

over the budget is really one that has always been a part of our Nation's dialogue. Do we want a big government and high taxes, which infringe on our individual freedom, or do we want a limited government that lets the American people keep more of the money that they earn, which expands freedom?

Democrats have a budget that says loud and clear: big government spending is going to be alive and well-fed by massive borrowing and increasing taxes by \$1.2 trillion. They will raise taxes not to pay off debt but, rather, to simply spend more money, mortgaging the future of our students, such as those at Timmerman School of Columbia.

Republicans have offered a budget that does the opposite. We want to cut spending, reduce debt, address short-term and long-term challenges, and provide more relief for American families and small businesses. Our budget is a clear sign of the confidence we have in the American people, not big government, to create jobs and put our fiscal house in order.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th and the global war on terrorism.

#### THE REPUBLICAN BUDGET

(Mr. DEFAZIO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. DEFAZIO. Well, after doubling the national debt under the failed leadership of George Bush, the Republicans unveiled their budget alternative yesterday, very appropriately on April 1, April Fool's Day.

Now, there's a pretense that they're going to restore fiscal stability through budget gimmicks, the spending freeze, no matter how great the need, bridges falling down, veterans need services, to educate our kids, budget's frozen. Well, it's frozen, sort of. There is another part that's not. After the smoke and mirrors are put up, their real agenda comes through, which is more tax cuts for the wealthy.

Here's the amazing thing. They're going to eliminate all taxes on capital gains so people who invest for a living don't have to pay taxes. We have had that argument before. But think of it, it's so beautiful. The hedge fund managers, who averaged \$260 million each a year last year creating toxic assets that are destroying our economy, claim that their income is carried interest, which is capital gains.

So the hedge fund managers who put our economy in the tank will contribute zero, zero dollars, under the Republican budget alternative to helping repair the damage in America.

Good work, guys. April fools.

#### BUDGET

(Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, unlike what the gentleman

just said, this President's budget spends too much, taxes too much, and borrows too much. This is the most fiscally irresponsible budget in the history of the United States.

The spending levels in the budget are just staggering. Under the President's budget, the government's spending will represent roughly 30 percent of our economy. That's not the American way.

The right way forward is the PAUL RYAN alternative budget which trims wasteful government spending and lets families and small businesses keep more of their hard-earned money.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting the conservative budget proposal that rekindles prosperity, promotes financial security, invests in our future, and saves for our children's future.

Let's go, America. It's the right way to go forward.

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#### A REPEATED FALSEHOOD

(Mr. BLUMENAUER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BLUMENAUER. We're going to hear more of our friends from the other side of the aisle talk about their budget proposal today. It's ironic that they're proposing things that they couldn't, wouldn't enact when they ran everything.

But one of the things I find most distressing is their repeated falsehood about some \$3,100 increase in taxes on the American people based on research done by MIT. They talked about it four times again last night.

Talking to Professor John Reilly, who actually did the 2007 study, indicates that they are using an intentional misrepresentation of the study. In fact, when somebody from the Republicans "called me on March 20 and asked about it, I explained why the estimate was incorrect and what they could do to correct it."

The actual number is one-fortieth of what the Republicans are talking about. And the fact is that in the budget we have an opportunity for people who want to be legislators—not communicators—to help us allocate how those benefits will be utilized.

#### ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded not to traverse the well while other Members are speaking.

#### CIGARETTE TAX

(Mr. PITTS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. PITTS. Madam Speaker, all in one week we've had April Fool's Day, the Democrats' budget, and the largest increase in cigarette taxes ever. But the American people aren't foolish and they aren't in the mood for gimmicks.

Yesterday, the Federal tax on a pack of cigarettes went up—way up. Was this tax raised to get people to stop smoking? Or was it raised to pay for a massive expansion in SCHIP? Well, both, actually. And that's a crazy way to run a railroad.

SCHIP needs more money under the Democrats' plan. So we're going to need more people to start smoking, not fewer. In fact, we're going to need about 22 million new people to start smoking.

But this tax increase is going to convince people to stop smoking, which means the SCHIP will be short of funds and the folks in charge in Congress are going to want to raise taxes again soon.

I'm all for health care for kids, and I'm all for getting people to quit smoking, but I'm against health care run by bureaucrats and health care programs funded by cigarette taxes.

The American people must wonder what Democrat leaders are smoking in Washington these days. And that is no laughing matter.

#### BUDGET FACT CHECK: NO COMPARISON

(Mr. PALLONE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. PALLONE. Madam Speaker, the Republicans, the "Party of No," are now the "Party of No New Ideas." The budget plan they released last week is a rerun of the same failed policies that got our country into this deep financial and economic crisis, including massive tax cuts for the wealthiest Americans, huge subsidies to big oil and gas companies, and no plan to bring down the cost of health care. And their approach to the financial market is to ask for more deregulation. The plan will result in deep cuts to vital services like education and public safety.

It's basically the same old thing—the Republican "Party of No." I ask my colleagues, vote for the Democratic budget and vote against the Republican alternative.

#### CHIEF STEVE WHEELER—TEXAS FIREMAN

(Mr. POE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. POE of Texas. Madam Speaker, the small town of Cleveland, Texas, lost one of their finest citizens this week when Fire Chief Steve Wheeler was killed. Steve was more than a Fire Chief. He was a fireman's firefighter—dedicated to the people of his town.

Steve decided at 13 he wanted to be a fireman. He worked at the local barber-shop and watched the firefighters next door at the station jump on fire trucks—and he got the urge to do the same.

After high school, he drove an ambulance and joined the volunteer fire department. He has held just about every position there ever since—most recently, head of the Cleveland Emergency Management Department. That's