

CELEBRATING GOD'S WORD

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

Mr. ARRINGTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise to support 76 years of celebrating God's Word during National Bible Week. No other book has sold more copies or changed more lives than the Bible.

Abraham Lincoln said: "In regard for this great book, I have this to say, 'It is the best gift God has given to man. All that the good Savior gave to the world was communicated through this book.'"

May we always remember the impact the Bible has had on this country and on our democracy. May we govern according to its timeless precepts and principles, and may God bless these United States of America.

□ 1730

GOP TAX SCAM BILL

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

Ms. JUDY CHU of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the GOP tax scam bill, H.R. 1, which, considering who it really helps, should be labeled "H.R. 1 percent."

As a member of the Ways and Means Committee, I offered amendments to ensure the middle class benefits, but Republicans rejected those proposals in order to give away tax cuts for corporate interests and the top 1 percent. Instead, H.R. 1 percent repeals the deductions for State and local taxes, raising taxes on California families who already pay more to the Federal Government than they receive back. In fact, the average middle class California family who owns a home will see an average tax increase of 26.4 percent, making California the hardest hit State in the country. It is outrageous.

The SALT deduction enables communities to fund important services that improve our quality of life, like law enforcement, infrastructure, and education. But repealing it forces constituents in my State to either accept higher taxes or a lower standard of living, all to pay for tax cuts for corporations and the wealthiest few.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote "no" on the GOP tax scam.

TAX REFORM

(Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I would love to vote for a bipartisan tax reform that supports middle class families, ensures the wealthiest Americans pay their fair share, invests in the next generation, and protects small businesses.

However, I can't vote for legislation that would raise taxes for 13 million middle class households next year; or that would give the top 0.1 percent of Americans an average tax cut of over \$320,000 while raising taxes on 36 million families by 2027; or that would provide more tax benefit to the richest 1 percent than the lower 95 percent of Americans combined.

Saddling the next generation with \$1.7 trillion in debt while prioritizing millionaires and billionaires at the expense of everybody else is irresponsible and cruel.

Mr. Speaker, I could spend countless hours describing how this bill harms middle class families, students, the elderly, and businesses in my home State of New Mexico, but since I only have 1 minute to address the floor today, I will be back tomorrow to talk about how this bill devastates investment and job creation in the quickly growing renewable energy industry in my home State of New Mexico.

TAX REFORM

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FITZPATRICK). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentleman from California (Mr. GARAMENDI) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, a moment ago, you heard from my colleague from California (Ms. JUDY CHU) about the tax bill. She put the first page of H.R. 1 up and she added this little percentage, H.R. 1 percent. I thought that was not only accurate, but it really does reflect what I was going to show a moment ago, and then I decided to use hers.

H.R. 1 is really about the 1 percent. The top 1 percent wealthy Americans would get 50 percent of a \$1.5 trillion gift from the American people, which really amounts to an enormous transfer of wealth from the working men and women of America who depend upon programs like education—and that was discussed by my colleagues a few moments ago—and depend upon medical services from Medicare, Medicaid. In California, we call it Medi-Cal.

But what is going to happen here with this \$1.5 trillion tax cut—and when you add the interest to it, basically, a \$2.3 trillion bogus deal that our Republican colleagues are putting forth—is what I call the Texas two-step. This really is Mr. BRADY from Texas' program to really do a two-step, together with the Speaker of the House, Mr. RYAN.

The two-step was laid out in the budget bill, and the two-step is this:

First, make a monumental tax cut that really is for the superwealthy. And then as soon as you get that signed by President Trump, you do the second step, which is to do massive cuts so that you can deal with the deficit.

So I am going to just bring up the issue of the deficit for just a moment

with this. I don't expect you to really look at all of these numbers, but this is the structural deficit that exists today: \$563 billion structural deficit. Every year—this year and in the past years—we are running a serious deficit: \$1.5 trillion. Ten years from now, it is going to be over a \$1 trillion-a-year structural deficit.

So what does H.R. 1, the 1 percent bill, do to you?

What it does is it adds to the structural deficit this year \$115 billion; and, in 2027, it will add \$155 billion.

You can look at it this way—and perhaps this is a little easier to understand. It is about the deficit, and this is why the two-step is going to happen.

By the way, all of the deficit hawks that once occupied that entire array on the right side of the congressional House of Representatives disappeared. They migrated. They migrated south or somewhere. But I will tell you this: as soon as this H.R. 1 percent passes, the deficit hawks will return with a mighty force to make cuts.

So here is what happens to the deficit: it starts down there—this is the annual, not the total deficit—and rises to this in 2027. This little orange across the top is what will be added. We don't deal with the deficit directly.

So here is the deal, folks: cut taxes now so that the superwealthy, five of which are in President Trump's administration—oh, yes, eliminate the estate tax. Great idea.

Do you know what that means to the Trump family?

If his wealth is \$10 billion, as he says, what it means is that somewhere around a \$4 billion tax avoidance. Eliminating the estate tax and the Trump family immediately saves \$4 billion. But maybe his net worth is really only \$4 billion. So maybe it is just a \$1 billion tax savings. That is just on the estate tax alone.

This is a bad deal for Americans. It will increase the deficit and it will create what we call the Texas two-step. Or maybe we should call it the Speaker RYAN two-step.

