

official whose agency cannot fully account for how it is spending your tax money within 2 years.

I am also a cosponsor of H.R. 5542, which amends the Federal criminal code to impose on a public official who engages in conduct in furtherance of a Federal felony a fine and a 2-year prison term in addition to any penalties imposed for such felony. Those who write the laws, Members of this body, Members of this Congress, must be held not to a lesser standard than everybody else in America, but to a higher standard. That is what this bill would do.

It defines "public official" as an elected official of the United States or of a State or local government, a presidentially-appointed official or an official appointed to a State or local government office by an elected official of a State or local government. It says that if you are an elected official who has been placed in the public trust and if you break the very laws that you helped write, you should have a stiffer fine and additional 2 years of prison time tacked on to the term that any other citizen in this country would get. It is time to hold our elected officials to a higher standard. When they break the law, they should be punished to a greater degree than everyone else.

Wasteful government spending has forced the national debt to its current record level, and future generations will have to pay that bill. Future generations will have to pay back with interest the money the Federal Government is borrowing from other countries due to this administration's fiscal recklessness.

The time has come to restore common sense and fiscal discipline to our Nation's government. The legislation that I am talking about this evening will put our Nation back on the track toward balancing the budget and restoring accountability within our government.

That is what the fiscally conservative, Democratic Blue Dog Coalition, 37 members strong, is all about, trying to restore some common sense and fiscal discipline and accountability to our Nation's government and requiring that elected officials be held to an even higher standard than everyone else. If elected officials break the law, they should be punished to a greater degree than everyone else, for they have been placed in the public trust, and when they violate that trust, they should be punished and they should be punished extensively.

Mr. Speaker, if you have questions about our program, I would encourage you to e-mail us at Bluedog@mail.house.gov.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, again, as of this evening, the national debt is a staggering \$8,347,371,018,253.

THE LATEST EDITION FROM THE
ABSOLUTE TRUTH SQUAD

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GOHMERT). Under the Speaker's an-

nounced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. PRICE) is recognized until midnight as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, what a pleasure it is to come back to the House floor this evening, even though it is for really just a few short minutes, and bring the latest edition of the Official Truth Squad.

The Official Truth Squad is a group of Republican Members who began with a group of freshmen Members of Congress in their first term this past year, who got together and said, why on Earth do we have all of the misinformation and disinformation and distortion that you hear oftentimes on this floor over and over and over again, and nobody, nobody, refutes it. What is going on? So what we did is we formed the Official Truth Squad.

We have heard some items just this evening that deserve some truth. So I am pleased to come this evening to the floor, Mr. Speaker, and to bring some facts, some facts, to the issues, because facts are important when we are talking about issues in Washington. If you don't deal with true facts, then it is extremely difficult to get to the right solutions.

We in the Official Truth Squad have a saying that we are fond of, a quote that we like to identify and like to call to people's attention. It is from the late Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan. He said everyone is entitled to their own opinion. Everyone is entitled to their own opinion, but they are not entitled to their own facts. That is important, Mr. Speaker.

We have just heard from what has been described as the fiscally conservative Blue Dogs. Well, I am here to tell you, Mr. Speaker, these folks have perfected, perfected, saying one thing at home and doing something here. In fact, as I was sitting here tonight, they have perfected saying one thing here and doing something different here.

To point that out, facts, Mr. Speaker, the truth, Mr. Speaker, here they tout the importance of the line item veto. We believe in the line item veto. A number of years ago we had an opportunity to demonstrate our belief in that by a vote on the floor of the House. This vote was back in 1995. At that time, eight Democrats voted in favor of the line item veto.

This is a bill that would give the President an opportunity to control spending, to assist in making sure that we move toward a balanced budget, and in fact eight Democrats voted yes. 194 Democrats voted no. Most of those, most of those that were in the Blue Dog contingent, were in the no column.

I haven't updated this, Mr. Speaker, but as you know, last Thursday we voted on a new line item veto bill on this floor of the United States House of Representatives. I have got to update this, because the numbers are staggering. The numbers are staggering. 156 Democrats voted no. It is a fact, Mr. Speaker, they voted no on the line

item veto. In fact, half, virtually half of those folks who call themselves fiscally conservative Blue Dogs, voted no.

So, as I say, Mr. Speaker, they have perfected the fine art of saying one thing here and doing something different here, not just saying one thing at home and doing something different here.

