

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION ON THE BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2018

SPEECH OF

HON. DANNY K. DAVIS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 4, 2017

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union had under consideration the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 71) establishing the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2018 and setting forth the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2019 through 2027:

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Chair, I include in the RECORD letters from: NAACP, National Committee to Preserve Social Security & Medicare, NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice, and the National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education (NAFEO).

WASHINGTON BUREAU—NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE,

Washington, DC, October 2, 2017.

Re NAACP strong support for the Congressional Black Caucus alternative budget proposal.

MEMBERS,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: On behalf of the NAACP, our nation's oldest, largest and most widely-recognized grassroots-based civil rights organization, I strongly urge you to support the alternative budget proposal as put forth by the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) later this week as you consider the budget resolutions for FY 2018. The CBC Alternative Budget responsibly reduces the deficit and at the same time alleviates harm which has been inflicted by the recent austerity measures in a responsible and fiscally sound manner. Furthermore, it proposes significant investments to accelerate our economic recovery and ensures that our recovery is felt in every community, every state and every Congressional District in America.

A nation's budget is perhaps the best reflection of the priorities, moral values and the beliefs of its citizens. Our country, for all its assets and riches is facing some crucial problems. No community is free from challenges, including hunger, homelessness, unemployment, substandard education, crime, a crumbling infrastructure, and home foreclosures. Furthermore, there can be little debate that racial and ethnic minority Americans tend to be disproportionately affected by these challenges more than any other group.

The federal budget cannot cure every dilemma, but it can provide the American people with the tools to begin to address many of these ills. The CBC budget alternative preserves crucial social safety nets, including Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, SNAP and TANF and provides money for job creating programs, health care, and veterans programs to help our returning soldiers as they reintegrate themselves and their families into American life. At the same time, the CBC budget alternative closes tax loop-

holes and generates new income from those who can most afford to pay, thereby reducing the deficit by \$2.72 trillion over the next decade.

Clearly, the CBC Budget alternative merits your serious consideration and I hope that after a careful review you will agree that it sets our nation on the proper course and establishes our priorities as they should be. Thank you in advance for your attention to the NAACP position. Should you have any questions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

HILARY O. SHELTON,
Director, NAACP
Washington Bureau
& Senior Vice President for Advocacy
and Policy.

NATIONAL COMMITTEE TO PRESERVE
SOCIAL SECURITY & MEDICARE,
October 4, 2017.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: On behalf of the millions of members and supporters of the National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare, I urge you to oppose H. Con. Res. 71, the House Fiscal Year 2018 Budget Resolution and the Republican Study Committee budget. Instead, I ask you to support the Democratic Caucus, Congressional Progressive Caucus and Congressional Black Caucus budgets.

OPPOSE H. CON. RES. 71, THE HOUSE FISCAL
YEAR 2018 BUDGET RESOLUTION

The committee-passed budget resolution would slash funding to Medicare and Medicaid, repeal the Affordable Care Act and make it easier for Congress to cut Social Security—all to pay for massive tax cuts for the very wealthy and profitable corporations.

The House budget calls for fast track procedures designed to ram Social Security benefit cuts through Congress without public scrutiny. This is an undemocratic end run to enact widely unpopular proposals.

Equally unpopular are proposals in the budget resolution to turn Medicare into a voucher or coupon program, raise the Medicare eligibility age to 67 and make other modifications to the program that would increase beneficiary out-of-pocket costs. These harmful changes would cut Medicare by nearly \$500 billion over ten years.

These vouchers/coupons might not be enough to keep up with health care inflation and could force seniors to pay more for less coverage. Less coverage will mean higher out-of-pocket costs that most seniors cannot afford to pay—particularly when half of them have incomes less than \$26,200 a year. Under coupon care, private insurers will design their health plans to attract younger and healthier beneficiaries. This will drive up the costs of traditional Medicare and force seniors into private plans that make it hard for them to choose their own doctors.

The budget resolution's plan to raise the Medicare eligibility age is a benefit cut. Although this proposal would save money for the federal government, it would increase system-wide health spending by boosting costs for everyone else, including 65 and 66 years olds who would have to buy private insurance, which—unlike Medicare—can be age rated.