Mr. Speaker, let me introduce a couple of my colleagues who have joined us today from the State of New York.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from New York (Mr. SUOZZI) to comment on this piece of legislation and what it means to his constituents.

Mr. SUOZZI. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. GARAMENDI for bringing this Special Order to the floor today.

Mr. Speaker, I am here to point out the unfairness of the Republican-led bill for tax reform, as they claim, that would be devastating to New York's middle class families.

I want the people at home to know that the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops have said:

"This proposal appears to be the first Federal income tax modification in American history that will raise income taxes on the working poor while simultaneously providing a large tax cut to the wealthy."

Mr. Speaker, this bill is flawed and unfair on many levels. One thing I have learned since taking office back in January, here in this Congress, is how very different the regions of this country are. It is different from State to State and it is different from place to place. The amount of money that people make in different regions is different. Their cost of living is different, their property tax bills are different, and their State income taxes are as different as night and day.

There are now 105 million full-time jobs in the United States of America. Fifty-nine million of those jobs pay less than \$50,000 a year. Eighty-six million of those 105 million full-time jobs pay less than \$75,000 per year. In my district, the average salary is actually higher than that, but so are their property taxes, so are their income taxes, and so is there cost of living.

While this bill could be a net positive for some Americans in many regions—in my region and in many other regions, and in my State and my district specifically—this bill is a huge net negative for middle class families.

One particularly devastating element of this proposal is the elimination of the State and local tax deduction that would be patently unfair to the over 250,000 hardworking families in my district that rely on that important deduction. New Yorkers claim the State tax deduction more than just about any other State. In my district, we have more people in the State than any other place that claim the State and local tax deduction. It is the top 10 of the Nation.

Let's look at the some of the specifics of what actually happens in my district:

People making between \$50,000 and \$75,000 in my hometown of Glen Cove will see a 39 percent tax increase. In my hometown of Glen Cove, a family that makes between \$100,000 and \$200,000 will pay, roughly, \$2,100 more in taxes under this plan.

In Huntington, every single family making over \$50,000 a year will see a tax increase. Every family in Huntington making between \$50,000 and \$75,000 a year will see—get this—a 135 percent increase on what they currently pay. Every family making between \$100,000 and \$200,000 a year will see a \$3,000 tax increase.

In Whitestone, every individual tax filer making \$50,000 or more will see a tax increase, regardless of their income.

Mr. Speaker, the evidence is crystal clear for people in my district and in many places throughout this country.

This tax reform plan, as it is called, is a punch in the gut to middle class taxpayers. These are hardworking people who deserve to be lifted up, not slapped down, by draconian tax increases that offset tax cuts going to the superrich.

How could anyone support a bill that targets our middle class in such a way is unfathomable. When I was elected to

Congress, I came here ready and willing to work—and I still stand ready and willing to work—across party lines to get things done, even tax reform. I want to see tax reform in this country, but I can't compromise my values. I can't let down the families in my district who are going to be hurt by this plan.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to try to do what is right: protect the hardworking Americans—the hardworking New Yorkers—who play by the rules and ask for very little in return by voting against this ill-conceived legislation, and protect the State and local tax deduction for our middle class.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. SUOZZI for his remarks. I appreciate him bringing to my attention the SALT—the State and local tax.

What basically happens is the Republicans are putting salt on the wound and causing an enormous amount of pain for Americans—certainly in California, another high-cost State; Illinois; New Jersey; and Massachusetts. This is a problem for about 50 percent of the population of this Nation that is going to see enormous things.

In my own State, there are 120,000—not 250,000, as in the gentleman's State, but 120,000—who are looking at somewhere over a \$12,000 loss deduction.

Mr. SUOZZI. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from New York.

Mr. SUOZZI. Mr. Speaker, I just want to point out that in the State of New York, there are many Republicans who have come out against this tax bill because of the fact that it will hurt so many middle class families.

□ 1745

Eliminating the State and local tax deduction is completely and patently unfair. This State and local tax deduction has been in place for over 100 years. Why should someone pay taxes on taxes they have already paid to their State and local governments?

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, there is one additional factor—I know this is the case in California and also in New York—and that is both New York and California are net contributors to other States. In our State of California, even with this deduction, far more tax revenue flows to the Federal Government than Federal Government revenue comes back to the State of California. It is probably in the 15 to 20 percent net loss range to the State of California, and I think in New York it is similar.

Mr. SUOZZI. Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to point out, in the State of New York, we send \$48 billion a year more to the Federal Government than we get back from the Federal Government. We are the largest net donor in America to the Federal Government.

We are contributing this money to subsidize many programs that our colleagues don't want to support, but we

are also supporting their States. Many of the blue States in America, quite frankly, are huge net donors to the Federal Government, and many of the red States are huge net takers from the Federal Government. This is just another slap in the face to States like ours.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, Mr. SUOZZI and I could probably spend a couple of hours going back and forth.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Washington (Ms. JAYAPAL), who comes from the far side of the continent from New York, Washington State.

Ms. JAYAPAL. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from California (Mr. GARAMENDI) for yielding, but also, most of all, for his leadership on so many critical issues around jobs and infrastructure and, of course, for pulling together this Special Order hour tonight on this very important subject, because I think that the American people should understand that Republicans in Congress are trying to literally rewrite the U.S. economy with no hearings. There were a couple of markups, but those are not hearings.

