□ 1417

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the question on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal, which the Chair will put de novo.

The question is on the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 254, nays 156, answered ''present'' 2, not voting 20, as follows:

[Roll No. 135]

YEAS—254

Abraham
Adams
Aderholt
Allen
Amodei
Ashford
Babin
Barletta
Barton
Beatty
Becerra
Bilirakis
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Bonamici
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Bustos
Butterfield
Calvert
Capps
Carney
Carson (IN)
Carter (TX)
Cartwright
Castro (TX)
Chabot
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clay
Cohen
Cole
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conyers
Cook
Cooper
Courtney
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Crowley
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeGette
DeLauro
DelBene
DeSaulnier
DesJarlais
Deutch
Diaz-Balart
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Duckworth
Duncan (TN)
Edwards
Ellison
Emmer (MN)
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Fincher
Fleischmann
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Goodlatte
Graham
Granger
Grayson
Green, Al
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Heck (WA)
Hensarling
Higgins
Himes
Huelskamp
Huffman
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurt (VA)
Issa
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Kaptur
Katko
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kelly (PA)
Kennedy
Kildee
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kline
Knight
Kuster
Labrador
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latta
Lawrence
Levin
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
Long
Loudermilk
Lowey
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lummis
Maloney, Carolyn
Marchant
Marino
Massie
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McCollum
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McNerney
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Meeks
Meng
Messer
Mica
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Murphy (PA)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neugebauer
Nunes
O'Rourke
Olson
Palmer
Perlmutter
Pingree
Pitts
Pocan
Poliquin
Polis
Pompeo
Posey
Price (NC)
Rangel
Reichert
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Richmond
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Royce
Ruppersberger
Russell
Ryan (WI)
Salmon
Sanford
Scalise
Schiff
Schock
Schweikert
Scott (VA)
Scott, Austin
Scott, David
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sessions
Sherman
Shimkus
Simpson
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Speier
Stefanik
Stewart
Stutzman
Takai
Takano
Tiberi
Titus
Trott
Tsongas
Upton
Van Hollen
Vela
Wagner
Walker
Walters, Mimi
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Webster (FL)
Welch
Wenstrup
Westerman
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (FL)
Wilson (SC)
Womack
Yarmuth
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NAYS—156

Aguilar
Amash
Barr
Bass
Benishek
Bera
Beyer
Bost
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brooks (IN)
Brownley (CA)
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Capuano
Carter (GA)
Castor (FL)
Chaffetz
Clarke (NY)
Clawson (FL)
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coffman
Collins (GA)
Conaway
Connolly
Costa
Costello (PA)
Curbelo (FL)
Davis, Rodney
DeFazio
Delaney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
Dold
Duffy
Ellmers (NC)
Farenthold
Fitzpatrick
Fleming
Flores
Foxx
Fudge
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Gosar
Gowdy
Graves (LA)
Green, Gene
Griffith
Hanna
Hastings
Heck (NV)
Herrera Beutler
Hice, Jody B.
Hill
Holding
Honda
Hoyer
Hudson
Huizenga (MI)
Hurd (TX)
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (OH)
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Kilmer
Kind
Kinzinger (IL)
Kirkpatrick
Lance
Langevin
Lee
Lewis
LoBiondo
Love
Lowenthal
Lynch
MacArthur
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McDermott
McGovern
Miller (FL)
Moore
Moulton
Mulvaney
Murphy (FL)
Neal
Newhouse
Noem
Nolan
Nugent
Palazzo
Pallone
Pascrell
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Peters
Peterson
Pittenger
Poe (TX)
Price, Tom
Ratcliffe
Reed
Renacci
Rice (NY)
Rigell
Rogers (AL)
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Rouzer
Roybal-Allard
Rush
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schrader
Sewell (AL)
Shuster
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (MO)
Stivers
Swalwell (CA)
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thompson (PA)
Tipton
Torres
Turner
Valadao
Vargas
Veasey
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walberg
Walden
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Weber (TX)
Wittman
Woodall
Yoder

ANSWERED ''PRESENT''—2

Gohmert
Tonko

NOT VOTING—20

Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Brown (FL)
Buchanan
Cárdenas
Duncan (SC)
Graves (GA)
Graves (MO)
Grijalva
Hinojosa
Miller (MI)
Norcross
Payne
Pelosi
Quigley
Ruiz
Ryan (OH)
Smith (WA)
Thornberry
Walorski

□ 1424

So the Journal was approved.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION ON THE BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2016

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. TOM PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H. Con. Res. 27.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Georgia?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 163 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 27.

The Chair appoints the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. YODER) to preside over the Committee of the Whole.

□ 1425

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 27) establishing the budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2016 and setting forth appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2017 through 2025, with Mr. YODER in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to the rule, the concurrent resolution is considered read the first time.

General debate shall not exceed 4 hours, with 3 hours confined to the congressional budget, equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Budget, and 1 hour on the subject of economic goals and policies, equally divided and controlled by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BRADY) and the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY), or their designees.

The gentleman from Georgia (Mr. TOM PRICE) and the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN) each will control 90 minutes of debate on the congressional budget.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. TOM PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I thank the chairman, and I want to thank my ranking member on the committee, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN), for his work on our budget that we bring forward and the spirited debate that we had in committee.

I want to thank all of our committee members for the productive activity

that they brought forward over the last 10 or 11 weeks to work on our budget and produce this product.

I want to thank our staff. They have done incredible work to get us to this point.

I want to take a special moment to thank Congressional Budget Office Director Doug Elmendorf, who will be leaving at the end of the month. I know the ranking member and I are going to have some words later on about his service, but I want to thank him and his staff for the work that they have done.

Mr. Chairman, I am so proud and pleased to join my Committee on the Budget colleagues and Conference member colleagues on this side of the aisle to present A Balanced Budget for a Stronger America.

When I talk with folks back home in the district, the Sixth District of Georgia, and across the State of Georgia, truly across this country, individuals are concerned. They are very concerned. Many of them are angry. Most are frustrated about the direction of America. They feel we are adrift, that Washington seems incapable of addressing their concerns, that the Federal Government is getting in the way or impeding the very spirit of the people. The President's response in his budget? More taxes, more spending, more borrowing, more debt, more stagnant growth, and a budget that never, ever, ever balances.

Remember, Mr. Chairman—the American people know this—every dollar that is taken for taxes and every dollar that is borrowed, stealing from the next generation, is a dollar that can't be used to pay the rent, to buy a car, to buy a home, to send a kid to college, to open a business or to expand a business and create jobs. We think there is a better way.

Framing that issue, as folks read our report, is our introduction, in which we say this: It is often said that a budget is more than a dry collection of numbers and budgeting more than a mechanical act. With respect to the congressional budget, no one has put it better than the renowned political scientist, Aaron Wildavsky, when he said:

> Taxing and spending, resource mobilization, and resource allocation now take up as much or more time on the floors of Congress than all other matters put together. How large government will be, the part it will play in our lives, whether more or less will be done for defense or welfare, how much, and what sort of people will pay for the services, what kind of society, in sum, we Americans want to have, all these are routinely discussed in budget debates.

This resolution proceeds from that conviction. It seeks to restore fundamental principles of budgeting and governing, to reverse the drift toward higher spending and larger government, to reinforce the innovative and creative spirit stirring among the myriad institutions and communities across this country, and to revitalize the prosperity that creates ever-expanding opportunities for all Americans to pursue their destinies. Put differently, this budget resolution expresses a vision, a vision of governing, and of America itself.

So what is that vision? Mr. Chairman, we believe in promoting the greatest amount of opportunity and the greatest amount of success for the greatest number of Americans so the greatest number of American dreams may be realized, and doing so in a way that demonstrates real hope and real compassion and real fairness without Washington picking winners and losers.

Now, Americans just have a common sense about them, and they understand that something just isn't right, especially with our debt—very troubling, over $18 trillion. They know that we can't spend more money than we take in forever. They can't do it in their personal lives, they can't do it in their families or their businesses or their communities, and we can't do it right here in Congress.

In fact, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff said just a few years ago, Admiral Mike Mullen, the highest ranking military officer in our country, he was asked: What is the greatest threat to national security? The highest ranking military officer in our country asked what the greatest threat was, and he said the national debt because he knows what Americans know, that unless we have economic security, we will never have national security.

□ 1430

So instead of the insecurity and the uncertainty of the President's plan, we think there is a better way.

What are our highlights? We balance the budget in less than 10 years, and we do so without raising taxes. Our budget reduces spending by $5.5 trillion. It stays in balance and sets us on a path to pay off that debt—all of it.

We provide for a vote on the balanced budget amendment in the House of Representatives—this Congress—something that folks back home just think makes sense.

We support a strong national defense—providing resources above the President's number—when taking into account the base defense budget and the global war on terror funding.

We repeal ObamaCare in its entirety. As a physician, I can tell you it is not just harming the health of America; it is harming the economy of America.

We stop the raid on Medicare. We eliminate the Independent Payment Advisory Board, where a board of individuals can not pay seniors' doctors for caring for them.

We promote patient-centered health care where patients, families, and doctors are making medical decisions, not Washington, D.C.

We secure economic opportunity. We call for fair and simple and comprehensive tax reform to get this economy rolling again and get millions of Americans back to work.

We repeal Dodd-Frank and end the too-big-to-fail bank bailouts. We reform Fannie and Freddie. We cut corporate welfare.

We promote federalism. In fact, a letter sent from Governors across this State recently said:

> Over the last several decades, the Federal Government has passed laws and promulgated regulations that restrict the ability of States to innovate while requiring States to implement and run programs dictated by Federal dollars and Federal rules.
>
> For a long time, States were willing to trade off power and responsibility for Federal taxpayer funds, but we have reached a tipping point where States serve to carry out the wishes of the Federal Government instead of serving as laboratories of democracy.

So, we give States flexibility—flexibility in programs like Medicaid and nutritional assistance. The States are the ones that know how best to respond to their population. We return control of education to State and local governments.

We hold Washington accountable, reducing the size of the Federal workforce through attrition, and we support selling Federal assets and unneeded Federal lands. We call for regulatory reform to free up small business and job creation across this land. We require fee-collecting programs in the Federal Government to account for that revenue in our own appropriations process so the people's Representatives can have a say about how that money is spent.

We cut waste, fraud, and abuse. We would end the double-dipping in disability insurance and unemployment insurance. We require able-bodied adults of working age to work in order to receive Federal welfare benefits.

We support the rights of conscience for doctors and health care providers and employers, and we push back on the executive overreach of this administration. We stop the President's war on coal. We prevent the carbon tax. We encourage construction of the Keystone pipeline, and we hold the IRS accountable for targeting American taxpayers.

Mr. Chairman, this is a positive vision for our country. It will deliver real results for the American people. We responsibly lay out a path for a healthy economy, an opportunity economy—one that opens doors for people, not subjects them to the dictates of Washington, D.C.

Mr. Chairman, we believe in America, and we believe in Americans. We understand our problems are significant, and we hear the people of this Nation crying out for leadership here in Washington, D.C.

The Balanced Budget for a Stronger America will result in a government that is more efficient, more effective, and more accountable—one that frees up the American spirit and optimism and enthusiasm to do great things and meet great challenges.

We encourage our colleagues and fellow citizens across this country to join us in this exciting opportunity.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Chairman, I want to start by thanking the chairman of the committee, Chairman PRICE, for conducting the business of the Budget Committee in a professional manner. We have sharp differences but have expressed them in a civil fashion.

I also want to agree with him with respect to the great job the Budget Committee staff has done, both Democrat and Republican, and agree with him on one more thing—and it may be the last thing I agree with the gentleman on during this debate. Dr. Elmendorf, the current head of the Congressional Budget Office, has done a great job, and we are going to have a little bit more to say about that later.

We all believe in America, Mr. Chair, but I do not believe this Republican budget reflects the values and priorities. It is the wrong direction for America.

Now, as we gather here today, we are facing some good news, we are facing some bad news, and we are facing some really bad news.

The good news is the economy is improving. More people are going back to work. In fact, the private sector has added 12 million new jobs over the last 60 months.

It is not all rosy. Many Americans are still looking for work, but the unemployment rate has fallen to 5.5 percent, and trends are good.

The bad news is that Americans are working harder than ever, but their paychecks are flat. This is not a new problem, Mr. Chairman. It is not even a problem in the last 2 years or just the last 5 years. It goes back quite a ways. In fact, as this chart indicates, we have seen a growing gap between worker productivity, which has been rising steadily, and the incomes and paychecks of most working Americans.

If you look at this chart, it is very interesting, because it goes from 1948 to the 1970s, and you see these two lines are convergent. That means the additional worker productivity—the hard work of American workers—was translated into higher paychecks and compensation for them.

But starting around the 1970s, you saw the great divergence. Worker productivity went up. People are working harder than ever, better than ever, but their paychecks and compensation have been pretty much flat.

So, where is the value of that hard work going? If people are working harder than ever, why aren't their paychecks keeping track?

Well, that additional value of hard work is no longer going to regular working Americans—people working for a paycheck. It has gone, overwhelmingly, to folks at the top. And I don't mean just the top 10. It has gone, overwhelmingly, to the top 1 percent of Americans, who have seen their incomes rise dramatically even as everybody else has pretty much been running in place and flat.

So, our challenge to all those people working really hard—harder than ever—is: How can we make sure that they benefit from that increased productivity?

Mr. Chairman, we had some hope right after the November election. I remember opening up the newspaper—The Wall Street Journal. There was an op-ed piece by Speaker BOEHNER and Republican Senate Leader MITCH MCCONNELL, and here is what they said. They said that they were humbled by the opportunity to ''help struggling middle class Americans'' and to deal with ''wage stagnation.'' That is what they said right after the election.

But, Mr. Chairman, the very bad news today for the country is, if you look at this Republican budget, it turns out they were just kidding. This Republican budget is really hard on hard-working Americans and those who are looking hard to find a job. It says, Keep working harder, but you are going to get less.

It will do nothing to increase paychecks and take-home pay for working families. In fact, it squeezes them even harder and tighter. It will increase the tax burden on millions of families—those in the middle class and those working hard to join the middle class.

Amazingly, it just drops the higher education tax credits. It ends the boost in the child tax credit. Millions of Americans will lose access to Affordable Care tax credits.

It is not just working families. Students who are working hard to try and get a job are going to find college even less affordable than today.

This Republican budget cuts student loans. It increases the cost of student loans. It starts charging students interest while they are still in college. It cuts $90 billion from Pell—mandatory—and more.

It is not just students and working families. Seniors who have worked hard to secure a healthy retirement are going to see their costs go up immediately. Prescription drugs will cost more. Copayments for preventive health services go up right away. Nursing home care will get much more expensive as they cut $90 billion out of Medicaid, two-thirds of which goes to help seniors and disabled individuals. Most of the rest goes to families with kids. And then they turn Medicare into a voucher program that will reduce Medicare benefits.

So while this Republican budget squeezes hard-working families, increases the cost of college for students, squeezes seniors—higher costs for them—it is great for those who are already in the top 1 percent. It is great for millionaires. In fact, this budget paves the way for the Romney-Ryan plan to cut the tax rate for millionaires by a third. It paves the way. It green lights it.

If you look at this budget, it is based on a failed and unproven economic theory—top-down, trickle-down economics—the same old theory, the theory that collided with the real world under President Bush in the 2000s, right? It cut the top tax rate. The theory was that benefits would trickle down and lift everybody up. Guess what? Incomes to the top 1 percent went up. Everybody else ran aground. Yachts went up. Everyone else's boat ran aground. That is what happened.

Guess what else went up? Deficits went up, Mr. Chairman, but everybody else was running in place or fell behind.

And here is the thing. While this Republican budget makes life harder right away for hard-working Americans—life will get harder immediately—it also disinvests in our future. It slashes the part of the budget we use to invest in our kids' education—from early education and Head Start to K–12 and beyond.

It is a sad day when we start chopping away at the ladder of opportunity in this country.

It will also devastate the investments our country has historically made in scientific research and innovation, investments that have helped power our economy and keep us at the cutting edge of world technology.

And guess what else? It provides no solution, no answer to the fact that in just a few months, in May, we are going to face a shortfall in the transportation trust fund that will result in a construction slowdown this summer. It does nothing about that in the budget. It says: Oh, we're going to come up with something after today—in a couple months.

So, Mr. Chair, when I say that this budget disinvests in America, it is not rhetoric. It is a mathematical reality.

I want people to look at this chart. This is a chart of the share of our economy that we spend on the investment portion of our budget—the investment in our kids' education, the investment in scientific research like the medical research to help find treatments and cures to diseases like cancer or diabetes or other diseases that plague American families.

Here is what the Republican budget does. It takes that investment budget and throws it off the cliff, to the point that it is 40 percent below the lowest level as a share of the economy since we have been keeping records in the late 1950s.

Here is a country that invested in the GI Bill. We invested in our infrastructure and the National Highway System. We have invested in our kids' education. This Republican budget disinvests in America. So it cuts all those things.

I will tell you one thing it doesn't cut. It doesn't cut one single tax break for the purpose of reducing the deficit. Not one penny. Not one penny to reduce the deficit.

□ 1445

We hear that the highest priority is to reduce the deficit; but, yes, let's cut our investment in education. Yeah, let's cut our investment in innovation. Let's not fund the transportation trust fund—but we are not going to cut one

single tax break for the purpose of reducing the deficit, not for corporate jets, not for hedge fund owners, not one.

Despite all that and despite the deep cuts it makes in our investment, the reality is this budget doesn't balance. It doesn't balance, not by a long shot, Mr. Chairman.

This budget takes budget quackery to new heights. It claims to repeal the Affordable Care Act, but it uses the revenues and the savings from the Affordable Care Act to claim balance at the end of 10 years.

Senator ENZI, the new Republican chairman of the Senate Budget Committee, said that was kind of a budget accounting that he didn't think was right. The Heritage Foundation, they called that question as well in comments last time this came up.

Here is the other thing. The budget doesn't account for the almost $1 trillion in tax extenders that our Republican colleagues brought to the floor last fall and are on the way to bringing to the floor now, $1 trillion. If you add that to the deficit, which is real money, it is even farther out of balance.

Then they go and claim a deficit dividend based on phantom deficit reductions. Here is the number. This is in the 10th year. This is in the 10th year when they say their budget is really in balance by $33 billion. Well, it is not.

If you take out the Affordable Care Act revenue, if you take out the Affordable Care Act savings, if you add in the tax extenders costs that our Republican colleagues keep bringing to the floor, you don't come close to balance, not close, Mr. Chairman. This balanced budget stuff, it just isn't true. It is just not true. It would make Enron accountants blush.

I think, Mr. Chairman, most Americans would agree that this budget—cutting tax rates for the very wealthy, while increasing the tax burden on working families, raising the cost to seniors, raising the cost to students, cutting vital investments—will simply stack the deck even more in favor of the very wealthy and the very powerful and make it harder on everyone else to get ahead.

Mr. Chairman, we can do better. We can do much better, and Democrats will propose a budget that promotes a more rapidly growing economy, with more broadly shared prosperity. That will be the right direction for America.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TOM PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, so much misinformation just presented and we will work through that over the course of the next 3 hours as we debate this bill.

I guess the most disheartening thing is the rhetoric that divides the American people. This is a time for the country to come together and solve the challenges that we have.

An individual who has been leading in that is the current chairman of the Ways and Means Committee, the past chairman of the Budget Committee. I am proud to yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. RYAN).

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Chairman, I just want to, first of all, tip my hat to the new Budget chairman. It is a very difficult job putting a budget together. I did it for the last 4 years and served in the capacity of the gentleman from Maryland as the ranking member of the Budget Committee for the prior 4 years before that, so I want to thank the gentleman for bringing an outstanding budget to the floor.