H. Con. Res. 71 assumes savings from redesigning the Medicare benefit by combining the Part A and Part B deductibles and making changes to supplemental insurance (Medigap) policies, changes that would likely increase costs for people with Medigap policies. The measure would also expand income-related premiums under Medicare Parts B and D until 25 percent of beneficiaries are subject to these premiums. A Kaiser Family Foundation study found that this proposal would affect individuals with incomes equivalent to \$45,600 for an individual and \$91,300 for a couple in 2013.

The budget resolution ends the commitment Medicaid provides by turning it into block grants subject to per capita caps that will not grow with the needs of the population. You and your colleagues need only look at what is happening in Puerto Rico to see how their block granted Medicaid program has compromised the delivery of health care in an emergency.

Middle class Americans often rely on Medicaid for long-term services and supports when they exhaust their savings. Nearly two-thirds of all nursing home residents' care is financed in part by Medicaid. In addition, Medicaid provides home and community-based services that allow seniors to stay in their homes. There is no way to cut Medicaid by a trillion dollars without limiting seniors' access to long term care services.

SUPPORT THE DEMOCRATIC CAUCUS, CONGRESSIONAL PROGRESSIVE CAUCUS AND CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS BUDGETS

In sharp contrast to the committee-passed budget resolution are the alternative budgets to be offered as substitute amendments by the Democratic Caucus, Congressional Progressive Caucus (CPC) and Congressional Black Caucus (CBC). The National Committee supports these budgets because they address the country's economic concerns without asking vulnerable Americans who depend on Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid to contribute significantly more than the wealthiest one percent.

The Democratic Caucus budget includes provisions requiring drug manufacturers to provide rebates for drugs used by those dually eligible for Medicare and Medicaid and builds on the improved Medicare efficiencies included in the Affordable Care Act (ACA). Similarly, the Progressive Caucus budget would allow Medicare to negotiate prescription drug prices and would eliminate a loophole some use to avoid paying their share of Medicare payroll taxes. The Democratic, Progressive and Black Caucuses' budgets continue the investment made in the ACA to expand Medicaid in the states, helping people with modest incomes purchase health insurance.

The National Committee commends the Progressive Caucus for proposing to significantly strengthen Social Security's financial condition by raising the payroll tax cap on wages. We also support the CBC and CPC plan that helps protect seniors against the disproportionate amount they spend on health care by using a more accurate Consumer Price Index to set Social Security cost-of-living adjustments (COLA). In addition, we endorse the CPC proposal to offer Social Security credits to caregivers of children and elderly family members.

● This “bullet” symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

OPPOSE THE REPUBLICAN STUDY COMMITTEE BUDGET

Conversely, we oppose the Republican Study Committee (RSC) budget's proposal to adopt the "chained" CPI to calculate COLAs. The chained CPI would cut projected benefits for the oldest and most vulnerable Americans who would be least able to afford it. We also oppose plans in the RSC substitute to increase the Medicare eligibility age and the Social Security full retirement age to 69. Contrary to popular belief, not everyone is living longer or is able to work into their 70s. For example, a 2015 study by the National Academy of Sciences found that for men born in 1960, those in the top income quintile could expect to live 12.7 years longer than men in the bottom income quintile. But even for Americans who can work longer, raising the Medicare eligibility age and Social Security retirement age are benefit cuts.

Like H. Con. Res. 71, the RSC budget would repeal the ACA and increase beneficiary out-of-pocket costs by privatizing Medicare, restructuring the program and expanding income-related premiums.

With so many major challenges facing our country, why do the authors of the House budget resolution and the RSC budget insist on fixing what is not broken? The answer is simple. They need to cut working and middle-class programs to pay for tax cuts for the wealthy and profitable corporations.

That's why we urge all Representatives to oppose these "Robin Hood-in-Reverse" budgets and instead protect the retirement and health security commitments made to generations of Americans by supporting the Democratic Caucus, CPC and CBC budget alternatives.

Sincerely,

MAX RICHTMAN,
President and CEO.

—
NETWORK LOBBY FOR
CATHOLIC SOCIAL JUSTICE,
Washington, DC.