We only just have been receiving some of the information about what is even in the bill to be able to then see what the effects are. The reality is that we owe it to the American people to share how this bill will affect their wallets, their housing, their education, their healthcare.

Contrary to what the majority would have you believe, this tax bill is yet another vehicle for Republicans to raise taxes on millions of middle class families and reward the wealthiest and the largest corporations by handing them trillions of dollars worth of taxes.

I think that Democrats certainly would love to see, as my colleague said, real tax reform; by that, I mean tax reform that benefits the middle class and tax reform that would allow us dollars to invest in jobs, in infrastructure, in education, in healthcare.

The twist this time that I find interesting is that the Republican majority has mysteriously jettisoned its dogmatic fidelity to reducing deficits because—make no mistake about it—however you slice it, this Republican tax bill will explode the budget deficits.

Mr. Speaker, Representative GARAMENDI talked about the two-step earlier, and that is right. We are all going to be dancing a two-step, because what the Congressional Budget Office literally just released is an analysis that said that this tax bill will lead to an immediate \$25 billion cut in Medicare.

This bill has many provisions in it. We have been talking about the State and local tax deduction elimination, and that is very important to my home State of Washington. We have about 800,000 people who are able to utilize that deduction and were able to reduce their tax liability by more than \$2,600 in Republican and Democratic districts

across our State. This deduction is significant to our communities because, really, it guards against double taxation.

The Fraternal Order of Police just came out against what I am calling the Republican tax scam and the SALT deduction elimination in particular, the State and local tax deduction elimination.

Why did the Fraternal Order of Police come out against this?

They came out against this because they understand the two-step that we are going to be dancing. They know that this tax bill and those kinds of deductions are ultimately going to lead to, and this is their words: endangering the ability to fund these essential law enforcement agencies that actually keep our communities safe.

Another crucial mistake that the Republican tax bill makes is eliminating tax-exempt bonds. For folks who are out there who are listening, the way to think about this is, if you have an affordable housing problem in your community, if you have a shortage of housing, which is happening across the country, then these tax-exempt bonds are the way that we help encourage and leverage local and State dollars for affordable housing, with these tax-exempt bonds. They advance, also, vital transportation projects, and they support infrastructure projects and hospitals and colleges and charities.

For example, in my district, Seattle Pacific University has been able to use these private activity bonds to finance nearly \$42 million in construction and renovations to the library and to the school of law. Similarly, the University of Washington Medical Center has been able to use these bonds to finance critical medical research that has been beneficial across the country.

In eliminating several education-related tax deductions, the Republican tax bill is also cutting off valuable paths forward for students of all ages to not only improve their lives, but also to join a workforce that depends on 21st century skills.

Mr. Speaker, I know that Mr. GARAMENDI spent a lot of time on this, but repealing the student loan interest deduction is in this bill.

Let me just remind people that we have \$1.4 trillion in student loan debt across the country. That is actually more than credit card debt in this country.

This bill, in order to get tax cuts to the largest corporations and wealthiest 1 percent of individuals, would repeal that interest deduction for student loans. In Washington State, that would harm more than 275,000 taxpayers who claim that benefit, and it would raise their yearly taxes by more than \$1,000 a year, on average.

This bill also hurts our responsible employers who provide tuition assistance to help workers continue their studies at associate's or undergraduate or graduate levels. Tens of thousands of students in Washington State have

benefited from this deduction, and that is true across the country. Nationwide, it is estimated that 70 percent of all companies offer tuition assistance.

There is another provision in this bill that everyone should be concerned with, and that is eliminating the medical expense deduction. That deduction basically says that, if you are suffering from a long-term, very expensive disease, if you have somebody in a nursing home and you have to pay for expensive long-term care for people, or maybe somebody who has cancer, that you can deduct medical expenses for those kinds of illnesses. This bill says: No more.

Once again, repealing the estate tax, which benefits 5,400 of the wealthiest families in this country, in order to provide that tax benefit, we are actually going to take away this critical tax deduction from regular working families around medical expenses.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, the Republican tax bill repeals the new markets tax credit, which, again, was created, really, to incentivize investment in low-income and rural areas. That tax credit is responsible for creating more than 12,000 construction jobs and an additional 11,500 jobs in related industries across my State, just as an example. It is extremely shortsighted to repeal that, especially for an administration and a party that says that they care about investing in jobs and infrastructure.

We haven't seen any package for jobs and infrastructure. I am not sure if you have, but I certainly haven't.

The reality is that this bill, because of this two-step that Mr. GARAMENDI described, which I will just remind people what that is: the transfer of trillions of dollars in wealth from the middle class to the largest corporations and the top 1 percent, and then through exploding the deficit, which this bill does, suddenly triggering automatic cuts as well as a rationale for cutting more from Medicare, from healthcare, from education, from transportation. That is what we are looking at.

The early word on the Senate Republican tax bill seems to be just as bad, because I just heard before coming onto the floor that Senate Republicans are now saying that, once again, they are going to try to strip healthcare from Americans by including a repeal of the Affordable Care Act individual mandate.

My State knows exactly what happened because we had a situation like that about a decade ago, and we had to dig our way out of that. What it meant was that, essentially, healthcare became way too expensive for everybody. There were too many people who were not buying healthcare, so you were stuck with all the people who needed healthcare, who were very sick. It exploded costs and, literally, Americans across the country ended up suffering because of that.