First of all, this is a budget to be proud of. This is a budget that makes our country stronger. This is a budget that balances. It is pretty important to note that hard-working taxpayers, the people that elected us here to represent them, they have to live within their means. Well, so should government. That is the basic decision here.

When you take a look at the budgets that are being considered here today, we are basically trying to get the government to get back into the business of being honest with people about our finances.

Here is the problem, Mr. Chairman. Our government is making promises to people in this country that it knows it can't keep. That is dishonesty. What this budget does is it puts our budget back on track so that the government can keep these promises, the promises that people are organizing their lives around.

What the gentleman from Maryland and the President's budget says is just keep raising taxes; tax more. Oh, by the way, that is not enough. Then we need to borrow more and spend more.

That seems to be the path to prosperity, according to them, and look at where we are, highest poverty rates in a generation. Our economy is growing below 2 percent in most cases, below 3, which is what we were supposed to be growing at. The gentleman, I just listened to his rhetoric. He says this slices, this slashes; we are chopping away at opportunity.

Here is what this budget does. Instead of increasing spending, on average, like the President's budget does at 5.1 percent, it does it at 3.4 percent. We are saying let's get the government to live within its means.

Government spending will still increase, on average, 3.4 percent a year, instead of 5.1 percent a year. I guess that is the difference between whether people can live the American Dream or not, whether we are slashing or chopping or doing all these horrible, awful things to people.

Mr. Chairman, just don't buy all this overheated rhetoric. The problem is we have got to balance the budget. We have got to get this debt under control.

We see the storm clouds on the horizon, and what this budget does is it gets government to be honest with the taxpayers that give us this money in the first place so that we can meet these priorities honestly and balance the budget and get this debt on the right track.

We invest it the right way by giving people more of their own money so that they can make decisions on what is right for their family, instead of having Washington run it all.

Now, there is one last thing I would like to say as I get carried away on the rhetoric. The CBO is an agency we use quite a bit here, and the Congressional Budget Office is a very important government agency that gives us all of our cost estimates. This budget is written on their estimates.

For the last 6 years, we have had a Director at the Congressional Budget Office by the name of Doug Elmendorf, who has done an outstanding job as Director of the CBO. I have worked very closely with Dr. Elmendorf and with CBO in my prior capacity. He was a Democratic appointee, but the CBO Director is supposed to call the balls and the strikes and play it fair. Doug Elmendorf has done that.

I just simply want to say, for the record, Mr. Chairman, that we wish him well. He is leaving at the end of the month. We wish him well. We thank him for his service. We thank the Congressional Budget Office for all the hard work that they put in so that we can be here on the floor with these budgets, and we wish him great success in the future in whatever it is he chooses and thank him for his service to this House, to this Congress, and to our country.

Mr. Chairman, I simply want to say this is an outstanding budget that deserves our support. Don't buy all the hype you are hearing from the other side, and pass this fantastic Price budget.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I listened to my friend and the former chairman and his remarks. The reality is that the President's proposal and the Democratic proposal, we don't increase tax rates; but, yes, we do get rid of some of the tax loopholes in the Tax Code that are riddled with preferences that are there not because they make America more productive, but because someone had a powerful lobbyist who was getting a special interest break for them.

If you think about it, if the government provides a grant of $1,000 to somebody, that is $1,000 in value; but if I say to you, Of the taxes you have to pay, I am going to give you a special break so it is $1,000 less, that is a pretty good deal, too.

The reality is we spend $1.4 trillion, according to the Congressional Budget Office, each year on tax expenditures, more than on Social Security. Now, some of those are for good purposes, good public policy purposes, but some of them are for like corporate jets, and some of them are for hedge fund managers.

Here is the thing. We think that we can get rid of some of those tax breaks

to help reduce the long-term deficit. Our colleagues would just prefer to devastate our investments in education and other areas,

Math is math, to the former chairman. The reality is—and he knows it—that the portion of the budget we use to make these investments, the Republican budget does absolutely cut that to 40 percent below the lowest levels of the shared economy since we have been keeping records. That is a fact.

Another reality is that this Republican budget doesn't balance unless you are using phony math.

Mr. Chairman, I am now very pleased to yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Wisconsin (Ms. MOORE), a great member of the Budget Committee.

Ms. MOORE. Mr. Chairman, I thank the ranking member for yielding to me.

I want to add my voice to those who congratulate everyone on the Budget Committee, particularly the chair and the ranking member, for their really hard work—and the staff—that we put into this labor.

I can tell you that I was, indeed, shocked. Even though I have been on the Budget Committee for several cycles, I continue to be shocked at how this budget does not reflect what I call democratic values. I mean democratic, not as a Democratic Party, but as our democracy. I believe that our democracy is really at risk when we put forth such a budget.

I think that this budget hollows out the middle class; and, based on the constructs that we have seen in the past, it would raise taxes on middle class families. I am talking about those people earning modest incomes—$50,000 to $75,000 a year—by $2,000 a year.

Of course, it abandons the poor. Of the $5.5 trillion, 69 percent of this is on the backs of those who are the most poor and most vulnerable. A lot of people just don't care that much about poor people; but who do we care about in this budget?

This budget pulls up the ladder of opportunity from our kids, that next generation that is going to make our economy work. They are doing us a favor by trying to go to college; yet we cut Pell grants in this Republican budget by somewhere around $90 billion.

It deconstructs our job-creating infrastructure investment by $187 billion. There used to be a time when the transportation budget was a bipartisan thing; but, in the name of balancing a budget, we even throw these workers under the bus.

It pulls the lifeline from seniors, disabled, and kids by block granting our Medicaid program and cutting $913 billion, that being a portion of the $2 trillion that we cut from health care, a lifeline, by repealing the Affordable Care Act and all this in the name of a phony balancing of the budget.

□ 1500

We are going to see a display here at some point. I don't know if you call it the king of the hill, the queen-of-the-hill budget, the price-is-right budget—I don't know—where we are either going to have $94 billion or $96 billion in a slush fund, the overseas account that is $36 billion, $38 billion above what the generals and the President say they need for war.

The CHAIR. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. I yield the gentlewoman an additional 30 seconds.

Ms. MOORE. That is $1.4 trillion of entitlements that we spend through the Tax Code for gas and oil subsidies, jets, hedge fund managers. There is talk in this budget of eliminating the estate tax. Millionaires and billionaires are benefiting tremendously on tax income from CEO pay.

The CHAIR. The time of the gentlewoman has again expired.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. I yield the gentlewoman an additional 15 seconds.

Ms. MOORE. Don't believe the hype. I agree with the gentleman from Wisconsin. Don't believe the hype. This is not a democratic budget, as Americans have come to know it.

Mr. TOM PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, this appears to be a common theme, moving forward with this rhetoric that is hyperbole and dividing American against American. It is just not positive. It is not what this Nation needs.

The gentleman from Maryland said that it is all about math. Math is math. And he is right.

We now spend about $12,000 per American every single year, and we collect about $10,000 per every single American each year. It doesn't work.

What does it get you? This is what it gets you. This is the debt-to-gross domestic product ratio, the debt since 1940 of this country until 2015. The red line is where the debt is going. This is the President's plan. This is the Democrat plan right here. That is what will crush this country. Our friends want to stick their heads in the sand and ignore that. This is what destroys lives. This destroys every American.

We stand for all Americans. We believe that having a balanced budget for a stronger America is the way to solve these challenges. We believe it is important to save and strengthen and secure the programs that are so vital for the American people.

I am proud to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. ROKITA), the vice chairman of the Budget Committee who has been working diligently on this from the very beginning.

Mr. ROKITA. I thank the chairman for his hard work. I thank all of my Budget Committee colleagues for their hard work.

Mr. Chairman, it has been hard work—it continues to be—to have this honest conversation with the American people.

The whole goal here is to allow the opportunity for Americans to build better lives for themselves and their families, not for the Federal Government to attempt to provide that better life because, Mr. Chairman, after 50 years of the War on Poverty, for example, we know that the Federal Government can't do the job.

There is a lot of rhetoric out there. Certainly, Mr. Chairman, for the committee, it is not positive and not right either. It is just plain wrong.

We talk about hard work. You know what is hard work? Getting the competing priorities and a continuing usurpation of our limited moneys in terms of our mandatory spending and getting a budget to balance in 10 years. Yet again, this Budget Committee and this House of Representatives has a plan to do it and, unlike you have heard, to do it honestly.

What is not hard work, quite frankly, Mr. Chairman, what is easier to do is to never balance, and this chart shows that. The President's budget never balances, ever.

Of course, Mr. Chairman, you know that you can't start paying down the $18 trillion of debt that we have with another $100 trillion on the way until you first count the balance. We do that in a responsible, honest way. We don't try to do it in a year. We do it in a responsible, logical 10-year window.

The Federal budget is very big. It is like an aircraft carrier, Mr. Chairman. You have got to turn it, and you have got to turn it decisively, but it doesn't turn on a dime. And that is what we show here. That is what we do here. Again, it is hard work.

It is also hard work, as I mentioned earlier, because, as time goes on, more and more of our over $3 trillion worth of spending per year is spent on programs that are eventually going to bankrupt us if we don't reform them. If we don't strengthen them and save them for future generations, no one will be able to take advantage of Medicaid, of Medicare, of Social Security.

And I know we all put money into those programs—especially Medicare and Social Security—but on average, we only put about 30 percent into them, Medicare, for example. And that 70 percent delta goes on the backs of our children and grandchildren, a lot of whom haven't yet been born. Talk about taxation without representation.

Our budget solves this problem. We have the ability, and we on the committee have had the honesty to have this direct, forthright conversation with the American people, frankly, now for 5 years. The worst thing we could have done is to turn tail and run and not have this honest conversation.

The CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. TOM PRICE of Georgia. I yield the gentleman an additional 1 minute.

Mr. ROKITA. But we did it 5 years ago when the new crew came in. We continue to do it. And I am encouraged, Mr. Chairman. I think the American people see the light. They see that unless we correct and reform this mandatory overspending, no one can be helped. We can't have Americans building better lives for themselves and

their families. We are going to have them more dependent on the Federal Government, and in doing so, more and more people will be hurt.

Slush fund, no. A very important fund to fight the global war on terror, to keep our troops safe and effective. That is an important fund. I wouldn't call that a slush fund. And I wouldn't call dependency on broken programs good or positive either.

Republicans on the Budget Committee, Republicans in this Congress, I hope all of us eventually will have the courage and ability to not only have this conversation with the American people but to start putting this conversation into direct action.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I am a little surprised the gentleman from Indiana brought up what is called the OCO funding. These are the funds in the overseas contingency operations account for overseas contingencies, like wars and other contingencies that come up.

The reality is that what the Republican budget does here is create a slush fund out of the overseas contingency account. It sends a signal that we are confused about how we are going to fund our defense obligations, and it is in total violation of what the Budget Committee itself stood for for years.

I want to read, Mr. Chairman, from the 2015 Republican budget. It is just a year ago, but we have got real amnesia among our Republican colleagues.

Here is what they said in their report:

> Abuse of the OCO cap adjustment is a backdoor loophole that undermines the integrity of the budget process;
>
> The Budget Committee will exercise its oversight responsibilities with respect to the use of the OCO;
>
> The Budget Committee will oppose increases above the levels the administration and our military commanders say are needed to carry out operations unless it can be clearly demonstrated that such amounts are war-related.

I didn't write that. Our Republican colleagues put it in their report. It is like, ooh, didn't mean it.

So I am really baffled that our colleagues keep bringing this up. It is a total violation of what the Budget Committee has always stood for on a bipartisan basis.

With that, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlelady from New York (Ms. VELÁZQUEZ), the ranking member of the Small Business Committee and a great friend to entrepreneurs around the country.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. I thank the ranking member for yielding.

Mr. Chairman, I rise to oppose a budget that will cut the legs out from under our Nation's small businesses. This budget would mean $10 billion of cuts to initiatives that foster small business growth. Taken together, these reductions would mean 190,000 fewer jobs created.

For many would-be business owners, the SBA's entrepreneurial development centers provide critical training and guidance; yet this budget would shortchange those programs, removing local resources that allow small businesses to take root and grow in our communities. Nationally, Small Business Development Centers and Women's Business Centers would see cuts of $195 million. This would mean 16,000 fewer small businesses are able to launch, while 150,000 existing small companies would be deprived assistance that speeds their growth.

Beyond technical assistance, small firms need capital to expand. Sadly, this budget also undermines credit programs. New York City alone would see a $22.5 million reduction in microloans—microloans. Do you know that 62 percent of microloan borrowers are women, low-income women with a default rate of less than 3 percent? Shame on us. This lending helps the smallest businesses create opportunity in economically stricken communities. So it only makes sense that this budget, which targets the most vulnerable, would slash this program too.

Small businesses would suffer in other ways. For many small businesses, having the Federal Government as a customer can mean significant revenue and job creation opportunity. Under this plan, small business contract awards would be reduced by $142 billion, lowering job creation by 2.1 million positions. New York City companies would lose out on $3.6 billion worth of Federal work over the budget period.

Mr. Chairman, Republicans like to position themselves as small business champions. However, supporting small firms takes more than lip service. It requires wise investments in programs promoting entrepreneurship. This budget slashes those programs, and I urge my colleagues to reject it.

Mr. TOM PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I was amused by my friend from Maryland's comments about the global war on terror fund, understanding that in 2015, 2014, and 2013, for those fiscal years, he voted for the appropriations bills that included the defense money and the OCO money. In fact, the levels were $91.9 billion, $91.9 billion, and $98.7 billion that the gentleman voted for.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. TOM PRICE of Georgia. Maybe I will yield to the gentleman later if I have time.

I am pleased to yield 3½ minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCLINTOCK), my friend and a member of the Budget Committee.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Chairman, we need to discuss the budget under the ominously growing shadow of unprecedented debt that has literally doubled in the last 8 years.

With crushing debt comes ruinous interest costs that the CBO warns will exceed our entire military budget within the decade on our current trajectory.

The budget produced by Chairman PRICE's House Budget Committee meets our current defense demands by adding additional money into the war account. But I would reassure the ranking member that it funds that increase through a concomitant decrease in other spending. That will hold us on a trajectory to balance the budget in less than 10 years and then begin paying down the unprecedented debt that this administration has run up.

Unfortunately, this plan is met with opposition from so-called defense hawks who want the extra spending for defense, which this budget provides, but who don't want to go through the fuss and bother of paying for it. And therein lies the problem.

This is not just a 1-year increase. Because it increases defense spending without making other cuts, it changes the overall spending trajectory over the next 10 years.

And here is the simple math of the matter. This adds more than $20 billion to our total spending this year, and it, in effect, repudiates the budget plan for additional reductions next year. On this new trajectory that these budget hawks would set, there will be no balanced budget in 10 years, even if we enacted every other reform called for in the budget and maintained all other departments within these constraints.

After 10 years, we will still be running deficits of nearly $100 billion a year, and interest costs will have eaten us alive. That is why it is so important to pass the budget intact, without the amendments being proposed.

□ 1515

I am curious how the self-proclaimed defense hawks claim to defend our country when our credit is shot and our debt service is approaching $1 trillion a year. They forget that in the spring of 1945, carrying a debt proportional to the one we have today, there was serious doubt over whether we could continue to conduct the war for another year.

When he was Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Admiral Mike Mullin warned that in his professional military judgment, the greatest threat to our national security is the national debt. He made that warning 5 years and $4½ trillion of debt ago.

History warns us that countries that bankrupt themselves aren't around very long because before you can provide for the common defense, you have to be able to pay for it, and the ability of our Nation to do so is coming into grave doubt. The Budget Committee's budget offers us a very narrow path out of debt while continuing to fund our military at the requested levels, and its adoption, intact, is indispensable both to our short-term and to our long-term defense needs.

Mr. Chairman, we have a stark choice before us: pay for the needed increases in defense by reducing other

spending, or refuse to pay for those increases and sacrifice the long-term security and prosperity of our country on the altar of instant gratification.

Amongst the most chilling words in history are those attributed to Louis XV, ''After us, the flood.'' Let that not be the epitaph of this Congress.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, Mr. MCCLINTOCK is right about this OCO slush fund.

To the chairman of the committee, you actually made exactly my point in your remarks. I did support the OCO money—again, this is for overseas contingency operations—at the level requested by the President and the Joint Chiefs of Staff, our military commanders. It was higher a couple of years ago because we had tens of thousands more troops in Afghanistan. The gentleman may recall that we brought a lot of those troops home. As a result of that, we don't need as much money in our war account, the overseas contingency account.

So what I did, Mr. Chairman, is exactly what our Republican colleagues on the Budget Committee said we should do at that time; in other words, I opposed increases above the levels the administration and military commanders said were needed to carry out those operations. Yes, I did support a budget level at the level the President and our military commanders said was necessary, but as Mr. MCCLINTOCK said, the Republican budget does just the opposite. It does what we said we would not do—and I say ''we,'' Republicans and Democrats alike. So it is important to heed our own words; otherwise, as the Budget Committee itself said, we will undermine the integrity of the budget process. That was the point Mr. MCCLINTOCK was making as well.

I now yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO), the ranking member of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee. He is somebody who knows we have to fund the modernization of our country's infrastructure.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Chairman, let's depart from a little bit of the acrimony, the acronyms, the magic asterisks, and the end runs. Let's be concrete. So let's talk about infrastructure investment and what the Republican budget would do.

We are running a deficit this year. We fall off a cliff the end of May, and if we don't put up $10 billion, many States will cancel projects this summer. That is not the subject of this budget. This budget is for next year.

So what are they doing for the long term? They are going to reform the highway trust fund. Oh, thank you very much. I appreciate that. They are going to limit expenditures out of the fund to future income. We have been supplementing it from general funds because the income is not adequate, but they are going to say: No. No more general funds. You live on the income.

What does that mean? Well, it means, in this budget put forward by these people, there would be a 99 percent cut in State funding. Yes. No, I'm not exaggerating, 99 percent. Because basically the money is paying for past obligations, past projects for the States. When the States finish a project, they get reimbursed. While they are building it, they don't. So under their budget in fiscal year 2016, your State Department of Transportation will get 99 percent less Federal funds. That kind of has a pretty big impact in some States here. If you are in a bright yellow State, you are over 70 percent, depending on the Federal funds; if you are in a green State, 50 to 69; and a light green, 30 to 49.

I would note on the Republican side that the chairman of the committee, Georgia, they would get $1.1 billion less. Now, I guess Georgia doesn't need the money. The roads, the congestion around Atlanta is not a problem. The Speaker's State would get $1.2 billion less under this budget; California, $3.2 billion less, the majority leader; and Louisiana, the whip, $619 million less. These are facts. That is the actual impact of their proposed budget. It digs a hole so deep we will never get out of it.

What happens after the first year of their reform of the trust fund? Well, actually, unless we pass a long-term bill with new funding, which they are quite resistant to thus far, it would mean 30 percent less funding than today for all States and a 60 percent cut in surface transportation.

We already have a system with 147,000 bridges that need repair or total replacement. Forty percent of the surface on the National Highway System is in such bad condition it has to be dug up—not just resurfaced, no, major work—and a $75 billion backlog in transit systems. Our legacy systems in our major cities are so obsolete, they are killing people. Right here in the Nation's Capital, people are dying unnecessarily because they can't afford to bring in modern cars without the Federal partnership.

We held a hearing just last week in the committee, and we heard from the Governor of North Carolina—red State, red Governor—the mayor of Salt Lake, and the transportation director from Wyoming. They all say the Federal partnership is absolutely critical, and you are going to reduce it to 1 percent.

Mr. TOM PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I would note for the gentleman that if he reads the budget resolution, we accommodate for appropriate funding for infrastructure and for highways in section 510. With a deficit-neutral reserve fund, that means that we actually accommodate for paying for it, for transportation and for infrastructure, because we believe it is a priority. We believe it is a priority for the American people.

Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN), a member of the Budget Committee.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the diligent work on the Budget Committee and the leadership you have shown there.

Mr. Chairman, Americans know that this country was built on a strong work ethic. This budget provides a framework to create work requirements for able-bodied, working-age adults receiving Federal benefits.

Some may ask, Why work requirements? In 1996, President Clinton, a fellow Arkansan from my hometown of Hot Springs but from across the aisle, said: Today we are taking an historic chance to make welfare what it is meant to be: a second chance, not a way of life. The goal of workforce requirements on able-bodied, working-age adults is simply to give Americans a hand up, not a hand out.

Mr. Chairman, we should be concerned about the negative effects these Federal benefit programs are having on our American work ethic when we review the data. The maximum an individual can earn and still receive government assistance under some programs, according to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, is only $1,000.

The Cato Institute reports that in 39 States, individuals can make more on government assistance than by working an 8-hour, $8-per-hour job. In six States, government benefits pay more than a $12-per-hour job; and in eight States, government assistance pays for more than the average salary of an American teacher.

In my home State, where Medicaid expansion was accepted, 40 percent of the able-bodied, working-age adults receiving 100-percent-funded Medicaid had zero income. By adding workforce requirements for able-bodied, working-age adults in the Medicaid population alone, this budget establishes a blueprint for work requirements that will result in savings by 2022 of up to $376 billion federally, with an additional $170 billion saved at the State level.

President Franklin Roosevelt made clear during a 1935 address to Congress that these programs were not intended to be an entitlement but a temporary aid to those in need. He said:

''The lessons of history, confirmed by the evidence immediately before me, show conclusively that continued dependence upon relief induces a spiritual and moral disintegration fundamentally destructive to the national fibre. To dole out relief in this way is to administer a narcotic, a subtle destroyer of the human spirit. It is inimical to the dictates of sound policy. It is in violation of the traditions of America. Work must be found for able-bodied but destitute workers.''

The principles President Clinton and President Roosevelt before him promoted are more important now than ever before as we find ourselves in a fiscal crisis created by dependence and entitlement. President Clinton reminded us in 1996 that this is not the end of welfare reform, this is the beginning, and we all have to assume responsibility.

The CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. TOM PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. WESTERMAN. This budget incentivizes work, not dependence. This budget reduces spending growth instead of growing government. This budget moves us in the right direction.

I encourage my friends on both sides of the aisle to assume responsibility by voting for this balanced budget for a stronger, working America.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, actually, this Republican budget strips away provisions that are in existence today to make work pay. Child tax credits for working families, they get rid of the bump up. They get rid of the enhanced earned income tax credit for working families. As I said, they get rid of the higher education deduction for families so that they can send their kids to school.

I also want to say a word about the transportation trust fund, because as the ranking member, as the senior Democrat on the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee just pointed out, this Republican budget has no provision inside the budget numbers for dealing with the crisis we are going to face in a few months.

Now, the chairman of the committee mentioned the deficit-neutral reserve fund, section 510. I am looking at it now. Deficit-neutral reserve funds can play an important role in signaling a policy direction. After all, these are 10-year budgets. I would understand if we didn't know exactly what we were going to do with our transportation trust fund 10 years from now or 9 years from now, but we are talking about 1½ months from now. We are talking about in the first year of this budget. In the middle of May, we are going to see a construction slowdown.

Now, the Democratic budget alternative, we have a plan. The President put forward a 6-year plan, $478 billion. It is included in his budget numbers. It is not like, okay, a little asterisk, we will figure this out in a month and a half. The President makes sure we don't have a shortfall, and, actually, he says we need to modernize our infrastructure so we can compete in this global economy.

So, Mr. Chairman, it is just reckless to put forward a budget where it doesn't even provide any solution to something that is going to face us in a month and a half.

Now I am pleased to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PASCRELL), a terrific member of the Budget Committee.

Mr. PASCRELL. Thank you, Mr. Ranking Member. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, there is a stark choice to be made, there is no question about it, as I am quoting from the gentleman from California.

Mr. Chairman, this is the stark choice. Look at this. This is what you tried to do to the American people after Bill Clinton left office.

During his term, 21 million jobs were created. Then the next 8 years when we dropped the tax rate down from 39.6 to 35 percent for those most affluent, we didn't gain anything. In fact, we lost 463,000 jobs. You want to try this again? We are not going to try it again. You want to talk about dead on arrival? Those are your words. This is dead on arrival.

Mr. Chairman, I rise in strong opposition to this budget. Forget about the trillions of dollars worth of cuts to programs that help people with low or moderate incomes. Forget about the tax increases that hit the middle class and working poor so that some millionaires and billionaires can squeeze a little more from the stone. Forget about repealing ObamaCare for the 56th time, taking affordable health care out of the hands of 16 million Americans, leaving them with nothing and not having the guts to tell them what is going on. Forget about all of that.

The fundamental problem with this document is that even with all the draconian spending cuts and with all the tax increases I just described, at the end of the day, it still doesn't balance, as the ranking member, just a few moments ago, said over and over again.

In fact, Mr. Ranking Member, it is not even close.

□ 1530

This budget, while calling for the complete and total repeal of the Affordable Care Act, continues to assume that the law's $2 trillion revenue increases and Medicare savings—it assumes that. We will do away with the bill, but we will keep the money. I don't know another way to put it.

When we get to taxes, the budget assumes that revenues remain unchanged for the current law. Yet you, yourself—you, yourself, Mr. Chairman, I have a great deal of respect for you, Doctor—you stated explicitly through the Chair that you don't think we should be using the current law baseline. You said that, I didn't.

Last Congress, we passed $956 billion in unpaid-for tax breaks. You all voted for that. They weren't assumed in the current law baseline. This year, we have already passed $100 billion in unpaid-for tax cuts. Where is this money coming from? We are the tax-and-spend Democrats. You folks know better than that.

The CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. PASCRELL. Thank you.

Two hundred billion dollars more have been reported out of Ways and Means. And tomorrow, we are going to report out another $300 billion tax cut for Paris Hilton, Ivanka Trump, and others fortunate enough to be left a nice inheritance. That is what you are going to do tomorrow.

My friend, the chairman, might just be assuming that your majority will shortly pass a trillion-dollar tax increase to offset these unpaid for tax breaks and abide by his budget's revenue assumptions.

Mr. Chairman, I urge a ''no'' vote for this budget. It is simply not worth the paper it is printed on.

The CHAIR. Members are reminded to direct their remarks to the Chair and not to other Members of the body in the second person.

Mr. TOM PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I want to make a comment about the highway trust fund that was referenced. My colleague from Maryland stated there is nothing in this budget that will deal with the problem that is about to occur in a month and a half. And he is right. This budget deals with fiscal year 2016, which begins in October.

The good news, Mr. Chairman, however, is that in last year's budget, FY15 budget, which addresses this year, this current year that we are in right now, we also had a proposal to be able to provide for a deficit neutral reserve fund for transportation, which was used previously for MAP–21. So a path to how we are able to actually solve the challenges before us.

I am so pleased to yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. MIMI WALTERS).

Mrs. MIMI WALTERS of California. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of the House Republican fiscal year 2016 budget resolution, A Balanced Budget for a Stronger America.

At a time when our Nation is grappling with over $18 trillion in national debt and an uncertain economic future, now more than ever Washington must learn to live within its means. Washington's spending problem is one that cannot be taken lightly.

According to former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Admiral Mike Mullen, the ''single, biggest threat to our national security'' is our national debt. House Republicans are working to confront this issue head on.

In our budget proposal, we seek to tackle Washington's spending addiction by reducing Federal spending by $5.5 trillion and balancing the Federal budget in less than 10 years. This is a sharp contrast to President Obama's budget, which never balances, ever, despite the President's continued insistence on raising taxes.

Our budget aims to strengthen vital programs like Medicare and Social Security in a fiscally responsible way so that we can fulfill the promises we have made to our Nation's seniors.

One of the Federal Government's top priorities is providing a strong national defense. This budget boosts defense spending above the President's levels so we can ensure a strong, safe, and secure Nation.

Furthermore, our proposal repeals ObamaCare in full, including the law's taxes, regulations, and mandates that are crippling hard-working Americans and small businesses nationwide.

We also empower patients by repealing the President's Independent Payment Advisory Board, an unelected, unaccountable board of bureaucrats charged with making patient's health care decisions.

The Republican budget is a positive step forward for our Nation. It seeks to address our Nation's debt crisis while also supporting the programs that are critical to our national and economic security.

I urge my colleagues to support this budget resolution.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Chairman, as we have previously pointed out, this Republican budget keeps the revenues from the Affordable Care Act even as it claims to repeal the Affordable Care Act. Without that level of revenue, along with other savings, it doesn't come close to balancing. No accountant would certify this Republican budget close to balance.

I am now pleased to yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from New Mexico (Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM), a terrific member of the committee and someone who is an expert on all sorts of issues, including health care.

Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico. Mr. Chair, I want to thank the ranking member.

This budget, the Republican budget, is a collection of $5.5 trillion of devastating cuts to both mandatory and nondefense discretionary programs.

I have heard my colleagues say that we need to treat the budget like we do American families: when you can't live within your means, then you have to figure that out. The problem is, this is a budget that actually takes away those means. If we are going to talk about entitlement reform, you have to provide an investment and actually create jobs and create opportunities to have careers and meaningful wages.

Now, as we debate these numbers, I really hope that my Republican colleagues, when they vote for this budget, will you really know what you are doing and what these numbers mean for hard-working American families? Because I know what the budget does and how it impacts them.

Here is what it means. It means 290 fewer New Mexican children are going to have access to Head Start. It means 18,700 fewer New Mexico residents are going to receive job training and employment services. It means 59,000 New Mexican students are going to lose access to their Pell grants for college. It means 24,100 New Mexican seniors are likely going to have to pay more for their prescription drugs. And about 431,000—that bears repeating—431,000 New Mexicans receiving SNAP, half of which are children, will be in jeopardy of losing their nutrition support.

Now, when we think about the budget, we cannot just think about the numbers that sit on a piece of paper. We need to think about the human meaning behind the numbers. We need to think about the child that will go hungry, the student who can't afford to pay for college, and the seniors who won't be able to pay their medical bills. We need to invest in economic security for everyone.

I urge my colleagues to oppose this budget and, instead, pass a budget that lifts people out of poverty, invests in hard-working families who have been left behind by the economy, and that provides for shared prosperity.

Mr. TOM PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. GARRETT), a senior member of the Budget Committee.

Mr. GARRETT. Mr. Chairman, back on January 20, 2009, the day President Obama took office, the Federal debt in this country stood at $10.6 trillion. The Federal debt today, as we stand here today, is over $18 trillion. That is an increase of over 70 percent during his tenure.

Debt now represents 101 percent of the GDP. In other words—let's put this in context—America owes more money to its creditors around the world than the value of all the goods and all the services that are produced right here in the United States in 1 year.

That level of debt, quite honestly, is unsustainable. In fact, that is not just me saying this. The nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office, the CBO, states that our ''high and rising debt would have serious negative consequences for both the economy and the Federal budget.'' And it certainly does.

Admiral Michael Mullen, also quoted on this floor before, perhaps put it best when he said: ''The single, biggest threat to our national security'' in this country is what?—''our debt.''

So, Mr. Chairman, Americans are faced with two paths right now: one that continues down the path of blissful neglect of our very real budget crisis; or on the other path, one that seeks an honest solution to it.

Instead of solving our debt problem, President Obama has committed to exacerbating it.

The President's budget would add another $8.5 trillion to our already staggering debt. But despite his $2.1 trillion in new tax increases, in addition, the Obama budget never ever balances. It is a vision that consigns our children and grandchildren to a future of crushing debts and heavy tax burdens.

The Republican budget, on the other hand, is a stark alternative to the past 6 years of reckless spending and failed policies. Instead of ever-increasing debt and ever-higher taxes, Republicans will balance the budget in less than 10 years without raising more taxes on you.

Instead of pretending that Medicare is sound, Republicans will strengthen the program by making much-needed structural improvements to it.

Instead of dictating that Washington knows all the answers, Republicans will promote by innovation and also by flexibility for Medicaid, for education, and other programs by restoring local control.

So, Mr. Chairman, I urge today all Members of this body to stand up to support the budget and to support the American taxpayers, to stand up for strengthening our social safety net, and to stand up for our children and to stand up for our grandchildren, who do not deserve to be handed the bill for our irresponsible spending today.

I urge a ''yes'' vote on the Republican budget.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I don't think that huge disinvestment in education, starting with early education going through K–12, helps our kids in their future. I don't think that the efforts that strip away a lot of the job training programs help hard-working Americans.

The President's budget's priority is to accelerate economic growth and have more broadly shared prosperity. I would remind my colleagues that the day the President was sworn into office we were losing 800,000 jobs every month in this country. The bottom was falling out. Now we have seen over the last 60 months 12 million jobs created. We have got a long way to go, but we are certainly on the right track. And the President's budget provides for additional economic growth in a fiscally responsible way. The President's budget reduces the debt-to-GDP ratio. The President's budget reduces the deficit's share of the economy.

But what the President's budget does not do is disinvest in our kid's education, it does not increase the cost to seniors for prescription drugs and copays for preventive health care, and it doesn't get away from a lot of the important tax credits and relief for middle class Americans and those working to join the middle class. So, no, it does not do that.

Now I am very pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. HAHN), who knows a lot about the importance of economic growth, especially as it relates to small businesses, a distinguished member of the Small Business Committee.

Ms. HAHN. Mr. Chairman, I thank my colleague, CHRIS VAN HOLLEN, for the opportunity to speak today.

Mr. Chairman, I think a budget is a reflection of our priorities. The choices we make about how to invest and spend have an impact on our American families. We must make it easier for hard-working Americans to own a home, to send their kids to college, and to have a secure and enjoyable retirement.

That is why it is so important that we invest in our Nation's ports, which create good-paying American jobs and sustain American businesses. Providing our ports and waterways with the funding and support they need is a high priority for me, and one that is shared by many of my colleagues, especially the almost 100 members of the bipartisan Congressional PORTS Caucus.

□ 1545

We know that America must invest more in our ports to remain globally

competitive and to be prepared for the expansion of the Panama Canal, which will impact international trade and shipping routes.

The budget we are considering today, however, does just the opposite. Cutting funding for programs that support American commerce is both shortsighted and harmful to the competitiveness of American businesses.

I applaud the Congressional Progressive Caucus budget because it fully meets the targets we set in the 2014 WRRDA bill for the harbor maintenance funding, using more of the revenue collected at our ports for its intended purpose of maintaining and improving ports and navigation channels.

Let me emphasize that the harbor maintenance trust fund is self-funded. This is not new spending or new fees. Shippers already pay this tax to fund improvements that Congress is refusing to authorize.

The trust fund now has a surplus of $9 billion in fees that America's ports have collected; but unless we act, these funds will not be used as intended, which is to improve our ports.

The CHAIR. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. I yield the gentlewoman an additional 30 seconds.

Ms. HAHN. Thank you.

Mr. Chairman, I call on my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to join me in supporting a budget that returns this tax back to the ports, where it is collected.

I want to thank the bipartisan group of 86 Members who signed the letter, which Congressman BOUSTANY and I sent to House appropriators last week, calling for the harbor maintenance trust fund funding to be at the WRRDA level.

Mr. TOM PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I want to thank the gentlewoman for her comments because she is absolutely right. The budget is about priorities, and the priorities that we have in our budget, we believe, address in a very responsible way the challenges that we face in this Nation.

What is the President's priority? If you look at where his budget would take us, it is debt. This, again, is the chart that demonstrates the debt that this Nation has held since 1940. That is the dark area here. You see the debt has increased since this President came into office. It is at virtually the highest level it has been since World War II.

Where does his path go? Where does the Democrats' path go in their budget? Higher than ever before—ever before—that is their plan, apparently. It is what their budget outlines. It is what the President's budget outlines.

What does that mean? What that means is the interest on the debt, paying the debt service. Everybody knows what interest means. They pay it on their credit cards. They pay it on their home mortgages. They pay interest when they buy a car. That is money that you pay just to be able to borrow the money that you are using for whatever it is.

In this instance, the interest on the debt, when we get to numbers not too far away, consumes the entire Federal budget. That is what we are talking about. In a very short period of time, within the budget window of this 10-year period of time, interest on the debt rises to over $1 trillion a year.

That is more than the amount spent on defense. That is more than the amount spent on Medicare. That is more than the amount spent on Medicaid. That is more than the amount spent on education. All of the priorities that the American people have is going to be spent on interest on the debt.

That is why we believe it is a moral question. Are we going to leave our kids this kind of debt? Are we going to destine them to a life that has no opportunity, to have them be servants to the Federal Government just to work so they can send their tax money to Washington to pay the interest on the debt?

Mr. Chairman, you know that is not the America we want to leave our kids and our grandkids. I don't believe it is the America that our friends on the other side of the aisle want to leave our kids and grandkids.

Sadly, that is what their budget does. That is what the President's budget does. That is why we are so excited about A Balanced Budget for a Stronger America, a budget that puts us on a path to balance within less than a 10-year period of time and that saves $5.5 trillion.

Our friends on the other side say, Oh, no; it really doesn't get to balance. Even if you conceded that—and I don't—our goal is to get it to balance. Theirs never does. It is more and more and more borrowing, more debt, more taxes, more spending. It is not what the American people want.

What we need to do is to come together and address these challenges that we have in a positive way, in a real way, in an honest way, and get real results for the work that we do here.

We are proud of the work that this budget does. It lays out a positive path, a path of real solutions, one of saving and strengthening and securing Medicare and Medicaid, one of tax reform that actually works to get this economy rolling again so we can grow the economy in this country and put people back to work. Those are the positive things that this budget does.

The safety net programs are vital. They are important. We protect those programs. We actually make them work better for the individuals who are receiving those moneys, and we encourage them, in a moral way, to better their lives and get back on their feet. We assist them in getting back to work.

Those are positive solutions, Mr. Chairman, positive solutions. It is A Balanced Budget for a Stronger America.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

As I said at the beginning of this debate, the one thing that the Republican budget, unfortunately, will do immediately is make life harder for hard-working Americans. How does it do it? As I indicated, it actually increases the tax burden on working Americans—middle-income Americans and people working their way to the middle—while providing another tax rate cut for folks at the very top.

For people who are working harder than ever and feel that they are just on a treadmill, it doesn't help them at all. In fact, they are going to move farther behind, in addition to the fact that they are going to pile more costs on to students by increasing the cost of student loans.

It is right there in their budget. They are going to start charging you interest while you are in college. They are going to start charging seniors with high prescription drug costs even more because they are going to reopen what is called the prescription drug doughnut hole. I don't know how that is good for seniors in America.

It is hard on seniors, hard on students, hard on working families.

The Democratic budget, like the President's budget, meets those priorities. For example, working families are facing huge childcare costs, so we propose a significant expansion of the child independent care tax credit. We make it a little bit easier for those families who are working but who want to make sure their kids have quality childcare. We make it easier for them by providing them a significant tax credit for that cost.

For couples who are working, we scale back the marriage penalty so the second worker doesn't begin work at the same higher tax rate as the first worker in the household. That is the kind of important relief we provide to middle class families and to those working to join the middle class.

The Republican budget actually gets rid of some of the important provisions that are already there to help those families, but our budget does this in a fiscally responsible way. As we have seen, the Republican budget doesn't balance, not by a long shot.

I mentioned a quote in my opening remarks. I am going to quote the chairman of the Senate Budget Committee, Mr. ENZI, who said:

> One of the problems I have had with budgets that I have looked at is that they use a lot of gimmicks. Now, when there was anticipation that ObamaCare would go away and that all of that money would still be there, that is not realistic. I would like to see us get to real accounting with the budget.