You heard about a balanced budget tonight, how strongly they support a balanced budget. Well, what about when given the opportunity to vote for a balanced budget, Mr. Speaker? What happened then? This is very recent, just this year. Roll call vote 156 this year, 2006, the balanced budget substitute was an amendment to the fiscal year 2007 budget. This is a bill that the Republican Study Committee put on the floor of the House and it would in fact balance the budget, which is what most folks say they desire and what they say they want.

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But when given the opportunity to speak up, what they say they want with true action, what happens? You see it right there, Mr. Speaker. Not a single, not a single Member of the minority party voted in favor of that bill, including, including all of the Members of the Blue Dog Group.

So, Mr. Speaker, I know facts are difficult, because they are tough to argue with and they are tough to refute. But truth and facts are important. And there are individuals here trying to do very responsible things as it relates to the economy and as it relates to our budget, and as it relates to being responsible with spending hard-earned taxpayer money.

And the vast majority of those folks are in the majority party. And the reason that I say that with such confidence is because the actions that have been taken by the Republican majority have resulted in a remarkable economy. A remarkable economy.

Now, you will not see that on the nightly news, and you will not hear about it on the radio, likely, and you will not read about it in your local newspaper. But it is important stuff that is going on. It is important and exciting activity that is going on in our economy. And I would just like to highlight a few of them. We have got some charts that we would like to show that demonstrate that.

The economic boom that we are currently under is almost unprecedented. Today, at this point, last month America had 75,000 new jobs, 75,000 new jobs created, which is in addition to 1.9 million new jobs in the last 12 months. This is really exciting news, Mr. Speaker.

More than 5.3 million new jobs since August of 2003. Now, the unemployment rate fell to 4.6 percent. Unemployment rate at 4.6 percent. That is lower than the average of the 1960s, the 1970s, the 1980s, and the 1990s.

Mr. Speaker, this is all great news. It is remarkable that we do not hear that

kind of positive news coming from many folks on the floor of the House. We have had the fastest real gross domestic product growth in 2½ years. Productivity has increased at a strong rate, 3.7 percent in the first quarter, increase this past first quarter.

Real hourly compensation, real hourly compensation, all of the times you hear folks say that real wages are not going up. In fact real hourly compensation rose at a 3.2 percent annual rate in the first quarter of this year.

Personal income. Oftentimes you hear things that are not the truth on the floor of this House and across this Nation. They talk about people not having an increase in their income. Personal income, the facts are, Mr. Speaker, the truth is, Mr. Speaker, personal income increased at an annual rate of 6.7 percent in April.

And since January 2001, real after-tax income has risen by 12.9 percent. That is a remarkable, remarkable achievement for this economy, which continues to grow.

Real consumer spending increased at an annual rate of 5.2 percent in the first quarter. Employment increased in 47 States over the last 12 months ending in April. Industrial production. We often times hear about lagging industrial production. Industrial production increased 4.7 percent over the past 12 months.

And manufacturing production which has been criticized as lagging behind in this recovery, in fact it is showing strong rebounding with, over the past 12 months, manufacturing production increasing by 5.5 percent.

Those are facts, Mr. Speaker. Those are facts. That is the truth about a remarkable economy that really is going along extremely well and continuing to improve. There is a reason for that. We are going to touch on that in just a minute.

But I think it is important when we talk about our economy, the American economy which is strong, and is growing stronger by the day, that we use some benchmark. And probably the best benchmarks to use are other large developed nations and developed economies. How are we doing compared to the rest of the world?

And I have here a paper from the Joint Economic Committee, which is a bipartisan group that reports on economic activity, not just in the United States but around the world. And it states here that although some people have expressed dissatisfaction about the performance of the U.S. economy, the economic data show that since 2001 the United States has outperformed every other large developed economy.

Mr. Speaker, did you hear that? The United States has outperformed every other large developed economy since 2001. Now what does that mean? Well, the United States ranks first in economic growth among the other large developed economies.

It is first in job creation. As I mentioned 5.3 million new jobs since Au-

gust of 2003. In terms of industrial production, the largest cumulative increase in industrial production, 4.6 percent. That is compared to nations, other large developed nations that have not seen that kind of growth.

First in labor productivity growth. Remarkable productivity growth that we have seen in our Nation. And when we compare it to our nations, that have large developed economies, remarkable, remarkable progress and remarkable improvement. And we ought to be celebrating that, Mr. Speaker, we ought not be casting aspersions on the kind of policies that have had a direct affect and a direct positive, positive result on the United States economy.