They weren't able to get rid of healthcare. Three times we have beat-

en that back. The American people, Republicans and Democrats in urban and rural districts across the country, said: No. We want our healthcare. Do not take our healthcare away from us.

Once again, the Republicans plan to incorporate this provision and try to once again strip healthcare.

Mr. Speaker, insanity is said to be doing the same thing over and over again and expecting a different result. I really fear for the threshold that we are crossing. I fear for our economy; I fear for our middle class families; I fear for our low-income families; and I fear for the future of this country and for the future of our children, because the reality is what we should be doing, if we were going to raise money through taxing people more, is we should be investing that money into infrastructure, jobs, healthcare.

Not only are we not cutting the taxes for people who need it the most, but we are increasing their taxes to give a tax break to the wealthiest, and we are destroying all of the investments that we need to make into the U.S. economy and into our communities and into our middle class families.

This is an incredibly important issue. I don't think people realize that the Republicans are trying to push through a vote on this bill as early as this Thursday.

I really believe that there are some Republicans across the aisle who have come out already and said that this is not a bill that helps our families, that helps our middle class families and our communities. They have been courageous to say that.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank them for doing that, and I want to urge other Republican colleagues across the aisle to do the same thing so that we can protect the livelihoods of our children and our families into the future.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Representative GARAMENDI so much for his leadership and for his constant speaking out on the need to invest in infrastructure and jobs.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman very much, Representative JAYAPAL, for her comments. She brought to our attention the inconsistencies that are in this piece of legislation.

Everywhere I go and people talk about this, they say: I don't understand why they want to do that. I don't understand why, with a growing economy and the economy actually moving along pretty well, 4 percent-plus unemployment and growth somewhere in the 3 percent range, why they want to totally turn the American economy upside down in a way that does not create growth.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from New York (Mr. NADLER), bouncing back across the continent and picking up, once again, in New York. I thank the gentleman for joining me, and I look forward to his words and the wisdom that he brings from Manhattan.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I thank

him for organizing this Special Order on this terrible Republican tax scam.

This scam is a desperate, disgraceful attempt to line the pockets of the wealthiest Americans and corporations at the expense of the middle class.

And for what?

We are told the corporate and upper income tax cuts will result in more investment, in greater economic growth, which will yield more jobs and more revenue for the country and higher wages for the middle class, but that is bull.

They have run this scam twice before. Ronald Reagan passed similar upper class tax cuts and told us they would generate such economic growth that they would pay for themselves. George W. Bush pulled the same scheme.

What happened?

President Reagan's cuts sent the national debt—the national debt accumulated from George Washington through Jimmy Carter, which was a little less than \$800 billion in 1980—from \$800 billion to \$4.3 trillion 12 years later, quintupled.

President Bush's tax cuts turned the projected 10-year, \$5.65 trillion surplus—remember at the end of the Clinton administration, we were having surpluses, and the projected surplus over 10 years was \$5.65 trillion. His tax cuts turned that, in 8 years, into \$10.63 trillion debt.

□ 1800

It turned a \$5.6 trillion surplus into a \$10.6 trillion debt. So the argument that these kinds of tax cuts for the upper-income people and for corporations generate greater economic growth to generate more tax revenues has been tried twice, not to mention in Kansas, recently. It doesn't work.

There is nothing in this bill to argue that this tax scam will have a different impact on the economy than Reagan's or Bush's. In fact, this scam is so skewed toward the rich and corporations, it could actually be worse.

The bill would eliminate the alternative minimum tax. To put it in perspective, in 2005, the only year for which we have at least the summary pages of Donald Trump's tax returns, in that year, Donald Trump paid \$38 million in taxes. Of that, \$31 million was the alternative minimum tax.

The Republicans want to eliminate the only tax that we actually know that Donald Trump has ever paid. His taxes would have been \$5 million, not \$38 million, if it weren't for the alternative minimum tax. Of course, he wants to eliminate it.

Republicans will repeal the estate tax, despite the fact that the estate tax is paid by only the wealthiest 5,000 estates in the country every year—two-thousandths of 1 percent.

Wealthy Americans would also see immediate personal benefits from cuts to corporate taxes. This bill immediately and permanently cuts the corporate tax rate to 20 percent from 35

percent. It also cuts the rates for pass-through corporations from 39 to 25 percent.

Once again, Republicans claim this will help small businesses, but it simply isn't true. These pass-through corporations are extremely wealthy partnerships and private companies. If you need a good example, I have a great one just outside my district; it is called the Trump Organization, which is organized as a pass-through corporation.

Now, they tell us that middle-income businessmen will profit by this, but middle-income businessmen are not paying more than 25 percent to start with, so this will only benefit the rich, again.

But while billionaires and corporations will enjoy all these benefits, the Republican bill hands working families ticking time bombs. Unlike the corporate tax changes, which are permanent and indexed to inflation, every benefit in the Republican tax scam for the middle class sunsets after 5 years or is indexed to a slower rate of inflation.

Speaker RYAN brags about a family earning \$59,000 a year getting a \$1,500 break in their tax burden next year. Well, even in his example, by 2023, that family is right back where they started; and by 2027, they will be paying \$500 more than they were this year.

This bill wipes out nearly every deduction and credit that helps working families make ends meet—the deduction of State and local income taxes, which hundreds of thousands of middle-income New Yorkers rely on each year.