That is what Senator ENZI said; yet this budget assumes the revenue from the Affordable Care Act at the same time it repeals the Affordable Care Act.

What the President's and the Democratic budgets do is put us on a fiscally

responsible path, reducing the debt to GDP ratio and doing it in a way that improves economic growth and provides for more shared prosperity, not a budget that provides another round of tax cuts for folks at the top with the hope that somehow it is going to trickle down and lift everybody up.

Somebody who knows a lot about these areas is someone who is both a member of the Budget Committee and the Ways and Means Committee.

I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. MCDERMOTT).

(Mr. MCDERMOTT asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MCDERMOTT. Mr. Chairman, a budget is a statement of values and priorities.

You have heard people standing up here, talking about what their priorities are, that we don't want to load up our kids with debt, that we don't want to do all this kind of stuff; yet the budget that is put forward by my Republican colleagues is a shortsighted statement that has no view of the future.

It gambles away the future of the next generation's in order to supply business and the ultrawealthy with near-term gains. What has made this country great is the strategic Federal investments in health care, roads, education, bridges, research—the types of investment that build the middle class and America.

Now, the Republicans say their budget plan balances the budget in 9 years. What they don't tell you is that they do this at the expense of Medicare, Medicaid, SNAP, Pell grants—everything in the social budget.

What you learn from this budget is that, when they say they are balancing the budget, they mean we are cutting domestic programs. We are cutting anything that helps hard-working families in this country.

It also fails to cut one single dime from the military, not one single dime. They actually want to give the military more than they asked for. Now, despite raising taxes, you would think they could at least cut a dime from the Defense Department.

By now, people's eyes are kind of glazed over at home in thinking about this, but let me talk to one group of people, to anybody who has a student with student debt. It is the largest debt load we have in this country. We have made our kids indentured servants of banks and of the Federal Government.

This budget contains $127 billion over the next 10 years that we will have extracted from students in interest on their loans to give cuts in taxes to the wealthy, to lower the rates, to make it better for the rich.

If you know anything about student loans, those loans can't be renegotiated. You can renegotiate on your house, or you can renegotiate on anything else, but not on a student loan. When a student and his mother and father or her mother and father sign up for a loan and put their home in the deal and put their futures and their 401(k)'s and everything behind that kid's education, they are stuck with that loan rate.

You have got people in this country who are paying 6, 8, 9 percent—as high as 13—on loans, and they can't renegotiate them. Is that fair? Is that the future you want, to stick the kids in this country with those kinds of loans?

In my view, this budget has no humanity and no view of the future for our kids.

I urge Members to vote ''no.''

Mr. TOM PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. MOOLENAAR), a freshman Member and a member of the Budget Committee.

Mr. MOOLENAAR. Mr. Chairman, the Federal Government has a spending problem.

Last week, the Government Accountability Office released a report estimating that the government made $124 billion in improper payments during 2014. Wasteful spending like this is one of the reasons the national debt has skyrocketed to $18 trillion today.

Divided among 320 million Americans, a child born today inherits $56,250 in debt—or $225,000 for a family of four. Americans work too hard to have the government waste their tax dollars. It is time to start our country on a new course. This Republican budget puts America on a more sustainable and responsible fiscal path.

In my district, there are over 130,000 Medicare-eligible residents and over 169,000 Social Security recipients. This budget keeps the promises that have been made to our seniors and to those near retirement age by stabilizing the Social Security trust fund. It also grants flexibility to the States on Medicaid, allowing them to craft their own programs to serve the needs of their States and their local communities.

This budget also enhances our national security. Former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Admiral Michael Mullen, said our debt is ''the single biggest threat to our national security.'' Over 20 percent of it is held by foreign governments.

By balancing within 10 years, this budget ends deficits and slows the amount that will have to be paid to other countries. With less spending needed for debt payments, more future funding can go to our national security.

□ 1600

This is a budget for solving problems and creating a better future. This budget addresses our country's fiscal problems in a responsible way, without raising taxes, and puts our Nation on a brighter path for our children and grandchildren.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Chair, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I do want to say a word about the impact on seniors. We have already talked about the fact that the Republican budget will immediately increase the cost to seniors with high prescription drug burdens, it will increase the copays immediately for preventive services.

Let me just say a word about what it will do to seniors who are in nursing homes and other settings that rely on Medicaid. The previous gentleman just mentioned the number of people in his district on Medicaid. Let me just say that seniors and people with disabilities account for 85 percent of Medicaid spending; 65 percent of that spending is to the aged and the disabled, 20 percent to kids.

Now, here is what the Congressional Budget Office, the nonpartisan folks, said about the Medicaid cuts of this magnitude in the Republican budget and the impact that they would have on States: even with significant efficiency gains, in other words, even if you imagine that the States are going to somehow come up with incredible efficiencies, even with that, the magnitude of the reduction in spending relative to such spending in other scenarios means that States would need to increase their spending on these programs, make considerable cutbacks in them, or both; in other words, you are just passing the buck down to the States. So they have a choice: either they raise taxes to make sure that folks in senior homes, seniors in nursing homes don't take a hit, or seniors in nursing homes take a hit through fewer benefits. You just can't have it both ways when you are cutting $900 billion out of the program that helps seniors and the disabled; right?

Okay. Here, States, you do it on your own; we are just going to give you $900 billion less. Any nonpartisan person looking at this would arrive at the conclusion the nonpartisan budget folks at CBO concluded, which is: either States are going to increase their taxes to maintain those services, or those people are going to get less services. That is why this Republican budget is hard on seniors, just like it is hard on students and why it is hard on working families around the country.

As I said, it is great if you are already at the top; right? If you are a millionaire, you are going to get greenlighted for the Romney-Ryan tax plan that cuts your rate by 30 percent while increasing the tax burden on working Americans. That is just not right.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TOM PRICE of Georgia. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, we have heard our friends on the other side talk about gimmicks. If you want to talk about a gimmick, let's talk about the President's budget and what he does for defense. The President comes out and pounds his chest and says: I am a big defense hawk. I think we need to give our defense folks more money—something that we actually believe—to keep this Nation safe, protect us from the threats we have today. The President

says: Oh, oh, I believe in our budget, we will put $566 billion in our budget for defense, in the base defense budget.

What the President knows, what our friends on the other side of the aisle know, is that that number is fiction. You talk about a gimmick. The President doesn't lay out any path at all to deal with the sequester cap, to deal with the law of the land right now that says that that number is going to be $523 billion unless the law is changed, which is why we positively, honestly, sincerely bring about appropriate increases for our men and women who are in harm's way and defending our liberty and freedom.

If this House actually stuck with the President's number, went with the President's number—and the President lays out no path to be able to change the law—that number would snap right back down to $523 billion as soon as the next fiscal year, the next calendar year begins. That is why we believe it is appropriate to lay out that path, to lay out the path to be able to solve the challenge that we have, and we do that in our budget.

You talk about gimmicks, Mr. Chairman, the President's budget is full of gimmicks. What it isn't full of is responsibility, as I mentioned before, increasing the debt beyond where the eye can see. So we have got a positive budget, A Balanced Budget for a Stronger America.

I am pleased to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from the great State of Georgia (Mr. WOODALL), my colleague on the Committee on the Budget, to talk about the responsible things that this budget can do.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Chairman, I thank my chairman for yielding me the time. It has been a great privilege to work with Chairman TOM PRICE on the Committee on the Budget.

I was down here earlier bringing the rule to the floor, but I was trying to defend a rule that was going to allow all the ideas. Now we actually get to talk about which ideas are the good ideas. That is why I wanted to come down here and speak.

I heard my friend from Maryland speak with such passion and conviction on Medicaid, and I share his passion, and I know his conviction to be true. But if we do nothing, interest payments alone are going to be larger than the entire Medicaid budget. We have six different budgets that we can consider down here on the House floor. Three of them balance; three of them never, ever do.

I was listening to what the chairman said earlier. He said: I do not concede any of the discussion from the other side about whether or not this budget balances or not. But the point is at least we are trying. Even if you are right that the numbers don't work out, even if the economic circumstances change, we have as a goal ending this wasted taxpayer resource, which is interest to our creditors. It dwarfs everything—everything. It is larger than the defense budget. It is larger than the Medicaid budget. It is five times larger than the education budget, five times larger than the transportation budget.

Whatever it is you care about, whatever investments in America you want to make, by failing to commit yourself to a balanced budget today, you are trading away those opportunities. Every dollar borrowed today is a tax increase on children and grandchildren or a benefit cut for children and grandchildren.

I could not be prouder. When faced with a deteriorating economic situation, where every year the CBO says we are constraining growth more and more and more, it has been the hardest year since I have been here to balance the budget. Our chairman said: If it is a big challenge, I want it in my committee. And he has done it.

It is a partnership in that committee. I have great respect for the ranking member from Maryland and his leadership of that committee as well. We are trading it all away. Balance this budget. Let's do it together; let's do it responsibly. But let it not be a question of whether or not we do it; let it be a question of when we do it. We will have that debate together.

I thank my chairman.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, just a couple of points. Again—and we keep hearing that the Republican budget balances—it does not balance. It is interesting that instead of having the priority right now be accelerated economic growth with rising paychecks and rising wages for Americans, our Republican colleagues have made the absolute priority a balance which their own budget doesn't achieve.

In fact, the Republican budget that was brought to the floor just 3 years ago didn't balance until something like 2047, and yet now instead of having the priority be growing the economy in a way that raises wages for all families, they have got a priority which their own budget doesn't meet.

Now, American families who are focusing on their pocketbooks know that from time to time they do borrow to invest in their future. They borrow to buy a home that can go up in value. They sometimes borrow for education because they know that is a good investment.

Actually, interest rates are very low right now. We should be investing in our national infrastructure so we don't become a pothole nation in the days ahead. You know, the chairman of the committee mentioned again the transportation trust fund a little earlier today.

The reality is that the President's proposal puts forward in the budget a 6-year transportation plan that avoids the shortfall and actually helps to boost our national infrastructure, our investment in roads and bridges and modernizing our national infrastructure, so that we can remain at the cutting edge and don't fall behind. The Republican budget has no plan more than the 10-months plan we have had, and in this budget nothing real at all.

Now, I do want to say one word about what the chairman said about the President's defense spending and the way the President did it. You ought to know, the President did not put it in the slush fund. He put our base defense needs where they always have been: in the defense budget for the Defense Department. In fact, I was really surprised to hear the chairman say that, because the Republican study group budget—I believe the Republican study group budget represents a majority of Republicans; I am not sure—does it the same way the President did it, in a straightforward manner. They put the funds that the Joint Chiefs of Staff say they need for our base defense needs, they put it in their budget. They do exactly what the chairman said the President was doing in some indirect way.

Look, I really am pretty surprised that our colleagues keep coming back to this point because it is a total violation of what they, themselves, said, wrote down on paper a year ago, that you shouldn't be funding our defense needs as part of the ongoing defense budget by putting them in a slush fund for the overseas contingency account when the military leadership says they don't need that money for that purpose.

I am pleased the President did this in a straightforward manner, in the manner that the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the military leadership said. In fact, it turns out the same way the Republican study group did, but apparently not the way the Republican majority wants to do business anymore.

I am pleased to yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. MAXINE WATERS), the distinguished ranking member of the Committee on Financial Services, who understands the impact that the Republican budget decisions are going to have on everyday Americans, including in their pocketbooks.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Chairman, I thank Mr. VAN HOLLEN for his leadership on the Committee on the Budget.

As ranking member of the Committee on Financial Services, I would like to express my serious concerns about how this budget resolution undermines our financial stability, protection for American consumers, and the entire housing market.

It is now 7 years since our country's financial system was rocked by Wall Street greed and predatory lending. All of our constituents bore witness to an economy where family members lost their jobs, friends were made homeless, and everyone's savings, no matter how modest, were depleted. In all, trillions of dollars of wealth vanished in the span of a few months. When some of the money returned, it was not shared equally.

Democrats in Congress worked to prevent a repeat of this disaster by, among other things, putting in place the tools necessary to prevent bailouts of megabanks and creating an independent regulator solely tasked with defending consumers from financial harm.

Rehashing failed policies, the Republican budget resolution would repeal these tools and bind the hands of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau. The Republicans would return us to a system where a company like AIG would once again threaten the entire financial system. The Republicans would return us to a system where lenders can make predatory mortgages to some of the most disadvantaged communities, including communities of color, but that is not all.

□ 1615

This budget resolution goes even further. It would privatize Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac along the lines of the failed PATH Act, a terrible piece of legislation rejected by everyone—housing advocates, realtors, mortgage banks, academics, and, I might add, a majority of Members in the House.

Why do we all reject it? We fear it would be the end of safe mortgages like the 30-year fixed rate mortgage. We fear it would favor only the big megabanks, hurting community banks. We fear that it would further widen the wealth gap in this country.

This budget resolution is built upon a flawed foundation that harms some of our most vulnerable communities. I urge that the Members of this House oppose the Republican budget resolution.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. STUTZMAN), a very productive member of the Budget Committee.

Mr. STUTZMAN. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in strong support of the Republican House budget, A Balanced Budget for a Stronger America.

Mr. Chairman, as we have seen over the last several years, the tax-and-spend policies of this President have made our economy very sluggish. It is a very slow recovery. Our wages are stagnant. Our national debt has increased to more than $18 trillion. This is a 70 percent increase since President Obama took office. And if the President had his way, we would actually add another $8.5 trillion of debt over the next 10 years.

Mr. Chairman, if we look at this chart, it shows interest versus other spending. This line right here—net interest—is the one that we should all be very concerned about because this is something that we have to pay for. This is not a line item that we can all of a sudden say: No, we're not going to pay as much on net interest as we're going to maybe on defense or education or transportation. This is something that we as American people have to pay because of the interest on our debt. This only gets worse if we don't do something sooner.

And so today, in contrast to the President's budget that increases taxes and increases spending—and his budget actually never, ever balances—we, as Republicans, are putting forward a responsible budget, a balanced budget, and one that I believe is critically important for the future of our country and for the future of our economy. Our budget balances in 10 years.

So, Mr. Chairman, if you look at this chart, it doesn't take an economist to see which plan will ultimately lead to debt and decline and which plan will lead us to growth and prosperity.

The House Republican budget begins making payments on our national debt in year 2024, and the President's budget just digs us deeper and deeper into the hole.

I can tell you, Mr. Chairman, I have two sons, Payton and Preston, 13 and 9 years old. We cannot continue to hand them the bill and expect them and future generations to pay for the spending of Washington that is out of control. That is why we have to get to a balanced budget sooner rather than later.

On top of balancing the budget, this plan calls for a fair and simpler Tax Code. It ends ObamaCare's broken promises and strengthens our entitlement programs for current seniors and for future beneficiaries. In light of current threats, this budget also increases defense spending, which is a priority for us, so that our military—our men and women in uniform—can defend this country at a very dangerous time.

This plan is an opportunity for us to stand together and to show the American people that we are committed to A Balanced Budget for a Stronger America, to starting to pay our debt down to make sure that future generations don't have to pay for those debts and that we can work together on commonsense reforms.

I thank the chairman for his work on this particular budget. I am proudly standing here today in support of that hard work, and I ask my colleagues to support it as well.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Chairman, not only does the Republican budget not balance, but it doesn't eliminate one special interest tax break for the purpose of reducing the deficit. Not one. These are tax breaks that powerful interests have put into the Tax Code over many years.

Apparently, it is okay to deeply cut our investment in our kids' education. Apparently, it is okay to increase the cost of prescription drugs for seniors on Medicare, but, for some reason, we are not going to get rid of one corporate tax break for the purpose of reducing the deficit. Those are not Americans' priorities.

Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Maryland (Ms. EDWARDS), someone who understands the importance of moving America forward, my colleague and friend and a member of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee.

Ms. EDWARDS. I thank my friend and colleague from Maryland for his leadership on the Budget Committee, and also the Democrats on the Budget Committee.

Mr. Chairman, Congress is really tasked at this time of year with developing a budget that lays out our Nation's priorities and spending, but those priorities really should reflect our values. As hard as it is to imagine—and it is hard—this Price budget resolution is actually worse than the previous Ryan budget for hard-working American families.

Once again, we see how little Republicans value protecting critical priorities that actually help Americans live a healthy life and enjoy a secure retirement. In fact, the Republican budget would force working families to pay more in taxes. It would make college education less affordable. It would force seniors to pay more for their health care and prescription drugs. It would end the Medicare guarantee by turning it into a voucher program. Lastly, Mr. Chairman, it would block grant both Medicaid and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.

The fact is that this budget would decimate our Nation's already crumbling infrastructure by reducing funding by 19 percent over the next decade. If you would imagine that, that means that every road that needs to be repaired, the bridges that are falling apart, the mass transit that needs investing in, this budget would actually cut our spending by 19 percent over the next decade.

It would require an additional $318 billion from Federal and postal employees and their retirees—hard-working people who have given all that they can to deficit reduction. In fact, that is a constituency that has already contributed $159 billion to deficit reduction.

Mr. Chairman, Republican priorities are making tax cuts for the wealthy permanent, and they are shrinking the size of government, regardless of the damage—great damage—that it would cause.

House Democrats, I believe, are investing in hard-working Americans. We have said it is important for us to improve access to high-quality child care and dependent care. It is important to invest in quality education for all our children. It is important to end the draconian across-the-board sequester cuts.

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania). The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. I yield the gentlewoman an additional 30 seconds.

Ms. EDWARDS. The Democrats' budget would protect seniors' health care and retirement. It would create jobs in America through rebuilding our infrastructure and support jobs by making sure our Nation's manufacturers get to invest in the research and development that they need.

In short, Mr. Chairman, I urge my colleagues to vote down this draconian Republican budget and support each of the Democratic alternatives. I know I will be voting for them because each of them, even though they are different, would be way better than the draconian budget that has been proposed by Republicans.

I thank my colleague from Maryland for his leadership. We need to invest in America's future, including our hard-working men and women.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SANFORD), a member of the Budget Committee.

Mr. SANFORD. I thank the chairman for yielding.

Mr. Chairman, I just heard the budget described as draconian. I would say that doing nothing, ultimately, is draconian because what the numbers show is that if we do nothing, roughly in 10 years we will be spending about $800 billion a year in interest alone—more than we spend on all of our Nation's defense.

I could give any number of different indicators that say if we do nothing, we are headed for a train wreck that will have real impact on the very constituencies that my Democratic colleagues were just alluding to.

It is not a perfect budget. We are having an intense debate, whether it is on the Democratic side or, frankly, even within the Republican family.

I just had a conversation with my colleague, MIKE TURNER from Ohio, who is really passionate about the need to spend more on defense. We are still working out those wrinkles. But what I do know, in fairness to the chairman and what he has tried to do in managing the different folks that are affected by this budget, is to say: If you are in a hole, you quit digging. And fundamentally, if you look at our Nation's budget trajectory, we are in a hole that is going to get far worse if we don't do what the chairman and the committee have suggested.

I would say, one, we are spending too much. And yet the President's proposal is to go from spending roughly around 20 percent of GDP up to 22 percent of GDP, from a historic average of, frankly, around 18 percent.

We are taxing too much. We are going to go in the President's proposal from spending of around 18 percent to around 20 percent—a little bit over that. That doesn't sound like much, but you take two points of a GDP in 2025, and you are looking at more than $500 billion—more than, again, roughly what we spend in defense for our entire Nation on a yearly basis.

We have a budget trajectory where we are handing too much debt to the next generation. And we are headed, again, for this unsustainable train wreck.

Think about it this way. It took our country 200 years to accumulate $5 trillion in debt. Under the Bush administration, in fairness to my Democratic colleagues, it went from $5 trillion to $10 trillion in the course of about 8 years. And then, under the Obama administration, it has gone from $10 trillion to roughly $20 trillion.

