

and creates a deficit. Our budget improves every single year and achieves a surplus in 2019 which is when the Obama budget has a huge deficit and a huge debt.

Under our budget, the national debt will decline by more than \$6 trillion, compared to the President's budget which averages deficits of more than a trillion dollars a year. It is true that we give tax relief, but that is important. Again, we want the American people who earn their money to keep more of their money rather than turning it over to the government under duress and allowing bureaucrats to spend that money.

We will also fully fund defense which is the number one role of the Federal Government. Our colleagues on the other side of the aisle constantly forget to talk about that. The Federal Government is the only government in our country that can provide for our defense. We suffered a terrible situation on September 11, 2001, and we have not had another episode since then because the administration kept us safe.

We also create a zero-growth baseline for nondefense spending, and we assume repeal of most of the provisions in the so-called stimulus bill. We make no changes in Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid. However, we do clamp down on wasteful and low-priority mandatory spending. We are also going to assume savings from an earmark moratorium, something that the American people desperately want to see.

#### PRESIDENT OBAMA'S BUDGET

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. PERLMUTTER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Madam Speaker, I was just listening to my good friend from North Carolina, and she and I are friends. We serve on committees together. We agree on a lot of things, but we couldn't disagree more on how we got into this place and what it is going to take to get out.

We had an administration and a Republican Congress that said America, it's okay to give tax cuts to the wealthiest people in the country and have wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and go into debt.

Well, it turned our country from a very prosperous Nation into one that was borrowing money from all across the globe, something that can't go on forever. And it finally came home to roost about 6 or 7 months ago when the banks had trouble, the automakers had trouble, everybody saw our economy just crunch like we hadn't seen it in generations. That's what we are faced with today, ladies and gentlemen. That's what we are faced with today, Madam Speaker.

So what are we going to do about it? Well, in the past month we passed the stimulus bill which is designed to do at least five things to get our country back on track.

First, it rebuilds our infrastructure, our roads, bridges and waterways. It builds a new energy grid so we can get power throughout our Nation in a cheaper and more efficient way.

Second, it creates a new energy economy. If we want to keep sending tons and tons of money across the waters to the Middle East, then we should do nothing, keep the status quo. That's what our friends on the Republican side of the aisle would like us to do, just vote no, we like the status quo. But I don't like the status quo. I don't like sending our hard-earned dollars to the Middle East year after year after year, and we are creating a new energy economy within the stimulus bill.

We are helping our States which have found themselves to have lost lots of revenue over the last 6 months, so they can continue to employ teachers and firefighters and policemen. So we are helping our States continue to provide the services that we so desperately need right now.

There are tax cuts within the stimulus bill and within the budget for almost every American, but not the wealthiest 5 percent, so that each one of us gets a little bit of a break, but we are not giving it to the top people who have had the break for the last 8 years.

The last thing it does is it provides assistance to people who have been laid off and need assistance with unemployment or with their COBRA health insurance so they don't just run into a wall, to get us through this difficult period.

President Obama inherited a budget deficit that was \$1.3 trillion. It is a lot of money. It is more than any of us can comprehend being in the red. When President Clinton left office, we had a budget surplus. We were paying off the debt, and we got just the opposite when President Bush left office.

We are doing three things in particular to get us out of this predicament. First is to provide a new energy economy, similar to the stimulus, but the budget moves this forward another 4 years.

Second, it deals with health care which is something that everybody has talked about for years but really little has been done. And for each company out there, for each individual, we have seen our health care costs going up. We have to come at it a whole different way, and that is what the budget proposes.

The third thing is to make sure that our education system, our kindergarten through 12th grade, and then our higher education system is the best in the world so we continue to be able to compete globally, so that business comes here and stays here and doesn't go overseas like it has been doing.

It is a very ambitious agenda, but it is one that is going to take us into the 21st century, something we didn't do during the last eight years of a Republican Administration. We just lived on borrowed time and borrowed money. And now it is time to move forward.

The budget that has been proposed reflects those particular values. At the same time, it maintains for middle America, for 95 percent of Americans, smaller taxes. But it is a difficult predicament we are in now. This President has provided to the Congress a budget that is going to get us out of this ditch, and it is going to take the work of each and every one of us to move forward.

#### BUDGET DECIDES AMONG PRIORITIES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. YARMUTH) for 5 minutes.

Mr. YARMUTH. Madam Speaker, this week the House will consider the budget resolution for fiscal year 2010. As with any budget, whether it is a household budget or the U.S. Government, the process involves deciding among priorities. And in the case of the Federal Government, it is deciding among priorities, all of which have legitimate public benefits.

Last week, the Budget Committee marked up the resolution. One of the amendments offered by our colleagues on the other side of the aisle proposed one of those decisions. Mr. HENSARLING and Mr. MCHENRY proposed to strip \$50 million of funding for the National Endowment for the Arts and direct those funds to be spent for veterans' health care facilities. I applaud them very much for their interest in veterans' health care.

And I am happy to remind them and everyone else who is watching that over the past 3 years, the Democratic Congress increased funding for veterans' health care by \$17 billion. And that is following 6 years under their party's rule where the number of vets actually receiving care declined.

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Unfortunately, the debate on their amendment the other night left a lot to be desired as it actually became an opportunity for somebody to take cheap shots at arts funding that are not borne out by logic or facts. We just heard a little earlier the gentleman from South Carolina say arts funding is wasteful spending. Well, this day by fortuitous coincidence is Arts Advocacy Day, and I'd like to make the case for NEA funding, because, although that amendment was defeated in the Budget Committee, it may rear its head this week as well.

Mr. HENSARLING supported his amendment by juxtaposing the health care needs of one of his constituents, a legitimate American military hero from Palestine, Texas, against funding for the arts. He implied that he didn't represent constituents who would benefit from arts funding. Well, I represent some legitimate American heroes as well, but I also represent Actors Theater of Louisville, a world-renowned institution; the Louisville Ballet; the Louisville Orchestra; the Kentucky