When the income tax was first enacted to finance the Civil War, and when it was re-imposed to finance World War I—and we have had it since then—we have always had a deduction for State and local taxes. Why? Because you shouldn't be taxed on a tax. You shouldn't be taxed doubly. It is unfair. But now we will be.

The medical expense deduction, which families use to pay for everything from fertility treatments to nursing home care, this deduction says: If you are a middle-income family, and your out-of-pocket expenses, beyond your insurance, if you have insurance, beyond your Medicare, if you are a senior citizen, total more than 10 percent of your total gross income, you can deduct your medical expenses to the extent it exceeds 10 percent of your total gross income.

So it has got to be large. If your income is \$75,000 a year, you can only deduct the medical expenses that exceed \$7,500, not the first \$7,500. This will be gone, too.

Now, if you have got parents in nursing homes, you depend on this. If you have got a child with cerebral palsy—God forbid—if you have got a kid with cancer, you depend on this, but it is going to be gone.

The student loan interest deduction will be gone. So people go to school, they go to college, they come out with these terrible, huge debts. They have

to repay the student loans. At least they can deduct the interest on the student loans. Not anymore.

The adoption tax credit, child care spending accounts, even deductions for teachers who buy school supplies for their classrooms, all gone. And why? To pay for tax breaks for billionaires and corporations.

But, as has been pointed out, under this scam, corporations keep these deductions for their income. They keep the State and local tax deduction, but individuals don't.

How can Republicans claim this helps the average American when families are denied the deductions that corporations get to keep?

If this bill is so blatantly harmful to working families, why are my Republican colleagues so crazy about it?

Does it create jobs or give the economy a boost? No. As I said, we have tried that twice before with disastrous results. Kansas, Brownbackistan as they call it, after Governor Brownback tried that, with disastrous results, so that the Republican legislature had to increase taxes earlier this year, over the Governor's veto, to start getting out from 4-day school weeks.

Under this plan, Republicans would tax companies less when they produce goods overseas than when they produce them here in the U.S. It is a giant incentive to large corporations to send jobs overseas.

And if you ever doubted the Republicans were doing this at the bidding of corporate donors, well, just last week, Chairman BRADY, of the Ways and Means Committee, tweaked an excise tax multinational corporations opposed and gave those corporations back \$100 billion in revenue. No such change was made for working families.

Now, we know—we know from experience—that a few years from now the Republicans will use the \$1.7 trillion deficit this scam creates to say: Oh, my God. Look at this massive deficit. We have to make terrible cuts to Social Security, to Medicare, to education, to infrastructure, not that we want to. We love Medicare. We love Social Security, but we have got to savage them in order to pay for these terrible deficits which we created.

That is what they are building in now. That is what this tax bill is designed to produce.

The Republicans are scamming America. They are offering a facade of lower taxes that most Americans will never see, in exchange for massive and permanent tax breaks for the wealthy and corporations, and guaranteed cuts down the road, in fact, some of them right away, to Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, education, infrastructure.

I do not accept that deal, and the American people shouldn't have to either. We can find bipartisan common ground that allows us to support working families, create jobs, and see every American pay their fair share.

American corporations, huge corporations, have \$2.4 trillion stashed

abroad, which they don't pay taxes on until they bring it home. We don't have to allow that. We can make them pay taxes on it right away, whether they bring the money home or not.

Why should we encourage them to keep the money abroad, to create jobs abroad, by telling them they don't pay taxes if the money is abroad?

And the Republican bill just makes that worse. This Republican tax scam is not a fair plan. It is not a plan to increase the economy. It is not a plan for economic growth. It is not a plan for fairness to the middle class.

Let me just say one other thing. A number of years ago, while we were told—I have seen ads—we were told by the Republican leaders that the economic growth from this bill will produce huge gains for the average family. Never mind the tax cut that the average family will or won't get.

Because of the economic growth from this tax plan, wages will go up, and the average person will get \$1,500 or \$1,800 or \$2,000, depending who you are listening to, in extra wages.

Well, a number of years ago, we were told the same thing about a bankruptcy bill. This bankruptcy bill that the big banks pushed and all the Republicans pushed, we were told that if we passed this bill, the banks would save so much money from certain deadbeats that the average American would save \$400 a year in lower interest rates.

I offered an amendment to say: Fine, mandate that the interest rates be lowered. And, of course, the Republicans voted that down.

Well, we passed that bill. We passed that bill 12 years ago. Have you seen the interest rates go down? The interest rates are still sky high. The banks raked in the money, hand over foot. The lobbyists did very well. The Republicans collected the campaign contributions. The American people did not benefit.

Same thing here. There will be no increase in economic growth as a result of this bill. There will be no increase in benefits. There will simply be a huge sucking sound as the money is taken from the middle class and low-income people and given to the superrich.

This bill is disgusting. It ought to be rejected.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for bringing us the view from New York. He is quite correct about what happened during the great crisis in 2008, 2009. The American public, probably to the tune of about \$1 trillion, bailed out Wall Street. And here we go again. Major support for the American corporations who are hiding trillions of dollars overseas.

Let me just give you one other example. There is a lot of talk around here from our Republican friends that somehow, if we reduce the corporate tax rate, we will see jobs being generated and some \$4,000 a year of new money in the pockets of American workers.

Really? You think so?

