

here at home and meet other important obligations. But right now, Mr. Speaker, our priorities are completely distorted. We are sacrificing the lives of our troops in a morally reprehensible war that is fiscally reckless and strategically an epic, historic failure. After 10 years, it's time to bring our troops home, make the change we so desperately need.

Embrace and adopt the principles of SMART Security.

TEXAS LEGISLATURE CALLS ON CONGRESS TO PASS BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT

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

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Speaker, in the last few weeks as I traveled across my district, the 24th District of Texas, it became very obvious to me that the number one issue on the minds of my constituents is out-of-control Federal spending.

In the last legislative session in Texas, my former colleagues in the Texas legislature passed a resolution addressing this out-of-control Federal spending. The resolution requested that the Congress pass a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution and send it to the States for ratification.

This is the resolution I have in my hand that was sent to me by the State representatives and the senators in my district that I represent. By overwhelming votes in both houses, the house and the senate, the Texas legislature passed this resolution that I'm holding right here in my hand. The Texas House of Representatives approved this bill by a vote of 115-17 on April 13, and the Senate adopted the bill on May 19 by a vote of 28-3.

This resolution calls on Congress to enact the best measure to stop runaway Federal spending. We can best ensure our future prosperity by passing a balanced budget amendment. I would like to personally thank the members of the Texas legislature that represent parts of my district, the 24th District of Texas. I applaud them for sending this resolution urging us to take action. My sincere thanks go to State Senator Jane Nelson, State Senator Chris Harris and State Senator John Carona, and to State representatives Vicki Truitt, Burt Solomons, Linda Harper-Brown, and Todd Smith. These brave men and women have taken a courageous stand on this issue, and I feel it's my obligation to follow through with their request.

The Federal Government must end sustained deficit spending. In fiscal year 2010, the Federal Government accumulated a deficit in excess of \$1.3 trillion, an annual deficit that exceeds the entire gross State product of Texas. In order to finance our current deficit, we borrow 40 cents of every dollar we spend—40 cents on the dollar—money that could easily go to pay our national debt down.

The longer we wait only results in more debt, debt that we will pass along to our children and to our grandchildren. Our national debt currently stands at \$14.7 trillion, which equals a debt per taxpayer of \$131,288. This is a problem we can no longer ignore.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting the Texas legislature's request for prompt passage of a balanced budget amendment.

THE STATE OF TEXAS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION No. 18

Whereas, the gravity of federal debt and federal obligations was established early in American history, with deficit occurring only in relation to extraordinary circumstances, such as war; yet for much of the 20th century and into the 21st, the United States has operated on a budget deficit, including the 2010 budget year, which surpassed an astounding \$1.3 trillion, an annual deficit that exceeded the entire gross state product of Texas; and

Whereas, the federal debt is greater than \$14 trillion, a sum that if shared equally by each person in America would be a burden of over \$45,000 per person, and yet the federal government continues to accrue debt; and

Whereas, the higher the deficit, the more the government must spend on paying interest on the debt; compounding the problem is the use of deficit spending, which becomes a responsibility for future generations of Americans to assume without their consent; and

Whereas, Congress has attempted to set budgetary restraints for itself in the form of a balanced budget amendment; the proposal won wide support in 1995, failing by only one vote in the senate; and

Whereas, many states have previously requested that Congress propose a constitutional amendment requiring a balanced budget, but Congress has proven to be unresponsive; and

Whereas, this growing burden of public debt is a threat to the nation's economic health, and action must be taken to restore fiscal responsibility; a balanced budget amendment would require the government not to spend more than it receives in revenues and compel lawmakers to carefully consider choices about spending and taxes; by encouraging spending control and discouraging deficit spending, a balanced budget amendment will help put the nation on the path to lasting prosperity; Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the 82nd Legislature of the State of Texas hereby respectfully urge the Congress of the United States to propose and submit to the states for ratification an amendment to the United States Constitution providing that except during a war declared by the Congress of the United States pursuant to Article I, Section 8, Clause 11, United States Constitution, or other national emergency, the total of all federal appropriations for a fiscal year may not exceed the total of all estimated federal revenue for that fiscal year and providing for a spending limitation; and, be it further

Resolved, That the Texas Secretary of State forward official copies of this resolution to the president of the United States, to the speaker of the house of representatives and the president of the senate of the United States Congress, and to all the members of the Texas delegation to the congress with the request that this resolution be officially entered in the Congressional Record as a memorial to the Congress of the United States of America.

UNDERAGE DRINKING AND FTC WE DON'T SERVE TEENS INITIATIVE

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

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to discuss the topic of underage drinking. It is an issue that challenges every generation of public officials, parents, educators, law enforcement, industry members, and concerned citizens. But through bipartisan leadership and almost three decades of public and private effort, our Nation has made some substantial progress. I mention "bipartisan" because it was President Reagan who teamed up with Democrats in Congress to enact the National Minimum Drinking Age Act of 1984.

□ 1050

At the signing ceremony, the President's remarks are a great lesson in federalism and national leadership that remains very important today. He said that underage drinking is a problem that is "bigger than the individual States." He called underage drinking a "grave national problem" that "touches all our lives." President Reagan concluded, "With the problem so clearcut and the proven solution at hand, we have no misgiving about this judicious use of Federal power."

I said that this was a bipartisan effort. Our colleague from the other body, Senator LAUTENBERG from New Jersey, was instrumental in guiding the measure through Congress, and he continues to be a forceful advocate for young people today.

According to the National Highway Safety Administration, the number of fatalities in teen drunk driving crashes has declined 74 percent since the early 1980s. Studies from the Department of Transportation and Government Accountability Office indicate that the 21-year-old drinking age has saved tens of thousands of lives. Most government measures of underage drinking have also declined.

Parents, educators, and other adults who have influence on young people need to recognize that older teens are still capable of making youthful mistakes, and some of these mistakes can be fatal. We should not do anything that allows our young people to obtain alcohol before they reach the legal drinking age. We need to remain involved in their lives and do everything we can to encourage and insist that they make responsible decisions.

Back in 2006, our colleague LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD led the effort to enact the Sober Truth on Preventing Underage Drinking Act, better known as the STOP Act. The law established a framework for cooperation among Federal agencies with responsibility to address underage drinking. In mid-July, we received a report from the Federal Interagency Coordinating Committee that was formally established by the STOP Act. It documents Federal Government prevention initiatives across