and you keep more money from withholding, and if you are a businessman you do not spend so much.

I urge Senators, particularly on our side of the aisle, if they want to express their concerns about certain items in the President's tax package, so be it. But clearly we ought to keep our minds open to the size of the package needed. Republicans should not come out of this Congress on the side of being cautious about stimulating the economy. We should come out of this session saying, if people want to be cautious, let it be them. If the economy does not get better, they did it. We should forget that and go with a big package that is apt to give the economy a real kick. Nobody knows the exact numbers. Nobody knows if $600 billion, with $150 billion in the first year, is right or too much. But clearly we ought to not be so cautious that we do not do enough. If that is the case, the tax cut will be wasted, the deficit will not change, and we will need more stimulus the next year.

I say to those who want the economy not only to grow but to create jobs, keep your powder dry on the size of the stimulus. It ought to be big, not little. It ought to get into the hands of the maximum number of people as early as possible. If there is some way to generate interest, real, genuine interest, in investing on the part of the public, do it.

For instance, perhaps people could depreciate equipment they bought. Buy a car, depreciate it in 3 years. Let consumers depreciate in one year, they might buy a car every year. That is a bottom line entry. This is in the President's package. One of them is in; accelerated depreciation.

I suggest on our side if we want to get the President's package, and if Democrats want to stimulate the economy, to produce jobs, we should work with the President and with the Budget Committee. The new Budget Chairman is DON NICKLES. I did that for 17 years and now I will try something else. But, I will help him do that, like a lot of other people.

That blueprint picture ought to end up reflecting people in the Senate who are concerned about jobs for people. So much talk about rich versus poor. If you are not for help with jobs, I don't know who you are for. If you are for a packaging that does nothing to create new jobs, who are you for? We want to be for a package, and I hope everyone does, that creates jobs and maximizes opportunity to create activity within this gross domestic product, that will, through new motion, create investment and jobs.

I yield the floor.

EXTENSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. DOMENICI. I ask unanimous consent the period for morning business be extended until 3:30, with the time equally divided and Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, the people of my home State of Washington are hurting in every corner of my State. Families are concerned about what the future will bring. In the last 2 years alone in my home State of Washington, we have faced an earthquake, an energy crisis, the bursting of the high tech bubble, the departure of Boeing, the loss of thousands of jobs, and now we face a State budget deficit of $2.5 billion which could easily translate into major cuts in education, health care, and infrastructure.

For much of the last 2 years, Washington State was ranked either first or second in the nation in unemployment rates. We have lost a staggering 74,000 jobs in the last 18 months. These are sobering numbers. Behind every one of these statistics is a man or a woman who is trying to support their family, keep food on the table and a roof over their head.

Throughout our country the economic picture is just as bleak. The United States has lost 2.1 million private sector jobs since January of 2001. Despite the President's mammoth $1.7 trillion tax cut last year, the economy is continuing to sputter and Americans are continuing to lose their jobs. When the President signed that tax cut he said it would ''provide an important boost at an important time for our economy.''

That was 20 months ago, May 16, 2001. What are the results? In December alone, 101,000 more Americans lost their jobs through no fault of their own. These fellow citizens are now out of work and many now are without health care. Health care is the unmentioned but painful reality of job loss for many. Since most Americans get their health insurance through their only employer, many Americans have also lost their health care coverage. In Washington State alone, 156,000 families have lost their health care in the last 2 years. That is an increase of 27.4 percent. Today, a staggering figure of Washingtonians are without health insurance. The glimmer of hope should be that we are providing good schools and learning opportunities to educate our young people for jobs in the future. Unfortunately, the President has proposed cutting funds for education at a time when these investments are now more important than ever. Everyone in my State would agree we need to get this economy back on track. We need to do it right.

Today, despite the fact that the President's last tax cut has yet to create any net new jobs, the administration is pushing another massive tax cut under the claim of stimulus.

Except this time, the Nation is back in deficit spending. According to private economists quoted in Friday's Washington Post, the U.S. could be facing deficits as high as $350 billion next year. We haven't seen deficits that high since the first Bush Administration posted a $290 billion deficit in 1992.