Let me give you an example of one of America's great corporations, AT&T. I think we all know AT&T. We probably have them on our smartphone. In the last decade, AT&T was capable, using various tax loopholes and deductions, to lower its effective corporate tax rate, not to 20 percent, but to 8 percent.

So over that period of time, while they were reducing their effective tax rates, that is their real tax rate, from whatever it was to 8 percent during that decade, did they create new jobs? No.

What they did was to lay off 80,000 workers. And at the same time, guess what? The CEO, he raked in \$124 million.

So what is going on here?

The American corporations, back in the seventies and sixties, actually invested more than 50 percent, almost 60 percent, of their after-tax profits in expanding their business—investment in plants and equipment and wages and hiring people.

Today, less than 10 percent is spent on expanding their businesses. Instead, they are pumping up their stock prices with buybacks and with dividends.

So what is going down?

Tell me that this is going to somehow create jobs.

And, by the way, the gentleman didn't quite pick this one up, so let me add to the weight of this terrible bill. They use what is called territorial tax system. Terrific. Corporations will not be taxed for their profits globally, but, rather, they will only be taxed for their profits within the United States, so it is even a further incentive to offshore your jobs to the lowest tax place in the world: Bahamas. Used to be Ireland, but the EU decided that Ireland was cheating the rest of the European countries; put a stop to that, so now they are off.

Apple, a great California company, abandoned Ireland and is now, I think, located in the Jersey Islands off the coast of Great Britain.

Scheme, scam, the American public is going to be the beneficiary? No. It is going to be the victim, is going to be the victim of this great transfer of wealth.

The gentleman had one more point to make, and then I would like to go to my colleague, also from New York and what we still call the East-West Show.

Mr. NADLER. I do have one more point to make, and the gentleman reminded me of it.

In 2004, when we had the repatriation, we told the big corporations they could bring all the offshore money home and pay only a fractional tax on it; they were going to create jobs and so forth. And what happened? They didn't create jobs. They had buybacks. They enriched their executives. They didn't create jobs.

The fundamental problem with this analysis is not that corporations don't have enough money to invest, and, therefore, if you give them lower taxes

they will have more money to invest; they have plenty of money to invest. They don't see the investment opportunities, and that is a different problem. There is plenty of money to invest. They are rolling in cash. There is not a dearth of investment opportunity. There is not a dearth of investment cash.

So if you give them more cash, they will pay their CEOs higher. They will put more money into stock buybacks. The shareholders may benefit, but they won't hire more workers. The economy won't benefit; and we will be taking money away from the middle class and lower-income people, and we will be taking money away from the governments, local governments, that have to spend the money on schools, housing, health, roads and bridges, and so forth to build up this country.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from the great State of New York (Mr. TONKO).

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Speaker, I thank Representative GARAMENDI for leading us in this Special Order. It is so important that the public understand what is happening here with this issue.

□ 1815

The first response ought to be: Here we go again.

Trickle-down has not worked in the past—the far past, the recent past. It is not going to work again.

When does trickle-down become trickle-up?

Well, to suggest that this is a tax reform act is really pulling a trick on the public. This is about a tax cut, and a tax cut for corporations, a tax cut for the wealthiest amongst us.

This trickle-down theory becomes trickle-up because you are taking and raising the taxes on some 36 million families, those that would be classified as middle class families, those who work day in and day out and don't even earn a minimum wage, but they are working. The poorest amongst us, the lowest bracket, gets an increase in its rates.

How is this fair? How is this economic or social justice?

Both measurements prove that it is false. It is not economically sound. It is not socially just. What we are doing here is playing a game with the economy, and we are putting the economy, the American economy, at great risk.

We have seen major efforts made since January of 2009 to grow the economy, and now we have this scam, this trickery, to go and do a trickle-up: take from the working families, deny their purchasing power, weaken their purchasing power, and give it to corporations, give it to the upper income strata in this country. That is a formula for disaster, and we are going to pay wickedly for this effort.

We have always heard about deficit situations. When President Clinton was in office, when President Obama was in office, the Republicans would talk about a deficit situation. There seems

to be no concern about deficit here, a deaf ear to the deficit.

Borrowing to spend. Borrowing to spend. Borrowing \$1.5 trillion, which probably amasses to \$2.1 trillion to \$2.3 trillion with the cost of borrowing, and using that borrowing to spend on the wealthiest amongst us, be they families, individuals, or corporations.

How does that make economic sense? How does that help the economy?

When we look at this situation, we are going to impact your average family in any of our districts, those who are working to maintain a household, to perhaps put aside some savings for improvements of that household or to assist their children in their pursuits of a career, be it apprenticeship programs or college programs. We are going to hurt these families.

Students will realize that their tuition deduction is eliminated—eliminated. Students will realize, former students, that their loan interest deductions will be eliminated.

I heard a lot about this, Mr. Speaker, when I was home over the last two weekends. We have always deducted exorbitant medical expenses when we did our taxes. We prepared that for our accountant because we had exorbitant medical fees, medical expenditures, be they for families who are walking through life with Alzheimer's or who are fighting cancer or who have chronic illnesses. They deserve to have that deduction.

I am told, on average, it is \$9,000. Seventy-three percent of people who make that deduction are earning less than \$75,000. This is a brutal response to America's working families. It is a harshness tossed against this economy that has finally started to churn over the last several years. Now we step up and want to wreck all of that.

