

COMMENDING CAPTAIN FRANCIS EDWARD SABLAN, JR., ON THE OCCASION OF HIS RETIREMENT FROM THE UNITED STATES NAVY

**HON. MADELEINE Z. BORDALLO**

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, November 5, 2003*

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend Captain Francis Edward Sablan, Jr., for nearly 25 years of service to his country in the United States Navy. Our Nation appreciates his courage and commitment to ensuring our security, and I want to express my personal gratitude to Captain Sablan as family and friends gather to honor his achievements on the occasion of his retirement.

Born in Hagåtña, Captain Sablan has proudly followed in the footsteps of his father in serving in the United States Navy. His father, Francis Edward Sablan of Yigo served as a Chief Warrant Officer in the U.S. Navy. Captain Sablan credits his father with encouraging him to pursue a career in the military. His mother, Maria San Nicolas Sablan, of Sinajana also provided many years of valuable support services to our Nation's men and women in uniform while working for the Department of the Navy, Naval Air Station Agaña.

Captain Sablan was commissioned as an Ensign on May 30, 1979, at the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland. He, along with fellow classmates and graduates Benny Fergurgur, Pedro Leon Guerrero, Frank Leon Guerrero and Francis Cruz, proudly represented Guam together at the U.S. Naval Academy. Their hard work and dedication has exemplified the patriotism and leadership qualities of the citizens of Guam and helped pave the way for future generations of talented young Chamorros to study at Annapolis.

Congratulations Captain Sablan on reaching this tremendous milestone. You have served your Nation and the people of Guam with dignity and courage. As you make the transition from active duty to civilian life, know that your contributions and legacy in the U.S. Navy will not be forgotten.

**THE "DEBT TAX" THREATENS AMERICA'S ECONOMIC FUTURE**

**HON. DENNIS MOORE**

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, November 5, 2003*

Mr. MOORE. Mr. Speaker, as a member of the House Budget Committee and as a member of the Blue Dog Coalition, I have grown increasingly concerned over the impact that rapidly increasing federal government payments on our national debt have had upon our country's economy and upon the economic condition of individual citizens. A recent column in the Boston Globe discusses these concerns in a thoughtful and focused way; I commend to you and to my colleagues the analysis of Byron Auguste, a partner at a global management consulting firm, and Mark Strama, a technology executive and the former director of programs at Rock the Vote. They are directors of the Hope Street Group, a nonprofit organization of young business professionals.

[From the Boston Globe, Nov. 3, 2003]

**THE BIGGEST "TAX" IS DEBT**

(By Byron Auguste and Mark Strama)

In recent years, much has been made over the repeal of the estate tax—or "death tax." Much less attention has been paid to a far more pernicious tax—the "debt tax"—which is bigger than the estate tax, capital gains tax, and so-called "marriage tax" combined.

When the Democratic presidential candidates convene here on Tuesday to engage a skeptical generation of younger voters at the Rock the Vote debate, we ask them to address the debt tax as the most important issue affecting young Americans today. American taxpayers paid \$332.5 billion in interest last year on the national debt. This huge payment, equal to 11 percent of the total federal budget, does not improve education, enhance homeland security, or rebuild Iraq. It merely services the \$6.6 trillion (and growing) national debt. These interest payments are a "debt tax"—a tax that drains income without producing any material benefits for taxpayers.

Today's average American household pays an astounding \$3,153 in taxes annually just to service the debt—about enough to lease a car for a year. These debt tax payments are required because of the fiscal irresponsibility of previous federal budgets.

A government running a large national debt is like an individual running a big balance on a credit card. Most American households use credit cards, and more than half of cardholders carry over credit card debt from one month to the next. But few would go as far as the federal government currently does; today's national debt is the equivalent of a whopping \$62,000 on each family's credit card. And each month, the debt is rolled over, with no plans to pay down the principal.

The debt tax is likely to grow in the coming years, placing an enormous burden on tomorrow's taxpayers. Even if the national debt does not increase, projected increases in interest rates will increase the cost of borrowing money—increasing the debt tax.

But the national debt is increasing, because the government is spending beyond its means. In the past three years, federal spending has increased by 13.5 percent. Only half of this increase is attributable to the war on terrorism. And this figure does not even include the \$87 billion recently requested for our efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Meanwhile, the tax cuts of 2001 and 2003 are projected to reduce revenues by \$1.35 trillion. Even if interest rates remain constant, this year's budget alone will add approximately \$22 billion to annual interest payments—\$22 billion in debt taxes. "Tax relief" for today's taxpayers is, plain and simple, a tax increase for tomorrow's taxpayers.

As a result these factors—rising interest rates, growing spending, and massive tax cuts—the debt tax burden will continue to mushroom. The administration's own projections show the debt growing by half through 2008. This means that in five years, the average family could be paying between \$4,500 and \$6,000 or more each year in debt tax alone.

The problem is compounded by the impending retirement of the baby boomers, whose tax contributions will decline at precisely the same time entitlement spending to support them will explode. For younger voters, this is like watching a train wreck in slow motion. We see the impact that is about to occur, and we are the ones who are going to get crushed.

It's not too late to avoid disaster, but doing so will require sustained, rigorous focus by our leaders. While many Democrats

and Republicans have criticized current fiscal policies, none has introduced a plan that will solve the debt tax. The time has come for our leaders to step up to the plate.

Americans understand this problem and are willing to help solve it. A recent Gallup poll revealed that by a 53 to 41 percent margin, Americans say they would rather hold down the federal deficit than lower their taxes.

Each generation of Americans has had the opportunity to determine our nation's priorities. In the middle of the 20th century, our grandparents expanded higher education and homeownership. Over the past 35 years, our parents invested in fighting communism abroad and poverty at home. Will our generation have similar opportunities, or will our only choice be to service the debts of our predecessors?

The debt tax is a problem with grave consequences for our future. It is a problem that won't be solved until we start talking about it. For the sake of our generation of voters, we hope the presidential candidates will start the discussion this week.

**STOP TREATING VETERANS LIKE A LINE IN THE BUDGET**

**HON. RODNEY ALEXANDER**

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, November 5, 2003*

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to remind my colleagues that our nation made a solemn pledge to our veterans that needs to be fulfilled.

Since the birth of our nation, patriots—citizen soldiers—have risked their lives to defend our freedom. They committed their lives to our defense and in exchange for that service we, the United States of America, committed to care for them and their families.

Our veterans have kept their promise. For over two centuries the men and women in our military have served us well. They've carried a heavy burden and sacrificed selflessly to ensure that our country remains a stronghold for liberty and freedom for all.

Unfortunately, we haven't done so well by them. While we have praised our troops in times of danger, we all too quickly turn our backs when we are safe. Using justifications like a tight economy or higher priorities, veterans programs have repeatedly been short-changed and neglected. For over a century disabled veterans have been subjected to unfair taxation and worst of all, America has come to regard our veterans as just another number in the federal budget.

In these days of bottom lines and more-bang-for-the-buck we seem to have forgotten the truth behind those numbers. Every single veteran is a man or woman who has served our country and earned their benefits. I represent over fifty thousand veterans; that's not a number; that's fifty thousand individual patriots who have sacrificed for us and who are now due what we promised them.

Mr. Speaker, it's time for the United States to stop treating our veterans like a line in the budget. We must pay what we owe those brave men and women for the service they've given. It's a small price to pay for the freedom we enjoy.