On top of that, we have incredible security needs at home and abroad.

We have increased needs in spending for defense, for homeland security, for border security and health care.

But this week the White House has proposed an economic plan that will blow a hole in the national debt, costing more than $6709 billion over 10 years. And the interest costs will add billions more.

I am deeply concerned that the President's plan is a disaster for the Federal budget and for our long-term responsibilities to our country to promote national security, homeland security, and economic security.

I thought the Bush plan was billed as an economic stimulus plan to get our economy moving. But when I look at this proposed plan I see it is heavily titled toward the wealthiest Americans.

While giving very little to average Americans, the plan give a $90,000 tax break to every millionaire, and these are the people least likely to need to spend an additional dollar of income and stimulate the economy.

I just don't see how the Bush plan will work. Eliminating the tax on dividends won't stimulate the economy in the short term. The total cost of the cuts is $670 billion, but less than $100 billion comes in the first year—which is when the economy needs it most.

It overwhelmingly benefits the wealthiest investors while providing little for most people in my State who are hurting. And it will do long-term fiscal damage with its $670 billion dollar price tag.

As I see it, the only thing this plan will stimulate is our deficit. It will add to the mountain of debt that we are forcing on our children to pay back later. It is a trickle-down plan that our President's father once called ''Voodoo Economics.''

I believe that if Congress is going to pass a tax cut, then it should be a plan that actually helps the economy and should do four things:

First, it should actually help the economy get moving again. I agree with Senator BAUCUS's proposals to increase the amount of money small businesses can deduct for investment in new equipment, and to enhance the bonus depreciation provision in last year's stimulus bill. This will actually help businesses create new jobs.

Second, it should address unemployment benefits. The President and his allies finally reversed themselves last week and gave in to the urgent need to provide some relief to the folks who need help the most. This will help thousands in my State to keep paying the bills until jobs are available again.

Third, it should help Washington State—and all States—deal with huge budget problems. The States do not have the luxury of deficit spending even if they are hit by what the President calls the trifecta of war, recession and national emergency.

Our States are having to deal with $70 billion in deficits by cutting funding for education, health care, transportation and other critical needs.

The people in my State need a safety net now to help get them back on their feet, and that safety net relies on states having adequate funding. We need to help the States get through this critical time.

Last, it should not blow an even larger hole in the Federal budget. Keeping our military strong, tracking down terrorists, defending our homeland, giving our young people a good education, making health care more affordable, and building infrastructure are the types of priorities that the Bush plan will crowd out.

I hope that my friends on the other side of the aisle and at the other end of Pennsylvania Avenue will listen to the hardworking Americans outside the beltway. I hope that they will work with us to get a real, responsible and effective stimulus plan to get America's economy moving again.

When my father was called upon during the Second World War, he was proud to serve his country. He earned the Purple Heart as one of the first G.I.'s to land at Okinawa.

Today we are engaged in a war on terrorism and on the brink of another. But rather than being asked to sacrifice, we are asked how much we want our taxes cut.

I visited Fort Lewis, McChord Air Force Base, and Everett Naval Station during the recent break. These young men and women are serving our country are working so hard to protect our security. Their families are being asked to sacrifice, as these men and women prepare to deploy.

It is amazing that at the very time we are asking these troops to leave their families and head overseas to respond to a foreign crisis, we are asking for a tax cut at home that puts our budget in crisis.

It is hard for me to imagine how a private first class making $16,000 a year is going to benefit from this tax cut. Yet he—or she—is prepared to make the ultimate sacrifice to protect America's national security.

America's defense needs, our homeland security needs, our education and health care needs will be jeopardized by the massive new Bush tax cut.

What America needs now is not a plan to stimulate the deficit, but a real plan to stimulate our economy and put Americans back to work.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

Ms. STABENOW. Madam President, I first thank my colleague from Washington State for her eloquence, standing up for those working Americans, middle class Americans, those on the front lines who are being asked to put their lives on the line in defense of our country and our freedoms. I appreciate very much her comments and would like to associate myself with her comments today.