The growth is becoming geometric. And the question is: What are we going to do about it? What we can do is what the President has proposed, which is nothing—adding $2 trillion in new taxes, adding $8 trillion in new debt, and going from structural $500 billion deficits to $1.1 trillion deficits.

I think that what we are talking about here is ultimately made important by what Admiral Mike Mullen had to say on the subject. When asked what the biggest threat is to the American civilization, his response was the American debt and deficit.

We are reaching this tipping point. If you look at the numbers, by 2025 we will only have enough money for interest and entitlements, and nothing else, without raising taxes substantially or cutting those benefits that my colleagues have just been talking about.

I will leave you with one point, and I think it is this. Sir Alexander Fraser Tytler studied history for the whole of his life.

The Acting CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. SANFORD. He got to the end of his life and the quote that was attributed to him at life's end was: A democracy cannot exist as a permanent form of government. It can only exist until the voters discover that they can vote themselves largesse from the public treasury, with the result that democracy always fails under a loose fiscal policy, and it is generally followed by dictatorship.

The average age of the world's great civilizations has been 200 years. These nations have progressed to this sequence: from bondage to spiritual faith; spiritual faith to great courage; great courage to liberty; liberty to abundance; abundance to selfishness; selfishness to complacency; complacency to apathy; apathy to dependency; and from dependency back again into bondage.

Ultimately, what I think that this budget is about is avoiding that very bondage that that historian and many others have talked about over the years.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Chairman, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER), the Democratic whip, who understands the importance of a growing economy—a growing economy with shared prosperity and a growing economy with fiscal responsibility.

(Mr. HOYER asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HOYER. I thank my friend, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, for yielding, and I thank him for the extraordinary job that he has done as ranking member of the Budget Committee.

My friend from South Carolina has left the floor. I regret that. He was the Governor of a State. This budget would not have been tenable during his administration or, frankly, the administration of my own Governor, who happens to be a Republican. We have had Democrats in the past.

The gentleman ended with a number of cautions about the path of fiscal irresponsibility and what it would lead to. I agree with him on that, but I will tell him it is indeed unfortunate that, once again, we have a budget that does not put us on a path of fiscal sustainability. We have a budget that is not real. We have a budget that pretends. That is what USA Today said today.

Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the budget resolutions offered by the chairman of the Budget Committee, Mr. PRICE, for whom I have great respect. I say budget resolutions, plural, because there are two of them. One was reported by the committee that channels $36 billion into the overseas contingency operations account, disguising it as emergency war funding as a way of getting around the defense sequester caps while offering token language providing about $20 billion to be offset at a later date.

The other budget was unveiled by Republicans yesterday. It includes an additional $2 billion on top of that $36 billion in overseas contingency operations and removes any mention of paying for this effective negation of the defense sequester. The gentleman from South Carolina referred to devices like that.

□ 1630

This dueling budget strategy came about because Republicans didn't have the votes for their own proposal yet again. They are offering their Members two options: blow through the defense sequester ceiling by $36 billion or blow through it by $38 billion.

Apparently, some are going to mask their either hawkish perspective on the defense or hawkish perspective on the deficit by a vote either for A or for A.

Of course, while they blow through the cap on the defense side, they continue the cap on the domestic side for this year, before cutting dramatically below that level in future years, mercilessly gutting priority investments in education, job training, innovation, research, and other priorities of this Nation if it is to remain competitive in world markets, if it is to remain a growing, thriving nation.

This budget is a severe disinvestment in America's future and our long-term economic competitiveness. This approach is not a blueprint for growth and opportunity for America's businesses and workers. It is, rather, sadly, a recipe for economic and fiscal disaster in the years to come.

Mr. Chairman, if we fail to invest in the next generation or to continue the War on Poverty in this country, we are doing a grave disservice to our children and our grandchildren by not giving them the tools they need to secure the

jobs and opportunities that open doors to the middle class.

Like the Ryan budgets, which were never implemented by the majority party at any point in time from this House—forget about blaming Senator REID or the Senate, they were never implemented in this House—Mr. PRICE's budgets rely on a magic asterisk, hiding the specifics behind over $1 trillion in cuts in order to appear to balance it in its stated goal of 9 years.

No one—no one—knows exactly what programs Republicans would cut or by how much. That is not being honest with the American people. They would turn Medicare into a voucher program and would take access to affordable health care away from millions of Americans by repealing the Affordable Care Act.

The Acting CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. I yield the gentleman an additional 1 minute.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Chairman, make no mistake. These budget alternatives are political documents that are unworkable and unserious when it comes to governing.

Like previous Republican budgets that rely on sequestration, I have no doubt that the majority will not be able to enact appropriation bills that adhere to whichever version that you will pass. You have not done so in the past, and you will not do so this year.

They will continue to be, as the Republican chairman of the Appropriations Committee, Mr. ROGERS, said, ''unrealistic and ill-conceived.''

Budget Committee Democrats, the Congressional Progressive Caucus, and the Congressional Black Caucus have all put forward alternatives that are far better than these dueling Republican budget resolutions.

Democrats prioritize replacing the sequester, which Mr. ROGERS believes should be done, on both the defense and domestic sides, so that we can make investments in America's future that are fiscally sustainable.

I urge my colleagues to reject the two Republican budget alternatives and their strategy of selective sequester.

The Acting CHAIR. Members are reminded to direct all their remarks to the Chair.

Mr. TOM PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. ROTHFUS).

Mr. ROTHFUS. Mr. Chairman, I want to first thank Chairman PRICE and his staff for their hard work on this budget. With all the difficulties and complexities in drafting a budget, including inheriting an $18 trillion debt, Chairman PRICE and the committee have managed to find savings of $5.5 trillion and to balance the budget in 10 years, all without any new taxes.

This has not been an easy task, but this budget resolution stands in stark contrast to what the President sent us. The President's irresponsible proposal makes no attempt to balance the budget, leaving future generations with even more debt. Indeed, his plan proposes returning to trillion-dollar deficits, leaving a legacy of staggering debt and further eroding our standing in the world.

For decades, Americans have been told that spending for things you can't pay for is good fiscal policy and that debts and deficits don't matter. President Obama believes that maxing out the Federal credit card to pay for government programs and using more of the taxpayers' hard-earned dollars to pay interest on the debt is actually good for our economy.

Well, the ruse is over. Families aren't buying it. The ''charge now and pay later'' mentality is no longer affordable. Parents know debt and interest payments add up. They understand that out-of-control debt cripples their ability to respond to an emergency, for example, when the basement floods or the furnace goes out.

Mr. Chairman, what is true for American families is true for the Federal Government. Just like working families must do, so must the government. Purchases we can't afford need to be put on hold until we can afford it; tough choices must be made.

Every day, families make responsible financial decisions. Do we sign up the kids for Little League, or do we buy the bigger van? The same principle must apply in our government.

This budget, Mr. Chairman, acknowledges that addressing our debt is a national priority. It puts forth parameters that will force the government to make reforms and live within its means so we can start to address a debt that now exceeds $18 trillion.

This budget eliminates all of the ObamaCare taxes and mandates that are costing small businesses tens of thousands of dollars, cutting into Americans' take-home pay, and driving up healthcare costs for the American consumer.

Importantly, Mr. Chairman, this resolution sets the stage for us to pass real healthcare reform that will actually address cost and coverage and help American families in their healthcare choices with more freedom, more choice, and less bureaucracy. This budget respects the rights of conscience for our Nation's doctors and religious institutions and people of faith.

Finally, this budget will result in a leaner, more efficient government that is transparent and accountable to the American people.

Mr. Chairman, the Budget Committee's resolution makes the hard choices needed to move the country forward, to make possible increases in our defense budget needed to address the threats in our world, and to set us on a path to a balanced budget.

Again, I thank Chairman PRICE for the work of him and his committee.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Chairman, this budget doesn't make tough choices. The Republican budget makes bad choices. It doesn't cut one single special interest tax break in the Code while it makes deep cuts to our kids' early education. That is a bad choice, not a tough choice.

Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CONNOLLY), a distinguished member of the Oversight and Government Reform Committee.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Chairman, I honor my friend from Maryland for his extraordinary and outstanding leadership on a very difficult set of complex numbers and policies known as the U.S. budget. Thank you so much for your leadership.

Mr. Chairman, this year's Republican budget resolution is incredulously titled ''A Balanced Budget for a Stronger America,'' but by every measure, the draconian cuts proposed in this budget would severely weaken America's innovative advantage and competitiveness. It might as well be called ''Let's Disinvest in America.''

Consider the cuts to basic research, once a bedrock, a Federal priority that spurred new discoveries that are now vital in our daily lives and the economy. R&D is critical for my northern Virginia district, where the technology community is driving innovation.

This Republican budget would slash R&D funding by 15 percent, to its lowest level since 2002. That is a retreat from America's role as the global innovation leader and, essentially, cedes the playing field to our international competition.

Similarly, the Republican budget would disinvest in our classrooms. To achieve their ruse of balancing the budget over 10 years, Republicans would cut nondefense spending 24 percent below the already reduced sequester levels.

For K–12 education, that translates into an $89 billion cut over the next decade and would surely leave every child behind their international peers. It would also put higher education further out of reach for low and middle class families. America did not ascend to its role as the world's leading economy by quashing the potential of future innovators and leaders.

Mr. Chairman, our Republican colleagues are, once again, showing they know the cost of everything and the value of very little. I often hear my colleagues lament that we should run government more like a business.

Well, if that is the case, perhaps we should start by listening to the business community which is advocating for us to invest more—not less—in R&D, in education, and in infrastructure for the future workforce of America and the building blocks of a competitive economy.

These are investments that yield tremendous returns for our families, for our children, for our future; and the Republican budget would eviscerate those pillars of American exceptionalism.

Mr. TOM PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for

bringing up the issue of business in America, jobs in America.

I include in the RECORD letters from the Chamber of Commerce of the United States of America and from the National Federation of Independent Business in support of our budget.

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,
Washington, DC, March 18, 2015.

Hon. TOM PRICE,
Chairman, Committee on the Budget, House of Representatives, Washington, DC

DEAR CHAIRMAN PRICE: The U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the world's largest business federation, representing the interests of more than three million businesses of all sizes, sectors, and regions, as well as state and local chambers of commerce, and dedicated to promoting, protecting, and defending America's free enterprise system, appreciates your proposed budget resolution, ''A Balanced Budget for a Stronger America,'' which would establish the budget for fiscal year 2016.

This proposal recognizes the importance of restraining federal spending, correcting the unsustainable growth path of entitlement spending, reducing federal budget deficits, containing the growth of federal debt, and enacting comprehensive tax reform—all goals shared by the Chamber.

The proposal would balance the budget within 10 years without raising taxes through $5.5 trillion in spending reductions, out of a base spending level of $48.6 trillion. The Congressional Budget Office estimated the macroeconomic effects of the proposed deficit reduction and concluded output per person would be 1.5 percent higher at the end of 10 years, which in turn would reduce the budget deficit an additional $147 billion. Such budgetary savings would move the budget from modest deficit to modest surplus by 2024.

The nation faces many challenging issues in budget policy that will require sustained debate over many months and, in some cases, years. Over the long term, the budget is a blueprint for restoring fiscal discipline by shrinking the size of government and debt compared to current law.

This budget proposal marks an important step toward a more sensible, more sustainable, pro-growth fiscal policy. The Chamber urges the Committee and the full House of Representatives to debate the issues fully and then adopt a budget resolution on a timely basis. The Chamber further urges the United States Senate likewise to meet its responsibility by passing a budget addressing our long-term challenges. The Chamber looks forward to working with Congress on the vital reforms to entitlements and our tax code necessary to get our fiscal house in order.

Sincerely,

R. BRUCE JOSTEN.

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF INDEPENDENT BUSINESS,
Washington, DC, March 23, 2015.

Hon. TOM PRICE,
Chairman, Committee on the Budget, House of Representatives, Cannon House Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN PRICE: On behalf of the National Federation of Independent Business (NFIB), the nation's leading small business advocacy organization, thank you for your efforts to address our nation's fiscal problems in the Fiscal Year 2016 Budget Resolution.

A budget that balances in fewer than ten years, and includes support for comprehensive tax reform, regulatory reform, and repeal of the Affordable Care Act, is a budget that addresses the top concerns of small business owners—our nation's job creators. NFIB and small business owners strongly support these efforts.

COMPREHENSIVE TAX REFORM

In your budget blueprint you state, ''The U.S. tax code is absurdly complicated, patently unfair, and highly inefficient.'' NFIB members could not agree more and strongly support the inclusion of comprehensive tax reform in the budget resolution. The complicated tax code, which forces small businesses to pay 67 percent more for tax compliance than larger corporations, needs to be simplified. Most importantly, high tax rates continue to be a persistent problem for small business owners. Specific tax concerns account for five of the top ten most severe problems facing business owners. As over 75 percent of small businesses are structured as pass-through entities, lowering individual income tax rates is especially important. Pass-through entities employ 54 percent of all private-sector workers—their tax burden is directly tied to their ability to keep their workers employed.

SENSIBLE REGULATORY REFORM

NFIB appreciates that your budget ''calls on Congress, in consultation with the public, to enact legislation to reform our regulatory system.'' While regulation is necessary, it must be pragmatic. Unfortunately, federal agencies rarely take into account how their regulations affect small business. Federal regulators should work with small business owners to help ensure compliance, rather than aggressively impose fines for violations that result from confusion. Government regulations rank as the fifth most severe problem for small business owners in the NFIB Research Foundation's most recent Small Business Problems and Priorities survey. Federal agencies, notably the Environmental Protection Agency and Occupational Safety and Health Administration, continue to demonstrate a lack of understanding of how regulatory proposals impact small business operations.

In order to provide for meaningful regulatory reform, Congress should eliminate loopholes and clarify language in the Regulatory Flexibility Act (RFA) to ensure that all federal agencies take into account, and make public, both direct and indirect costs to small businesses in their rulemaking; expand the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement and Fairness Act (SBREFA) and Small Business Advocacy Review (SBAR) panels to apply to all federal agencies; waive fines for first time paperwork errors and provide small business with a grace period to fix minor violations when the public and employees are not at risk; and make compliance assistance programs a priority, instead of minimizing them in order to provide for the expansion of enforcement programs.

HEALTHCARE REFORM

The budget resolution also addresses small business owners' most severe business problem: the cost of health insurance. NFIB members continue to advocate for full repeal of the Affordable Care Act. Thank you for including this provision in the budget resolution. The Affordable Care Act only exacerbates a system of health insurance that is financially unsustainable, threatening the health and financial security of Americans. Small business owners and their employees are especially vulnerable to the weaknesses of the current system. As Congress addresses future healthcare policy, we urge you to put forward reforms to balance the competing goals of affordability, access to quality care, predictability and consumer choice.

According to a December 2014 survey by the NFIB Research Foundation, ten percent of small business owners had their personal insurance plans cancelled last year, something the President and the law's supporters promised wouldn't happen. Twelve percent of owners renewed their old plans early in order to avoid higher premiums and narrower choices, two results that were also not part of the deal. The NFIB survey found that 62 percent of small business owners are paying higher premiums while only eight percent say their costs have dropped. The President's sales pitch for the law included promised health insurance premium relief for small businesses. Five years later, a substantial majority of small business owners are reporting the opposite result.

PROVIDING FOR A BALANCED BUDGET

Small business owners have long supported balancing the federal budget. Additionally, according to the NFIB Federal Ballot, 90 percent of NFIB members support a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution. Our nation's small businesses are calling on Congress to fix our dangerous fiscal situation without damaging economic growth or raising taxes on job creators. If our long-term fiscal outlook is not addressed by lawmakers today, future generations will continue to be faced with higher debt and interest payments, increased tax rates and fewer investment opportunities. Small business owners must compete in today's economy while operating within their budgets and so too should the federal government.

Thank you again for introducing the Fiscal Year 2016 Budget Resolution. NFIB strongly supports its passage when considered by the full House of Representatives. We look forward to working with you on this, and similar measures to protect small business as the 114th Congress moves forward.

Sincerely,

AMANDA AUSTIN,
Vice President, Public Policy.

Mr. TOM PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from the Commonwealth of Virginia (Mr. FORBES), a senior member of the Republican Conference.

Mr. FORBES. Mr. Chairman, I first want to commend Chairman PRICE for shepherding this budget to the floor and doing such a tremendous job; yet, with the great job he has done, I know it is confusing, probably, to people listening to this debate at home because, throughout today and tomorrow, a lot of very smart men and women are going to come to this floor and argue various debates.

When all those voices have silenced and everybody sits back down in their chairs, we all know that it is going to come down to two choices. Those two choices are going to be what we refer to as Price 1 or Price 2.

Mr. Chairman, we also all know that the difference between those two bills is going to be how much we are willing to spend for the national defense of this country to defend the greatest nation the world has ever known.

In addition, one of the things that will be clear is not that we will be spending what we need to defend the country, but we will be spending the amount we have to spend to keep from putting our national defense in a crisis situation and a devastating situation to the men and women who serve this country around the globe.

Just two points I would like to leave Members with as they cast those votes

and the first one is this. The difference in the amount of money we will be spending for national defense between Price 1 and Price 2, if the budget were $1, would be equal to half of this penny if I could cut it in two—half of this penny; yet, as small as that may seem, it makes the difference between a crisis in national defense and a devastating situation to our men and women in uniform.

The last thing, Mr. Chairman, I would like to leave everyone with as they cast those votes is this. It will not be about the men and women in suits who make speeches in here, but it is going to be about the men and women who wear uniforms around the globe because they will fight to defend this country, regardless of what we do.

The question is whether we will leave them in a crisis situation and a devastating situation. That is why I hope this body will vote ''no'' to Price 1, ''yes'' to Price 2, and then, if Price 2 passes, vote for final passage of this budget, which is a well-done document by the chairman.

□ 1645

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Chairman, just for all Members listening, the last gentleman was talking about the differences between the two versions of the Republican budget.

I want to point out that the President of the United States funds our defense budget in the straightforward way and in the way that the Joint Chiefs of Staff have asked for, funding the base budget as it should be and funding the OCO budget as it should be.

I now yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT), the ranking member of the Education and the Workforce Committee who understands that growing our economy depends on our kids getting a good education.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the underlying Republican budget for fiscal year 2016, and I also rise to commend the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN) for his strong opposition.

Mr. Chairman, this budget is not a serious plan. It contains trillions of dollars in tax cuts, but it doesn't show a dime's worth of tax increases when they say it is going to be revenue neutral. It includes trillions of dollars in unspecified cuts that will not be made. For example, are we really going to repeal Medicare as we know it?

If you actually believe that the Republican majority will carry out this plan, it would actually devastate our economy by balancing the budget on the backs of students, workers, seniors, the disabled, and vulnerable communities across the Nation.

The Republican budget assumes that sequestration cuts will be enacted and then adds an additional $759 billion in nondefense discretionary spending cuts. That is the part of the budget that invests in education, workforce training, scientific research, transportation, and infrastructure.

With those cuts, the budget would be funded at 40 percent below the lowest level in the last 50 years as a percentage of GDP. Those cuts will not be made, but if they are, that would be devastating.

As the ranking member of the Committee on Education and the Workforce, I am particularly concerned about the cuts in education. Education funding would be cut by $103 billion over 10 years. That is a 22 percent cut in Federal aid to teachers, principals, school districts, colleges, and universities.

That will include significant cuts in title I funding, resources that go to areas of high poverty school districts. It would cut the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, which supports educational services and resources for students with disabilities, and there would be significant cuts to Head Start. College students are having trouble paying for tuition, room, and board. Well, this budget cuts Pell grants.