And so folks say, well, why is the economy booming? What is happening out there? In addition to the hard work of Americans all across this land, I think it is important to appreciate that one of the reasons that the economy is doing so well and that we continue to improve is because of the tax policy that was put in place by this Republican Congress and this Republican administration in 2001 and 2003.

And the reason that that is important to look at is because you often times hear the other side say, well, we in fact they say, well, you need to be more responsible with spending. You need to decrease spending. You need to have greater accountability. But then immediately out of their mouth is the programs that they would spend more money on, in fact billions, billions more money on.

And their solution to how to get more money into the system is the tried and true system that they use all of the time, and that is to raise your taxes, Mr. Speaker. That is the tried and true method that they have.

But we believe and can demonstrate clearly that by decreasing taxes, by decreasing taxes, you increase revenue to the Federal Government. And this demonstrates it so very, very clearly. This is a graph that shows the increase in tax receipts over each year from 1982 on through 2005 and 2006.

In the last 3 years you see a significant increase. In fact, in 2005–2006, a \$432 billion, 2-year increase. That is a significant increase. And the reason for that is because people had more money in their pockets, they spend, they save, they invest as they choose. And in fact that drives the economy in a much greater way.

And it sometimes seems counterintuitive, but if you look at this graph, this is the growth, projected growth of revenues. And the 2001 and the 2003 tax relief being made permanent. And what you see here is the historical average of the percent of gross domestic product that comes in as revenue. That is this green line right here that is straight across. And what we see with the red line is what happened with the tax policy previously, and the recession and the affects of 9/11.

But what happened at this point is that tax decreases, appropriate tax de-

creases, were put in place, often times opposed, most often times opposed by the minority party. But what we have seen is a significant increase in receipts to the Federal Government because of, because of the appropriate tax policy that was put in place.

So tax decreases indeed help increasing revenue to the Federal Government. Our good friends on the other side often times talk about the debt. And they talk about the deficit. And we have shown that in fact when given the opportunity they do not support a balanced budget, but they often times talk about the deficit and not being responsible enough with hard-working taxpayer money, and we can always be more responsible.

But I think it is important to appreciate that what is happening under current policy is that we are decreasing the deficit significantly. This graph shows the deficit over a 40-year historical average of 2.3 percent. That is that dotted black line straight across the chart here.

And what we are seeing is a continual decrease in the deficit of hundreds of billions of dollars, put in place because of appropriate tax policy that allows individuals to have more money in their back pocket, again, and decide when they spend or they save or they invest. And that drives the economy to a much greater degree, Mr. Speaker, as you well know.

So we are making progress. We are making good progress, in a wonderful economy that is moving along in the right direction. What we need to do is greater fiscal responsibility, yes indeed, but also making certain that we continue the appropriate tax policies that allow individuals all across this Nation, hard-working American taxpayers to have more of their own money in their back pocket.

I think it is also always important when we talk about taxes to get a lot of distortion and misinformation that often times comes from folks in Washington when they talk about who is paying taxes. You often times hear that. Well, you know, it is just, the rich do not pay their fair share. And you get this class warfare going on that is really destructive, it does not help anything, it does not solve any of the challenges that we have, and it is not positive in terms of its presentation.

But I am struck by the amount of tax revenue that comes from different sectors of our society. And if you look at the percentage of taxpayers, and if you look at the share of individual income taxes that those percentage of taxpayers pay, the top 1 percent, remember this is what the other side call the richest of the rich, and they continually denigrate them and belittle their participation in our system.

In fact, the top 1 percent, Mr. Speaker, pay over 30 percent of the taxes in this Nation. The top 1 percent pay over 30 percent. And you can see that as you get to the top 5 percent, it is over 50

percent. So the top 5 percent of individuals in our Nation pay over 50 percent of the taxes.

Mr. Speaker, I think that probably really shows, one, the facts and the truth, but it also makes it so that the argument that the other side brings forth over and over and over about the class warfare just is so destructive, and it is not even true. It is not even true.

So the foundation of their argument does not even hold any water. And that tall bar over there, Mr. Speaker, that is the top 50 percent, and in fact the top 50 percent pay about 96 percent of the taxes.

The hard-working Americans taxpayers, hard-working American taxpayers. But this is a very progressive scale. And it is important that we appreciate that. It is also important that we remember that. It is important that we talk about it, because when you try to define these issues as they relate to taxes in terms of class warfare, it does not help.

It is not a positive solution. It does not bring us together as a people. We have so many challenges out there, Mr. Speaker, they are not Republican challenges, they are not Democrat challenges, they are American challenges. And we do best when we work together.

