

Furthermore, we need to bring to the floor a vote on comprehensive background check legislation that includes closing the gun show loophole and individual internet sale loophole. There is overwhelming support in the public and this Congress for those actions.

I would like to see what the investigation reveals and whether a suppressor would have allowed this monster to create more carnage. However, we do know he used something called a bump stock, which I never heard of before.

Anything that converts a semiautomatic weapon into something that is virtually a fully automatic weapon, which is outlawed, should not be sold. The bump stocks and any other devices like that should be banned.

#### CRITICAL NEED TO FUND CHILDREN'S HEALTH INSURANCE PROGRAM

(Mr. CARBAJAL asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CARBAJAL. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in disbelief that this Congress has shamefully allowed the Children's Health Insurance Program, CHIP, to expire earlier this week. CHIP provides healthcare to 8.9 million low-income children in our country and to over 2 million children in my home State of California.

My Republican colleagues have spent all their time and energy this year fighting to repeal healthcare for millions of Americans covered by the Affordable Care Act, and now they have failed to protect healthcare for our country's children.

If we do not act quickly, it could soon lead to States not enrolling children and potentially even denying them coverage altogether due to the lack of funding.

It is critical that we fund the CHIP program without delay and provide certainty to these families that they will not lose their health coverage because of this irresponsible and derelict congressional inaction.

□ 1230

#### PROTECT WOMEN'S HEALTH AND SUPPORT THE CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHT TO CHOOSE

(Mr. BROWN of Maryland asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BROWN of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, 3 days after Congress allowed the Children's Health Insurance Program to expire, this House once again passed a bill that restricts women's health and reproductive rights.

This should not be the time to prioritize politics. Women should be able to make their own choices about their bodies and their healthcare.

Over the past 40 years, the Supreme Court has affirmed a woman's constitu-

tional right to privacy, including the right to choose.

Not only is the 20-week ban imposed by this Congress not based on accepted science, but this ban disregards the role doctors play in making health decisions.

In States that have already passed this ban, young people, women of color, low-income women, and immigrant women are the ones who are most impacted by the ban.

If we care about women's health, we should work to reduce unintended pregnancies, expand access to contraception, and support maternal and children's health. Instead, the majority is slashing Medicaid, attacking Planned Parenthood, and passing bans.

Not me. I will remain committed to protecting women's health and supporting the constitutional right to choose.

#### PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H. CON. RES. 71, CONCURRENT RESOLUTION ON THE BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2018

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 553 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 553

*Resolved*, That at any time after adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of 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. The first reading of the concurrent resolution shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the concurrent resolution are waived. General debate shall not exceed four hours, with three hours of general debate confined to the congressional budget equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Budget and one hour of general debate on the subject of economic goals and policies equally divided and controlled by Representative Tiberi of Ohio and Representative Carolyn Maloney of New York or their respective designees. After general debate the concurrent resolution shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. The concurrent resolution shall be considered as read. No amendment shall be in order except those printed in the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, and shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent. All points of order against such amendments are waived except that the adoption of an amendment in the nature of a substitute shall constitute the conclusion of consideration of the concurrent resolution for amendment. After the conclusion of consideration of the concurrent resolution for amendment and a final period of general debate, which shall not exceed 10 minutes equally divided and con-

trolled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Budget, the Committee shall rise and report the concurrent resolution to the House with such amendment as may have been adopted. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the concurrent resolution and amendments thereto to adoption without intervening motion except amendments offered by the chair of the Committee on the Budget pursuant to section 305(a)(5) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 to achieve mathematical consistency. The concurrent resolution shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question of its adoption.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Georgia is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all of my colleagues may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Georgia?

There was no objection.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, it is going to be a great day. I don't know how your Wednesday has gotten started, but we are now in the throes of budget day.

Budget day only happens on the floor of this House once a year, and it is one of those times where I would tell you the House operates as every man, woman, and child across this country believes the House should operate every day.

I have the great honor as a member of the Rules Committee and as a member of the Budget Committee of bringing this structured rule to the floor today.

Mr. Speaker, H. Con. Res. 71, the rule that we will be debating for the next hour, makes in order every single budget substitute that was offered in the Rules Committee. Now, let me tell you what that means in practical terms.

Over the next 2 days, we are going to hear visions laid out for what the American government should spend, what American policies should look like, what the Federal budget should include.

Over the next 2 days, we are going to hear visions laid out from every single Member or group in this institution that cared enough about this process to craft a budget of their own.

Mr. Speaker, I serve in the Republican Study Committee. I was once chairman of the Budget and Spending Task Force on the Republican Study Committee. I had the honor of crafting a substitute budget to bring to the floor to offer for my colleagues' consideration.

Over the next 2 days, any Member who has a voice that needs to be heard

has had the opportunity. We put out the call last week. My friend from Massachusetts and I, we sit on the Rules Committee, Mr. Speaker. We send out the call to the membership in advance to say this is what we expect to happen in the Rules Committee, this is what we are going to be considering in the Rules Committee. We sent out the call for any Member of this House to craft their substitute amendment, and we received four.

We received one from the Congressional Black Caucus, we received one from the Progressive Caucus, we received one from the Republican Study Committee, and we received one from the Democrats on the Budget Committee. Every single one of those has been made in order by the rule that I will ask my colleagues to support today.

We are going to debate those. We are going to vote on those each individually, allowing everybody to have their say. That budget that this House ultimately agrees on collectively, collaboratively after these days of debate, we will then send to the United States Senate for its consideration.

Mr. Speaker, they say that budgets are a reflection of values. I believe that to be true. We are going to have budgets on the floor of the House to consider that cut taxes, budgets that believe that the economy has not grown to its full potential, budgets that believe that the American workforce participation rate is still at historically low levels. We have to get men and women back into the workforce. We have to reward that dignity of work. We have budgets that are going to cut taxes in an effort to stimulate that job growth across this land.

We have other budgets that are concerned that we are not bringing enough revenue into the government coffers. It is true, Mr. Speaker. I know you are thinking it. We are bringing in more tax revenue today than we have ever brought in in the history of the United States of America. That is true, but we are still running budget deficits. So we will consider those budgets today that don't necessarily believe that spending is the problem; they think it is tax collection that is the problem.

We will consider budgets that raise taxes by about \$2 trillion. We will consider other budgets that raise taxes by about \$4 trillion. Mr. Speaker, I think we will even consider budgets that raise taxes by \$9 trillion.

Mr. Speaker, there are only two things that can happen in this institution. We either have to raise more revenue, or we have to cut spending, or we have to mortgage our children's future. Three things: raise taxes, cut spending, mortgage our children's future.

Over the next 2 days, we are going to have that debate and we are going to have that discussion.

I know where my constituency lands, Mr. Speaker. There are tough decisions that have to be made, and they believe they sent men and women to Congress

to help make those tough decisions. We sit on the Budget Committee. That is what we do.

If you have not gotten a chance to work with her this season, Mr. Speaker, Chairwoman DIANE BLACK on the House Budget Committee, if there is a more patient and more persistent Member of this body, I don't know who that would be. She has worked tirelessly to move this process along, to get us to this point where we are today, trying to bring people together around a unified vision of what we can do and what we should do not just as an institution, but as a nation.

I expect we will have some disagreements over the next 2 days, Mr. Speaker. It won't surprise me at all. In fact, I think this institution is characterized by the things that we disagree about. Certainly that is what the media would like to focus on. But at the end of this process, what will have to be said is that we have considered every idea, that we have considered every point of view, that we have made room for every voice, and that we have now come together on a common pathway forward. That is what is ahead of us, Mr. Speaker, if we support this rule that we are debating now.

Again, I urge my colleagues to support this rule. I hope you will find that budget that meets your constituency's needs, support that underlying budget, and then let's move a budget to the United States Senate and speak with one voice for the American people.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume, and I thank the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. WOODALL) for yielding me the customary 30 minutes.

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I obviously rise in strong opposition to this rule. This can be a frustrating place. So frustrating, that sometimes I want to tear the remaining two strands of hair I have on my head out, because what we do here, in my opinion, is not to advance anything that is good for the American people. This is a frustrating place, because what happens on this House floor is either nothing or you guys make things worse.

On Sunday, we once again witnessed a massacre, the worst mass shooting in American history. People across this country are demanding action, but the response of the Republican leadership in this Congress is nothing. We had a moment of silence, but it means nothing because that is all we do. There are no hearings, no debate, no votes, just absolutely nothing.

It is obvious that too many Republicans have been intimidated and have been frightened or have been bought off by the National Rifle Association. It is shameful and, quite frankly, it is disgusting.

If the Republican leadership of this House is not willing to lead, then move

aside. Allow us to bring measures to the floor so we can have a vote, so we can have a debate, so we can enact measures that might save some lives.

Mr. Speaker, what we are considering today, this Republican budget, is an example of the majority making things worse for the American people.

Budgets are moral documents. They show what we value and what we care about. And if this budget reflects Republican values, then shame on Republicans. When you look at the specific programs House Republicans target, it becomes clear just how cruel this budget really is.

Last night, in the Rules Committee, I complained loudly to the distinguished chairwoman of the Budget Committee about the cuts to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program known as SNAP, basically a program that provides poor people food. It helps prevent hunger in this country. In this budget, they call for \$164 billion in cuts to this program.

The chairwoman said: Well, I believe that people who get this benefit ought to work.

I pointed out to her last night, and I am going to point out to my colleagues here today, that the majority of people on this program—67 percent of the people who are on this program are not expected to work. Why? Because they are children, because they are senior citizens, because they are disabled.

Of those who can work, the majority work. But you have individuals who are working, who are on SNAP because they earn so little that they still qualify for this program.

So why aren't we demanding that work pay more in this country? Why aren't we coming together to demand an increase in the minimum wage so it is a livable wage, so that people who work don't have to be on public assistance?

Instead, we have yet another attack on poor people in the form of these cuts.

The gentlewoman said: Well, I want to narrow it down to just able-bodied adults without dependents. They all ought to work.

□ 1245

Well, many of these people do work, Mr. Speaker, but many of them don't work, for a number of reasons. Many have limited educational experience, with 80 percent having no more than a high school education or a GED. Some are aging out of foster care. Some have underlying mental health issues, difficult histories of substance abuse, or are ex-offenders with nowhere else to turn.

As many as 60,000 of these able-bodied adults without dependents who have qualified for SNAP initially are veterans. These are brave, courageous men and women who have served our country, who have returned home and are having difficulty reintegrating into the community, getting on their feet. Our gratitude for their service is, we

are going to throw you off the food benefit? I don't know what people are thinking who drafted this in the budget.

The chairwoman of the Budget Committee said: Well, it is important that we constantly review programs to see if they are working, if they are living up to our expectations. I agree. I am a liberal Democrat. I want to make sure that whatever programs are in existence are working, are effective. Nobody is for ineffective government.

I happen to sit on the Agriculture Committee, Mr. Speaker. We have already held 23 oversight hearings on this program—23 on SNAP alone. We have had Republican witnesses, and we have had Democratic witnesses. As my friend from Georgia knows, his party is in control, so Republicans get to have more witnesses than Democrats do. We have had 23 hearings, and not one witness, not one, recommended a \$164 billion cut in this program.

In fact, what they recommended, Democrats and Republicans, was that we ought to strengthen wraparound services. That means like you ought to fund fully job training programs so that States can guarantee people a slot in a job training program.

Many argue, Democratic and Republican witnesses, that the benefit is too inadequate, that we need to expand the benefit, because contrary to what you hear oftentimes on this floor about SNAP and about how generous the benefit is and that it is like a gravy train, if you will, the average SNAP benefit is \$1.40 per person per meal. That is it. That is the benefit.

That is why when you talk to the heads of food banks all across the country, in every State in this country, they tell you the same thing, that they experience an uptick in people who need to utilize their services in the middle and toward the end of the month because, basically, the benefit is not enough to carry them through the month so they can put enough food on the table for them and their families.

We have 42 million people in the United States of America, the richest country in the history of the world, who are hungry. I am ashamed of that, and I am ashamed because hunger is a political condition.

What I mean by that is we can solve it, but we don't, because for some reason, this population, these people struggling in poverty, never quite rise to the level as the very wealthy in this country.