In the area of job training and employment services, the budget would result in 2 million fewer workers receiving critical support and does nothing to help the long-term unemployed get back into the workforce.

Mr. Chairman, the Republican budget sends students, families, and workers down the wrong path at this important crossroad. We need a strong budget that reflects the values of all Americans and makes the necessary investments in programs that we know will expand the economy for all.

The Republican budget fails to do this and, therefore, should be rejected.

Mr. TOM PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. TURNER), the former mayor of the great city of Dayton.

Mr. TURNER. Mr. Chairman, I want to commend Chairman PRICE for the work that he has done. The chairmanship of the Budget Committee is one of the most difficult.

He has a 360-degree responsibility of all aspects of funding the Federal Government, balancing our priorities, looking at our financial security, and most of the time, we ask the Budget Committee chairman to produce a budget. In this instance, we asked him to produce two.

I greatly appreciate that the chairman has produced two. We have what is coming to this floor, Price 1 and Price 2. I am here to speak in support of Price 2, but even beyond that, I am asking people to vote ''no'' on Price 1.

It is very important that you vote ''no'' on Price 1. We can't pass multiple budgets. We have to have one agenda coming out of this House, and that one agenda is only the difference between Price 1 and Price 2 with respect to how do we defend this Nation.

Now, Price 2 has $523 billion for the Department of Defense and $96 billion in overseas contingency operations funding. It fully funds our national defense. It is the amount that is endorsed by Chairman Dempsey, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff at the Department of Defense.

It is what he has asked for from this House and what he says is necessary in the face of things such as ISIS, ISIL, what is happening in Libya, what is happening with Putin and his aggressiveness.

The Secretary General of NATO was just here today and spoke to Members of Congress, and he said we are facing a Russia that is both willing to use its military force, modernizing its military force, and also is not being bound by international agreements. This is only going to be able to be responded to not by force, but by strength, a strength that we must give in this budget of Price 2.

Secondly, the Chief of Staff of the Army, General Ray Odierno, was before us, and I asked him: What will happen if we go to the sequestration levels? What happens if we don't fully fund, as in Price 2? He says that it means that it will take us longer to do our mission. It will cost us in lives. It will cost us in injuries.

The difference between Price 1 and Price 2, from the Chief of Staff of the Army, is lives and whether or not we can win and do our mission and whether or not our men and women in uniform are injured.

That is serious stuff. It is serious enough that people in this Congress need to vote ''no'' on Price 1 and ''yes'' on Price 2.

Mr. Chairman, we cannot afford to jeopardize our national security and reduce funding for defense anymore. Our men and women in uniform need to have a clear message, and that clear message is that we are behind them. That message only comes by a vote ''no'' on Price 1 and a vote ''yes'' on Price 2.

I urge all Members of Congress to support our men and women. Vote ''yes'' on Price 2.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Chairman, I am now really pleased to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. RYAN), a terrific member of the Budget Committee.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Chairman, I have been in Congress now 13 years, and I have had many discussions with the chairman over the course of my career, but I am stunned—and I know he won't be stunned that I am stunned—with the inability of the Republican Party to govern this Chamber or to govern the country.

I mean, if you just look at Price 1, Price 2, the contortions that the Republican Party has to go through in order to meet the basic standard of trying to govern the country is mind-blowing—and then to go through all these contortions just so you don't have to fund the domestic agenda that is going to actually grow the economy in the United States.

I say this because I was here and watched when President Bush was here

and the Republicans controlled Congress: cut taxes, deregulate, and the economy will grow, and jobs will be created.

We had a stagnant decade of growth because we failed to make the kinds of investments that we need to make in this country in order to grow the pie.

Here we are today, after we were able to survive a huge economic collapse after that agenda was fully implemented, and we have the average CEO making $296 for every $1 that the worker makes; we have the top 1 percent getting 17 percent of the tax expenditures that this Chamber and this government doles out, and wages have been stagnant.

I think we have got to go back and ask ourselves: How did we grow this great middle class? How did we grow this economy? How did we have the highest standards and the highest wages in the entire world for such a long period of time? We invested in research and development at the National Science Foundation. Now, we are down hundreds of grants from the National Science Foundation.

Do you think China is not putting money into these programs? India? Pacific rim countries? They are investing in research, development, technologies, alternative energy; and they are beating us to the punch. We are cutting our budgets and some of these programs that ultimately lead to growth.

These budgets are supposed to provide stability for the government and the private sector. We say: well, we are providing stability, but we will tell you what the tax rates are going to be later. We are going to fund transportation; we will tell you how later.

This formula is fairly simple: invest in research, educate your workforce, invest in transportation, and make sure that everybody has access to a decent education, and your economy will take off.

This budget does the exact opposite. The ultimate contradictions are the deep cuts in the SNAP program, the cuts in the Medicaid, and everyone is supposed to pull themselves up by their bootstraps and go to work, but then we try to raise the minimum wage, and you fight us on that.

I think that we have proven how to grow this economy. I am sure most Americans would want to go back and say: we will take the Clinton economy; we will take the Democratic budget in '93, and we will grow the economy where we see every income group increase in the incomes that their families are making.

This budget continues to hollow out our military and our domestic priorities.

Mr. TOM PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. LAMBORN).

Mr. LAMBORN. I thank the chairman for his hard work on this budget.

Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of the House Republican budget with the defense fix. Our country needs to get back on a responsible financial path, a path that protects our national security, repeals ObamaCare, and reforms our entitlement programs so they are sustainable.

Mr. Chairman, I want to remind us of the rapidly deteriorating security situation we face. Russia has invaded Ukraine. ISIS is spreading. Iran is pursuing nuclear weapons and long-range missiles while actively supporting terrorist organizations around the world.

North Korea is pursuing a submarine-launched ballistic missile capability to go with its nuclear weapons program. China is threatening our friends and allies in Asia. This is just a laundry list of bad actors that threaten the very safety of our Nation.

Meanwhile, President Obama's foreign policy is a disaster, which puts us at even greater risk. Shockingly, the President is even turning his back on Israel, damaging our partnership with our closest ally in the Middle East.

Our military has already faced drastic cuts. The Air Force is the smallest it has ever been. The Army is on a path to being the smallest since 1940. The Navy will soon be the smallest since 1915.

Mr. Chairman, I firmly believe most Americans agree that now is not the time to cut our national security spending. Russia isn't cutting its military budget. Iran isn't cutting its military budget. ISIS certainly isn't cutting its military budget.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this budget by voting ''yes'' on Price 2. This is a vital step in keeping our military strong in the face of dangerous threats around the world.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Chairman, I am now really pleased to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. YARMUTH), a member of the Budget Committee.

Mr. YARMUTH. I thank my friend for yielding.

Mr. Chairman, as a 6-year member of the Budget Committee and the second ranking Democrat, I have seen this budget proposal up close and personal. I have seen the way it has been reshaped over the years, from its early days as the first Ryan budget, to the collection of budget tricks and gimmicks we find before us today.

Despite the highly questionable math and mysterious growth projections, the consequences are clear. This budget hurts American families now and in the future, hitting their pocketbooks and their checkbooks today while disinvesting in our and their future.

It immediately raises taxes on the hard-working families who are simply looking for a shot at the American Dream: owning a home, providing their kids with access to a good education, living a healthy life, and being able to save for retirement while their parents enjoy theirs.

It makes college more expensive for those families, cutting Pell grants by $90 billion and eliminating higher education tax credits. It cuts investment in our infrastructure and innovation, leaving us less competitive in the global economy.

This budget takes more than 16 million men, women, and children off of the health insurance plan they have now, thanks to the Affordable Care Act. People will, again, be denied care because of preexisting conditions. Lifetime caps on coverage return.

If the Affordable Care Act were repealed, as proposed in the Republicans' ''work harder for less'' budget, here is what would happen in my State: more than 500,000 Kentuckians would lose their healthcare coverage.

We wouldn't gain the 40,000 new jobs that are projected over the next 6 years because of the Affordable Care Act, and the Kentucky budget would miss out on $800 million more in revenue.

For seniors, this budget ends the guarantee of Medicare as we know it. Prescription drug costs will go up on day one. Copays will increase. The prescription drug doughnut hole will reopen.

Eventually, seniors will be given a voucher and sent on their way, told to find their own health plan—ironically, something that very, very closely resembles the healthcare exchanges that our friends on the other side despise so much.

This is not what the American people want. They want us to invest in our people, invest in innovation, and continue our economic recovery by creating new opportunities.

The Democratic budget will do just that, cutting taxes for working families, making college more affordable, health care more accessible, and retirement more secure.

It is time we reward hard work, and I urge my colleagues to reject the Republican budget and support the Democratic alternative.

Mr. TOM PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, it gives me particular pleasure to yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from the great State of Missouri (Mrs. HARTZLER), one of the most diligent and dedicated Members of this Congress who is a member of both the Armed Services Committee and the Budget Committee.

□ 1700

Mrs. HARTZLER. Thank you very much, Chairman. You are a wonderful chairman and have helped us produce a wonderful, responsible budget.

Mr. Chairman, this budget goes a long way to address the out-of-control spending problem and crushing debt the administration has fostered over the last few years. Unlike the President's proposal, though, our budget contains progrowth economic reforms, repeals ObamaCare, and it balances. Most importantly, Price 2 restores harmful defense cuts and provides the necessary resources our warfighters need.

The threats facing this Nation and the world right now are vast, real, and

expanding: ISIL has proclaimed a caliphate in the Middle East, and it is now looking to expand into other countries; Russia is continually making headlines with aggression and invasions into Ukraine and surrounding areas; China continues to build its military as it gains more and more power globally; and Islamic extremism continues to spread to more and more countries.

We, as representatives of the people, are charged with providing for the common defense. Given the size, reach, and increasingly brutal nature of the threats we face, we should feel obliged to make sure that we create a budget that gives our military the tools necessary to address today's threats and be fully prepared to address the threats of tomorrow, whatever they may be and wherever they may come from.

As the only Member to sit on both the House Budget Committee and the House Armed Services Committee, I am proud that these two committees have come together for Price 2 to provide total defense funding spending above the President's request.

Missouri's Fourth Congressional District is proud to be one of our Nation's most military-intensive congressional districts, home of two major military installations—Whiteman Air Force Base and Fort Leonard Wood—and thousands of dedicated military families sacrificing so much to keep us safe.

Providing our military the resources necessary to safeguard our liberties and protect our shores is one of the top legislative priorities I have, and I am proud that these resources are provided in Price 2.

Again, I thank Chairman PRICE for his leadership on this committee and in this process, and I urge my colleagues to vote ''yes'' on Price 2.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Chairman, I think our colleagues can hear that there is an awful lot of confusion and uncertainty among our Republican colleagues about funding our national defense. The President's budget is very clear. He funds the national defense the way the Joint Chiefs of Staff proposed is best for the country.

Mr. Chairman, I am now pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE), a distinguished member of the Judiciary Committee who fights for justice and other really important causes.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Let me thank my good friend from Maryland for his leadership consistently that really speaks to the hearts and minds of Americans because we know what Americans want: just a simple opportunity to live, thrive, and to create the values that we have built this country on. If you work hard, you are successful.

Mr. Chairman, the budgeteers on the majority side have a very poor track record when it comes to economic forecasts and projections.

Let me also acknowledge the chairman of this committee for the work that he has done. We just happen to disagree.

Ever since the Affordable Care Act was passed, it has been the challenge of Republicans to suggest that it wasn't working. We have close to 11 million people insured. Some populations who were never insured now have high numbers—citizens who were uninsured. And so the idea of the Affordable Care being a failure, you are just dead wrong.

I am very glad to support the Democratic alternative because it is the opposite of the Republican budget, which says work harder for less when we know what Americans need and what they want for their families. They want to be able to buy a home; they want to be able to send their kids to college, and they want a secure retirement. Under the GOP budget, it is harder to buy a home, absolutely almost impossible to send your children to college, and certainly harder to enjoy a secure retirement.

House Republicans oppose increasing the minimum wage, claiming that it costs jobs. Wrong again. For every increase in the minimum wage, it has been accompanied by an expanding economy.

House Republicans opposing comprehensive immigration reform, wrong again. Studies conducted by groups as far apart as the Chamber of Commerce and the AFL–CIO indicate that the gross domestic product will grow $1.5 trillion over 10 years.

This is a sorry track record of economic forecasting, and therefore, this budget is one that I have to oppose because it favors the wealthy over working class families and those struggling to enter or remain in the middle class. I oppose the Republican budget because it asks major sacrifices of seniors who can barely make ends meet and fundamentally alters the social contract by turning Medicaid and the SNAP program into a block program and Medicare into a voucher.

The Acting CHAIR. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Chairman, I yield the gentlewoman an additional 30 seconds.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. It is clearly not a working road map for success. If the House Republican's ''work harder to get less'' budget were adopted, here is a sample of the pain and misery that will be visited on working families: an end to higher education tax credits, an end to needed increases in the child tax credit, the loss of access to tax credits for the Affordable Care Act, a reduction in tax rates for the wealthy, yielding average tax cuts of $200,000 for millionaires financed by a $2,000 tax increase on the typical working class family.

Mr. Chairman, this ''Price is not right'' budget will make it harder to get to the middle and working class parents to send their kids to college, ending these higher education tax credits and cutting student loan programs and Pell grants.

The Acting CHAIR. The time of the gentlewoman has again expired.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Chairman, I yield the gentlewoman an additional 30 seconds.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. As I close, let me thank the gentleman for his courtesy.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN is right. I have served on the Judiciary Committee. It is there that we deal with the problems, particularly on the Crime Subcommittee, at the end of someone's detour in life. Do you know what, Mr. Chairman? Those detours in life that wind up with 75,000 persons in the Federal prison system on mandatory minimums has been because people cannot read, do not have opportunities, and do not have jobs.

I want to invest in a budget that lifts the boats of all people; if you work hard, you get a home; if you work hard, you can send your kids to school; if you work hard, you can retire. That is the budget I want to support, not this no-success budget that is being proposed by our Republican friends.

I ask my colleagues to support the alternative budget along with the CPC and the CBC budget.

Mr. Chair, I rise in strong opposition to H. Con. Res. 27, the House Republicans' ''Budget Resolution for Fiscal Year 2016'' because it continues the reckless and irresponsible approach to fiscal policy that the House majority has championed for years, with disastrous results.

Mr. Chair, the budgeteers on the majority side have a very poor track record when it comes to economic forecasts and projections.

For years, they have based their entire legislative agenda and strategy on their belief that the Affordable Care Act or ''Obamacare'' would be a failure.

The wish was father to the thought. But they were wrong.

Because of Obamacare more than 16.4 million Americans now know the peace of mind that comes from affordable, quality health insurance that is there when you need it.

House Republicans oppose increasing the minimum wage, claiming that it costs jobs. Wrong again.

Every increase in the minimum wage has been accompanied by an expanding economy, especially during the Clinton Administration.

House Republicans opposing comprehensive immigration reform claim that it will lead to lower incomes and lost jobs.

Wrong again. Studies conducted by groups as far apart as the Chamber of Commerce and the AFL-CIO consistently show that comprehensive immigration reform will grow the Gross Domestic Product by $1.5 trillion over 10 years.

Given this sorry track record of economic forecasting, I strongly oppose the Republican budget because it favors the wealthy over middle class families and those struggling to enter or remain in the middle class.

I oppose this Republican budget because it asks major sacrifices of seniors who can barely make ends meet, and fundamentally alters the social contract by turning Medicaid and SNAP programs into a block grant and Medicare into a voucher.

I cannot and will not support a resolution that attempts to balance the budget on the

backs of working families, seniors, children, the poor, or mortgages the future by failing to make the investments needed to sustain economic growth and opportunity for all Americans.

Mr. Chair, the GOP "Work Harder, Get Less" Budget squeezes hard-working Americans by making it: 1. Harder to buy a home by keeping their paychecks stagnant; 2. harder to send your kids to college by cutting student loans; and 3. harder to enjoy a secure retirement by privatizing Medicare.

If the House Republicans' "Work Harder to Get Less" budget were adopted, here is a sample of the pain and misery that will be visited on middle-class and working families: 1. An end to higher education tax credits; 2. an end to needed increases in the child tax credit; 3. the loss of access to tax credits for affordable health care for millions of Americans; and 4. a reduction in tax rates for the wealthy yielding an average tax cut of $200,000 for millionaires financed by a $2,000 tax increase on the typical middle class family.

Mr. Chair, this "Price is not Right" budget will make it harder to middle and working class parents to send their kids to college by: 1. Ending higher education tax credits; and 2. cutting student loan programs and Pell Grants, making college less affordable and adding to the already huge levels of student debt.

The damage caused by the Republican budget is not limited to working families and students; there are also lumps of coal for seniors who have earned and deserve a secure retirement: 1. The Medicare guarantee is turned into a voucher program with increased costs for seniors. 2. Seniors who have worked hard for a financially secure retirement will immediately have to pay new co-pays for preventive care and much higher costs for prescription drugs.

The Republican budget also disinvests in America's future: 1. Slashes the part of the budget we use to invest in our children's education; and 2. devastates our investments in scientific research and innovation.

Mr. Chair, the Republican budget exacerbates the drag on the economy resulting from a crumbling infrastructure by cutting $187 billion, or more than 19 percent, from transportation funding over the coming decade and provides no solution to address the current shortfall in the federal transportation fund, which means we can expect construction slowdowns beginning this summer.

Mr. Chair, compared to the President's budget, the Republican budget would result this fiscal year in 35,000 fewer children in Head Start and up to 6,000 fewer special education teachers, paraprofessionals, and other related staff.

The Republican budget also shortchanges America's future by cutting investments in scientific research and innovation in real terms by failing to lift the draconian sequester on domestic priorities.

As a result, under the Republican budget, there would be 1,300 fewer medical research grants at National Institutes H and 950 fewer competitive science research awards at the NSF, affecting 11,600 researchers, technicians, and students.

Finally, Mr. Chair, the Republican Budget mistreats the poorest and most vulnerable persons in our country.

The Republican "Work Harder, Get Less" budget takes aim at millions of families with children struggling to make ends meet and put food on the table by converting the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) into a block grant beginning in 2021 and cutting funding steeply—by $125 billion (34 percent) between 2021 and by 2025.

These dramatic cuts could mean in 2021 through 2025 either cutting off assistance to 11 to 12 million eligible people each year, or cutting benefits by almost $55 per person per month.

In contrast, the Democratic Budget works FOR American families by giving them the tools to buy a home, send their kids to college and enjoy a secure retirement.

Mr. Chair, the Democratic Budget represents a better way.

We Democrats understand that we are all in this together and that our current economic situation calls for a balanced approach between increased revenues and responsible reduction in expenditures.

Our plan will protect and strengthen our recovering economy, reduce the deficit in a responsible way, while continuing to invest in the things that make our country strong like education, health care, innovation, and clean energy.

Mr. Chair, this Republican budget is bad for America but it is disastrous for the people from my home state of Texas who sent me here to advocate for their interests. Let me highlight a few examples.

1. If the Republican budget resolution were to become the basis of federal fiscal policy, 3,435,336 Texas seniors would be forced out of traditional Medicare and into a voucher program. Under the Republican plan to end Medicare as we know it, Texas seniors will receive a voucher instead of guaranteed benefits under traditional Medicare.

2. For the 3,435,336 Texans aged 45–54, the value of their vouchers would be capped at growth levels that are lower than the projected increases in health care costs. Previous analyses showed that this type of plan would cut future spending by $5,900 per senior, forcing them to spend more out of pocket and diminishing their access to quality care.

3. Additionally, private insurance plans will aggressively pursue the healthiest, least expensive enrollees, thereby allowing Medicare—currently the lifeline for 3,187,332 Texas seniors—to "wither on the vine."

4. If the Republican budget resolution were to be adopted by Congress, 206,304 Texas seniors would pay more for prescription drugs next year.

