignment and Closure process, otherwise known as BRAC, used to take politics out of the highly sensitive and politically charged military basing process. With clear, transparent criteria, a non-partisan agenda, and a streamlined process for action, the BRAC Commission has been able to do what Congress or the President has never been able to do before. Clearly, with our spending problem, we need a mechanism like this to set in motion the reduction in the growth of government.

In the meantime, I urge my colleagues to support my amendment and allow it to be debated in the full House. While I would hope the President would do this, we can't leave it to chance.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Madam Chairman, I ask unanimous consent to claim time in opposition, even though I will not ultimately oppose the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. Without objection, the gentleman from Maryland is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Madam Chairman, I support this amendment be-

cause this is something we all want to see happen and which the President himself has indicated he wants to see happen. In the last fiscal year budget, in fact, the President, through OMB, the Office of Management and Budget, submitted something called Cuts, Consolidations, and Savings to be considered by the Congress and the executive branch; and he also asked that legislation be submitted on his behalf to help give him more authority to reorganize some of these government agencies, which was introduced during the last Congress by Mr. BARROW, who may well intend to reintroduce that.

Madam Chairman, these are things I think we all would like to see, greater efficiencies that help save money in a smart way. The President has indicated not only his intention but specific proposals to do so, and so we do not object. In fact, I support the amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

□ 1030

Mr. FLEMING. I want to thank the gentleman from Maryland for agreeing with what is really common sense. We all, I think, want to squeeze out waste in government and certainly take away the duplication that's behind much of it.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. FLEMING).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 4 OFFERED BY MR. MESSER

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 4 printed in House Report 113-8.

Mr. MESSER. Madam Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

In section 3(b), strike "and" at the end of paragraph (3), strike the period at the end of paragraph (4) and insert "; and", and add at the end the following:

(5) an estimate of the cost per taxpayer of the annual deficit for each year in which the supplemental unified budget is projected to result in a deficit.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 48, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. MESSER) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Indiana.

Mr. MESSER. Madam Chairman, I rise today in support of the Require a PLAN Act because the American people deserve to know when or whether the budget proposed by the President would achieve balance and what policies are being pursued to require the Federal Government to live within its means.

My amendment today is based on a very simple principle—that each hard-working American taxpayer deserves to know how much the deficit costs

them every year. To achieve this goal, the amendment very simply will require the supplemental unified budget called for in the underlying bill to include the cost per taxpayer of the annual deficit for each year that budget is projected in deficit. This requirement would be a powerful reminder to the President and Congress that our decisions have real world consequences for hardworking taxpayers.

We've all heard the question asked, how much is a trillion dollars? It's very difficult to quantify. It's very difficult to bring it into a real world context. What this bill will do is allow us to do that for taxpayers.

Our constituents might be surprised by what they learn. According to the Internal Revenue Service, there were about 145 million tax-paying Americans last year. With a trillion-dollar budget deficit that we've had in recent years, that would calculate out to about \$6,896 per year per taxpayer to cover our existing deficit. The total tab for the past 4 years of \$1 trillion each year would be about \$27,500 a year. Back in the Sixth District of Indiana where I come from, that is a lot of money. I think we owe it to the taxpayers to let them know what we're doing here in Washington.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Madam Chairman, I ask unanimous consent to claim time in opposition even though I am not opposed to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. Without objection, the gentleman from Maryland is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. I think it is very useful to let everybody in the country know exactly what the debt and deficit will be on a per capita basis. We in Congress of course can do the math. I think it's no problem asking the President to run that calculation as well.

Again, I want to emphasize the fact that there's agreement on reducing the deficit; the real differences here are over how we do it. But regardless of how you want to do it, I think the gentleman has offered a useful amendment. The more information for the American people, the better, and we will not object and in fact support the amendment.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MESSER. I yield 1 minute to my good friend and classmate, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. COLLINS).

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Chair, I rise in strong support of this amendment because in the 60 seconds that I speak before this body, the Federal Government will spend \$7 million. Madam Chair, in the 60 seconds I speak before this body, the Federal Government will borrow \$3 million.

Madam Chair, I rise in support of this amendment because in Washington political will has replaced principled leadership, and our economy is paying the price.

These discussions over spending cuts and fiscal priorities can be difficult.

Telling the President that he has failed to lead can make my friends on the other side of the aisle uncomfortable, but we cannot let the emotion of the moment override the honesty of the moment.