We have a budget here that not only cuts SNAP but basically cuts a whole bunch of other programs aimed at helping people get out of poverty and helping struggling middle class families.

Basically, this budget, just so everybody is clear, is kind of a blueprint to help pave the way for the Republican tax cut bill that they are going to produce on this floor in the not-too-distant future.

It was interesting last night in the Rules Committee, we heard people talk

about, well, we have to make tough choices because we don't want to saddle our children and our grandchildren and great-grandchildren with debt. Well, if, in fact, my Republican friends get their wish and pass this tax cut, we are told that it will add about \$2.4 trillion to our debt.

The deal is this, Mr. Speaker. One of the faults in their budget is they have these assumptions that we all know are not true. Like, for example, the Affordable Care Act is going to kind of mysteriously just disappear, and they are going to be able to cut Medicaid by close to \$1 trillion to help offset the cost of their tax cut. But the last time I checked, their repeal barely passed this House, and it can't seem to get anywhere in the United States Senate. Their assumptions are fantasy. They are not based on reality.

Mr. Speaker, it is not just food assistance that this budget dismantles. It cuts half a trillion dollars in Medicare and ends the Medicare guarantee. It rips apart the Affordable Care Act, drastically raising healthcare costs for older and low-income adults, and kicks another 20 million people off their health insurance if they get their wish here. It makes higher education more expensive. It cuts veterans' benefits. It reduces our commitment to ensuring that our neighbors have access to affordable housing. It even sticks the American taxpayer with a \$1.6 billion bill to begin constructing a costly and stupid and ineffective wall along the U.S. southern border with Mexico.

In case people are scratching their heads, during the campaign, Donald Trump said that Mexico was going to pay for the wall. I guess he didn't mean it because a downpayment was put into their budget.

I could go on and on and on, but you might ask yourself, Mr. Speaker: Who wins? The answer is simple. If this budget goes through, and they pave the way for their tax cut, it is clear who the winners are: Donald Trump, the Trump family, and all of his wealthy friends. While all these cuts in the budget come from our safety net programs, infrastructure investments, and programs that help middle and working class families, none of the savings in this budget—that is right, not one penny—come from closing tax loopholes that benefit big corporations or the wealthy.

As I said before, the drastic cuts are all being used to try to finance this massive tax cut that disproportionately benefits the wealthiest in this country. Give me a break.

Mr. Speaker, it is galling how indifferent that so many in this House seem to be to those who are struggling in poverty. America's most vulnerable, granted they don't have super PACs, they don't have big lobbyists, their voice in Washington is supposed to be us. The whole purpose of government, in my view, is to make sure that everybody gets a fair shake, and the people who need government the most are the people who are struggling in poverty.

But to listen to my colleagues and to look at this budget that they put together, it is clear that the poorest Americans in this country are being treated as if they don't exist, as if they are invisible, as if they don't matter. I just find that deeply offensive.

President Kennedy said it this way. He said: "If a free society cannot help the many who are poor, it cannot save the few who are rich." It is frustrating. It is just frustrating that here we are with this budget which devastates so much of what I think is important.

If we implemented what this budget asks us to do, this country would become a tale of two cities, and it is already getting to that point. It would truly become a tale of two cities. It would create a government without a conscience, and I think we need to push back and we need to reject that.

Mr. Speaker, this isn't some Ayn Rand fantasy where we can just mess with the numbers and see what happens. We are talking about real people here—people who are counting on us; people who need help. This budget fails by any measure, in my opinion, to be a budget even for Republicans to support.

I think America's hardworking middle class families and all those working to struggle to get in the middle class deserve a heck of a lot better than this.

Mr. Speaker, I would urge my colleagues to vote against this rule and certainly vote against this cruel Republican budget, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, you heard the passion of my friend from Massachusetts, and I have had an opportunity to work with him on the Rules Committee for 7 years now. I can tell you that every bit of that passion is sincere.

So often I think folks turn on C-SPAN, they look at a group of politicians talking, and they think it is all for the cameras and it is all for show. I will tell you that while I sometimes have that same suspicion when I turn on a program of folks I don't know, with folks I do know, I can tell you that that passion is sincere.

What I can also tell you is that many of those concerns are misguided, and I think that is important. What happens here in this institution matters. Our ability to have that debate with one another matters. The truth is, as you know, Mr. Speaker, most of that debate doesn't happen here on the House floor.

My friend from Massachusetts and I are here today because it is time to vote. We are here to bring the rule, we are here to bring the substitutes, we are here over the next 2 days to vote. The conversation has gone on not for a day, not for a week, not for a month, but for the better part of this year on what the budget is going to look like.

I happen to have a copy of the budget report right here, Mr. Speaker. It captures all the votes we have taken. It

captures all the debates we have had. It captures what the intent of the institution is.

Now again, we are going to have a choice of which budget we want to support. If you think taxes are too low, you can vote to raise taxes. If you think taxes are much too low, you can vote to raise taxes a whole lot. If you think the tax code as it exists today is a ridiculous compilation of confusing provisions stitched together by a patchwork of Congresses over the last 40 years, you can vote for fundamental reform.

If you are tired of the fact that America used to be number one in the world in terms of tax competitiveness and now we are at the bottom of the list and you want to take America back to being number one, you can vote for that, too. I happen to put myself in that category.

I want to read, if I may, Mr. Speaker, from the budget report. The fact is, I can't. I imagined myself a younger man when I grabbed that report.

If I can now read from the budget report, "The resolution's reconciliation instructions," that is what is in the budget, Mr. Speaker. That is what allows us to take a tax package from the House to the Senate. You have heard about how the Senate is having a tough time getting anything done because it requires a supermajority. It requires 60 votes. Through reconciliation, you can get things done with less than 60 votes. That is how the Affordable Care Act was passed, with less than 60 votes. You can get the tax bill passed with less than 60 votes.

It says this, "The resolution's reconciliation instructions that the Committee on Ways and Means will develop will be a deficit-neutral tax reform legislation and report such legislative language to the Committee on the Budget." Deficit neutral. Nobody wants to blow a hole in the budget, Mr. Speaker.

What the discussion is, is can we do better than today's tax code? Candidly, Mr. Speaker, if any Member of this body wants to take the position that we can't do any better, the IRS is as good as it can be in implementing the American Tax Code today, the Tax Code that is twice as long as the Bible is absolutely as concise and succinct as it can possibly be, those Americans who spend dozens of hours, even dozens of days, even dozens of weeks trying to put together their taxes, that is just the best we can do.

Mr. Speaker, I have seen it happen. Sometimes folks throw their hands up and think: We can't do any better. Not me. Not today.

We can all agree that we can do better than what we are doing today. Passage of this budget gives us that opportunity.

You heard my friend from Massachusetts speak from the heart, Mr. Speaker, about the ability we have as a government to care for one another. I would tell you that responsibility isn't uniquely a government responsibility. I

would say it is a faith responsibility, it is a family responsibility, it is a community responsibility. It is a responsibility that begins at home. It doesn't begin here, it begins at home, but it is a sincere responsibility, and it is one that we want to do better at every day.

I am sure you are aware, Mr. Speaker, the labor force participation rate in America is the lowest it has been since the President from my great State of Georgia, Jimmy Carter, was in office. The labor force participation rate. There is not one of us in this body who can drive down the street without seeing a "help wanted" sign. There is not one of us in this body who can go out to a business without seeing someone asking folks to come in and help, yet fewer Americans are working today than ever before. Why? It is a hard question.

Fewer Americans are working today than since the 1970s. Why? It is important that we ask that question.

The budget is not designed to answer it. The budget can't answer it. I sit on the Budget Committee. I don't have the jurisdiction to answer it, but I know this: you will find in this budget a discussion of whether it is better to support people in poverty or lift folks out of poverty.

□ 1300

It doesn't have to be mutually exclusive. I would tell you that we can support people until we can lift them up, but that lifting them up must be our goal. Supporting them is not enough.

You will find it here, Mr. Speaker, in these pages. This is a vision document. This is what we are gathered together to do today, and we will have legitimate disagreements about when we are doing enough in a particular area and when we are doing too much.

There are those in this body, Mr. Speaker, who believe passionately in education. I am one of those people. I come from a district with amazing school systems.

You can go to any public school in my district, Mr. Speaker, if you work hard and apply yourself. I don't care what your background is, I don't care where your family is from, I don't care what you have stacked against you; if you work hard and apply yourself in our public schools, you can be anything you want to be.

I know everybody wants that for their constituency back home; and I have colleagues who believe that only Washington, D.C., is successful enough, has a track record of success strong enough to implement that vision back home.

I don't come from that camp. I see a lot of failure come out of Washington, D.C. I see a lot of bureaucracy come out of Washington, D.C. I see success come out of parents and teachers and principals back home raising taxes, supporting those institutions, making sure every child has a chance. We do that together as a community.

The discussion that we might have in this institution, Mr. Speaker, is not: Do you believe in education?

It is: Do you believe educators in Washington, D.C., have the best answers, or educators back home in your district have the answers?

The truth is that we don't have many educators in Washington, D.C. We have bureaucrats in Washington, D.C., who oversee educators. I side with my educators back home. It is a legitimate disagreement that we are welcome to have.

What can't be said, though, Mr. Speaker, is that there are any disagreements over these next few days that we are not going to be allowed to have. I have said it before, and I will say it again because it makes me so proud. We don't always have time or make room for all the voices in this institution, Mr. Speaker. You know, sometimes we pick and choose winners and losers, whose voice is going to be heard. Not today. Any Member of Congress could submit their budget to the United States House of Representatives Committee on Rules.

It is a hard thing to produce a budget. I told you I have done it before, Mr. Speaker. It takes a lot of time, a lot of effort, a lot of commitment. But if you believe that you have a better idea, you can do it. And if you did it, we made it in order in the Rules Committee last night and we are going to debate it on the floor and we are going to vote on it on the floor.

We can't always say that every single idea, every single substitute is going to make it to the floor for a vote. We can say that today. I am proud that we can.

It is not going to stop the disagreements, Mr. Speaker, but what it is going to do is air those disagreements; what it is going to do is allow us to talk about our differing visions; and what it is going to do is allow us to come together on a common vision at the end of the day.

I hope my colleagues will support this rule so we can begin that process, and I hope my colleagues will support the underlying budget of their choice.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD a letter from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops in opposition to the Republican budget.

UNITED STATES CONFERENCE OF  
CATHOLIC BISHOPS,

Washington, DC, August 31, 2017.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: As Congress proceeds with the 2018 budget process, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) reaffirms that the federal budget is a moral document with profound implications for the common good of our nation and world. The budget requires difficult decisions that ought to be guided by moral criteria that protect human life and dignity, give central importance to "the least of these" (Matthew 25), and promote the welfare of workers and families who struggle to live in dignity.

The Catholic Church teaches that it is the role of the state to promote the three pillars

of the common good. In May 2017, we outlined these three pillars: respect for the fundamental and inalienable rights of the human person, promotion of human development, and defense of peace. Our Conference has long supported the goal of reducing future unsustainable deficits that would harm all citizens, especially those who are poor. However, a just framework for sound fiscal policy cannot rely almost exclusively on disproportionate cuts in essential services to poor and vulnerable persons.

Sharp increases in defense and immigration enforcement spending, coupled with simultaneous and severe reductions to non-defense discretionary spending, particularly to many domestic and international programs that assist the most vulnerable, are profoundly troubling. The House Budget Committee's H. Con. Res. 71 proposes increasing defense spending by \$929 billion over the next decade, which is \$72 billion above sequester levels. This is coupled with a proposal to cut \$4.4 trillion over the same period from domestic and international programs that assist the most vulnerable, potentially impacting health care safety net programs like Medicaid, Medicare, and CHIP, as well as food security programs like SNAP. The proposal would also reduce current funding levels for environmental stewardship by \$824 million.

Such deep cuts would harm people facing dire circumstances, and would place the environment and natural resources at risk. When the impact of other potential legislative proposals, including the proposed reduction of spending on health care by hundreds of billions of dollars over the next decade and implementation of tax policies that would offer trillions of dollars in tax cuts to the wealthy over the same period are considered, the prospects for vulnerable people become even bleaker.