STATEMENT OF SUPPORT FOR THE CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS FY2018 ALTERNATIVE BUDGET

NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice strongly supports the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) FY 2018 Alternative Budget. This faithful budget prioritizes the needs of our country's most vulnerable, protects vital safety net programs and closes tax loopholes for the wealthy who intentionally avoid "paying unto Caesar what is Caesar's." (Matthew 22:21)

The CBC Budget Alternative reflects its commitment to investing in programs and policies that will support working Americans and help our nation prosper. The CBC budget rightly begins with revenue, ensuring support for programs necessary for the long-term growth and development of our nation. NETWORK continuously states that ALL, especially the wealthiest and corporations must provide their fair share of support for our nation. "... from the one to whom much has been entrusted, even more will be demanded." (Luke 12:48)

Much of our national infrastructure is outdated and dilapidated. Roads are crumbling; hundreds of bridges have been designated as unsafe. This budget invests in these and other public structures. It also invests in housing for all levels of low-wage workers through investments in programs such as Public Housing Recapitalization and the national Housing Trust Fund. These would be decimated by the cuts proposed in the Republican Budget. NETWORK sees housing as a priority for mending the gaps in our society. Pope Francis, when addressing Congress in September, 2015 said: "We can find no so-

cial or moral justification, no justification, no justification whatsoever, for lack of housing."

Despite a lack of support from the public, Republicans in Congress continue their attacks on the Affordable Care Act. The Congressional Black Caucus's move to protect and strengthen the Affordable Care Act and ensure universal health care for all is in line with NETWORK's advocacy for quality, affordable, accessible healthcare. We know it is especially crucial to eliminate our nation's troubling racial and economic disparities in healthcare, which is a problem being addressed by the CBC Budget's healthcare proposals.

The Congressional Black Caucus budget protects social safety net programs, which NETWORK knows are essential to supporting families and communities. For both the CBC and NETWORK, ensuring the health of programs such as nutrition assistance, school meals, affordable child care, and more are critical. We strongly oppose putting the reduction or eliminations of safety net programs, SNAP in particular, on the chopping block as the Republican budget does.

One expense pushing both young adults and elders into poverty is the costs of college and repayment of college loans. Education is so necessary for young people, and for all who are retraining to meet the demands of our changing workforce. We strongly support the CBC budget's investment in education for the next generation, a stark contrast to the Republican budget which guts the Pell Grant program and eliminates many job-training programs. Changes to Pell Grants and job-training programs make it difficult for people to develop the skills to contribute to society to their full potential.

The tax credits most effective in helping low- and middle-wage households move out of poverty are the refundable Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and the Child Tax Credits (CTC). Working families deserve to live in dignity! These tax credits are minimal compared to the tax benefits for the wealthiest households and corporations which would balloon in the Republican budget. It is unacceptable to provide further gains to those who are already receiving the greatest "wealthy benefits" through existing tax breaks.

The CBC budget proposes beneficial improvements to retirement security. Unfortunately, Republican leaders do not agree and one of the mandatory programs at risk in the Republican budget is Social Security. Social Security is a program with obvious and just means of being strengthened. Lifting the ceiling on income subject to the employment tax by a few thousand dollars would keep Social Security viable indefinitely. Using the Consumer Price Index for the Elderly (CPI-E) would also create a more just cost-of-living for seniors, as it takes into account the types of expenses the elderly face.

The Congressional Black Caucus Budget is a morally and fiscally responsible alternative to the Republican Budget. The CBC budget provides necessary expenditures and revenues, while reducing the deficit by approximately \$2.5 trillion over 10 years. NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Teaching is proud to support it.

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NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR EQUAL
OPPORTUNITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION,
Washington, DC, October 4, 2017.

Re Congressional Black Caucus Alternative
Budget for Fiscal Year 2018

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: I am writing as the CEO of the National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education (NAFEO), the only 501(c)(3), tax exempt membership association representing the nation's His-

torically Black Universities (HBCUs) and emerging Predominantly Black Institutions (PBIs) and the 700,000 student enrollees, 72,000 faculty, and roughly 7 million alumni associated with these institutions. Today, NAFEO represents 106 public and private HBCUs and 50 PBIs in 35 states, the District of Columbia and U.S. Virgin Islands. I am writing in support of the Congressional Black Caucus Alternative Budget for Fiscal Year 2018 ("CBC Budget"). The CBC Budget calls for fiscally sound and morally conscientious revenue and savings, new investments, and net deficit reduction. We urge you to support the CBC Budget which recommends a fair tax code that will allow Congress to reinvest in communities, such as infrastructure and school modernization, energy infrastructure and broadband access, adult and youth job programs, neighborhood revitalization, and a package that protects the safety net and helps to eradicate poverty. Also, the CBC Budget includes aid for those areas ravaged by the recent Hurricanes. NAFEO supports the entire budget, and we highlight certain sections below:

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

NAFEO supports the CBC Budget recommendations to increase access to high quality education and make college more affordable. NAFEO, the only membership association of its kind, was founded by the presidents and chancellors of HBCUs and PBIs to represent the issues and interests of these richly diverse public, private and land-grant, two- and four-year, graduate and professional, historically and predominantly black colleges and universities. The organization provides an international voice for the nation's HBCUs and other equal educational opportunity institutions; advocates for policies, programs and practices to preserve and enhance HBCUs; and increases the active participation of underrepresented minorities in higher education and in the formulation and implementation of policies and programs in American higher education. The CBC Budget would fully fund the Every Student Succeeds Act, and the 2015 reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, and invest in increasing access to higher education and HBCUs. It would further provide affordable pathways for students, by providing grants, reducing interest rates, and increasing Pell Grant awards.

INFRASTRUCTURE AND COMMUNIVERSITIES

NAFEO supports the CBC Budget recommendations to ensure targeted investments for our most vulnerable communities. NAFEO endorses the CBC Budget recommendation to rebuild our nation's infrastructure and reinvest in our communities. NAFEO supports a \$1 trillion infrastructure rebuilding proposal, especially one that places HBCUs at its epicenter, because of their unique strategic locations, mostly in the areas in which the roads, bridges, waterways, airports and other infrastructure serve as the gateways to American commerce, and because HBCUs are graduating disproportionate percentages of the growing populations in America who are receiving degrees in the sciences, technology, engineering, mathematics, architecture, urban and rural planning, and other critical education and training required to improve our infrastructure. HBCUs also possess faculty, staff, students, goods, services, and promising practices, position them well to drive the new infrastructure initiative, the revitalizing of urban and rural America, the economic stimulus and STEAM agendas. Indeed, some HBCUs are serving as "Communiversities"—the epicenters for the revitalization of urban

and rural America for shoring up infrastructures; energizing communities; seeding intellectual, scientific, technological, and economic capital; and ensuring healthy, sustainable, communities.

HURRICANE SUPPORT

NAFEO supports the CBC Budget recommendation to provide a \$200 billion down payment to aid victims of recent hurricanes. As noted above, NAFEO represents 106 HBCUs including the University of the Virgin Islands ("UVI"). The UVI President, Dr. David Hall, has shared that the University has endured tremendous challenges associated with the recent hurricanes, and is in dire need of operating funds. Dr. Hall writes "Due to the problems the Territory is facing as a result of the two [now three] hurricanes, and their financial impact, the monthly allotments to the University [have] not been received. We receive approximately \$2.6 million each month from the local government and without those funds we will cease to operate. We are resuming classes on October 9th and the University will need to pay its employees and address other critical needs. Federal funding specifically earmarked to the University to operate would be extremely helpful and valuable."

Representative, we need your leadership to ensure that our nation's budget reflects our priorities and especially the needs of our students. The CBC Budget focuses on meeting the needs of our nation. We look forward to working with members of Congress to advance a budget that reflective of what we need and deserve.

Sincerely,

LEZLI BASKERVILLE,
President & CEO.

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION ON
THE BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR
2018

SPEECH OF

HON. ELIJAH E. CUMMINGS
OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 4, 2017

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union had under consideration the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 71) establishing the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2018 and setting forth the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2019 through 2027:

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Chair, as the Ranking Member of the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, I strongly oppose House Concurrent Resolution 71.

This Budget Resolution would direct the Oversight Committee to identify a minimum of \$32 billion in savings over ten years.

Only two of the other 11 authorizing committees would be instructed to make more drastic cuts to federal programs—the Ways and Means Committee would have to identify at least \$52 billion and the Judiciary Committee would have to identify at least \$45 billion in cuts.

Once again, House Republicans are targeting middle class civil service workers and their pensions for massive reductions.

The Republican Budget would require federal workers to contribute significantly more to their pension plans than they do now.

It would also end the retirement supplement for employees like law enforcement officers

who are required by law to retire before reaching eligibility age for Social Security benefits.

It would also eliminate pensions altogether for new hires.

This Budget Resolution would slash the federal workforce by 10 percent through attrition in certain agencies by limiting agencies to one new hire for every three employees who leave.

