H.R. 6, cosponsored by myself and the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. DANNER) and the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. MCINTOSH) as well as 230 Members of the House.

That is why it is so important, we want to bring fairness to the Tax Code. That is why I am so pleased that the leadership of this House, led by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HASTERT), the Speaker of the House, has made a decision to move a stand-alone piece of legislation, a stand-alone bill, which wipes out the marriage tax penalty for the vast majority of those who suffer. In the next few weeks, the Speaker intends to bring that legislation to the floor. That is good news as we work to bring fairness to the Tax Code by eliminating the marriage tax penalty.

I was just informed earlier today that the President in his State of the Union Speech tonight is going to discuss eliminating the marriage tax penalty. That is good news. Because it is time to make it a bipartisan effort. And while the President and Vice President GORE vetoed the legislation last year, he is now coming our way. I am very pleased. Let us make it a bipartisan effort. Let us wipe out the marriage tax penalty and let us send the President a stand-alone bill and let us bring fairness to the Tax Code.

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MARSHA PYLE MARTIN: A LEADER FOR POSITIVE CHANGE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, during the short interlude we call life, we sometimes have the rare and memorable occasion to meet someone who exudes such a sense of positive accomplishment that we are forever changed just from that encounter.

I had that special experience when I met and heard Marsha Pyle Martin, who served as chair of the Farm Credit Administration Board. She appeared before our Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration and Related Agencies of the House Committee on Appropriations to thoughtfully and persuasively argue that we need to be concerned about the financial condition of America's farmers and the future of agriculture in rural America.

I am sad to tell our colleagues that Ms. Martin passed from this life to her blessed rewards on January 9. This afternoon she is being celebrated in a memorial service at the Farm Credit Administration Offices in McLean, Virginia.

She is a woman who deserves this celebration, for she has helped so many by her caring for America's farmers and her advocacy on their behalf and for building a sound farm credit system in this country.

Marsha Pyle Martin was the first woman who ever served as chair of the Farm Credit Administration. While that was a first for FCA, it was far from that for her. After all, she was the first woman senior executive in the Farm Credit System when she served as vice president of the Farm Credit Bank of Texas. She also was the first woman to serve as a director of the Farm Credit System Insurance Corporation.

I remember most vividly when she appeared before our subcommittee. Her dedication, her passion, her knowledge both overwhelmed and imposed her sense of purpose on our committee. She wanted efficient and competitive credit markets for borrowers, and it showed. She recognized the changing face of agriculture in America and wanted to both embrace and support the changes that are necessary for America's farmers to continue as the finest in the world.

Those who know agriculture know that the availability of credit at reasonable terms is critical, vital to success; and those who knew Marsha Pyle Martin knew that such a system was both her goal and her mandate to those who worked for and with her.

To her husband Britt, to her daughters Michelle and K.B. and her two grandchildren, I can only extend our deepest sympathies for the unexpected loss of their loved one. But may they be comforted and inspired by the fact that each and every day she tried to make a positive difference for people. Each and every day positive change was her goal and her accomplishment.

If only more people shared her vision, her energy, her commitment, just imagine how much better a place this world would be.

Mr. Speaker, I ask our colleagues to join me in thanking Marsha Pyle Martin for her lifetime of contribution. May her eternal reward be no less than triple what she gave in this world. For, because of her, many people live each day as a better one than they might have were it not for her.

May I ask the House, in her memory, for a moment of silence.

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The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DIAZ-BALART) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DIAZ-BALART addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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DEMOCRATIC AGENDA FOR PROGRESS IN 2000

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, let me say that I am glad to be back.

I think my colleagues know and I am sure most of the American people or many of the American people know that the House of Representatives has been in recess, has not had a session, for approximately 2 months since we adopted the budget at the end of November for the next fiscal year.

Tonight, of course, the President will give his State of the Union Address, which represents really a new opportunity. This is the second session of the 2-year Congress. And when we come back today, we know that although we perhaps only have about 10 months before the House adjourns and the Congress adjourns there is this 10-month period when we can pass legislation and get things done that will positively impact the American people.

Of course, the President will give his speech tonight and we will not know exactly what is in it until we hear it from him. But we know that he is going to talk about how the state of the Union is strong, how the country is strong economically, record new surpluses, overall crime rate down 25 percent, welfare rolls deeply cut.

A lot of progress has been made under President Clinton, certainly in the 6 or 7 years now that he has been in office.

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But part of the problem particularly in the last year is that many times when the President suggests a positive agenda, progressive agenda to the American people as he did in his last State of the Union address, the Congress, which of course is dominated by the Republican majority, the Republicans are in the majority, resists his recommendations and do not pass the legislation or provide the resources so that we can move his agenda. And so I hope that this year that will not be the case again.

If we look at what happened last year in the Congress, particularly in the House, there really was a resistance and most of the President's agenda was not adopted. I hope that is not the case this year. I hope that this year the Republican majority in the Congress will go along with the President's programs. If they differ slightly, fine, we can come to accommodations, but let us try to work together to come up with an agenda to pass legislation that helps the people and that moves this country quickly in a positive way into the next millennium.

I wanted to talk a little bit about President Clinton and the Democratic congressional leaders' agenda for a few minutes if I could. What we want to do is to get the job done, if you will, for the American people in the year 2000. I am going to talk about a few specific points. Basically our Democratic agenda for progress in 2000 includes, first, repairing, renovating and renewing our schools. Second, cutting taxes while maintaining fiscal discipline because obviously we want to maintain the balanced budget that we have had and the surpluses that we continue to generate. Third, the Democrats want to modernize Medicare and include a voluntary prescription drug benefit.