Our nation should elevate diplomacy, along with humanitarian and international development assistance, as primary tools for promoting lasting peace, regional stability and human rights. The USCCB urges Congress to reject H. Con. Res. 71's proposed fiscal year 2018 budget authority level of \$41.521 billion for the International Affairs functions of government. This would represent a \$10 billion cut from this year's appropriations for those functions. Although the USCCB does not support every individual International Affairs account, it has repeatedly called for robust diplomatic efforts to end longstanding conflicts in a range of countries, including Syria and Iraq, as well as for robust funding for refugee and humanitarian assistance. It is hard to reconcile the need for diplomacy, political solutions, and life-saving humanitarian and development assistance with cuts to the State Department budget of the magnitude proposed by H. Con. Res. 71.

At the same time, H. Con. Res. 71 anticipates dramatic increases in immigration enforcement spending. We fear that such increases could pave the way for enactment of many of the destructive proposals contained in recently released budget plans, including increases in immigrant detention beds, the construction of a wall along the entire border between the United States and Mexico, and the expansion of agreements with state and local governments that threaten local law enforcement's ability to foster trusting relationships with immigrants in their jurisdictions. Any changes to the tax code called for through reconciliation should include a provision to empower the educational choices of families. The reconciliation process should not be used to achieve savings through cutting health care, nutrition, income security, or other anti-poverty programs. This budget attempts to use the rec-

onciliation process to fast-track over \$200 billion in cuts to anti-poverty programs over the next ten years, including Medicaid and Medicare. The bishops have devoted their efforts to addressing the morally problematic features of health care reform while insuring that all people have access to health care coverage.

The human consequences of budget choices are clear to us as pastors. Our Catholic community defends the unborn and the undocumented, feeds the hungry, shelters the homeless, educates the young, and cares for the sick, both at home and abroad. We help mothers facing challenging situations of pregnancy, poor families rising above crushing poverty, refugees fleeing conflict and persecution, and communities devastated by wars, natural disasters and famines. In much of this work, we are partners with government. Our combined resources allow us to reach further and help more. Our institutions are present in every state and throughout the world, serving some of the most marginalized communities and enjoying the trust of local populations.

The moral measure of the federal budget is how well it promotes the common good of all, especially the most vulnerable whose voices are too often missing in these debates. The Catholic Bishops of the United States stand ready to work with leaders of both parties for a federal budget that reduces future deficits, protects poor and vulnerable people, and advances peace and the common good.

Sincerely yours,

HIS EMINENCE TIMOTHY  
CARDINAL DOLAN,  
*Archbishop of New  
York, Chairman,  
Committee on Pro-  
Life Activities.*

MOST REV. OSCAR CANTÚ,  
*Bishop of Las Cruces,  
Chairman, Com-  
mittee on Inter-  
national Justice and  
Peace.*

MOST REV. CHRISTOPHER J.  
COYNE,  
*Bishop of Burlington,  
Chairman, Com-  
mittee on Commu-  
nications.*

MOST REV. FRANK J.  
DEWANE,  
*Bishop of Venice,  
Chairman, Com-  
mittee on Domestic  
Justice and Human  
Development.*

MOST REV. GEORGE V.  
MURRY, SJ,  
*Bishop of Youngs-  
town, Chairman,  
Committee on Catho-  
lic Education.*

MOST REV. JOE S.  
VÁSQUEZ,  
*Bishop of Austin,  
Chairman, Com-  
mittee on Migration.*

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD a letter from the Coalition on Human Needs against the Republican budget.

COALITION ON HUMAN NEEDS,

Washington, DC, October 3, 2017.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: On behalf of the Coalition on Human Needs, I strongly urge you to vote no on H. Con. Res. 71, the proposed FY 2018 Budget Resolution, and to vote for the substitute budgets advanced by the Congressional Progressive Caucus, Congressional Black Caucus, and the Democratic alternative budget resolution.

The Coalition on Human Needs is an alliance made up of human service providers,

faith organizations, policy experts, labor, civil rights, and other advocates for meeting the needs of low-income and vulnerable people. Our members understand that the economic security of millions of American families depends on building on the progress we've made in health coverage, jobs, basic living standards, and ensuring that our children are well-prepared for productive lives. But the majority's proposed budget does not build—it breaks apart our engines of progress. It will make our nation weaker for decades to come.

The most recent survey data on poverty in the U.S. shows the biggest two-year decline since the late 1960's. Refundable tax credits for working families, SNAP/food stamps and housing subsidies have lifted multi-millions of people out of poverty. The decline in the proportion of our population without health insurance continued its decline in 2016, down to 8.8 percent. More people are working, and in general, low- and moderate-income households have finally started to make income gains.

The budget advanced by the House Budget Committee would be a dangerous backwards plunge, stripping trillions of dollars from programs that work to reduce poverty and create security and opportunity. Medicaid, Medicare, working family tax credits, nutrition assistance, education and housing assistance: these are just some of the services the budget would massively cut. The budget takes trillions in funding that supports economic security and progress and hands it to the wealthy and corporations in the form of enormous tax cuts.

The primary goal of H. Con. Res. 71 is to allow huge tax cuts to be enacted with only a simple majority in the Senate. These tax cuts are claimed to be a critical element in increasing economic growth enough to make the tax cuts deficit neutral. Reputable economists are skeptical that the proposed tax cuts would boost the economy to the 2.6 percent average growth projected in the budget and acknowledge that tax cuts to corporations and the rich deepen the deficit. History supports this: the economy grew and unemployment declined more during the Clinton tax increase years than during the Bush era tax cuts. And the Kansas experience with tax cuts is cautionary: revenues plummeted, with the tax take in 2016 \$570 million lower than in 2013, even after counting increases enacted in sales and cigarette taxes. The economic growth that did occur from cutting taxes was estimated to bring in about \$30 million, leaving the state very deeply in the hole. The state legislature has recently reversed course, unwilling to slash education budgets as much as the revenue hole would have forced. They saw that they were weakening their state. Congress should not inflict the same dangerous lesson on the entire nation.

We urge you to reject H. Con. Res. 71 because of its central choice: paying for tax cuts that overwhelmingly favor the rich and corporations with cuts to essential services. Our nation faces major challenges: reducing disproportionate poverty among children and helping children and young adults to advance in education so they can meet the challenges in our economic future, protecting seniors in their retirement, and rebuilding communities. Both the emergency needs of communities devastated by natural disasters and the similarly urgent threats from opioids and other epidemics, decaying infrastructure and inadequate public health and consumer protections demand a vigorous federal response. Instead of making these investments, the House budget would cripple the federal capacity to respond by slashing domestic appropriations by 44 percent compared with FY 2010 levels over the next decade and making similarly extreme cuts in

health care, nutrition, income assistance for seniors, people with disabilities, and working families. In addition to trillions of dollars in cuts and structural constraints to basic mandatory programs, the budget would fast-track \$203 billion in cuts to domestic programs over the next ten years through reconciliation rules. Cuts like these would recklessly weaken us; they are self-inflicted wounds.

The proposed tax cuts will worsen inequality and reward businesses that park their income offshore. Instead, Congress should insist that corporations and the rich pay their fair share. Please vote against weakening America, and instead protect and expand investments as called for in the budgets proposed by the Congressional Progressive Caucus, Congressional Black Caucus, and the House Budget Committee Democrats' substitute. These three constructive alternatives deserve your yes vote.

Sincerely yours,

DEBORAH WEINSTEIN,  
*Executive Director.*

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD a letter to all Members of Congress from the National Hispanic Leadership Agenda against this Republican budget.

NATIONAL HISPANIC  
LEADERSHIP AGENDA,  
July 26, 2017.

Re NHLA opposition to House Budget Resolution.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: On behalf of the National Hispanic Leadership Agenda (NHLA), the coalition of the nation's 45 pre-eminent Latino advocacy organizations, we are writing to express our deep concerns with the budget resolution that recently passed out of the House Budget Committee and urge you to vote against passage of the resolution if it comes to the House floor. The resolution threatens the basic living standards of tens of millions of Americans in order to subsidize tax cuts for the wealthy. From education and scientific research to basic assistance and health programs, the House budget would cut \$4.4 trillion from entitlement programs and \$1.3 trillion from non-defense discretionary programs over the next decade, crippling the most important drivers of our nation's economic engine—working families. For these reasons, and those detailed further below, NHLA will consider any votes on the budget resolution for inclusion in future NHLA scorecards evaluating the support of Members of Congress for the Latino community.

Budget resolutions serve as fiscal blueprints that signal the priorities of government spending to support all Americans in their attainment of the American Dream. However, rather than seek to bolster opportunities for American working families, the House budget places the burden of reducing our deficit squarely on the backs of families struggling to make ends meet in order to give tax breaks to wealthy corporations and individuals. Rather than investing in America's future homebuyers, workers, and students, both the House budget and President Trump's budget undermine the progress our country has made and prioritize corporate interests over those of hardworking American families.

The trillions of dollars of cuts in the House budget would have a catastrophic impact on the millions of Latinos who struggle to put food on their tables and a roof over their heads. Recent research by UnidosUS (formerly NCLR) provides evidence of the strong impact of federal assistance programs on lifting millions of Latinos, especially children, out of poverty. In 2015, for example:

Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) lifted about 2.7 million Latinos out of poverty, including 1.4 million children.

Child Tax Credit (CTC) lifted an estimated 981,000 Latinos out of poverty, including 560,000 children.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) lifted an estimated 1.3 million Latinos out of poverty, including 640,000 children.

Rental assistance lifted about 720,000 Latinos out of poverty, including 270,000 children.

Supplemental Security Income (SSI) lifted an estimated 630,000 Latinos out of poverty, including 140,000 children.

The House budget resolution would threaten the effectiveness of many of these programs. The budget plan also calls for cuts to Medicaid and other health programs more severe than the House-passed bill to repeal the Affordable Care Act.

Further, the House budget resolution dismantles consumer and worker protections, jeopardizing the ability of Latino and all working families to build and maintain wealth. The budget plan not only guts the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau—the only agency whose sole mission is to protect Americans from predatory practices in the financial marketplace—but also undermines our nation's workforce, cutting funding for the Wage and Hour Division in the Department of Labor more deeply than proposed in the Trump budget. Additionally, Latino workers cannot afford cuts to the Environmental Protection Agency, which protects our human health and environment from toxic chemicals. Working families need more and better enforcement of consumer financial and labor protection laws to protect Americans from abuse, and also ensure law-abiding financial service providers, as well as employers, are not harmed by unfair competition by unscrupulous actors.

Simply put, the House budget resolution would harm American families and workers, especially Latinos, making our nation more inequitable and less prepared for economic challenges. We strongly urge Members of Congress to oppose the House budget plan and instead support a budget that defends the interests of the American public and prudently spends taxpayer dollars.

Sincerely,

HECTOR SANCHEZ BARBA,  
*Chair, NHLA, Executive Director, Labor Council for Latin American Advancement (LCLAA).*

BRUCE GOLDSTEIN,  
*Co-Chair, NHLA Economic Empowerment and Labor Committee, President, Farmworker Justice.*

ERIC RODRIGUEZ,  
*Co-Chair, NHLA Economic Empowerment and Labor Committee, Vice President, UnidosUS.*

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD letters from the AARP, the Main Street Alliance, and the League of Conservation Voters, all in strong opposition to the Republican budget.

AARP,

Washington, DC, October 3, 2017.

DEAR MEMBER OF CONGRESS: On behalf of over 38 million members and other Americans who are age 50 and older, AARP is writing to communicate our views as you consider H. Con. Res. 71, the House Concurrent Resolution on the Budget for Fiscal Year 2018. As the process moves forward, AARP urges you to support Social Security, Medi-

care, and other key programs that millions of Americans depend upon for their health and financial security and oppose proposals that would hurt older Americans.