I am utterly dismayed at the relentless Republican attacks on middle class federal workers without any real consideration of what they do every single day for the American people.

Over the past several years, Republicans in Congress have cut federal employee compensation and retirement benefits for a total of nearly \$200 billion in order to pay for deficit reduction and other government programs.

The argument that federal workers must sacrifice for the good of the country might have made some sense when the country was struggling during the Great Recession, and they did sacrifice.

But it makes much less sense now that our economy is recovering and the wage gains made by private sector workers are far outstripping those of workers who commit their lives to public service.

The argument that federal workers must be continually forced to sacrifice for deficit reduction also loses its strength when House Republicans are trying to give tax cuts to the wealthy without paying for it.

The Republican tax package would add \$2.4 trillion to the deficit over 10 years, and 80 percent of tax cuts would benefit the top 1 percent of Americans, who earn at least \$900,000.

While the wealthiest in our country would receive the vast majority of tax cuts, one third of middle class families making between \$50,000 and \$150,000 would see their taxes increase.

Many of these middle class families are federal workers who dedicate their lives to serving the American people.

It is unfair and uncompassionate to treat our civil servants in this way.

These are the men and women who aided in the rescue and recovery efforts as Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria tore through Texas, Louisiana, the Southeast, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands.

More than 32,000 federal employees were involved in helping families trapped in the storms.

They include: disaster response teams from the Federal Emergency Management Agency; U.S. Army Corps of Engineers who provided temporary power and roofing, debris removal, and infrastructure assessment; National Guard soldiers and airmen who delivered food and water to survivors and cleared debris to open roads; Department of Energy personnel who ensured that fuel was available in impacted areas; Public Health Service officers who provided healthcare, including dialysis services to those in need; Members of the U.S. Coast Guard who helped ensure the delivery of relief supplies; and Agriculture Department employees who provided food to schools, shelters, and disaster organizations.

Rather than targeting and penalizing these brave and selfless public servants, Congress must do a better job at showing how much we appreciate their efforts.

I urge my colleagues to vote against House Concurrent Resolution 71.

HONORING BOULTER INDUSTRIAL CONTRACTORS

HON. LOUISE McINTOSH SLAUGHTER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 6, 2017

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable achievement—the 125th anniversary of Boulter Industrial Contractors located in Webster, New York. Founded in 1892 by Thomas Boulter, the company started by delivering coal and ice by horse drawn wagons and is now Western New York's premier mover of heavy machinery for manufacturing and infrastructure projects. Even though decades have passed since those starting days, the company still displays their original wagons in remarkable condition as a reminder of how far they have come.

The growth of Boulter Industrial Contractors as a family-run business is a true success story in American entrepreneurship. Under the leadership of President and CEO William S. Boulter, a fifth-generation member of the Boulter family, and their hard-working employees the company is proudly carrying on Thomas Boulter's legacy. Congress should never lose sight of companies like this. That's why a flag that has flown over the U.S. Capitol flies over Boulter today. I congratulate the Boulter family and its employees, several of which are veterans.

HONORING THE SERVICE OF
RACHELLE DEANNE O'NEIL

HON. JOHN LEWIS

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 6, 2017

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Ms. Rachelle O'Neil, who served as a constituent services representative in my District Office for 15 years.

A Houston native who is proud of her Ragin'-Cajun roots, Rachelle is one of eight children born to the late Audrey Ann Colbert-O'Neil and George O'Neil, Sr. Her loving parents instilled a passion for education that inspires Ms. O'Neil to this day. In fact, Mr. Speaker, she recently graduated magna cum laude with master's degree in public administration from the University of Texas at Arlington.

While earning undergraduate degrees from the University of Houston in psychology and political science, Ms. O'Neil won the Mickey Leland Congressional Internship opportunity, which brought her to the U.S. Capitol where she worked in former Representative Carrie P. Meek's (D-FL) congressional office. The experience, which included meeting President Bill Clinton, cemented her passion in working on the behalf of the American people.

Within a few years of relocating to Atlanta, Ms. O'Neil joined my congressional staff, and Mr. Speaker, please trust me when I say that she hit the ground running. Rachelle assists constituents with judiciary, education, health, Social Security, child welfare, and transportation matters, and she is a tireless advocate for women and girls. Mr. Speaker, few people can match her passionate, fierce pursuit of justice and equity.