Ms. MURRAY. I thank the Senator.

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN ADMISSION POLICY

Ms. STABENOW. Madam President, I rise to express my deep disappointment at news reports today that indicate the Bush administration will try to overturn the admissions policy at the University of Michigan, in my great State. As many people know, the Supreme Court will soon hear a case that will decide the future of racial diversity in all institutions of higher education. The University of Michigan's admissions policy so far has been upheld by the 6th Circuit Court of Appeals as constitutional. Unfortunately, those who want to dismantle all admissions programs that consider race have taken this all the way to the Supreme Court.

It is important to note this case is not about racial quotas. Let me say that again. It is important to note this case is not about racial quotas. The University of Michigan does not have racial quotas for admission. I am opposed to racial quotas and this, in fact, has been the law of the land since the Supreme Court's decision in the Bakke case in 1978.

The University of Michigan's undergraduate admissions policy simply takes into account student diversity as one of many factors that are considered for admission. Incidentally, the most important factors for admission are the applicant's grade point average and test scores. Race is one factor of diversity, but it is not the only factor. I think this oftentimes is missed in the discussion about the university's policies and what affirmative action means. There are several other factors the university considers, including if the applicant comes from a socially or economically disadvantaged background, if the applicant is a white student from a majority minority high school, if the applicant comes from an underrepresented community, such as one of Michigan's many rural communities throughout northern Michigan, southern Michigan, up in the Upper Peninsula, or if the applicant is an athlete.

I think it is important to emphasize there is a category where there are certain points that are given and you can either be given points as an athlete or points for racial diversity or points for other kinds of categories—not all of them but one. Certainly, there are a number of factors that are considered in this process to create a balanced student body for the university.

The university considers a long list of factors, including if the applicant is a child of an alumni or if he or she has written a terrific essay. So there are many factors.

All of these factors help the University of Michigan select a diverse, well-rounded student body that is not just racially diverse but economically and geographically diverse as well.

Do we not believe that students from our small towns and rural communities add a unique and valuable perspective to our academic institutions? What about our students who come from economically disadvantaged backgrounds?

I know many Michigan families in the Upper Peninsula who lost their jobs because of the iron mines closing. Don't their children deserve an equal opportunity to attend one of the State's best academic institutions, and in fact I would argue one of the best in the Nation?

I might add that my son, Todd, is also an alumni of the great University of Michigan.

This debate is much greater than the admissions policy of one university. This is about whether we are going to have equal opportunity for all Americans. This is about whether we support policies that help provide the opportunity for Americans of all backgrounds to have a chance at the American dream regardless of where they live, regardless of their ethnic background and their religious background, or whether they are male or female, whether they are an athlete or not a good athlete—a wide variety of factors that go into making those decisions. And shouldn't all young people have the opportunity?

We already have policies called veterans preferences to help our veterans. I certainly am very supportive of doing that. We have set aside programs for women-owned and minority-owned small businesses and some categories for small businesses in general. There are certainly preferences that make good sense in public policy.

Shouldn't we also give a helping hand to all young people who want to go to college to be able to create the brainpower to drive the economic engine of this country with new innovations and new opportunities to continue forward an American economy that is as strong as it can be?

President Bush's decision to try to dismantle the University of Michigan's admissions policy comes at a very tough time for our Nation's minority community. Over the past month, the Republican Party has undergone a makeover—a change in leadership. But it would be very unfortunate if it is a change in style and not of substance.

Despite the White House's recent proclamation of issues that impact our minority community, I was very disheartened to see that they immediately renominated Charles Pickering to the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals despite his controversial record on civil rights and his defense of someone convicted of burning a cross on the lawn of an interracial family.

There has been no commitment by this administration to support hate crimes legislation or legislation to prevent racial profiling. There has not been a commitment to fully fund election reform measures to ensure that minority voters are not disenfranchised as they were in the 2000 election.

Unfortunately, this administration seems to be all talk and no action. We