#### MEDICARE AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Our members count on Social Security and Medicare and believe they should be protected and strengthened for today's seniors and future generations. Proposals creating a defined contribution premium-support program; restricting access by raising the age of eligibility; or allowing hospitals and providers to arbitrarily charge consumers higher prices than Medicare can make health care unaffordable for older Americans. These proposals do little to actually lower the cost of health care, but simply shift costs from Medicare onto individuals—many of whom cannot afford to pay more for their care. We urge you not to include attempts to cut Medicare benefits or increase beneficiary costs in the upcoming budget proposal.

The typical senior, with an annual income of around \$25,000 and already spending one out of every six dollars on health care, counts on Social Security for the majority of their income, and on Medicare for access to affordable health coverage. We will continue to oppose changes to current law that cut benefits, increase costs, or reduce the ability of these critical programs to deliver on their benefit promises. We urge you to continue to do so as well.

#### MEDICAID, LONG-TERM SERVICES AND SUPPORTS AND SNAP

Medicaid serves as a critical safety net for millions of people in every state, including over 17 million poor elderly and children and adults with disabilities, who rely on vital Medicaid health and long-term care services. Efforts to reduce or cap Medicaid funding could endanger the health, safety, and care of millions of individuals who depend on the essential services provided through this program. Furthermore, caps could result in significant cost-shifts to state governments unable to shoulder the costs of care without sufficient federal support. Instead of arbitrary caps, proposals should focus on efforts to improve Medicaid, such as encouraging more individuals to receive services in their homes and communities rather than costly institutional care.

SNAP plays a vital role in feeding millions of hungry Americans, including over four million older Americans. Proposals to block grant the program, or impose work requirements will make SNAP less responsive and accessible in times of need; and without clear work requirement exemptions for the elderly and disabled, would bar these individuals from receiving SNAP benefits.

We ask you to reject the cuts proposed in H. Con. Res. 71. We stand ready to work with you to develop proposals that protect and improve Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security, and SNAP.

Sincerely,

JO ANN C. JENKINS,  
*Chief Executive Officer.*

JOYCE A. ROGERS,  
*SVP Government Affairs, AARP.*

MAIN STREET ALLIANCE,  
Washington, DC, October 2, 2017.

Re H. Con. Res. 71, Fiscal Year 2018 Budget Resolution.

MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVES: Main Street Alliance, a network of small business owners

throughout the country, strongly urges you to oppose H. Con. Res. 71, the Fiscal Year 2018 Budget Resolution. This budget, if enacted into law, would cut \$3.4 trillion from Medicaid, Medicare, Social Security, education, employment and training, food and housing assistance, and infrastructure spending over the next 10 years. This will significantly harm small business owners and their employees, damage local economies, and decimate state budgets.

Millions of small business owners, their employees, and their families rely on Medicaid and Medicare for access to healthcare critical to their survival. The House Budget Resolution would strip them of their health coverage. The proposed budget would slash \$1.5 trillion from Medicaid and other health programs, and gut Medicare by \$500 billion, transforming both from systems in which beneficiaries are guaranteed certain levels of coverage, to a capped amount per enrollee. Work requirements would also be imposed on Medicaid. This puts 69 million Medicaid recipients and 57 million Medicare beneficiaries at risk for a loss in services, including millions of small business owners and their employees.

Healthcare, education, food, and housing costs would skyrocket under the House Budget, devastating local economies and small businesses that depend on consumer demand from customers in their communities. In addition to the deep cuts to healthcare, the budget would cut \$150 billion from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, which enables nearly 22 million families to put food on the table, and eliminate \$90 billion from education, training, employment, and social services programs, significantly scaling back Pell Grants, which help nearly 8 million students afford college. These draconian spending cuts would force vulnerable and working families to pay more for vital programs, resulting in a reduction in their disposal income and the amount of money they can spend on goods and services. Small business owners would see a decline in customers.

The House budget cuts would siphon trillions of dollars out of state economies from 2018 to 2027. Because the block grant funding scheme provides a fixed amount of Medicaid and Medicare funding for states each year, the proposal would also leave states on the hook for any and all unexpected healthcare costs from recessions, natural disasters, public health emergencies, or prescription drug price spikes, and unaccounted costs like the aging of the population. The deep reductions in federal healthcare, education, employment and training, food and housing assistance, and infrastructure spending would force states to make up the difference, drastically cutting the quality of services offered. As state budgets contract, employment would decrease and small businesses would decline.

The impact of the House Budget Resolution on small businesses will be felt in the loss of vital services, reduced business, and contracted state budgets. We urge you to protect Main Street small businesses owners, working families, communities, and economies, and oppose the House Budget Resolution. Reject any budget that enables tax cuts for the very wealthy and large profitable corporations to lose revenue, since it will force deep cuts in vital programs that harm small business.

Signed,

AMANDA BALLANTYNE,  
National Director, Main Street Alliance.

LEAGUE OF CONSERVATION VOTERS,  
Washington, DC, October 4, 2017.  
Re Oppose FY18 House Budget Resolution.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: The League of Conservation Voters (LCV) works to turn environmental values into national priorities. Each year, LCV publishes the National Environmental Scorecard, which details the voting records of members of Congress on environmental legislation. The Scorecard is distributed to LCV members, concerned voters nationwide, and the media.

LCV urges you to vote NO on H. Con. Res. 71. This budget resolution includes a huge giveaway to oil and gas companies by paving the way for drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, one of America's most iconic landscapes. It threatens environmental and public health safeguards, provides tax cuts for millionaires and billionaires, and slashes programs and protections that benefit communities across the country, among other harmful provisions.

The House budget resolution puts some of our most iconic landscapes at risk. It contains reconciliation instructions that aim to open up the pristine Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and possibly other public lands and waters to drilling. The Arctic Refuge is one of the largest remaining intact ecosystems in the world. It has sustained the Gwich'in people for centuries and is home to an incredible array of wildlife, including caribou, wolves, polar bears, and nearly 200 species of migratory birds. We have a moral obligation to protect this natural treasure and to transition to a clean energy future.

Following in the footsteps of the Trump administration's unconscionable budget proposal, the House Republican leadership's budget resolution would make dangerous cuts to programs that benefit the most vulnerable in our society while benefitting polluters. Included in the resolution are provisions that will lead to trillions of dollars of cuts to health care and programs that provide basic living standards for struggling families, as well as other substantial cuts. Meanwhile, it would account for \$1.6 billion of federal funds to pay for a xenophobic and environmentally harmful border wall. Rather than investing in safeguards for clean air and water, protections for our national parks and other public lands that drive our outdoor recreation economy, and growing clean energy industries, this budget sells out those priorities to pay for tax cuts for millionaires and billionaires and for gifts to corporate special interests.

We urge you to REJECT H. Con. Res. 71 and will strongly consider including the vote on this bill in the 2017 Scorecard.

Sincerely,

GENE KARPINSKI,  
President.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I just want to make sure that it is clear that, certainly on the Democratic side, we are very much dedicated to trying to lift people out of poverty. That is one of the reasons why we oppose this Republican budget that cuts \$211 million from financial aid programs to help people be able to get additional higher education. That is one of the reasons why we have complained loudly about the inadequate funding for job training. You want people to train for employment, you need to make sure that those slots are available so that people can get the training and the assistance they need.

The gentleman says: Don't worry about the debt because the reconcili-

ation instructions will instruct the Ways and Means Committee to do a deficit neutral tax plan.

Well, I mean, there is lots of stuff in here that are assumptions that aren't true, like, you repealed the Affordable Care Act. That didn't happen and it is not going to happen.

And what we are told from the Tax Policy Center and the Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget, according to their analysis, is that what the Republicans are proposing in terms of their tax plan will basically cost well over \$2 trillion, and that will be added to our debt.

So I don't—we can debate fantasyland if we want, but the reality is the reality, and this budget is a bad deal for everybody.

Mr. Speaker, this week, our Nation witnessed the deadliest mass shooting in history. We have endured horrific mass killings in Newtown, San Bernardino, Orlando, and now Las Vegas, among many others, all without any congressional action. The killings happen every single day on our streets, at public events, and even in our homes.

Mr. Speaker, my heart broke when the children of Sandy Hook were killed, and I remain absolutely stunned that this Congress has done nothing about it, nothing.

Now 59 people lost their lives in Las Vegas during what was supposed to be a celebratory event, a concert, and this is only 16 months after the last deadly mass shooting in Orlando. Gun violence in this country is out of control, and all we have done is cater to the gun lobby.

The United States Congress is a legislative body, Mr. Speaker. We are not a think tank or a church or a synagogue. Thoughts and prayers are not what this country expects from us, and it is not what it needs from us. The people of this country need us to act, to pass laws that protect their lives and their children's lives.

As my colleague in the Senate, Senator CHRIS MURPHY, has said: "This must stop. It is positively infuriating that my colleagues in Congress are so afraid of the gun industry that they pretend that there aren't any public policy responses to this epidemic. There are. And the thoughts and prayers of politicians are cruelly hollow if they are paired with legislative indifference."

For this reason, if we defeat the previous question, I will offer an amendment to the rule to bring up Mr. THOMPSON's bill, H. Res. 367, which I am a cosponsor of, which would establish the Select Committee on Gun Violence Prevention.

Mr. Speaker, let me explain what I mean when I say "defeat the previous question." We are here debating which bills will come to the House floor this week, the agenda for the House of Representatives. The majority chose to consider their misguided budget. Fine. We can do that.

But what I am saying is that we should also take the first step in at least setting up a committee to look at gun violence in America. So if we say no to ending debate on this rule, by defeating the previous question, we can then debate whether or not to create this committee. This is the least we can do.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to insert the text of my amendment in the RECORD, along with extraneous material, immediately prior to the vote on the previous question.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Massachusetts?

There was no objection.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. THOMPSON) to discuss our proposal.

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, it was almost 5 years ago that this Nation witnessed the terrible tragedy at Sandy Hook Elementary School, where 20 first graders were murdered in their classrooms, along with six of their teachers. Congress did nothing.

A church in Charleston, a White supremacist walked in and murdered nine worshippers. Congress did nothing. And worse than that, Congress didn't even address what is called the "Charleston loophole" that allowed this deranged White supremacist to be able to buy a gun or obtain a gun that he was buying without completing the background check.

Orlando, Florida, the nightclub: 49 people murdered. Congress did nothing.

The congressional baseball game, one of our own was shot by some deranged murderer. Congress did nothing.

Las Vegas, just these past days, a country music festival: 59 people murdered. The biggest mass shooting in the history of the United States of America. Even as sad, it is the 273rd mass shooting in the United States of America this year.

So what is Congress going to do? More of nothing? That is not appropriate.

In the almost 5 years since Sandy Hook, we have been working on our side of the aisle diligently to try and come up with some ideas, some solutions to help prevent gun violence, and we have come up with some. As a matter of fact, one of them is a bipartisan measure with a bipartisan coauthor on my bill, Mr. PETER KING from New York, and we have four or five Republican coauthors on that bill.

Have we had a hearing?

No.

Have we had a vote?

No.

All we are trying to do with that bill is expand background checks to make sure that criminals and the dangerously mentally ill can't buy firearms easily; make it more difficult for these people, who we know commit crimes with these guns, to get their hands on a gun. It is within the confines of the Second Amendment. It just

expands the already existing background checks to include commercial sale of firearms across the country. No hearings, no votes.

Instead, our friends on the other side of the aisle have their own gun agenda. They want to legalize silencers. They want to remove the restrictions on silencers. Police entities, officers, chiefs, and sheriffs across the country have told us that this is dangerous. It puts the people that we represent at risk, but that is their gun agenda.

If you don't like the ideas that we have brought forward, please bring something forward, other than deregulating silencers, that will help with this epidemic that we are facing in our country.

Thirty people a day are killed by someone using a gun.

What are your ideas?

Nothing. Silence.

The only thing we have heard now is we hear from your leadership that we are not going to discuss policy in regard to gun violence prevention.

Well, that is why we came to Congress. That is why every one of us ran for Congress, to work on policy. That is why our constituents sent us to Congress, to vote on policy.

But on the heels of 59 people being murdered the day before yesterday, what are we told?

That we are not going to do policy on gun violence prevention.

That is not responsible.

The bill that my friend, Mr. McGovern, talked about, my bill that he is a coauthor on, would establish a Select Committee, Democrats and Republicans, to sit down at the same table and try and find some solutions to help prevent gun violence, and then move that to the House for consideration. That is all we want.