I encourage my friends on both sides of the aisle to make certain that we do indeed talk about facts, talk about truth, try to make certain that we work together as we move through the remarkable challenges that are present in our Nation today.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to be able to come tonight and bring that positive information about the economy, positive information about where we are going as a Nation, and as a United States House of Representatives.

Mr. Speaker, we live in a wondrous and a remarkable Nation, a Nation that remains the land of opportunity for all who are here. It is indeed a beacon of hope and a vessel of liberty to men and women around the world. It is such a privilege for me to have the opportunity to come tonight and to share that kind of positive information with not just Members of this body, but with you, Mr. Speaker, and with the men and women around the Nation.

So I thank you and the leadership so very much for the opportunity to be with you tonight.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. ABERCROMBIE (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today until 6:00 p.m. on account of weather delays.

Mr. ORTIZ (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of official business in the district.

SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. McNULTY) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, for 5 minutes, today.

Mrs. MCCARTHY, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. DEFAZIO, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. PALLONE, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. EMANUEL, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. WOOLSEY, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. SKELTON, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. LEVIN, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. STUPAK, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. ENGEL, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. CHOCOLA) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. BISHOP of Utah, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. CONAWAY, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. FOXX, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. CHOCOLA, for 5 minutes, today.

EXTENSION OF REMARKS

By unanimous consent, permission to revise and extend remarks was granted to:

Mr. LEVIN, and to include therein extraneous material, notwithstanding the fact that it exceeds two pages of the RECORD and is estimated by the Public Printer to cost \$1,774.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at midnight), the House adjourned until today, Wednesday, June 28, 2006, at 10 a.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 8 of rule XII, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

8292. A letter from the Congressional Review Coordinator, APHIS, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule — States Approved to Receive Stallions and Mares From CEM-Affected Regions; Indiana [Docket No. APHIS-2006-0020] received May 1, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

8293. A letter from the Principal Deputy Associate Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Bacillus myocides isolate J; Temporary Exemption from the Requirement of a Tolerance [EPA-HQ-OPP-2005-0303; FRL-8072-3] received June 9, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

8294. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting a request

for FY 2007 budget amendments for International Assistance Programs; (H. Doc. No. 109-119); to the Committee on Appropriations and ordered to be printed.

8295. A letter from the Secretary of the Army, Department of Defense, transmitting notification that the Nunn-McCurdy Unit Cost (NMUC) thresholds for the listed Army Major Defense Acquisition Programs' unit cost metrics have been breached, pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 2433(e)(1); to the Committee on Armed Services.

8296. A letter from the Under Secretary for Acquisitions, Technology and Logistics, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's report on recommendations in the National Research Council assessment of the Department's Basic Research, pursuant to Public Law 109-163; to the Committee on Armed Services.

8297. A letter from the Under Secretary for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics, Department of Defense, transmitting a copy of the "Annual Report on the Department of Defense Mentor-Protege Program" for FY 2005, pursuant to Public Law 101-510, section 831; to the Committee on Armed Services.

8298. A letter from the Under Secretary for Personnel and Readiness, Department of Defense, transmitting a letter on the approved retirement of Lieutenant General George P. Taylor, Jr., United States Air Force, and his advancement to the grade of lieutenant general on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

8299. A letter from the Under Secretary for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics, Department of Defense, transmitting a copy of the Department of Defense (DoD) Chemical and Biological Defense Program (CBDP) Annual Report to Congress, pursuant to 50 U.S.C. 1523; to the Committee on Armed Services.

8300. A letter from the Acting Chairman and President, Export-Import Bank, transmitting a report on transactions involving U.S. exports to Mexico pursuant to Section 2(b)(3) of the Export-Import Bank Act of 1945, as amended; to the Committee on Financial Services.

8301. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Standards, Regulations and Variances, Department of Labor, transmitting the Department's final rule — Diesel Particulate Matter Exposure of Underground Metal and Nonmetal Miners (RIN: 1219-AB29) received June 7, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

8302. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Energy, transmitting the Department's Annual Report on Federal Government Energy Management and Conservation Programs during Fiscal Year 2004, pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 6361(c); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

8303. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the FY 2005 Performance Report to Congress required by the Medical Device User Fee and Modernization Act (MDUFMA); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

8304. A letter from the Principal Deputy Associate Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Indiana [EPA-R05-OAR-2006-0004; FRL-8176-4] received June 9, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

8305. A letter from the Principal Deputy Associate Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Maryland; Ambient Air Quality Standard for Ozone and Fine Particulate Matter [EPA-