Sustainable debt is a myth. The number of people in Federal programs has grown faster than the U.S. population, and continuing to grow our Federal debt is like driving with the emergency brake on—it will not get us where we want to go and do significant damage in the process.

The more government borrows, the more interest it pays. Last year, the U.S. spent \$220 billion in net interest on its debt, and this number will only continue to grow unless serious reforms are made.

This is a commonsense amendment that our constituents deserve to see passed. This amendment forces Washington to confront the very same reality that American taxpayers face every day: you cannot spend more than you earn. I support this amendment and the underlying bill, and thank the gentleman from Indiana and my colleague from Georgia for their leadership.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Madam Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MESSER. I want to thank the gentleman from Maryland for his statement in support of the bill. It's a commonsense provision, and I appreciate your support.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. MESSER).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 5 OFFERED BY MR. SCALISE

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 5 printed in House Report 113-8.

Mr. SCALISE. Madam Chair, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Section 3(b) is amended by striking "and" at the end of paragraph (3), by striking the period and inserting "; and" at the end of paragraph (4), and by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

(5) under a separate heading entitled "Direct Spending", which shall include a category for "Means-Tested Direct Spending" and a category for "Nonmeans-Tested Direct Spending" and sets forth—

(A) the average rate of growth for each category in the total amount of outlays during the 10-year period preceding the budget year;

(B) information on the budget proposals for reform of such programs;

(C) a description of programs which shall be considered means-tested direct spending and nonmeans-tested direct spending for purposes of this paragraph; and

(D) an annual estimate of the total amount of outlays for each such program for the period covered by the budget proposal.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 48, the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. SCALISE) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Louisiana.

Mr. SCALISE. Madam Chair, the amendment that I bring forward just puts some additional transparency into a piece of legislation that I strongly support that just requires the President to lay out a detailed plan of how his budget would balance.

What this amendment would do would be to specifically carve out direct spending. Direct spending, Madam Chair, represents more than 60 percent of all Federal expenditures. So more than 60 percent of our budget is direct spending, both means tested and non-means tested. All we ask for with this amendment is the transparency that as that supplemental budget is produced, that it also breaks out how means-tested spending and non-means-tested spending, number one, was averaged over the prior 10 years, but also, in this supplemental budget the President would lay out, what would happen to those direct spending programs over the course of the period that the President would lay out in that supplemental budget.

One other thing it does is it makes sure that if there are any reforms, just like in the House budget, if we lay out any reforms, those would have to be spelled out in the language of this amendment. So if any reforms to direct spending would be included in the President's supplemental budget, that those reforms would have to be spelled out in an actual text of that document.

This is something we already included in the House rules package. It's part of the House rules when a House budget is presented, so we felt like the American people deserve this kind of transparency, especially when you're talking about more than 60 percent of the budget. Let's just make sure it's laid out.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Madam Chairman, I ask unanimous consent to claim time in opposition even though I am not opposed to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. Without objection, the gentleman from Maryland is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Again, what this amendment does is ask the President, when he submits the budget, to provide certain information about mandatory spending and means-tested spending. In fact, the President already does this in his budget. I have in my hand, in fact, the budget for fiscal year 2013—that's the current fiscal year that we're in now—historical tables that were submitted by the President as part of that budget submission. The categories include mandatory spending, and within mandatory spending they break it down: Social Security deposit insurance, means-tested entitlements, and others. So this is information that the President already provides as part of the budget process. I'm happy to support him continuing to do that.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SCALISE. Madam Chair, at this time I'd like to yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. PRICE), the author of the underlying bill.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. I want to commend my colleague from Louisiana and the chair of the Republican Study Committee for bringing forth this amendment and supporting the underlying bill.

The amendment, as the gentleman from Maryland said, simply provides greater information, more transparency, more information from the President in his budget on the differences between the mandatory and the means-tested in the discretionary side of the budget.

It also, I think, is so important for the American people to gain as much information as possible as we move through this national debate, the national debate of whether or not it is appropriate for the President to bring a budget to Congress that in the past 4 years has never balanced.

The underlying bill, again, urges the President to bring a budget to the Congress that gets to balance and let's the American people know when it does. So I want to commend my colleague from Louisiana for his amendment and urge adoption of the amendment and the underlying bill.

□ 1040

Mr. SCALISE. Madam Chair, if I may inquire, how much time is remaining?

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Louisiana has 2½ minutes remaining. The gentleman from Maryland has 4¼ minutes remaining.

Mr. SCALISE. At this time, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. RADEL).