We want these issues to be heard. We want to be able to do our job. Our constituents want a vote on these issues that are important to the safety of every single person in the United States of America.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that we defeat the previous question.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

If you have not tuned in to this debate until just these past few minutes, you might not know that this is the budget debate today. We have been prepping for the budget debate today for about 10 months now, and we are ready today not just with one budget, but with a variety of budget choices. And what is wonderful about this process is it has been such an open process.

You can come down to the House floor and air absolutely any idea that is on your mind. That has not just been true today, Mr. Speaker, but that has been true throughout this entire budget process. In fact, I have a letter signed by literally hundreds of groups that support not just voting on the rule to bring the budget to the floor, but groups that support passing the budget as we passed it out of the House Budget Committee.

Now, if my colleagues have any concerns about that, I hope they will come and knock on my door, Mr. Speaker, because I promise you that one of these groups is going to be from their part of the country.

Certainly, in Georgia, the Georgia Chamber of Commerce is on that list. So our folks back home are supportive. If you are from Alabama, I have got Alabamans on here. If you are from Baton Rouge, I have got Baton Rouge. If you are from Battle Creek, I have Battle Creek, because what we are working on here isn't a Republican budget, Mr. Speaker.

□ 1315

What we are working on isn't a regional budget. What we are working on here is the national budget for the United States of America that can be transformational for absolutely every citizen in absolutely every corner of this country.

We have that opportunity. I think we are going to seize that opportunity, but we can't do it until we move this rule to get to the underlying bills. I encourage my colleagues to do that.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume, and I include in the RECORD letters from the UAW, the SEIU, The National Treasury Employees Union, AFSCME, the American Federation of Government Employees, and NARFE.

INTERNATIONAL UNION, UNITED  
AUTOMOBILE, AEROSPACE & AGRICULTURAL IMPLEMENT WORKERS  
OF AMERICA—UAW,

Washington, DC, October 3, 2017.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: On behalf of the International Union, United Automobile, Aerospace and Agricultural Implement Workers of America (UAW), I am writing to strongly urge you to oppose H. Con. Res. 71, the House Fiscal Year (FY) 2018 budget resolution. The federal budget is a moral document as well as a fiscal blueprint, and H. Con. Res. 71 fails spectacularly on both fronts. This draconian budget would be a disaster for our economy, the middle class and our most vulnerable citizens.

The proposed budget forces working people and retirees to pay for enormous tax cuts to the wealthy. Despite claims to the contrary, by 2027, roughly 30 percent of households earning between \$50,000 and \$150,000 would see an increase in their taxes. H. Con. Res. 71 cuts \$1.5 trillion from Medicare and Medicaid and ends the programs as we know them. Medicaid and Medicare are literal lifelines for many of our most vulnerable citizens—especially children and the elderly. Medicaid is the largest provider of nursing home and long-term care.

This radical piece of legislation creates fast-track procedures to implement the tax cuts that will overwhelmingly benefit the wealthy and multinational corporations. The average tax cut for millionaires would be \$230,000 a year by 2027. It eliminates the estate tax, which currently only applies to the top two tenths of one percent of estates, giving the ultra-wealthy \$239 billion in tax cuts. By 2027, 80% of tax cuts will go to the top one percent.

It also uses these procedures to make at least \$203 billion in cuts to mandatory programs that are important for working families and our most vulnerable citizens. In

total, this budget assumes \$5.4 trillion in spending cuts. Cuts of this magnitude would almost certainly lead to slashing funding for Legal Services Corporation, federal employee pensions, nutritional assistance infrastructure, and unemployment compensation, to name a few. It also repeals the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and the Affordable Care Act.

This budget resolution takes America in the wrong direction. We have tried “trickle down” economics several times in the past; it did not work then and it will not work now. These tax cuts will not pay for themselves. Instead, they will come at the expense of hardworking every day Americans—many of whom have trouble affording basic necessities today.

We strongly urge you to oppose H. Con. Res. 71 and instead work on a federal budget that invests in our country and works for ALL Americans.

Sincerely,

JOSH NASSAR,  
*Legislative Director.*

SEIU STRONGER TOGETHER,  
*Washington, DC, October 4, 2017.*

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: On behalf of the 2 million members of the Service Employees International Union (“SEIU”), I write to oppose H. Con. Res. 71, the FY18 House budget resolution. This budget would further rig the system against working Americans by slashing resources that help families afford basic needs like healthcare, food, and education—all to pave the way for tax cuts for corporations and the wealthy. SEIU believes The People’s Budget is a better way forward for working families. While the House Republican budget would continue to leave working families behind, The People’s Budget makes American workers its first priority through critical investments in health care, education, and infrastructure.

The first goal of any elected representative should be to improve the lives of their constituents. H. Con. Res. 71 fails to meet this standard. To pay for tax giveaways for the wealthy and corporations, the budget resolution includes reconciliation instructions that would significantly undermine basic living standards for families. For example, under the reconciliation instructions, committees are directed to make cuts of \$203 billion dollars over ten years to programs that could include Medicaid, Medicare, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and programs for people with disabilities, which provide critical support for millions of Americans.

By threatening Medicaid, this budget ignores the tens of thousands of people who mobilized month after month to soundly reject efforts to dismantle healthcare and cut Medicaid. Efforts to reduce or cap Medicaid funding put at risk healthcare for 74 million Americans—including children, people with disabilities, and seniors. Hospitals could be forced to close or cut services, further reducing access to care, especially in underserved areas. States—which must balance budgets and already face fiscal pressures—would not be able to make up the lost federal Medicaid dollars and would likely be forced to deny coverage. Furthermore, the cuts would lead to significant job loss in the healthcare industry, one of the fastest growing sectors in our economy.

In contrast, The People’s Budget would focus on reforms to increase access, affordability, and quality of health care by building on the foundation of the Affordable Care Act (“ACA”). In its entirety, it would move the nation’s health care system closer to achieving universal coverage, while ensuring that working families would have affordable care. At the same time, it would invest in de-

veloping innovative care delivery models that control costs and increase quality. The People’s Budget would put America’s health care system on the right path forward.

The House Republican budget, however, would compound the proposed Medicaid cuts with potential cuts to Medicare, Social Security Disability Insurance, and nutrition assistance. The budget doubles down on its harm to seniors and people with disabilities and further shift costs to states. The cumulative impact of the deep cuts proposed in this budget would force states to make drastic spending and job cuts, raise taxes, or both. This budget pressure would likely also trickle down to local governments in the form of decreased funding to cities and counties, creating a fiscal crisis in communities across the nation.

While H. Con. Res. 71 would force Americans to make a false choice between programs that are essential to their communities and tax giveaways for the wealthy, The People’s Budget invests in American communities through a robust infrastructure program and makes debt free college a reality for all students—without sacrificing health care for millions of Americans. The House Republican budget makes no such commitment to education, and its steep cuts create the potential for state budget crises that put education programs and working families’ futures in jeopardy. Trickle-down economics have left America’s middle class behind for decades. It is time we turn the page towards an economy that is designed for working families and aimed at improving their lives.

The proposed FY18 House Budget Resolution is a disaster for America’s working families. By decimating programs that provide healthcare, food, housing, and education to set the stage for massive tax cuts for the wealthy and corporations, this budget is an attack on our communities’ quality of life. We respectfully urge you to reject the proposed budget resolution, and instead support The People’s Budget which would prioritize working families in building an economy that works for everyone. We will add votes on H. Con. Res. 71 to our legislative scorecard.

Sincerely,

MARY KAY HENRY,  
*International President.*

THE NATIONAL TREASURY  
EMPLOYEES UNION,  
*Washington, DC, October 4, 2017.*

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: As National President of the National Treasury Employees Union, I represent over 150,000 dedicated federal employees at 31 agencies. I am writing to ask you to VOTE NO on the House Budget Resolution, H. Con Res 71.

The House Budget Resolution instructs the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform to produce at least \$32 billion in cuts to programs under its jurisdiction, which are federal employee benefit programs. While the Budget Committee recommended sizable cuts to federal employee retirement, it is important to highlight that this program has been utilized in recent years to help pay for both infrastructure and unemployment insurance. This was twice accomplished by increasing the amount federal employees contribute toward their retirement benefits, and occurred against a backdrop of a multi-year pay freeze, further squeezing employee paychecks. In recent years, federal employees have endured compensation losses of close to \$200 billion for deficit reduction, from the above retirement changes and from reduced pay increases in 2014, 2015, 2016, and in 2017. At a time when private sector raises are averaging 3%, federal wage increases continue to trail behind.

Federal employees play a vital role for taxpayers—ensuring air, water and food safety, border and national security, consumer protections, and preserving our national parks, to name just a few of their functions and missions. Like all Americans, federal employees face ever-increasing food, utility, health care, and college bills, and have rent and mortgage obligations. Families will fall further behind if their take-home pay is slashed or if cost-of-living adjustments, similar to those made to Social Security, military retirement and to veterans’ benefits to keep these payments whole, are removed in retirement. These further cuts will also degrade morale, make it difficult for agencies to recruit and retain quality employees, and will erode income security for retirees.

Additionally, I ask you to strongly oppose Representatives McClintock and Walker’s Amendment in the Nature of a Substitute that places a severe financial burden on federal employees by eviscerating federal employee compensation, and further unfairly attacks worker protections and labor organizations.

On behalf of our nation’s federal employees—who live and work in every state and congressional district across the country—serving as scientists, accountants, statisticians, park rangers, and law enforcement officers, I ask you to reject the cuts contemplated in the Budget Resolution, and VOTE NO.

Sincerely,

ANTHONY M. REARDON,  
*National President.*

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF STATE,  
COUNTY AND MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEES, AFL-CIO.

*Washington, DC, October 2, 2017.*  
MEMBER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
*Washington, DC.*

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: On behalf of the 1.6 million members of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), I urge you to oppose H. Con. Res. 71, the fiscal year (FY) 2018 budget resolution approved by the House Budget Committee and scheduled to be considered by the full House. This budget plan would impose considerable hardship on many Americans in order to slash taxes for the wealthy and corporations and to boost defense spending.

The budget decisions made by Congress each year are vital to ensuring that the economy is strong and that our communities are safe and prosperous. Yet, this budget completely undercuts responsibility for shared prosperity by applying the same misguided priorities proposed by President Trump. It sets woefully inadequate spending levels for critical public services and cuts over a trillion dollars from non-defense discretionary spending (NDD), in order to significantly boost defense spending and provide massive tax giveaways to wealthy individuals and large corporations.

The budget slashes \$5.7 trillion over 10 years including \$1.3 trillion from NDD programs that have already been compromised by austere budget caps. FY 2018 statutory caps lower funding for NDD programs by 17 percent adjusted for inflation below FY 2010, and the House budget cuts this by an additional \$5 billion. The additional cuts proposed in the House budget would weaken public services that all Americans rely on, create massive budget problems for states, and lead to enormous job losses. It would force dramatic cuts in, education, job training, federal employee pensions, and nutritional assistance. Over 10 years, the budget cuts \$4.4 trillion from entitlement programs, such as, Medicare and Medicaid, including at least \$203 billion in entitlement cuts to be

made through the “fast track” reconciliation process. As a result, safety-net programs that millions rely upon are once again a target, further shifting enormous and unsustainable costs to the elderly, disabled, students and states.

Rather than increasing revenues for investment that creates jobs and spurs economic growth, the proposed budget creates a fast-track process for tax cuts that overwhelmingly benefit corporations and the wealthy. In fact, according to the non-partisan Tax Policy Center, the Trump/GOP tax cut would largely benefit the richest 1 percent. The budget also relies on the gimmicks of dynamic scoring and sham accounting, hiding the true cost of unnecessary and harmful tax cuts.

The budget approved by the House Budget Committee would hurt families, kill job growth and send the economy into a downward tailspin. I strongly urge you to oppose. H. Con. Res. 71, the proposed 2018 concurrent budget resolution.

