

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. And I would like to make a point, because as the oil companies reap these profits, and again I am not saying for you not to make profits, but not at the expense of every-one else in society.

So I want to make this point: The oil companies benefit a great deal from the public, from what the taxpayers support. A, point number one, the \$16.3 billion in corporate welfare that they are getting from the public tax dollars that is going to them. So they can't say they don't benefit from the public.

But their product is sold on roads that are funded by the taxpayer. Those roads are protected by the taxpayer, paved by the taxpayer, secured by the taxpayer. The ports in which the oil comes in and out of our country, all funded by the taxpayers. The Coast Guard, by the taxpayers. The military, the over \$400 billion budget that we have here that we spend on our military that goes to protect the transportation lines and the oceans, and as the ships start distributing this all over the world, that is protected by the taxpayer.

So all we are arguing here, Mr. Speaker, is that the taxpayer has an interest; and when this company and this certain industry benefits so much from the public tax dollars, they should be responsive to the public in these instances.

I would be happy to yield to any one of you to wrap up this brilliant discussion. I am going to yield to Debbie.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Thank you.

The only thing I want to add to tie a ribbon on this whole discussion is that what we have all noticed, whether we are in our districts with our constituents or talking to people across the country, when we interact with them, is that people have reached the breaking point. They don't buy it. They don't buy the garbage that is being fed to them by this administration that the economy is rosy, that everything is going well, that everything is hunky-dory.

They are falling off the cliff into the Republican cavernous abyss, and they are tired of it, and they want to have the Democrats or someone other than the people who are taking them in this direction that they no longer are willing to go, to fix it. Even their former House Speaker Newt Gingrich said that they are seen by the country as being in charge of a government that can't function.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Newt Gingrich, former Republican Speaker of this House.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. It is time to move this country in a new direction and restore America's confidence in their government. We know we have a plan that we can do that.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, as we go through this tonight, the 30 Something's two key third-party validators are the former Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich and former

Congressman Pat Toomey, now president of the Club for Growth, both saying that there is out-of-control spending, out-of-control government, dysfunctional, and the American people know that.

Any Members who would like to come to our Web site, www.housedemocrats.gov/30Something, www.housedemocrats.gov/30Something.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Also, Mr. RYAN, I want to share with the Members, Mr. Speaker, that all of the charts tonight will be on that Web site, on the 30 Something front page.

Also, I would like to share with the Members that Ranking Member GEORGE MILLER and also U.S. Senator DICK DURBIN put forth a proposal to reverse the raid on student loans. Earlier this year, as you know, \$12 billion was cut out of the Federal student loan program in order to help finance tax breaks for the wealthiest Americans.

This proposal will roll that back and cut in half interest rates from 6.8 percent to 3.4 percent. And it has to be done sooner rather than later. If not, it will be a financial burden after July 1 for so many kids that want to go to college. They will actually qualify, but kids will be priced out and not be able to make it to college.

Of course, this wouldn't be a discussion if the Democrats were in control, but we hope that we can work in a bipartisan way to change that.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank all of my colleagues who joined us here tonight on the floor and thank the Democratic leadership for the hour.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has shown lenience toward the rather informal pattern by which Members have been claiming and yielding and reclaiming the time controlled by the gentleman from Florida. But Members should bear in mind that the Official Reports of Debate cannot be expected to transcribe two Members simultaneously.

Members should not participate in debate by interjection and should not expect to have the reporter transcribe remarks that are uttered when not properly under recognition.

THE CONTINUED MISDIRECTION OF THE COUNTRY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CARNAHAN) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. CARNAHAN. Mr. Speaker, I am glad to be here in the House tonight and be joined by some of our colleagues in the freshman Democratic class that was elected in 2004.

I believe my colleague, Congresswoman DEBBIE WASSERMAN SCHULTZ from Florida, is going to stay on and talk with us a little bit tonight, and we

expect to be joined by some other of our colleagues to talk about the continued direction of our country and, in particular, this budget and tax plan that has been put before this Congress by President Bush and congressional Republicans.

I really want to rise and express my deep, deep concern about this budget. The cuts in programs across the board, no other word can be given, but they are staggering. This budget does not provide for the average American. It continues to line the pockets of the wealthiest Americans.

Like so many of the President's priorities, this budget is a misplaced opportunity to actually effect positive change for our citizens. I would like to draw particular attention to the energy provisions in this budget.

Last week, the AP reported that the average cost of a gallon of regular, unleaded gasoline was \$2.92, up 35 cents from just a month ago. Moreover, U.S. drivers are now paying about 14 percent more to fill their tanks than just 1 year ago. Recent polls show that over 65 percent of Americans are suffering from financial hardship due to rising gas prices. But we don't need a poll to tell us that when we fill our tanks.

DEBBIE, you told us earlier, like many of us, we go to fill up our tank of gas, and it is nothing to pay \$50 or more to fill our tank of gas, just to do our routine chores and drive around town where we live.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. And the astronomical increase we have had in gas prices, which affects everyday Americans every single day, has just been unbelievable.

Actually, Mr. CARNAHAN, we have a chart that illustrates those drastic increases, that is being brought over right now, that I think would be helpful; because I am a visual person, and graphically depicting some of these significant problems is really helpful.

Mr. CARNAHAN. I have to add, by the way, you have great graphs.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Thank you.

Mr. CARNAHAN. And I loved your top ten.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. We have good graph-makers among our staff.

You talk about summer gas prices. Just look at the difference over the years since the Republicans have been in charge.

In 2002, Mr. CARNAHAN, the average price of a gallon of gas was \$1.39; that was the summer of 2002. Then you go to the summer of 2003, it was \$1.57. 2004, \$1.90. Move over to the summer of just last year, \$2.37. And then this April, just last month, we hit \$2.91. Now, most of us in the last several weeks have all paid over \$3 in most communities across America.

So this is the reality of the rosy Republican economy that they have been describing and painting for us over the last several days.

Mr. CARNAHAN. It certainly is. And we have all had the stark awakening as we fill our tanks each week.