declined. And household income has risen substantially. We have reformed welfare, passed the Defense of Marriage Act and promoted quality education in our schools, fulfilling the Reagan revolution.

As a lifelong member of the Republican Party, I have never been prouder of our party. Under the leadership of our Speaker, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HASTERT); our majority leader, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY); the chairman of the Republican Conference, the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. PRYCE); and our majority whip, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT), working with President George Bush, this team will continue to promote America's families.

In conclusion, may God bless our troops, and we will never forget September 11.

GOP 10-YEAR ANNIVERSARY

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

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, in 10 years of majority, Republicans have made a difference and a difference not by over-legislating but by having confidence and faith in the American people and the American individual.

My Republican colleagues and I believe that it is the individual American and not the government who can best improve their lives. Financial decision-making is best done by the family and not by the Federal government. The taxpayers' money belongs in the taxpayers' pockets. They work hard for it, and they know how to spend it best.

Republicans created across-the-board tax cuts for working Americans, giving them a greater chance to spend and to save their money as they deem fit, giving them options, giving them independence. The benefits of our tax relief have rolled on to jump-start the economy, with 1.7 million new jobs this past year, with the current unemployment rate lower than the average rates of the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s combined.

Mr. Speaker, in the next 10 years, the Republicans will continue to respect the American individual and, in turn, build on our successes and on the success of this great Nation.

SUPPORT THE PLEDGE

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

Mr. RYUN of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, amidst the controversy surrounding the Pledge of Allegiance, I fear that we have forgotten our Founding Fathers' true intentions behind the establishment clause in the Constitution. While our critics argue that the words ''under God'' violate the establishment cause, our founders actually encouraged this type of religious recognition.

As George Washington said in his farewell address, and I quote, ''Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports. The mere politician, equal with the pious man, ought to respect and to cherish them.''

Washington encourages us to respect religion, and I think he feared that the government might misapply the establishment clause to things like the Pledge. Even Thomas Jefferson, who advocated the wall of separation between church and State, articulated this, and I quote, ''No Nation has ever yet existed or been governed without religion, nor can be.''

Considering our Founding Fathers' clear statements, it is hard to say that the Pledge establishes religion or crosses the wall of separation. I urge my colleagues to embrace the founders' original intent and support H.R. 2028.

REPUBLICAN MAJORITY AND FAMILY HEALTH CARE

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

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, in the 10 years of Republican majority in the House, we have always put families first. We recognize that protecting our Nation's families means in part creating access to better health care, providing affordable prescription drugs to seniors and ensuring the best doctors and care for our children. These are critical and necessary commitments.

In 1994, when Republicans took the majority, many of our citizens were being left behind without access to rapidly developing medical technology. Last year, we passed the most sweeping modernization to Medicare legislation since its creation in 1965. For the first time, our seniors now have a prescription drug benefit. Americans know that their parents and grandparents will be taken care of and that they are in safe hands.

We have provided better options to our Nation's low-income families by making doctors' appointments and necessary checkups available through community health centers; 15 million families nationwide now have a place to count on for health care through these centers.

America's families will always receive the best existing health care. Republicans recognize the importance of family health care, and we will continue to recognize it as a top priority in the future.

CELEBRATING 10 YEARS OF REPUBLICAN MAJORITY

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

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, 10 years ago, 25 hearty souls met for 3 hours every week to decide whether we could change the course of America, led by then House Minority Whip Newt Gingrich. We said that if you gave us the authority and the power, we would change the way America works, and we did it with a specific Contract With America; 9 million additional people voted in that election and gave us the opportunity to lead.

We believed that too many people were on welfare, and they deserved an opportunity to get off, so we changed that. We balanced the budget and paid down debt. Some of that is going by the wayside now with a war to fund, but when we stood before the American people in 1994, we stood for something solid, and we can do it again.

We want to thank the American people for giving us the opportunity. And, Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Newt Gingrich, who would be our Speaker ultimately, for leading us to that majority.

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THE RECORD OF THE REPUBLICAN-CONTROLLED CONGRESS

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

Mr. HINCHEY. Mr. Speaker, the Republicans have reminded us that it has been 10 years since they have controlled this Congress, and I think it is important to reflect upon that record. Since they have been in the majority here, they have managed to shift the tax burden from the most affluent people in America to the white and blue collar working class, raising taxes for working Americans, lowering them for multimillionaires. They have established the conditions for, and presided over, the Enron and other corporate scandals. And since they have controlled not just the legislative branch but the executive branch as well, they have managed to increase the poverty level in America in the last 4 years by 4.3 million people now living in poverty.

They have reduced the average income of the average American family by more than $1,500. They have raised the energy costs of the average American family by more than $1,000 a year. They have raised the number of people who are without health insurance, bringing it up to 45 million people without health insurance. The list goes on. And we will have other opportunities to discuss it, I am sure.

PLEDGE PROTECTION

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

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, this week we will vote on keeping ''one Nation under God'' in the Pledge of Allegiance. The Pledge is