Sincerely,

SCOTT FREY,

*Director of Federal Government Affairs.*

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF  
GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES, AFL-CIO,  
Washington, DC, September 29, 2017.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: On behalf of the American Federation of Government Employees, AFL-CIO, which represents over 700,000 federal employees across the country, I strongly urge you to oppose any FY 2018 budget resolution proposal that includes reconciliation instructions to the Oversight and Government Reform Committee (OGR) requiring cuts within its jurisdiction to reduce the deficit by \$32 billion for the FY 2018-2027 period, when the House considers various FY 2018 budget proposals during the week of October 2, 2017. These cuts would target federal employee retirement benefits, as that is the only substantial mandatory spending within OGR's jurisdiction.

Such an approach would be consistent with the Senate Budget Committee's FY 2018 budget resolution proposal that excludes reconciliation instructions that would result in cutting federal employee retirement benefits. Indeed, the Senate version only includes reconciliation instructions to two committees: the \$1.5 trillion allowance for net tax cuts under the Finance Committee's jurisdiction and a \$1 billion, 10-year deficit cut instruction to the Energy and Natural Resources Committee which could open up a portion of Alaska's Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to oil and gas exploration.

AFGE opposes the House Budget Committee's FY 2018 budget resolution's reconciliation instructions to the Oversight and Government Reform Committee to cut federal employee retirement benefits by \$32 billion for the FY 2018-2027 period. We believe this budget reconciliation instruction would help rip away any sense of financial security that federal employees currently have.

As you know, the House Budget Committee budget report included recommendations that would:

Require federal employees, including Members of Congress and their staffs, to make greater contributions to their own defined benefit retirement plans.

Eliminate the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) supplemental annuity payments to federal employees who retire before age 62, such as law enforcement officers and federal firefighters.

Transition new federal employees to a defined contribution retirement system. (The existing Thrift Savings Plan under FERS is a defined contribution retirement plan.)

These proposed federal retirement cuts of \$32 billion over ten years would be on top of the \$182 billion in cuts to pay and benefits that federal employees have experienced since 2011. Those pay and benefit cuts included: a three-year pay freeze (2011, 2012, 2013), three years of reduced pay increases (2014, 2015, 2016), unpaid furlough days because of the 2013 sequestration, and two increases in retirement contributions for new hires (2012 and 2013).

It is important to view the House Budget Committee's FY 2018 budget proposal to cut federal employee retirement benefits in the proper context. The federal employee retirement systems (FERS and CSRS) have played no role whatsoever in the creation of the federal budget deficit. In addition, increasing federal employees' contributions to their defined benefit retirement plans would decrease consumer demand and thereby adversely impact the American economy.

Thank you for your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,

THOMAS S. KAHN,

*Director, Legislative Affairs.*

NATIONAL ACTIVE AND RETIRED  
FEDERAL EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION,  
Alexandria, VA, October 3, 2017.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: On behalf of the National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association (NARFE), I write to ask you to oppose the inclusion of reconciliation instructions in any budget resolution that target federal retirement and/or health benefits considered by the full House of Representatives.

The House Budget Committee passed, and the House is expected to consider, a budget resolution containing reconciliation instructions calling for at least \$32 billion in cuts to mandatory spending under the jurisdiction of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform (OGR). Such instructions directly target the hard-earned retirement and health benefits of federal and postal workers and retirees, as these benefits constitute the only substantial mandatory spending under OGR's jurisdiction.

Proposals to meet the \$32 billion in savings range from bad to worse—from imposing a “retirement tax” on current federal and postal employees by raising payroll contributions towards retirement without any benefit increase to various proposals that would dramatically reduce the value of federal pensions for those nearing—or even in—retirement. These are neither fair nor prudent policies, yet any budget resolution containing reconciliation instructions for OGR endorses them prior to any significant evaluation.

The upcoming budget resolution is being used to set the stage for advancing tax reform that proponents argue provides a break to hard-working, middle-class Americans. Reconciliation instructions that target hard-working, middle class federal and postal workers are diametrically opposed to that goal and undermine a key argument as the basis of comprehensive tax reform.

For these reasons, I ask you to oppose any budget resolution that contains substantial reconciliation instructions to the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

Sincerely,

RICHARD THISSEN,

*National President*

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, let me just say to my colleague from Georgia, thanks for reminding us that the Republicans have been working on the

budget for 10 months; but according to your own Republican Budget Committee website, the budget was supposed to be presented and finished by April 15, so you are a little late.

In any event, I also want to remind the gentleman, because I know he is on the Rules Committee, so I know he knows this, that the rule sets the agenda for the House. Yes, if one of the things that the Republicans want to bring up is their terrible budget, that is fine. You can do that. But the rule can also be an opportunity for us to bring up the bill that Mr. THOMPSON has offered, to set up this commission to deal with gun violence. We can do both.

You can walk and you can chew gum at the same time. This is not a radical idea. But this is our only way to be able to bring something to the floor, because the leadership of this House has said no to everything. They have said no to everything. We can't get hearings. We can't get votes. We can't get debates. We get nothing.

Don't be startled by us trying to defeat the previous question. It is a perfectly legitimate way to try to expand the agenda, and I hope that some of our Republican friends will vote with us to defeat the previous question. We can still do the budget, but we can also do the Thompson bill as well.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Delaware (Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER).

Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend and fellow member of the Agriculture Committee, Mr. MCGOVERN, for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to H. Con. Res. 71, the Republicans' proposed budget. This plan would make extreme and irresponsible cuts to domestic spending programs and weaken our Nation's social safety net.

We should be proposing a budget that provides for real economic growth. We should be strengthening programs that help young Americans access higher education, increasing infrastructure funding, and investing in our Nation's roads and bridges. We should be focused on vision, aspiration, a budget reflective of our great Nation and the great things we can do.

This budget instructs my friend from Massachusetts and my committee to find \$10 billion in cuts to agriculture programs over the next 10 years. This decrease will affect our ability to fund essential USDA programs across our country in every congressional district. These are programs that farmers, schoolchildren, families, communities, and Americans rely on.

Where will we be forced to take the money from? Rural development? conservation programs? our already insufficient nutrition programs? resources for schools?

At a time when spending on fighting wildfires has surpassed previous records, will we cut that budget?

This budget and accompanying tax plan does not put us on strong fiscal

ground either. Many people don't realize the significance of the agricultural industry in Delaware. Our State is filled with family farmers that produce specialty crops, commodities. Delaware has the highest number of chickens per capita—300—of any State in the Nation. Many of these farmers rely on the very programs that we will be forced to undermine if these cuts are realized, and that hurts all Americans.

Access to food is not just a farmer's issue; it will affect rural communities, urban communities, and all of us. This is not a responsible way to govern.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I would say to my friend from Massachusetts that I have no further speakers remaining. I would be happy to close when the gentleman is prepared.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the remainder of my time.

I just want to tell my colleague from Georgia, if he hasn't read what we are trying to propose here, we are suggesting that they bring up the Thompson bill to the floor under an open rule, and even get a motion to recommit, but under an open rule. Take us up on this offer because we have had no open rules in this Congress. Try it; you might like it. It might be contagious. We might see more open rules where Democrats, Republicans, liberals, and conservatives can offer their ideas. We suggest they bring it up under an open rule.

I would urge all of my colleagues to think about that before they cast their vote on defeating the previous question.

Mr. Speaker, I began by saying the frustration I have with this place is that we either do nothing or we make things worse for people. Going back to this issue on creating a commission to deal with gun violence, there are a lot of things I would like to do, but maybe this is a way to get some bipartisan buy-in to actually try and figure out how to respond to this epidemic of gun violence.

There have been 26 bills on gun safety introduced in this Congress sponsored by Democrats and Republicans. I include that list in the RECORD.

#### GUN SAFETY BILLS IN THE 115TH CONGRESS

1. H. Res. 367 Establishing the Select Committee on Gun Violence Prevention.

2. H.R. 2841 Title: Disarm Hate Act

3. H. Res. 361 Supporting the goals and ideals of "National Gun Violence Awareness Day" and "National Gun Violence Awareness Month".

4. H.R. 57 Accidental Firearms Transfers Reporting Act of 2017

5. H.R. 62 Gun Violence Reduction Resources Act of 2017 (200 additional ATF Agents)

6. H.R. 1982 To authorize funding to increase access to mental health care treatment to reduce gun violence

7. H.R. 370 Amending the Rules of the House of Representatives to require that a standing committee (or subcommittee thereof) hearing be held whenever there is a moment of silence in the House for a tragedy involving gun violence

8. H.R. 630 National Statistics on Deadly Force Transparency Act of 2017

9. H.R. 445 Buyback Our Safety Act (gun buyback program)

10. H.R. 1079 Campus Gun Policy Transparency Act

11. H.R. 163 Gun Manufacturers Accountability Act

12. H.R. 2033 Undetectable Firearms Modernization Act

13. H.R. 3013 Help Communities Fight Violent Crime Act

14. H.R. 1111 Department of Peacebuilding Act of 2017

15. H. Res. 90 Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that gun violence is a public health issue and Congress should enact by the end of the 115th Congress comprehensive Federal legislation that protects the Second Amendment and keeps communities safe and healthy, including expanding enforceable background checks for all commercial gun sales, improving the mental health system in the United States, and making gun trafficking and straw purchasing a Federal crime.

16. H.R. 1475 Title: Gun Trafficking Prevention Act of 2017

17. H.R. 1612 Title: Gun Show Loophole Closing Act of 2017

18. H.R. 1708 Firearm Risk Protection Act of 2017 (insurance for gun owners)

19. H.R. 1832 To authorize the appropriation of funds to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for conducting or supporting research on firearms safety or gun violence prevention.

20. H.R. 2380 Handgun Trigger Safety Act of 2017

21. H.R. 1832 To authorize the appropriation of funds to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for conducting or supporting research on firearms safety or gun violence prevention.

22. H.R. 1478 Gun Violence Research Act

23. H.R. 3613 Safer Neighborhoods Gun Buyback Act of 2017

24. H.R. 3361 SECURE Firearm Storage Act

25. King-Thompson Background Check Bill (closes gun show and Charleston loopholes, not yet reintroduced)

26. No Fly No Buy (not yet reintroduced)

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, people have their ideas. Some of them are maybe not so good ideas; some of them may be very good ideas. But let's begin to talk about what our response should be. That is at least doing something. That is better than a moment of silence or offering your thoughts and prayers to people who were victims in this terrible latest massacre.

We have got to do something, and nothing is no longer sufficient. We can't keep on doing that. People are horrified that Congress seems indifferent. We can't even have a hearing on this issue, never mind a debate on the floor.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to defeat the previous question so we can bring up the Thompson bill, and maybe we can start coming together and coming up with some ideas that might save some lives. That is the least we can do.

Mr. Speaker, to my other point that we either do nothing or you guys do things that make life worse for people, it brings us to the budget. This budget basically, in my opinion, is a cruel budget that targets, disproportionately, those who are poor and those who are in the middle class.

It is astounding to me where some of the savings are sought. The idea that

you would cut SNAP by \$164 billion, a program that provides food to people; a program where 67 percent of the people on the benefit are children, are senior citizens, or people who are disabled; a program where those who can work, the majority of them work, but they earn so little in the workforce that they still qualify for that program. You want to take that benefit away, a benefit that is \$1.40 per person per meal.

Come on. What are people thinking when they make those kinds of suggestions?

By the way, we all know what this is. It is basically a pretext to move forward on your tax cut plan, which benefits Donald Trump, Donald Trump's family, and Donald Trump's friends.

This idea that somehow this would be deficit neutral is laughable. The OMB Director, Mick Mulvaney, stated: "If we simply look at this as being deficit neutral, you're never going to get the type of tax reform and tax reductions" that you guys are looking for. That is the former colleague and the OMB Director.

So we all know what is going on here. But people ought to think long and hard before they cast their vote for this Republican budget. Budgets basically indicate what we value, what we think is important.

I have got to tell you, I just don't believe that if people read this budget, that a majority of my friends, we have disagreements on lots of issues, but I just don't believe that deep in your heart you actually believe this stuff. I mean, this is offensive.

