projections are overestimated, the tax cut will be deferred, avoiding additional debt.

There is no question that Americans are overtaxed and deserve to keep more of their hard-earned dollars. But tax relief, no matter how desirable, must be provided responsibly. That is what the House is accomplishing.

It is critical that this trigger mechanism stays in the legislation as it comes out of the conference committee. Tax cuts must be dependent upon tax reduction. I urge the House to keep this responsible provision. Not only is it fiscally responsible, it is plain common sense.

**TRIGGER MECHANISM IN TAX BILL PROVIDES FOR TAX RELIEF AND DEBT REDUCTION**

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

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, on the tax cut and on the debt reduction, we are interested in both. We developed a trigger last week when we passed one's tax bill that accomplishes the assurance that we are going to pay down the debt. The Senate is putting in a provision in the tax bill that sunsets after 10 years.

Additionally, we are working on a new trigger that is based on revenues. It says, in effect, that, if the revenues are not there, we are not going to have these kinds of tax cuts.

So the first portion that comes in from increased revenues would be to expand spending. The next portion would be to pay down the debt. What is left over from that would be additional tax cuts.

Let me just give my colleagues a fact that is interesting in terms of the overzealous taxation. We are talking about doing away with 10 percent of the income tax. If we did away with all of the personal income tax, revenues coming into the Federal Government would still be greater, larger than they were in 1990. That is how fast government is growing. That is how we are sucking the pocket of the people that earned it.

Now, let me repeat that, and let me be a little more precise. The top 50 percent of income earners, according to the latest IRS data, pay exactly 95.7 percent of the total Federal income taxes. The bottom 50 percent, those with incomes below $23,160, the bottom 50 percent pay only 4.34 percent of the total Federal income tax in the country. In other words, low income earners pay almost no Federal taxes at all.

That is why any tax cut is immediately labeled tax cut for the wealthy. Even the $500 per child tax credit that passed 2 years ago, which was available to all families except the wealthy, was called tax cuts for the wealthy by the other side.

If one is a taxpayer, Democrats think one is wealthy, and one should not have one's tax reduced under any circumstances.

**GODSPEED TO REV. DOUGLAS ZIMMERMANN AND HIS YOUTH MISSION TEAM**

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, the Reverend Douglas Zimmerman of St. Thomas Episcopal Parish in Miami, Florida has always been known for his unsselfish giving and his invaluable service to his parish and community.

Among his many gifts are the precedents he sets and the ways in which he leads children by example into following Biblical teachings.

This Monday, August 2, Reverend Zimmerman will, once again, instruct students to give of themselves as he organizes a group of seven dedicated students and four adults who have volunteered part of their summer vacation to lend a helping hand to underprivileged families in Central America.

During this mission trip, Reverend Zimmerman and his dedicated team of 11 will travel to Honduras, a country which was ravaged by Hurricane Mitch, to establish places of refuge for families which have been left desolate.

They will bring light to a world of darkness by providing children and their families with the basic necessities which we often take for granted. During their 9-day trip, the mission team will have the unique opportunity of building a House of the Lord, a church where individuals, families, and entire communities can gather.

In light of his many contributions, we congratulate Reverend Zimmerman and the St. Thomas Episcopal Parish youth mission team, that they will have a fortunate journey this summer.

**RAISE MINIMUM WAGE**

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

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to highlight an important issue that is currently being neglected by the House, the dire need for a raise in the minimum wage for our Nation’s workers.

Both sides of the aisle recognize the advantages of new legislation. For this reason I question our delay in moving forward. Our hesitation is leaving cupboards empty as American families struggle unnecessarily.

Today’s minimum wage leaves families at 19 percent below the equivalent 1979 poverty level. There is no excuse for this abhorrent fact to continue into the year 2000.

An increase in the minimum wage gives us the unique opportunity to give gifts of security and comfort to the American people. I believe that by stalling on this pertinent issue, we are directly denying our constituents the chance to live the American Dream.

Opponents of increasing the minimum wage would have us believe an increase in the minimum wage would cause employees to lay off workers; that it would hurt the poorest workers and destroy the economy. But I ask,