Mr. RADEL. I'd like to thank the gentleman from Louisiana for his hard work.

I would like to take a moment to speak, in fact, in support of the Scalise amendment. In doing so, there's a much bigger picture here, a bigger picture that, quite frankly, isn't even being talked about when it comes to the challenges our country faces today. Our problems go beyond Republican and beyond Democrat. Our problems are numbers, debt and deficits that we cannot even begin to wrap our arms around.

So what we must do as a country and beyond party lines is work together as Americans. Today I ask for your support of this amendment to demand accountability and transparency from Washington, accountability when it comes to your money—not tax dollars, not stimulus dollars—your money.

We often hear from the President that we cannot cut, cut, cut, and I agree. This is not about cutting. This is about saving. This is about saving Social Security, saving Medicare, saving our economy and ultimately our government. In the big picture, we must demand that we, as elected officials and servants of the people, are

held accountable. Both the Scalise amendment and the Require a PLAN Act do just that.

Mr. SCALISE. At this time, I would like to yield 1½ minutes to the Republican whip from Kendall, California (Mr. MCCARTHY).

Mr. MCCARTHY. Madam Chair, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I rise in support of the amendment. This amendment will help bring transparency and accountability back to the budget process, something that has been sorely lacking under this President.

Let's just look at the facts:

The last budgets from this President that were voted on have not received one vote in support from the House or the Senate—that's on the Democrat side nor the Republican side;

Every year this President has been in office, he's had deficits of \$1 trillion, adding \$6 trillion to the debt;

Out of the last five budgets, four of them have been late;

The President has never submitted a budget to this House or the other that balances.

That is a record of failure that is distressing to this House and to the American people. We deserve better.

It's unfortunate that this House has to pass bills to get responsible budgeting. That's why I support this amendment and the underlying bill.

Mr. SCALISE. Madam Chair, I'm prepared to close.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Madam Chairman, I will not use all the time. As I said, what this amendment requests is information that, in fact, the President already provides as part of the budget submission. I indicated I have in my hand that information from the last fiscal year's budget. I do think that in pursuit of transparency it's important to point out that when the President was first sworn in his first term, before he put his hand on the Bible, he faced a projected deficit of well over \$1 trillion—a record deficit at that time.

As we saw from the Congressional Budget Office in their report just the other day, that deficit is now coming down. As the economy has improved and as the President's policies have begun to take shape, that deficit is on its way down. Is it far enough down? No. And there's a legitimate debate as to the best way to get there, but as part of that debate, certainly the more information, the better. And as I indicated, this information that is being requested is, in fact, already provided to the Congress. So we will not oppose it. In fact, I would support the amendment.

I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. FATTAH).

Mr. FATTAH. I rise in support of this amendment.

As our ranking member has said, this information is already provided. But I also rise in support of the Simpson-Bowles proposal. I voted for it on the

floor of the House, one of only three dozen who support it, but hopefully many more will support it.

We need to get our fiscal house in order. The majority party has this kind of selective amnesia, however, about this. When the President was sworn in, we were \$11 trillion in debt at that moment. We had a \$1 trillion deficit for that fiscal year the day he was sworn in. Your party seems to run away from any responsibility for this.

And then you passed a budget the last couple years that doesn't balance until 40 years from now, and now this rush to the floor that we must have balance, we must have transparency. But that's okay. Whatever brings you to the party. It's like in my church. If you come and you find a belief, a shared belief that a fellowship of faith has, that's great.

So if you're joining this party that we want to get our fiscal house in order and that deficits do matter and that the debt matters, then we welcome that. If this is a political charade, then you should be concerned about your credibility.

Mr. SCALISE. Madam Chair, clearly, if you look at what happened, we don't have the numbers from the President because he missed his statutory deadline, so we're hoping that he at least puts forth a budget. It would be ideal if he puts forth a budget that shows balance in some period of time, as we've done; but at the same time, we also expect transparency so that the American taxpayers can see where more than 60 percent of the budget is spent.

So I urge adoption of this amendment and the underlying bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. SCALISE).

The amendment was agreed to.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Madam Chair, I move that the Committee do now rise.

The motion was agreed to.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. COLLINS of Georgia) having assumed the chair, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Acting Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 444) to require that, if the President's fiscal year 2014 budget does not achieve balance in a fiscal year covered by such budget, the President shall submit a supplemental unified budget by April 1, 2013, which identifies a fiscal year in which balance is achieved, and for other purposes, had come to no resolution thereon.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess for a period of less than 15 minutes.