We ought to be talking about lifting people up and not putting them down. We ought to be talking about all of the citizens of this country with respect and treating them with dignity. We ought not treat people who are in poverty as if somehow they are invisible, and that is what this budget does.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote down this Republican budget. I urge them to defeat the previous question so we can bring up, under an open rule—under an open rule, which nobody in this Congress has seen—a bill that would allow us to create a commission, a bipartisan commission to examine gun violence.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, what I love most about budget day is the fact that we do get to talk about our competing ideas. I do reject some of the implications that we have heard that what we are talking about is whether we love people or not. That is actually not the debate today.

I want to stipulate that I know the men and women of this Chamber on a personal basis, and each and every one of them that I know personally loves and cares for their constituency back home. The debate that we have is not whether we love people; it is how to love people best.

Do you love people best by giving them a check or giving them a job? That is a legitimate debate.

Do you love people best by leaving their children with them or taking their children away from them? That is a legitimate debate.

I believe in families. I believe in the dignity of work. I want to have those debates.

I think we do ourselves a disservice when we describe what is going on here today on the floor of the House as anything other than our absolute legal and governmental responsibility to pass a budget for the United States of America. Wherever you sit on the continuum, the political continuum, the economic continuum, the regional continuum, there is a budget for you today.

If what you believe, Mr. Speaker, is that the problems we have in this country are because taxes are not high enough, there is going to be a Democratic substitute coming out of the Budget Committee that will raise taxes about \$2.4 trillion. If you think taxes are too low, we can raise them \$2.4 trillion. That budget never balances. That budget never stops borrowing from our children and our grandchildren. That budget never stops mortgaging America's future. But it is a legitimate debate because folks are taking those funds and they are investing them in America. They are prioritizing that investment over balancing.

If you believe \$2.4 trillion is not enough, Mr. Speaker, we will have a budget from the Congressional Black Caucus today that will raise taxes by \$4.2 trillion. We can raise taxes by \$4.2 trillion. Again, that budget never balances. It spends all that money and more, but it is a legitimate debate about where those dollars come from and where those dollars are going. I am glad we are going to be able to have it.

If raising taxes by \$4.2 trillion isn't enough for you, Mr. Speaker, we have the Congressional Progressive Caucus' budget on the floor. It raises taxes by just over \$10 trillion. Again, the budget never balances. It spends all of that money and more and continues to borrow from our children and grandchildren, but it is a legitimate debate and it is a conversation worth having. I am proud that the Rules Committee made that debate in order.

To describe what is happening on the floor of the House today, Mr. Speaker, as anything other than what is exactly expected of this institution is to do us all a disservice.

I talked about making taxes higher. Let me talk a second about making taxes lower.

I talked to some friends back home; I talk to constituents; I talk to folks for whom I work, and some of them might say: "Rob, I have enough to feed my family, and if it means paying down the debt and deficit, I am willing to pay a little bit more." Other members in the community, Mr. Speaker, say: "For Pete's sake, I am trying to grow

a business here, Rob. I am trying to employ your friends and neighbors. I am trying to keep the community working. I am plowing everything I have back into the business. If I don't have to pay as much in taxes, I am going to be able to hire more people."

The Republican budget, Mr. Speaker, takes a shot at once-in-a-generation tax reform—once in a generation. This isn't what we talked about last year or the year before that or the year before that. This is a conversation we have not had since Ronald Reagan and Tip O'Neill had it in 1986. This is a conversation that we have not had since America slipped from number one in the world to almost last in the industrialized world in terms of tax competitiveness. This is a conversation that America has longed for and that we can deliver today.

Mr. Speaker, let's have these debates about what our priorities are. Let's have these debates about whether or not we can do better. At the end of the day, let's agree that we, in fact, can do better, that our bosses back home expect us to do better, and that by supporting this rule and supporting one of the underlying budgets, we, in fact, will do better.

I encourage my colleagues, Mr. Speaker, support this rule, begin this debate. Let's pass this budget. Let's fulfill our promises. Let's make the difference that we all came here to make.

The material previously referred to by Mr. MCGOVERN is as follows:

AN AMENDMENT TO H. RES. 553 OFFERED BY  
MR. MCGOVERN

At the end of the resolution, add the following new sections:

SEC. 2. Immediately upon adoption of this resolution the Speaker shall, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the resolution (H. Res. 367) to establish the Select Committee on Gun Violence Prevention. The first reading of the resolution shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the resolution are waived. General debate shall be confined to the resolution and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Rules. After general debate the resolution shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. All points of order against provisions in the resolution are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the resolution for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the resolution to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the resolution and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion or demand for division of the question except one motion to recommit with or without instructions. If the Committee of the Whole rises and reports that it has come to no resolution on the resolution, then on the next legislative day the House shall, immediately after the third daily order of business under clause 1 of rule XIV, resolve into the Committee of the Whole for further consideration of the resolution.

SEC. 3. Clause 1(c) of rule XIX shall not apply to the consideration of House Resolution 367.

THE VOTE ON THE PREVIOUS QUESTION: WHAT  
IT REALLY MEANS

This vote, the vote on whether to order the previous question on a special rule, is not merely a procedural vote. A vote against ordering the previous question is a vote against the Republican majority agenda and a vote to allow the Democratic minority to offer an alternative plan. It is a vote about what the House should be debating.

Mr. Clarence Cannon's *Precedents of the House of Representatives* (VI, 308-311), describes the vote on the previous question on the rule as "a motion to direct or control the consideration of the subject before the House being made by the Member in charge." To defeat the previous question is to give the opposition a chance to decide the subject before the House. Cannon cites the Speaker's ruling of January 13, 1920, to the effect that "the refusal of the House to sustain the demand for the previous question passes the control of the resolution to the opposition" in order to offer an amendment. On March 15, 1909, a member of the majority party offered a rule resolution. The House defeated the previous question and a member of the opposition rose to a parliamentary inquiry, asking who was entitled to recognition. Speaker Joseph G. Cannon (R-Illinois) said: "The previous question having been refused, the gentleman from New York, Mr. Fitzgerald, who had asked the gentleman to yield to him for an amendment, is entitled to the first recognition."

The Republican majority may say "the vote on the previous question is simply a vote on whether to proceed to an immediate vote on adopting the resolution . . . [and] has no substantive legislative or policy implications whatsoever." But that is not what they have always said. Listen to the Republican Leadership Manual on the Legislative Process in the United States House of Representatives, (6th edition, page 135). Here's how the Republicans describe the previous question vote in their own manual: "Although it is generally not possible to amend the rule because the majority Member controlling the time will not yield for the purpose of offering an amendment, the same result may be achieved by voting down the previous question on the rule. . . . When the motion for the previous question is defeated, control of the time passes to the Member who led the opposition to ordering the previous question. That Member, because he then controls the time, may offer an amendment to the rule, or yield for the purpose of amendment."

In Deschler's *Procedure in the U.S. House of Representatives*, the subchapter titled "Amending Special Rules" states: "a refusal to order the previous question on such a rule [a special rule reported from the Committee on Rules] opens the resolution to amendment and further debate." (Chapter 21, section 21.2) Section 21.3 continues: "Upon rejection of the motion for the previous question on a resolution reported from the Committee on Rules, control shifts to the Member leading the opposition to the previous question, who may offer a proper amendment or motion and who controls the time for debate thereon."

Clearly, the vote on the previous question on a rule does have substantive policy implications. It is one of the only available tools for those who oppose the Republican majority's agenda and allows those with alternative views the opportunity to offer an alternative plan.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on ordering the previous question.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 9 of rule XX, the Chair will reduce to 5 minutes the minimum time for any electronic vote on the question of adoption of the resolution.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 231, nays 189, not voting 13, as follows:

[Roll No. 551]

#### YEAS—231

Abraham	Garrett	Mitchell
Aderholt	Gianforte	Moolenaar
Allen	Gibbs	Mooney (WV)
Amash	Gohmert	Mullin
Arrington	Goodlatte	Murphy (PA)
Babin	Gosar	Newhouse
Bacon	Gowdy	Noem
Banks (IN)	Granger	Norman
Barletta	Graves (GA)	Nunes
Barr	Graves (LA)	Olson
Barton	Graves (MO)	Palazzo
Bergman	Griffith	Paulsen
Biggs	Grothman	Pearce
Bilirakis	Guthrie	Perry
Bishop (MI)	Handel	Pittenger
Bishop (UT)	Harper	Poliquin
Black	Harris	Posey
Blackburn	Hartzler	Ratcliffe
Blum	Hensarling	Reed
Bost	Herrera Beutler	Reichert
Brady (TX)	Hice, Jody B.	Renacci
Brat	Higgins (LA)	Rice (SC)
Brooks (AL)	Hill	Roby
Brooks (IN)	Holding	Roe (TN)
Buchanan	Hollingsworth	Rogers (AL)
Buck	Hudson	Rogers (KY)
Bucshon	Huizenga	Rohrabacher
Budd	Hultgren	Rokita
Burgess	Hunter	Rooney, Francis
Byrne	Hurd	Rooney, Thomas J.
Calvert	Issa	Ros-Lehtinen
Carter (GA)	Jenkins (KS)	Roskam
Carter (TX)	Jenkins (WV)	Ross
Chabot	Johnson (LA)	Rothfus
Cheney	Johnson (OH)	Rouzer
Coffman	Johnson, Sam	Royce (CA)
Cole	Jones	Russell
Collins (GA)	Jordan	Rutherford
Collins (NY)	Joyce (OH)	Sanford
Comer	Katko	Schweikert
Comstock	Kelly (MS)	Scott, Austin
Conaway	Kelly (PA)	Sensenbrenner
Cook	King (IA)	Sessions
Costello (PA)	King (NY)	Shimkus
Cramer	Kinzing	Shuster
Crawford	Knight	Smith (MO)
Culberson	Kustoff (TN)	Smith (NE)
Curbelo (FL)	Labrador	Smith (NJ)
Davidson	LaHood	Smith (TX)
Davis, Rodney	LaMalfa	Smucker
Denham	Lamborn	Stefanik
Dent	Lance	Stivers
DeSantis	Latta	Taylor
DesJarlais	Lewis (MN)	Tenney
Diaz-Balart	LoBiondo	Thompson (PA)
Donovan	Love	Thornberry
Duffy	Lucas	Tiberi
Duncan (SC)	Luetkemeyer	Tipton
Duncan (TN)	MacArthur	Trott
Dunn	Marchant	Turner
Emmer	Marino	Upton
Estes (KS)	Marshall	Valadao
Farenthold	Massie	Wagner
Faso	Mast	Walberg
Ferguson	McCauley	Walden
Fitzpatrick	McClintock	Walker
Fleischmann	McHenry	Walorski
Flores	McKinley	Walters, Mimi
Fortenberry	McMorris	Weber (TX)
Fox	Rodgers	Webster (FL)
Franks (AZ)	McSally	Wenstrup
Frelinghuysen	Meadows	
Gaetz	Meehan	
Gallagher	Messer	