Mr. TOM PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I am now pleased to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. WILSON), a senior member of the Armed Services Committee.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Thank you, Chairman PRICE, for your extraordinary leadership.

Mr. Chairman, I am grateful today to join with my House Armed Services Committee colleagues and speak in support of Chairman PRICE's defense alternative budget, Price 2.

As the chairman of the Emerging Threats and Capabilities Subcommittee on the House Armed Services Committee, my top priority is to provide adequate funding for our Special Operations Forces who are currently deployed in more than 80 countries worldwide defeating the terrorists overseas. I support our cyber forces who play a critical role in the defense of our national security from state and nonstate aggressors alike. And I appreciate our scientists and engineers who develop the cutting-edge technologies provided for our warfighters to protect American families.

In an environment where our Air Force is the smallest since its creation, the Army is on the path to being the smallest since 1939, and the Navy will soon be the smallest since 1915, we cannot risk reducing our national defense. We can best provide for peace through strength.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to point out that tomorrow we will be taking a vote on two seemingly similar budgets, Price 1 and Price 2, but there are two major differences between the budgets. Price 2 represents the product of fruitful negotiations between the leadership, the House Budget Committee, and the House Armed Services Committee.

In Director of National Intelligence James Clapper's recent Worldwide Threat Assessment before the Senate Armed Services Committee, he said:

> In 2013, just over 11,500 terrorist attacks worldwide killed approximately 22,000 people. Preliminary data just for the first 9 months of 2014 indicate nearly 13,000 attacks, which killed 31,000 people. When the accounting is done, 2014 will have been the most lethal year for global terrorism in the 45 years such data has been compiled.

The world is becoming more dangerous, and it is time Congress came together and funded our troops appropriately. Terrorists have declared war on American families.

I would like to thank our leadership team, Chairman PRICE and Chairman MAC THORNBERRY, for their work in negotiating Chairman PRICE's defense alternative, Price 2, and it is my hope that tomorrow we can come together and pass Price 2.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and may the President by his actions never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Chairman, I would just say to my Republican colleagues, if you want to vote for a defense budget in a straightforward manner the way the Joint Chiefs of Staff have recommended, then vote for the Democratic alternative.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TOM PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, may I inquire as how much time remains on each side?

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. HILL). The gentleman from Georgia has 27 minutes remaining. The gentleman from Maryland has 10½ minutes remaining.

Mr. TOM PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I am now pleased to yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. HUNTER), a member of the Armed Services Committee and a gentleman who has served this country in the armed services.

Mr. HUNTER. I would like to thank the gentleman from Georgia for dealing with the entire Congress and coming up with only two budgets, Price 1 and Price 2.

I think that the chairman has been pulled in just about every different direction, and I am actually glad that this is coming to fruition.

I would like to urge my colleagues to vote for Price 2, the defense budget that Chairman PRICE is putting out, and vote ''no'' on Price 1. There is a reason for that: Price 2 is the defense budget.

Our job as Members of Congress is to do a lot of things. We go to different meetings. We vote on transportation, education, labor issues, and all kinds of things. But our number one job, our number one job of the American people is to keep them safe. It is national security. That is why I am here.

I did three tours. I did two tours in Iraq and one in Afghanistan. I was in Iraq when we didn't have up-armored Humvees. I was in Iraq when we didn't have enough scopes for our Marines and security forces. I was in Afghanistan when we didn't have enough stuff, too. In fact, if you vote for Price 2, you are still only voting for the ragged edge of what our Defense Department needs.

We have things going off all over right now. Africa is gone. The Middle East is gone and going. Eastern Europe is going now because of the Russians. And Asia and China, China is impinging and coming eastward towards the United States. Things will never be safer. Things will never be safer. I think the American people have to realize that, but they have to contend with it.

The American people need to know that their Navy is patrolling the ocean, that their Marines and their Army are able to go wherever we ask them to at a moment's notice and wherever we need them to. The American people need to know that their Air Force is patrolling the skies.

If we are $20 billion under the ragged edge of what our Defense Department needs, we are going to have to make sacrifices, and the American people are not going to be as safe. If we vote and Price 1 wins, we are going to have to leave here and tell the American people that the American military cannot do what they think it can do. Price 2 will fund the U.S. military where it needs to be to face all these challenges, still barely—still barely—but the American military will be able to do it.

Mr. Chairman, I would urge my colleagues to look around the world and ask themselves one question: What is their job as a U.S. Congress Member? What is their number one job? There is no social security without national security. It doesn't matter what our education budget is if another 9/11 happens.

I wear this 9/11 memorial bracelet on my wrist. That is what made me join the Marine Corps is when our towers went down. When those towers fell, we realized what was important, and it was keeping this country safe. Price 2 will help keep this country safe; Price 1 will make it a more dangerous place. Again, Mr. Chairman, I would urge my colleagues to vote ''no'' on Price 1 and vote ''yes'' on Price 2.

Again, I thank the chairman for giving his heart and soul to this and listening to so many people and trying to come up with something that this side of the aisle can agree on.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Chairman, I just point out to my colleagues that both of what we are referring to as Price 1 and Price 2 are a total violation of what the Budget Committee, on a bipartisan basis, has said we would not do with respect to using the overseas contingency account as a slush fund. Both Price 1 and Price 2 do that to different degrees. If you want to fund defense in the straightforward manner that the military leadership has recommended to the President and the President has put in the budget, then you should support the Democratic alternative.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1715

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

It saddens me to have our colleagues on the other side of the aisle talk about a slush fund when they are talking about the military. I think it maligns our military. It doesn't give the honor and the dignity to the men and women who stand in harm's way every single day to protect our liberty and protect our freedom. It is hard to even recognize the comment when you are talking about those men and women of a slush fund.

I have great respect for members of the armed services, incredible respect for their leadership. We believe strongly in their ability to take the resources that we provide them and do the job, do the mission, make certain that this Nation is safe and kept from harm.

So I would encourage our colleagues on the other side to rethink their language and their rhetoric. Words mean something. Words mean something. I hope that they are able to recognize that that language doesn't do dignity to this Chamber, it doesn't do dignity to the men and women who stand in the breach.

I want to take a few minutes, Mr. Chairman, and I want to recognize those folks who have recognized us in supporting A Balanced Budget for a Stronger America, groups all across this Nation, men and women who stand up and say: We know that there is a challenge out there, we know that the fiscal situation of this Nation is difficult, and we want to support those who are actually providing positive solutions:

Council for Citizens Against Government Waste—I have a letter from the Council for Citizens Against Government Waste supporting our budget; Americans for Tax Reform, supporting our budget; Americans for Prosperity, supporting our budget; National Taxpayers Union, supporting our budget; 60 Plus Association, supporting our budget; Association of Mature American Citizens, supporting our budget. And I mentioned before the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, and National Federation of Independent Business.

Mr. Chairman, I include in the RECORD letters of support that have been provided by these organizations.

AMERICANS FOR TAX REFORM
Washington, DC. March 17, 2015.

Chairman TOM PRICE,
Committee on the Budget,
House of Representatives.

DEAR CHAIRMEN PRICE: On behalf of Americans for Tax Reform, I write in strong support of the recently released U.S. House of Representatives budget proposal. The budget blueprint authored by House Budget Committee Chairman Tom Price (R–GA) will ensure that Washington lives within its means by balancing the budget in less than ten years and cutting $5.5 trillion in federal spending.

The budget proposal calls for a fairer, simpler tax code, reforms struggling entitlement programs, clamps down on inefficient and ineffective government programs, and lays the groundwork for strong economic growth. The plan also empowers the states to make their own decisions by restoring the principle of federalism.

By keeping to the proposed reforms, Congress stands to secure America's economic prospects, protect jobs, and accelerate economic development to levels which would be unattainable given the current spending policies. Lower, flatter taxes plus a competitive international tax regime would enshrine our place as the world's number 1 destination for entrepreneurship. Simply put, asking taxpayers to pay $160 billion per year is an undue burden that we can do without.

Notably, the House budget repeals Obamacare in its entirety and reforms the health care system to increase access to affordable care and provide patients with better medical choices. Repealing Obamacare would eliminate numerous job killing regulations including the employer mandate and the individual mandate. In place of this complex system, the House budget prioritizes a patient-centered approach that gives power back to the individual.

Repealing Obamacare will also put a stop to the raiding of the Medicare trust fund. In turn, this will help secure and strengthen Medicare so the program can continue to provide retirees with the care that they deserve. The budget will also build a new premium support program for Medicare that will further empower seniors to make their own choices.

Finally, the budget implements improvements to Medicaid. Specifically, it repeals the Obamacare Medicaid expansion and grants increased flexibility to the states, which will allow the states the opportunity to build a strong and sustainable system of Medicaid that suits their needs.

The House Budget maintains the spending restrictions mandated in the Budget Control Act of 2011, ensuring the continuation of the savings from discretionary spending. In contrast to the White House budget, which ignores 2011 spending caps and raises spending through misleading promises, the House budget abides by federal law. The budget allocates funding to the DOD's Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) fund to meet the

complex and dangerous global threats, balanced by cuts to mandatory spending.

It is important to keeps the caps in place that have stabilized federal spending since 2011 and will lead to $1.79 trillion in savings through 2021. You should be congratulated for proposing a more fiscally responsible solution despite the urging of some of his more reckless colleagues to break spending caps and undo years of fiscal restraint.

We urge the House Budget committee to support this bold pro-growth proposal. It returns power to states and localities while making great, positive strides in the tax code.

Sincerely,

GROVER G. NORQUIST,
President,
Americans for Tax Reform.

THE 60 PLUS ASSOCIATION,
Alexandria, VA, March 18, 2015.

Hon. TOM PRICE,
Chairman, House Committee on the Budget,
Cannon House Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN PRICE: On behalf of more than seven million senior citizen activists, the 60 Plus Association applauds your leadership in putting forth a responsible Balanced Budget plan. Not only will this legislation protect seniors but also our children and grandchildren.

We need positive, common sense solutions to put our nation's spending on a path of sustainability that both strengthens and preserves our Social Security and Medicare benefits. By reducing spending though responsible government-wide reforms, the House Republican budget also ensures America's economic security.

Again, we thank you for your efforts and introducing a Balanced Budget that puts our nation back on the right path! This plan will protect the investment of our generation as well as for future generations.

Sincerely,

JAMES L. MARTIN,
Chairman.

ASSOCIATION OF
MATURE AMERICAN CITIZENS,
March 18, 2015.

Hon. TOM PRICE,
6th District, Georgia, Cannon House Office Building, Washington, DC.

Hon. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN,
8th District, Maryland, Cannon House Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN PRICE AND RANKING MEMBER VAN HOLLEN, On behalf of the 1.3 million members of AMAC, the Association of Mature American Citizens, I am writing to convey our strong support for many of the policies set forth in the House Budget Committee's FY 2016 budget resolution, ''A Balanced Budget for a Stronger America.'' This budget proposal correctly identifies the financial and economic challenges facing America today and provides a blueprint for tackling those problems with positive, responsible solutions.

Time and again, it is has been said that America's national debt is the single biggest threat to our national security. For this reason, it is imperative that Congress unite around a plan to pay down our debt and balance the budget so that Washington can begin living within its means. ''A Balanced Budget for a Stronger America'' promises to balance the budget in less than 10 years without raising taxes by reducing federal spending by $5.5 trillion and making government programs more effective and efficient.

Not only does this budget promote healthy economic policies and reduce federal spending, it also provides a path forward to save and strengthen vital programs like Social Security and Medicare. On Social Security, the budget clearly states that Congress should not raid the retirement trust fund to temporarily patch the disability program, which is projected to be insolvent in 2016. AMAC strongly supports this policy position and believes this is the kind of forward-thinking leadership that is required to save and secure this critical program. While these important senior programs face uncertain futures, AMAC appreciates that this budget compels Congress to adopt long-term legislative solutions that will guarantee Social Security and Medicare benefits for today's seniors and tomorrow's retirees.

Last, AMAC is pleased to see that the budget fully repeals the ''Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act,'' or ''ObamaCare.'' Repealing ObamaCare will save over $2 trillion, will end the egregious $700 billion raid on Medicare, and will unburden the public from obtrusive government mandates and regulations. Instead of imposing one-size-fits-all government health care on the American people, this budget proposes health reform that is patient-centered. AMAC supports the budget's patient-centered approach to health care that places value on increased access to quality, affordable care and expanded choices for individuals, families, and businesses.

As an organization committed to representing the interests of mature Americans and seniors, AMAC is encouraged by the positive vision outlined in ''A Balanced Budget for a Stronger America.'' We feel that this budget will help to restore our nation's financial and economic security and will put America on a path toward greater prosperity.

Sincerely,

DAN WEBER,
President and Founder of AMAC.

CCAGW PRAISES FY 2016 HOUSE BALANCED BUDGET RESOLUTION

(WASHINGTON, DC).—Today, the Council for Citizens Against Government Waste (CCAGW) praised House Budget Committee Chairman Tom Price's (R-Ga.) fiscal year (FY) 2016 Budget Resolution. The blueprint balances the budget in less than 10 years, a clear divergence from President Obama's budget, which never balances at all.

The budget proposal cuts waste, improves accountability, and eliminates redundancies in the federal government. A particularly laudable component is the elimination of ''double dipping'' of Social Security Disability Insurance and Unemployment Insurance, as recommended by the Government Accountability Office (GAO) on March 4, 2015. The budget proposal also makes note of duplicative programs that need to be consolidated, including food aid and housing assistance that not only waste millions of taxpayer dollars but also fail to achieve their stated objectives.

The budget includes numerous recommendations from ''Prime Cuts,'' such as the privatization of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, the elimination of the Commerce Department's Hollings Manufacturing Extension Program and International Trade Promotion Activities, and the termination of dozens of green energy grants funded in the stimulus bill that would ''protect taxpayers from being on the hook for future boondoggles.'' The 2015 Prime Cuts will be released on April 1.

Moreover, the budget proposal's commitment to devolving programs to the states, particularly Medicaid, food stamps, and educational programs, will spur innovation, increase flexibility, and save taxpayers money. Government that is closer to the people governs more effectively, with less waste and more accountability.

''We are very supportive of Chairman Price's budget proposal and look forward to working closely with the committee to safeguard the interests of taxpayers,'' CCAGW President Tom Schatz said. ''We are also pleased to see the budget contains many Prime Cuts recommendations. With the national debt more than $18 trillion, it is time to balance the budget and end deficit spending in Washington.''

The Council for Citizens Against Government Waste is the lobbying arm of the nation's largest nonpartisan, nonprofit organization dedicated to eliminating waste, fraud, abuse, and mismanagement in government.

[March 17, 2015]

AMERICANS FOR PROSPERITY ON THE HOUSE BUDGET PROPOSAL

ARLINGTON, VA.—Today Americans for Prosperity, the nation's largest grassroots advocate for economic freedom, applauded the House Budget Committee for introducing a budget resolution this morning. AFP Vice President of Government Affairs Brent Gardner issued the following statement:

''We applaud House Budget Committee Chairman Tom Price for putting together a common sense budget resolution. While not perfect, we are pleased to see a number of positive policies proposed in this common sense budget. We applaud Chairman Price for holding firm on Congress's past agreement to control spending by adhering to the discretionary spending caps established in the Budget Control Act. Keeping these caps is the best tool for lawmakers to restrain spending, and we encourage Congress to keep these caps.

''This is a welcome change from the President's recent call for higher levels of federal spending and higher taxes on American families. Additional reforms that Americans for Prosperity supports in this budget resolution is that it balances within 10 years, sets the stage for comprehensive tax reform, and turns control over certain mandatory programs over to the states. It also includes a full repeal of the President's health care law that has already seen millions of people lose their health care plans. Overall, this budget resolution is a strong step in the right direction.''

Earlier in March, Americans for Prosperity sent a letter of specific items that should be included in the upcoming budget resolutions in Congress. Online here. We continue to encourage federal lawmakers to work towards budget solutions that protect American taxpayers and reduce spending.

Groups Supporting: Americans for Tax Reform; Council for Citizens Against Government Waste; Americans for Prosperity; US Chamber of Commerce; Association of Mature American Citizens; National Federation for Independent Business (NFIB); 60 Plus Association.

Mr. TOM PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I also want to address this issue of morality. We have had a number of folks on the other side of the aisle talk about the morality of a budget. And budgeting is priorities, it is a moral document; there is no doubt about it.

In the earlier debate, a number of folks on the other side talked about this notion that moral documents, moral issues, are raised in budgets. And I agree, there is no doubt about it. Budgets say what kind of people we are. They say what kind of people we want to be.

So I want to ask this question, Mr. Chairman:

What is the morality of trapping disadvantaged people in a web of welfare programs that discourage self-sufficiency and instead shackle them to government dependency? What is the morality of that?

What is the morality of keeping retirees in a health care coverage program that is going bankrupt, becoming insolvent, not according to my numbers, according to the trustees of the program itself, and that can't keep its promises if its so-called providers keep blocking reform? What is the morality of that?

What is the morality, Mr. Chairman, of forcing low-income people into a second-rate health care program in which many can't get appointments with doctors and those doctors are grossly under-reimbursed by the government? What is the morality of that?

What is the morality, Mr. Chairman, of stifling medical innovation, preventing new treatments from reaching patients because of ever-expanding Washington bureaucracy and red tape? Where is the morality in that kind of program?

What is the morality of tying college students to years of crippling debt because of a government-run student loan program that drives up tuitions? I hear my friends on the other side talk about how difficult it is for students, and it is. Mr. Chairman, it is difficult because of the student loan program that they put in place when they were in the majority that doesn't give students access to low interest rate loans. Where is the morality of that?

Where is the morality of heaping trillions of dollars of debt onto future generations to finance today's government spending because today's policymakers refuse to stop outspending our tax revenue? Where is the morality in that, Mr. Chairman?

And these are only a few examples of the regrettable consequences of well-intentioned, government-sponsored compassion.

Our Republican budget aims to break that pattern. We aim to respect the American people and talk to them about the seriousness of the challenges that we face, but provide positive alternatives, real solutions with real results. That is what they are longing for, real leadership in this town.

Our budget isn't about cutting programs, it is about improving and saving them to ensure a sustainable safety net for those who need it, while encouraging and helping others sustain themselves, the most truly compassionate thing one can do for another. That is the morality of our Republican budget.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Let me just start with some comments about the importance of making sure we make investments in defense in a straightforward and honest way.

The chairman's comments were directly contrary to the position he took 1 year ago. Here is what he said as part of the Republican majority: ''Abuse of the OCO''—that is the overseas contingency account—''is a backdoor loophole that undermines the integrity of the budget process.'' That is what our Republican colleagues said. They said they weren't going to allow it. They are using the overseas contingency account as a slush fund for moneys that should be invested in the normal Defense Department accounts. That is what they said last year. They have done a 180 here. That is a discredit to this House.

We keep hearing all day about Price 1 and Price 2. What is that all about? I am sure colleagues listening have got to be going: What is going on, Price 1 and Price 2? It is because our Republican colleagues haven't figured out how they are going to fund the defense of the country. But both Price 1 and Price 2 are a violation of the position our Republican colleagues took just a year ago.

So let's do this in a way that honors our commitment to our defense and do it in a straightforward manner, the way that the Joint Chiefs of Staff and others have recommended.

Now, it is always interesting to understand people's different perceptions in morality. I would just ask a question: Is it right to have a budget that refuses to cut a single special interest tax break in order to reduce the deficit while cutting our investment in our kids' education? Is it right to have a budget that won't cut a corporate tax break, like the corporate jet loophole, but cuts our investment in our kids' education, increases the cost of prescription drugs to seniors, says to students you are going to pay more for your student loans?