We have all sorts of efforts that deny various professions, teachers, for one, who will not be able to deduct for classroom expenses where they will, out of their own pocket, provide greater resources for the children who are in their classes that they teach. They are facilitating this discovery, self-discovery, within children. They are digging into their pockets to make that experience all the more real, all the more magical, all the more important, and here we are going to deny teachers to deduct those expenses, but we won't do that for the businesses that want to reach into their own pocket and spend.

We look at this situation, and we understand who gets a fair shake in this deal, in this scam, and it is regrettable.

Now the talk of a Senate version bringing in the individual mandate? Dollars that are made available for families to realize healthcare coverage, and we are going to penalize them and use that to help pay for this borrowing? This is a disaster.

America needs to see this with its eyes wide open and to call your individual Representatives and ask them to tell you how you are going to benefit from this package.

Somebody today told me it is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for tax reform—tax reform. Is there reform in this mess? There are the same old loopholes. We grow more loopholes, and they are getting a tax break in addition. What are we doing to our economy here? This is a terrible bill.

When it comes to the SALT deduction, the State and local tax deduction, you will destroy States by requiring double taxation on the investments they make in their own programs in their State. That will severely impact upon people in my home State of New York.

I think it is a disaster that this House, this majority, the entire majority, would allow this bill to come to the floor.

Before you tell me how you are going to vote on this bill, tell me how you tried to stop it from coming to the floor because it hurts so many Americans. Thirty-six million families will be impacted. They will see a tax increase. That is not my word. It is not Representative GARAMENDI's word. It is coming from the Tax Policy Center.

People are putting this one under the microscope, and they are detailing what is in here and what is not in here, and this is a scam. It is bringing down an economy. It is taking it in the wrong direction. It gives tax breaks to corporations that want to grow their prosperity offshore and making it more productive for them to take jobs overseas.

How can we tolerate this? No wonder they are trying to rush the bill now. Get it done in a day or two before America finds out what is in it. This is a tax disaster, not a tax reform. It is a tax cut for the wealthy at the expense of the working families and those who work below minimum wage in this country, people who make it their goal to be self-sufficient, and now this is how they are rewarded.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. HASTINGS).

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. GARAMENDI for bringing this Special Order.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to tell you, in 7 minutes, I, along with the other members of the Rules Committee, will be meeting on what is described as an emergency meeting. That emergency is what you all have been describing. We were originally scheduled to meet at Rules tomorrow, and now, in an effort to jam this measure through, we are meeting in an emergency capacity.

What the American public needs to know is the substance of what you two gentlemen and others have been talking about, but please know this: every Member deserves the right to contribute to these bills when they affect all of our constituents and will lead to millions of Americans paying more in taxes.

You all will handle the substance, but I thought that I would add that in with my thanks to Mr. GARAMENDI. It

is just atrocious what is going on, and not just Democrats or Republicans, but many persons who sent their Representatives here are not going to have their Representatives be heard.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, as an esteemed member of the Rules Committee, there is an emergency meeting to push this bill to the floor without any public hearings. Is that correct?

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, no hearings whatsoever, and yet the Speaker stood up and said that we are following regular order.

We are not following regular order at all.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, my recollection in the 1986 Reagan tax reform, it took 2 years of public hearings all around the country and some 30 hearings in the House Ways and Means Committee, probably a similar number on the Senate side before the bill came to the floor. There were many, many amendments that were offered.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, in addition to hearing from experts and from affected entities around the country, now we are doing it in 2 weeks.

Mr. Speaker, I have to go to the Rules Committee, but I thank you all for what you are doing.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the work that the gentleman does there trying to protect the American public from this hasty—Mr. HASTINGS, thank you so very much.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from New York.

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Speaker, I just would love to point out, I would encourage middle class America to raise its voice. Raise your voices, because when we look at the repeal of the individual mandate that is being suggested here, you are going to rip away healthcare from some 13 million Americans, and that alongside the 36 million families in this country that are going to see a tax increase.

Before that hits home, stand up and speak out. And if you are not going to get a tax increase, if you might get crumbs off the table because, remember, if you weren't at the table, and this was done in veiled secrecy, if you are not at the table, you are probably on the menu.

Here you are going to have these families, 36 million that will get a tax increase, but if you are going to get maybe a crumb off the table, that sunsets, and the other benefits are going to go forever.

This is a monumental change in a tax cut policy. It is not reform. It is tax cuts for the wealthy and corporations at the expense of working families.

Finally, I would just make mention that there would be an immediate \$25 billion cut in Medicare. The efforts that were made under the last administration to bring more stability to Medicare, to make certain that it had a longer life out there, are now going to be wiped away. That is a very important program to Americans, very important program. We cannot afford to

have this go through in veiled secrecy on a rush in the next day or two without America knowing what is on the table.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman, very, very much. There has been much discussion. We are going to be yielding this floor to our Republican colleagues, and I see them beginning to assemble, all of them who, just 3 weeks ago, were deficit hawks.

I am going to point this out, and I am going to leave it here for my colleagues who will be talking about why we ought to increase the deficit.

The current structural deficit is about \$500 billion. We are going to add, just this year, \$115 billion on top of that. You can see that. But over the next decade, that present structural deficit will grow to nearly \$1 trillion a year, and we will add to it another couple hundred billion dollars.