Westerman  
Williams  
Wilson (SC)  
Wittman

Womack  
Woodall  
Yoder  
Yoho

Young (AK)  
Young (IA)  
Zeldin

#### NAYS—189

Adams	Gallego	Nolan
Aguilar	Garamendi	Norcross
Barragán	Gomez	O'Halleran
Bass	Gonzalez (TX)	O'Rourke
Beatty	Gottheimer	Pallone
Bera	Green, Al	Panetta
Beyer	Green, Gene	Pascarell
Bishop (GA)	Grijalva	Payne
Blumenauer	Gutiérrez	Perlmutter
Blunt Rochester	Hanabusa	Peters
Bonamici	Hastings	Peterson
Boyle, Brendan F.	Heck	Pingree
Brady (PA)	Higgins (NY)	Pocan
Brown (MD)	Himes	Polis
Brownley (CA)	Hoyer	Price (NC)
Bustos	Huffman	Quigley
Butterfield	Jackson Lee	Raskin
Capuano	Jayapal	Rice (NY)
Carbajal	Jeffries	Richmond
Cárdenas	Johnson (GA)	Roybal-Allard
Carson (IN)	Johnson, E. B.	Ruiz
Cartwright	Kaptur	Ruppersberger
Castor (FL)	Keating	Rush
Castro (TX)	Kelly (IL)	Ryan (OH)
Chu, Judy	Kennedy	Sánchez
Cicilline	Khan	Sarbanes
Clark (MA)	Kildee	Schakowsky
Clarke (NY)	Kilmer	Schiff
Clay	Kind	Schneider
Cleaver	Krishnamoorthi	Schrader
Clyburn	Kuster (NH)	Scott (VA)
Cohen	Langevin	Scott, David
Connolly	Larsen (WA)	Serrano
Conyers	Larson (CT)	Sewell (AL)
Cooper	Lawrence	Shea-Porter
Correa	Lawson (FL)	Sherman
Costa	Lee	Sinema
Courtney	Levin	Sires
Crist	Lewis (GA)	Slaughter
Crowley	Lieu, Ted	Smith (WA)
Cuellar	Lipinski	Soto
Cummings	Loeb sack	Speier
Davis (CA)	Lofgren	Suozzi
Davis, Danny	Lowenthal	Swalwell (CA)
DeFazio	Lowe	Takano
DeGette	Lujan Grisham, M.	Thompson (CA)
Delaney	Luján, Ben Ray	Thompson (MS)
DeLauro	Lynch	Tonko
DelBene	Maloney,	Torres
Demings	Carolyn B.	Tsongas
DeSaulnier	Maloney, Sean	Vargas
Deutch	Matsui	Veasey
Dingell	McCollum	Vela
Doggett	McEachin	Velázquez
Ellison	McGovern	Visclosky
Engel	McNerney	Walz
Eshoo	Meeks	Wasserman
Españillat	Meng	Schultz
Esty (CT)	Moore	Waters, Maxine
Evans	Moulton	Watson Coleman
Foster	Murphy (FL)	Welch
Frankel (FL)	Nadler	Wilson (FL)
Fudge	Napolitano	Yarmuth
Gabbard	Neal	

#### NOT VOTING—13

Amodei  
Bridenstine  
Doyle, Michael F.  
Kihuen

Long  
Loudermilk  
McCarthy  
Palmer  
Pelosi

Poe (TX)  
Rosen  
Scalise  
Titus

□ 1351

Messrs. GRIJALVA and HOYER changed their vote from “yea” to “nay.”

Mr. FITZPATRICK changed his vote from “nay” to “yea.”

So the previous question was ordered.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the resolution.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

#### RECORDED VOTE

Mr. McGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 232, noes 188, not voting 13, as follows:

[Roll No. 552]

#### AYES—232

Abraham	Goodlatte	Olson
Aderholt	Gosar	Palazzo
Allen	Gowdy	Palmer
Amash	Granger	Paulsen
Arrington	Graves (GA)	Pearce
Babin	Graves (LA)	Perry
Bacon	Graves (MO)	Pittenger
Banks (IN)	Griffith	Poe (TX)
Barletta	Grothman	Poliquin
Barr	Guthrie	Posey
Barton	Handel	Ratcliffe
Bergman	Harper	Reed
Biggs	Harris	Reichert
Bilirakis	Hartzler	Renacci
Bishop (MI)	Hensarling	Rice (SC)
Bishop (UT)	Herrera Beutler	Roby
Black	Hice, Jody B.	Roe (TN)
Blackburn	Higgins (LA)	Rogers (AL)
Blum	Hill	Rogers (KY)
Bost	Holding	Rohrabacher
Brady (TX)	Hollingsworth	Rokita
Brat	Hudson	Rooney, Francis
Brooks (AL)	Huizenga	Rooney, Thomas J.
Brooks (IN)	Hunter	Ros-Lehtinen
Buchanan	Hurd	Roskam
Buck	Issa	Ross
Bucshon	Jenkins (KS)	Rothfus
Budd	Jenkins (WV)	Rouzer
Burgess	Johnson (LA)	Royce (CA)
Byrne	Johnson (OH)	Russell
Calvert	Johnson, Sam	Rutherford
Carter (GA)	Jones	Sanford
Carter (TX)	Jordan	Schweikert
Chabot	Joyce (OH)	Scott, Austin
Cheney	Katko	Sensenbrenner
Coffman	Kelly (MS)	Sessions
Cole	Kelly (PA)	Shimkus
Collins (GA)	King (IA)	Shuster
Collins (NY)	King (NY)	Simpson
Comer	Kinzing	Smith (MO)
Comstock	Knight	Smith (NE)
Conaway	Kustoff (TN)	Smith (NJ)
Cook	Labrador	Smith (TX)
Costello (PA)	LaHood	Smucker
Cramer	LaMalfa	Stefanik
Crawford	Lamborn	Stivers
Culberson	Lance	Taylor
Curbelo (FL)	Latta	Tenney
Davidson	Lewis (MN)	Thompson (PA)
Davis, Rodney	LoBiondo	Thornberry
Denham	Love	Tiberi
Dent	Lucas	Tipton
DeSantis	Luetkemeyer	Trott
DesJarlais	MacArthur	Turner
Diaz-Balart	MacArthur	Upton
Donovan	Marchant	Valadao
Duffy	Marino	Wagner
Duncan (SC)	Marshall	Walberg
Duncan (TN)	Massie	Walden
Dunn	McCauley	Walker
Emmer	McClintock	Walorski
Estes (KS)	McHenry	Walters, Mimi
Farenthold	McKinley	Weber (TX)
Faso	McMorris	Webster (FL)
Ferguson	Rodgers	Wenstrup
Fitzpatrick	McSally	
Fleischmann	Meadows	
Flores	Meehan	
Fortenberry	Messer	
Fox		
Franks (AZ)		
Frelinghuysen		
Gaetz		
Gallagher		

#### NOES—188

Adams	Beatty	Blumenauer
Aguilar	Bera	Blunt Rochester
Barragán	Beyer	Bonamici
Bass	Bishop (GA)	

Boyle, Brendan F.	Grijalva	O'Rourke
Brady (PA)	Gutiérrez	Pallone
Brown (MD)	Hanabusa	Panetta
Brownley (CA)	Hastings	Pascarell
Bustos	Heck	Payne
Butterfield	Higgins (NY)	Pelosi
Capuano	Himes	Perlmutter
Carbajal	Hoyer	Peters
Cárdenas	Huffman	Peterson
Carson (IN)	Jackson Lee	Pingree
Cartwright	Jayapal	Pocan
Castor (FL)	Jeffries	Polis
Castro (TX)	Johnson (GA)	Price (NC)
Chu, Judy	Johnson, E. B.	Quigley
Cicilline	Kaptur	Raskin
Clark (MA)	Keating	Rice (NY)
Clarke (NY)	Kelly (IL)	Richmond
Clay	Kennedy	Roybal-Allard
Cleaver	Khanna	Ruiz
Clyburn	Kildee	Ruppersberger
Cohen	Kilmer	Rush
Connolly	Kind	Ryan (OH)
Conyers	Krishnamoorthi	Sánchez
Cooper	Kuster (NH)	Sarbanes
Correa	Langevin	Schakowsky
Costa	Larsen (WA)	Schiff
Courtney	Larson (CT)	Schneider
Crist	Lawrence	Scott (VA)
Crowley	Lawson (FL)	Serrano
Cuellar	Lee	Sewell (AL)
Cummings	Levin	Shea-Porter
Davis (CA)	Lewis (GA)	Sherman
Davis, Danny	Lieu, Ted	Sinema
DeFazio	Lipinski	Sires
DeGette	Loebach	Slaughter
Delaney	Lofgren	Smith (WA)
DeLauro	Lowenthal	Soto
DelBene	Lowe	Speier
Demings	Lujan Grisham,	Suozi
DeSaulnier	M.	Swalwell (CA)
Deutch	Lujan, Ben Ray	Takano
Dingell	Lynch	Thompson (CA)
Doggett	Maloney,	Thompson (MS)
Ellison	Carolyn B.	Tonko
Engel	Maloney, Sean	Torres
Eshoo	Matsui	Tsongas
Espallat	McCollum	Vargas
Esty (CT)	McEachin	Veasey
Evans	McGovern	Vela
Foster	McNerney	Velázquez
Frankel (FL)	Meeks	Visclosky
Fudge	Meng	Walz
Gabbard	Moore	Wasserman
Gallgo	Moulton	Schultz
Garamendi	Murphy (FL)	Waters, Maxine
Gomez	Nadler	Watson Coleman
Gonzalez (TX)	Napolitano	Welch
Gottheimer	Neal	Wilson (FL)
Green, Al	Nolan	Yarmuth
Green, Gene	Norcross	
	O'Halleran	

## NOT VOTING—13

Amodei	Kihuen	Scalise
Bridenstine	Long	Schrader
Doyle, Michael F.	Loudermilk	Scott, David
Hultgren	McCarthy	Titus
	Rosen	

□ 1359

So the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

### COMMUNICATION FROM THE DEMOCRATIC LEADER

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Honorable NANCY PELOSI, Democratic Leader:

OCTOBER 4, 2017.

Hon. PAUL RYAN,  
*Speaker of the House of Representatives, U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC.*

DEAR SPEAKER RYAN: Pursuant to section 3 of the Alyce Spotted Bear and Walter Soboleff Commission on Native Children Act (Pub. L. 114-244), I am pleased to appoint Dr. Dolores Subia BigFoot of Norman, Oklahoma to the Alyce Spotted Bear and Walter

Soboleff Commission on Native Children Commission.

Thank you for your attention to this appointment.

Sincerely,

NANCY PELOSI,  
*Democratic Leader.*

### CONCURRENT RESOLUTION ON THE BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2018

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. BLACK. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H. Con. Res. 71, currently under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Tennessee?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 553 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 71.

The Chair appoints the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. LAMBORN) to preside over the Committee of the Whole.

□ 1402

#### 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 consideration of 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, with Mr. LAMBORN in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to the rule, the concurrent resolution is considered read the first time.

General debate shall not exceed 4 hours, with 3 hours confined to the congressional budget, equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Budget, and 1 hour on the subject of economic goals and policies, equally divided and controlled by the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. TIBERI) and the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY) or their designees.

The gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACK) and the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. YARMUTH) each will control 90 minutes of debate on the congressional budget.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Tennessee.

Mrs. BLACK. Mr. Chair, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of H. Con. Res. 71, our budget, Building a Better America. Our budget takes real, tangible steps to balance the budget, build a stronger military,

unlock tax reform, and support an economy that creates opportunity for all Americans.

In past years, our budget resolution was a vision document, but this year it is different. With the election of President Trump, our budget goes from being a vision document to being a governing document that outlines how we build a better America for our children and our grandchildren.

Today, we have the opportunity to fulfill our promises to the American people. Balancing the budget by 2027 is our top priority. Our national debt stands at \$20 trillion, with \$9 trillion added over just the last 8 years. For too long, both parties in Washington have failed to abide by a simple principle that all American families and small businesses do, that we must live within our means.

Balancing the budget requires us to make some tough decisions, but the consequences of inaction far outweigh any political risk we may face.

Unless we take bold steps to bring our excessive spending and debt under control, a sovereign debt crisis is the natural conclusion. Failure to take swift and decisive action is not only inexcusable, it is immoral.

The budget resolution before us takes real steps to put our country on a sound fiscal path that balances in 10 years and will allow us to start paying down our national debt.

Building a Better America also assumes bold reforms to strengthening programs that our seniors and our most vulnerable citizens rely on and ensure that these programs can continue to serve them for generations to come.

While our budget includes reforms to discretionary spending, we also strongly believe that mandatory spending must be addressed in this budget resolution and in budget resolutions to come.

Mandatory spending is already more than two-thirds of all of our Federal spending, and that number will only continue to grow, and that is why our committee felt strongly about addressing mandatory spending programs in this budget through reconciliation.

Our budget requires 11 authorizing committees to find a minimum of \$203 billion in savings and reforms over the 10-year budget window with an expectation that the reforms will result in significantly higher savings.

This package of mandatory reforms is the largest since the 1990s, through reconciliation, and it is the first step to change the culture of Washington in our spending.

Our budget also promotes tax reform and regulatory reform to get the Federal Government out of the way and allow our free market economy to thrive. The larger the government, the less freedom individuals and businesses have to thrive, grow, hire, and innovate. The Obama economy left millions of Americans behind with over 14 million people leaving the labor workforce in just the last 8 years.