I was really interested to hear the chairman's comments about the student loan program. What the Democrats did when they were in the majority was get rid of a system where the big banks were making guaranteed returns off of taxpayer dollars that were not going to students. They were making guaranteed 9 percent returns.

So we said: Why should we have a system where the big banks are getting these guaranteed taxpayer-subsidized returns? And we moved to a direct loan program. That meant every dollar could go farther in terms of providing student loans. Cut out the big banks. They were just siphoning off dollars that were intended to go to students. That is what we did. But we also understand that despite those improvements, our students are finding it costly to go to college.

That is why actually in our budget we provide for increased opportunity and more affordable college, the opposite of what our Republicans do, which is they say they want to increase interest rates on student loans and cut $90 billion-plus from Pell grants.

Is it moral or, I should just ask: Does the country really think it is right to have a budget that paves the way for cutting the top tax rate for the wealthiest people in the country, the people who have done just great over the last 20, 30 years? Is it right to cut their tax rates by one-third, from 39 percent down to the mid-20s, while increasing the tax burden on working families, middle class families, and those who are working their way into the middle class, getting rid of the deduction for higher education, getting rid of the increase in the child tax credit, getting rid of the Affordable Care Act tax credits that help people afford education?

The Tax Policy Center did a study that said a proposal like the Romney-Ryan plan would provide about an average tax cut of $200,000 to millionaires and increase the tax burden on middle-income families by $2,000. Is that right?

Look, the issue here is whether you believe that we should grow our economy and accelerate economic growth in a way with more shared prosperity, or whether you believe in an economy that grows through trickle down, the idea that cutting tax rates for the top will somehow lift everybody up. That theory ran into the hard wall of reality. Folks at the top had their incomes go up, everybody else was running in place. We should not go back to that.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I am amused by my colleague's interpretation of what happened with student loans. It is an interesting rewriting of history.

What the translation is is that the Federal Government now controls the vast majority of student loans, controls and dictates interest on those loans. So the money that the students are paying out there in interest on those loans, where is it going? It is going to the Federal Government when, in fact, those students could actually get loans at a lower rate, but that is now precluded. So our friends have a proclivity for rewriting history. Their plan, by the way; that was their plan to put the Federal Government in charge of student loans.

The gentleman says, What has changed in a year? Well, a lot has changed, Mr. Chairman: Russian aggression in Eastern Europe, ISIS, Chinese making more noise.

Look, I admit that funding the defense for our country in this way, $613 billion—$523 billion in the base budget and $90 billion in the global war on terror fund—is not ideal.

Why are we doing that? The President so far has refused to lay out a path to change the law, which it takes in order to put it in the base defense budget, which is why we in our budget responsibly, proactively, honestly lay forth the path to be able to get that done.

Our friends know that if the President's number were included in the budget, as soon as the next year begins,

boom, right back down to $523 billion. He can talk about the number he has got all he wants, but the law of the land brings it right back down to $523 billion unless the law is changed.

We look forward to working with our colleagues, we look forward to working with the administration, so that we can actually do so in a way that modifies the base defense budget. I hope that that is able to happen, I hope that that is able to happen.

I am now pleased to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DIAZ-BALART), a very active member of the Appropriations Committee and of the Budget Committee.

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Chairman, I rise today, first, to thank the chairman of the Budget Committee for the job he has done and the staff of that committee.

As the chairman stated, this budget actually deals with the issues that are important to our country. The President has put together and has put forward a budget, but as the chairman stated, it is a budget that assumes that the law is not the law. He assumes that you can just throw money on top of the law and that it is going to stay there by some miracle of nature when the reality is that we know, as the chairman stated, that that is fake, because if we were to mark up to those numbers, the sequester would kick in and just eliminate those funds outright.

□ 1730

This budget deals with reality. This budget deals with the fact that, if we don't deal with and if we don't reform what is causing, frankly, the debt, the deficits—which is mandatory spending—it will consume 100 percent of the budget in a generation.

This budget also demands from Congress tax reform, tax reform that we all know would increase the economy, that would create more jobs, that would make it easier for Americans to open businesses—small, medium, and large—to create jobs here in this country.

I want to thank the chairman because it also recognizes the fact that, no, al Qaeda is not on the run; that, no, we have not defeated terrorism; and that the world is not as safe as any of us would like it to be. This recognizes that we have to give our military what it needs to do its job.

Yes, the President adds money to the base, but I repeat—and the chairman mentioned this—that that is fake because, unless you change the law, which this budget cannot do, that money automatically goes away.

The one thing that we can do that is in the hands of this bill, of this budget that is in front of us, is to do precisely what the chairman has put forward.

Is it perfect? Absolutely not—it is responsible. It helps create jobs, and it will grow the economy. It will stop this out-of-control spending; and, yes, it will deal with making sure that our military has the tools that it needs to fight the enemies of freedom and the enemies of America. It does it in a realistic fashion, not in this dream world that the President's budget seems to be living in.

I encourage my colleagues to support this effort from our chairman of the Budget Committee. Again, I thank the chairman for his effort.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Chairman, I am just a little puzzled by the comments from the gentleman from Florida since the Republican study group's budget—and I understand the Republican study group consists of about 170 members of a big majority of the Republican caucus—funds defense in a straightforward way that the President's budget does and that the Democratic alternative budget does.

I am interested to hear the Republican study group's budget approach to defense characterized as a fake. I think that would be a surprise to the members of the Republican study group.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TOM PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I would like to put a little more meat on the bones, if you will, of this issue of discretionary spending and of mandatory spending because it really is the locus of the problem that we have, and I think our friends on the other side of the aisle would agree.

When you look at history, over the last 50 years or so—the red on this is mandatory spending, and the blue is discretionary spending—back in 1962, mandatory spending was about a third of our Federal budget, and discretionary spending was about two-thirds.

Over the last 50 years, what has happened is that that has flipped, and mandatory spending has become two-thirds or even more of Federal spending, and discretionary spending has become about a third.

Now, why is that important? All of the things that we say that we care about outside of Medicare and Medicaid and Social Security, basically, are in this blue area. Defense is in the blue area, as are transportation, energy, education, research.

All of the things we say that we want to protect are in the blue area. This is what our Appropriations Committee deals with. The automatic spending—the mandatory programs—are crowding out, as you see, Mr. Chairman, the discretionary spending. The challenge to my colleagues is to recognize this problem, to recognize what needs to be done.

What needs to be done is that the mandatory programs need to be addressed. You can't bury your head in the sand and say it doesn't make any difference. We spend about $3.6 trillion a year on the entire Federal budget.

About $2.6 trillion—ballpark figures of $2.5 trillion, $2.6 trillion—is of basically three things, which is Medicare and Medicaid, Social Security, and interest on the debt, which has been talked about and that we aren't able to do anything about. We can't change it.

When you think about the Federal Government, everything else is about $1 trillion a year: education, energy, legislative branch, judiciary, court system, transportation, research, defense. Everything else in the Federal Government, with the exception of Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security, is about $1 trillion.

Now, Mr. Chairman, people out there across this great Nation know that, for 4 out of the last 6 years, Washington—this country—has run a deficit of greater than $1 trillion each year, which means that you could do away with the entire Federal Government—the entire thing, everything—with the exception of Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security, and you wouldn't even balance the budget. That is the challenge. Very shortly, mandatory spending is going to consume the entire Federal budget.

We have got a problem that we have got to deal with. If we don't, what happens is that we are no longer going to be able to pass off to our kids and our grandkids the kind of opportunity for them to realize their dreams.

That is what we need to do, Mr. Chairman. We need to recognize the problems, and we need to recognize the challenges, and that is what our budget does. It recognizes that mandatory spending can't continue on the path that it is on.

Sadly, in that mandatory spending, those programs are actually going broke: Medicare, insolvent by 2033; Social Security, insolvent by 2034.

What our budget does is responsibly, positively, honestly say to the American people that we recognize that challenge. It is reckless for us not to recognize and address that challenge, so we do in our budget put forward positive solutions to those challenges so that we can, as a percentage of the amount of spending in the Federal Government, narrow the amount of money spent on mandatory programs so that we have more moneys available for the kinds of things that everybody on this House floor and everybody in this Chamber wants to do.

We want to make certain that we have the greatest opportunity for the next generation, but that light is getting dim unless we address the challenges that we face. That is why it is so important to adopt a positive budget, an honest budget, a sincere budget, a budget that recognizes these challenges but that puts in place positive solutions.

I appreciate the conversations and the discussions of my friends on the other side of the aisle, but it is absolutely vital that we, as Representatives of the people, come together and solve these challenges that we have from a financial standpoint so that we can pass on to our kids and our grandkids the greatest nation the world has ever known.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Chairman, how much time remains on both sides?

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. CURBELO of Florida). The gentleman from Maryland has 4 minutes remaining. The gentleman from Georgia has 6½ minutes remaining.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Chairman, I reserve unless the gentleman wants to close.

Mr. TOM PRICE of Georgia. I would say to my friend that I am prepared to close, so I am happy to have the gentleman close.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself the balance of my time.

When we are talking about the budget and priorities, the chairman of the committee left out one of the biggest areas of ''spending'' in the Tax Code according to the Congressional Budget Office, and that is the amount of spending that goes through a whole range of tax breaks.

If you look at this chart, you will find that what the Congressional Budget Office calls ''tax expenditures'' exceed the amount spent each year on Social Security, on Medicare and Medicaid, on defense: $1.4 billion in tax breaks.

Now, some of those are for good policy purposes, but some of them and a lot of them are there because some powerful special interest got some special break that helps him and nobody else, and this Republican budget doesn't touch one of those in order to reduce the deficit, not one. It doesn't close one of those $1.4 trillion in tax expenditures to reduce the deficit.

What it does do is make life harder for people who are working hard every day. It increases the tax burden on middle class Americans and on those who are working to join the middle class. It raises the cost of going to college by increasing the cost of student loans. It increases the daily costs of seniors, who are going to face higher prescription drug costs and higher fees for copayments—seniors, students, working class families.

I started this discussion by pointing out that we have seen worker productivity grow. American workers are working harder than ever, but their paychecks have been flat. Our Democratic alternative budget will address that issue.

This Republican budget makes the situation worse. It doesn't do anything to help hard-working Americans get ahead. It says, Work harder, but get less. You are going to take home less, and you are going to get hit with higher taxes because they take away certain important tax benefits for middle-income and working people.

Why in the world we would want to pass a budget that makes it harder on hard-working people today and that disinvests in the future of America tomorrow, I don't know. There is a much better way to do it. We will present an alternative tomorrow which does that.

It says we should have a Tax Code that is not rigged in favor of making money off of money, but that actually favors people who earn a living through hard work every day. Our current Tax Code actually gives better tax rates to unearned income than to earned income. That doesn't make sense.

We propose to provide important tax incentives and benefits to hard-working Americans; whereas the Republican budget just provides another tax rate cut for folks at the top on the failed theory that it is going to trickle down and lift everybody up. That is not the way to accelerate economic growth.

The way to accelerate economic growth is to make sure all hard-working Americans can bring back bigger paychecks to provide for their families, to make sure their families can achieve the American Dream.

That is an economy in which everyone moves forward together, as opposed to an economy that says to the folks at the top: you have made it; we are going to give you even more tax breaks, and once you climb the ladder of opportunity, it is okay to lift the ladder up after you.

That has not been the way our country has worked from the beginning. Let's reject this budget. There is a better way, and we will have a chance to debate that tomorrow.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. TOM PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself the balance of my time.

In closing, we have heard a lot of conversation this afternoon about the budget; a lot of hyperbole, a lot of misinformation, I would suggest.

I suspect that those out there watching, if they are looking at this, have said to their spouses: hide the kids and pets, dear; they are talking about the budget.

Let me set the record straight on a couple of items. Some folks on the other side have talked about the research budget is being decimated. Table one in the budget report has a line item for general science, space, and technology. That is research and innovation—for 2016, $28.381 billion; in going to 2025, $34.488 billion; for the 10-year window, $313 billion to research and innovation.

Chairman RYAN, early on in this conversation, in this debate, talked about all of the hyperbole on the other side and of the words ''slashing'' and ''cutting'' and ''decimating'' and ''destroying.''

Mr. Chairman, what the other side proposes, what the President proposes, is a growth in the budget of 5.1 percent on average. That is what gets you this amount of debt.

□ 1745

It crowds out everything else that we want to do in our society. Our growth rate, 3.4 percent—3.4 percent. That is what gets you A Balanced Budget for a Stronger America.

Now, my friend talks about the productivity in this country; and it is true, productivity is up, but let me talk about the growth. If they want to double down on the policies that we have had for the last 6 years, let's talk about what has happened. This is the Congressional Budget Office estimate of growth over the ensuing 10 years: in 2012, they predicted that the growth was going to average 3 percent; in 2013, 2.9 percent; in 2014, 2.5 percent; this year, 2.3 percent growth over the next 10 years.

Now, what does that mean? What that means is that a full percent growth off the average growth rate over the last 40 years, and such a distinctive decrease in growth that jobs aren't going to be able to be created at the numbers that they need to be, that the economy doesn't get to be roaring at the way that it needs to be, that revenue into the Federal Government is diminished because the growth isn't projected to be what it ought to be.

How much? Is it a little bit? If we—if, when, we are able to adopt the policies in our budget, A Balanced Budget for a Stronger America projection, we would suggest that we can return to the average growth rate of the last 40 years, 3.2, 3.3 percent. What that means is more jobs, more activity, more economic vitality out there. What that means is nearly $3 trillion, $3 trillion more to the Federal Government in terms of revenue just because of the increased activity in our economy. Imagine what we could do with those kinds of resources, to balance the budget, to get this economy going again, to allow the American people to realize their dreams in so many, many wonderful and vital ways.

How do you do that? You do that with tax reform. You do that with tax reform. My friends on the other side of the aisle say: Well, no, you haven't identified what you are going to do. No, that is the responsibility of the Committee on Ways and Means. The budget lays out the pathway, and then the committees of jurisdiction go to work and accomplish that pathway, put in place the programs that would accomplish that pathway, A Balanced Budget for a Stronger America.

I want to reiterate once again, remember, Mr. Chairman, that every dollar that is taken in taxes from the American people and every dollar that is borrowed is a dollar that can't be used to pay the rent, can't be used to buy a house, can't be used to buy a car, can't be used to send a kid to college, can't be used to expand or to begin a business.

So what we need are positive solutions, real solutions, honest solutions, like we put forward in our budget. Highlights once again: We balance the budget in less than 10 years without raising taxes. Our budget decreases spending by over $5.5 trillion in the 10-year budget window—$5.5 trillion—instead of adding trillions of dollars of spending. We support a strong national defense; we have defined that, $613 billion combined with base defense spending and global war on terror spending. We repeal ObamaCare in its entirety, once again, as a physician, not just because it is harming the economy, but it

is also harming the health of the American people. We secure economic opportunity for all citizens.

We don't leave anybody behind. We recognize the imperative and the opportunity that is so necessary for folks. We do, however, believe that there are places where appropriate federalism ought to occur, where States and local communities can better respond to the needs of their citizens, whether it is in the area of health care, whether it is in the area of nutritional assistance, or whether it is in the area of education, something that so many State legislatures and so many Governors are talking about as we speak.

We hold Washington accountable. We think it is important to have a right size of Washington, not an expanded Federal bureaucracy that continues to overreach and continues to affect adversely, in regulatory schemes, the lives of the American people. We cut waste and fraud and abuse all across the Federal Government, defining areas that need to be audited and where we need to find savings. The American people, the hardworking American people, they are sick and tired of the kind of waste in this government. We support rights of conscience for physicians all across this land, and we push back on the executive overreach.

This is A Balanced Budget for a Stronger America. It will result in a greater efficiency, greater effectiveness, and greater accountability of this government. I urge my colleagues to support A Balanced Budget for a Stronger America.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. All time for general debate on the congressional budget has expired.

Mr. TOM PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Chair, I move that the Committee do now rise.

The motion was agreed to.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. MOOLENAAR) having assumed the chair, Mr. CURBELO of Florida, Acting Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the resolution (H. Con. Res. 27) establishing the budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2016 and setting forth appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2017 through 2025, had come to no resolution thereon.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on the motion to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote incurs objection under clause 6 of rule XX.

Any record vote on the postponed question will be taken later.

BENJAMIN P. GROGAN AND JERRY L. DOVE FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION MIAMI FIELD OFFICE

Mr. CURBELO of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1092) to designate the Federal building located at 2030 Southwest 145th Avenue in Miramar, Florida, as the ''Benjamin P. Grogan and Jerry L. Dove Federal Bureau of Investigation Miami Field Office'', as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1092

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. DESIGNATION.

The Federal building located at 2030 Southwest 145th Avenue in Miramar, Florida, shall be known and designated as the ''Benjamin P. Grogan and Jerry L. Dove Federal Building''.

SEC. 2. REFERENCES.

Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the Federal building referred to in section 1 shall be deemed to be a reference to the ''Benjamin P. Grogan and Jerry L. Dove Federal Building''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. CURBELO) and the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. CARSON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CURBELO of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 1092, as amended.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

There was no objection.

Mr. CURBELO of Florida. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 1092, as amended, would designate the Federal building located at 2030 Southwest 145th Avenue in Miramar, Florida, as the Benjamin P. Grogan and Jerry L. Dove Federal Building.

FBI Special Agents Jerry Dove and Benjamin P. Grogan were killed in 1986 during a gun battle with robbery suspects. Special Agents Dove and Grogan had been a part of a surveillance effort in connection with a series of violent bank robberies in Miami, Florida.

Special Agent Dove was born in January 1956 in Charleston, West Virginia. He earned degrees from Marshall University and West Virginia University and had been in law enforcement for 4 years prior to his death.

Special Agent Grogan was born in Atlanta, Georgia, in February 1933. He became an FBI special agent in 1961 and had been with the FBI for 19 years prior to his death.

This legislation recognizes the ultimate sacrifice of these two FBI agents who were killed in the line of duty. I am pleased to be a cosponsor of this legislation, and I want to thank the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. WILSON) for her leadership on this bill.

Mr. Speaker, earlier this afternoon, I spoke with George Piro, special agent in charge of the FBI's Miami field office, and on behalf of the families of the fallen officers and of all of his colleagues, he conveyed his sincere appreciation to this House for considering this important legislation today.

I urge my colleagues to support passage of this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CARSON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1092, as amended, which designates the Federal building located in Miramar, Florida, as the Benjamin P. Grogan and Jerry L. Dove Federal Bureau of Investigation Miami Field Office.

I would also like to thank my dear friend and pioneer and legend, the gentlelady from Florida, Madam FREDERICA WILSON, who really is a Floridian icon, but I want to recognize her for her dedicated work with law enforcement officers, including the two who died in the line of duty.

On April 11, 1989, Mr. Speaker, FBI Agents Jerry Dove and Benjamin Grogan were killed in southwest Miami, Florida. While these two FBI agents were investigating a spate of violent armed robberies, they observed a vehicle suspected to be connected to the robberies. When the agents attempted to stop the vehicle and the suspects refused, a high-speed chase ensued. A gun battle followed, and Special Agents Dove and Grogan were killed. Five other agents were injured in the attack.

Now, since this incident, Mr. Speaker, every April 11, the Miami FBI field office has held a special ceremony to honor Special Agents Dove and Grogan and other law enforcement officers who have been killed in the line of duty.

As a former police officer, I have a deep appreciation of this honor being bestowed today. Naming this new facility after FBI Special Agents Jerry Dove and Benjamin P. Grogan is a fitting tribute to these two law enforcement officers who gave their lives in service and protection of the citizens of Miami, Florida.

I urge my colleagues to join us in supporting H.R. 1092, as amended.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CURBELO of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to my distinguished colleague from Florida, Ms. ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I thank our brand-new Florida colleague, the gentleman from Miami, Mr.