The deficit hawks have a choice. They can live with the deficit, forget they ever were deficit hawks and just increase the deficit with this 1 percent tax bill, H.R. 1, or they could do what I call the Texas two-step.

Keep in mind, the chairman of the Ways and Means Committee is a Texan. The Texas two-step is first you seriously cut the revenues with this tax bill that is not a reform but, rather, a bill that actually 50 percent of the \$1.5 trillion reduction goes to the American corporations and the top 1 percent. Forget about the deficit or do the Texas two-step: cut the revenues and then cut the programs.

What are the programs?

You mentioned Medicare. Already in the budget that passed this House with Mr. RYAN as Speaker was a \$500 billion reduction to Medicare and a \$700 billion or \$800 billion reduction to Medicaid, 60 percent of which goes to the elderly in nursing homes. That is what they have in mind.

□ 1830

Secondly, they are going to talk about a trillion-dollar infrastructure. No way. The money is gone. There will be no infrastructure program, no roads, no trains, no buses, no levees, no repair.

Mr. TONKO. Mr. GARAMENDI, I would point out, in addition to tinkering with the public utility bonds out there, that public utility financing that will be devastated by this bill, adds to the further woes for building our investments and infrastructure of all kinds.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Exactly, and you might add education to that. So what do you do? Student loans of which \$1.4 trillion and nearly a trillion of that is owned by the Federal Government, these students are paying interest to the Federal Government; and to add to that, we are going to deny them the ability to deduct the loan interest that they are paying.

This is really just hypocritical, and it is very harmful to the economy. We want to do job training. Forget it. The

money is gone. The Texas Two Step will deny us the money that we need for education, reduce the revenues, and then cut the programs to attempt to bring back under control the deficit. It did not work. It will not work. And what it means is, the American economy that is recovering is going to be given a wallop on the side of its head, and we are going to see some real serious problems as we attempt to build the foundation for future economic growth. The money will not be there.

Mr. Speaker, I suspect that that emergency meeting of the Rules Committee is to specifically deal with the problem that was announced by the Congressional Budget Office just 3 hours ago that said this tax bill will, because of the sequestration law—it is a law—will create an automatic \$25 billion reduction in Medicare immediately and another \$111 billion reduction in programs, not to be determined by the Representatives of the people of the United States but, rather, by Mick Mulvaney, the head of the Office of Management and Budget, who is known to be really weird in his budgeting proposal.

He will make a \$111 billion reduction all on his own, if this tax bill passes as it is written today.

This is serious business, Americans. This is about your future. This is about your ability to have a decent job in America, a decent infrastructure, a decent education system, and medical services.

What about the children's health program which is not yet in place? It is unbelievable that, without one public hearing, the Republicans are determined to pass a \$1.5 trillion tax cut of which 50 percent of the benefit goes to the top 1 percent, and America's corporations are given yet another reason to offshore their jobs with what is called territorial pricing.

This is where we are, folks. Wrap it up, if you will.

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Speaker, I would just say: Let's do this with our eyes wide open. Trickle-down isn't going to happen. Tax reform, this is not tax reform. Certainly, tax cuts where you aid the upper-income strata and corporations at the expense of an increase of taxes to the middle class is what this is about. It is pathetic. It is devastating. It is disastrous, and it ought to be denied.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman is exactly right. Finally, as we turn this floor over to our Republican colleagues, I am really interested in hearing why—and I see one of our colleagues from my area—why in the Central Valley of California where anywhere from 110,000 to 150,000 families who pay taxes are going to lose their State and local tax deduction? They will lose somewhere between \$7,000 and \$12,000 of deductions.

That amounts to an increase in taxes anywhere from \$1,500 to \$2,000. I want to hear them explain why that is good tax policy. We will see what they have

to say. They will be on the floor in a few moments.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HOLLINGSWORTH). The Chair would remind Members to direct all remarks to the Chair, and to formally yield and reclaim time when under recognition.

CELEBRATING NATIONAL BIBLE WEEK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. LAMBORN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LAMBORN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on the topic of my Special Order.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. LAMBORN. Mr. Speaker, it is a great honor for me to come to the House floor tonight to celebrate National Bible Week.

This is an opportunity, for the next hour, to celebrate the tremendous influence of the Bible on the freedoms we enjoy today in America. We are truly blessed to live in a nation where we are free to worship and read the Holy Scriptures without fear of persecution.

There are many places throughout the world, unfortunately, where such freedoms do not exist. Americans have the right, under our wonderful system of government, to respect and study the Bible, or any other system of belief, if they so choose, or even no belief at all. That is the beauty of the American way, and I believe it is founded and goes back to the Bible.

In 1941, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt declared the week of Thanksgiving to be National Bible Week. Every U.S. President since has followed this tradition by declaring this time of year to be National Bible Week. The National Bible Association and the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops have designated the specific days of November 12 through 18 of this year as National Bible Week.

This is the week set aside to recognize the Bible as a foundational building block of Western civilization, the Judeo-Christian heritage, and the legacy that motivated and shaped the founding of the United States. In this hour, we will hear from Members of Congress from various faith traditions and denominations speak about what the Bible means to them and what it means to the country. We are here, in keeping with tradition, to recognize National Bible Week.

Mr. Speaker, I am just going to speak for a couple of moments about my own personal experience and then turn it