

## PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KOLBE). Will the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. LUTHER) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. LUTHER led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

## MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Mr. Lundregan, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate had passed with an amendment in which the concurrence of the House is requested, a bill of the House of the following title:

H.R. 2606. An act making appropriations for foreign operations, export financing, and related programs for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2000, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the Senate insists upon its amendment to the bill (H.R. 2606) "An Act making appropriations for foreign operations, export financing, and related programs for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2000, and for other purposes," requests a conference with the House on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses thereon, and appoints Mr. McCONNELL, Mr. SPECTER, Mr. GREGG, Mr. SHELBY, Mr. BENNETT, Mr. CAMPBELL, Mr. BOND, Mr. STEVENS, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. INOUE, Mr. LAUTENBERG, Mr. HARKIN, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mrs. MURRAY, and Mr. BYRD, to be the conferees on the part of the Senate.

The message also announced that the Senate agrees to the amendment of the House to the bill (S. 606) "An Act for the relief of Global Exploration and Development Corporation, Kerr-McGee Corporation, and Kerr-McGee Chemical, LLC (successor to Kerr-McGee Chemical Corporation), and for other purposes."

The message also announced that the Senate has passed a bill of the following title in which concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 695. An act to require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to establish a national cemetery for veterans in various locations in the United States, and for other purposes.

## ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will entertain 1-minute requests at the end of the day.

## CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 2488, TAXPAYER REFUND AND RELIEF ACT OF 1999

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 274 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

## H. RES. 274

*Resolved*, That upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider the conference report to accompany the bill (H.R. 2488) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to reduce individual income tax rates, to provide marriage penalty relief, to reduce taxes on savings and investments, to provide estate and gift tax relief, to provide incentives for education savings and health care, and for other purposes. All points of order against the conference report and against its consideration are waived. The conference report shall be considered as read. The yeas and nays shall be considered as ordered on the question of adoption of the conference report and on any subsequent conference report or on any motion to dispose of an amendment between the houses on H.R. 2488. Clause 5(b) of rule XXI shall not apply to the question of adoption of the conference report and to any subsequent conference report or to any motion to dispose of an amendment between the houses on H.R. 2488.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LINDER) is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, for purposes of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MOAKLEY), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume.

During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for purposes of debate only.

Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 274 provides for the consideration of the conference report for H.R. 2488, the Taxpayer Refund and Relief Act of 1999. House Resolution 274 waives all points of order against the conference report and against its consideration, and provides that the conference report shall be considered as read.

The rule provides for 1 hour of general debate, divided equally between the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Ways and Means.

Finally, the rule provides that clause 5(b) of rule XXI, which requires a three-fifths vote on any amendment or measure containing a Federal income tax increase, shall not apply to the question of adoption of the conference report and to any subsequent conference report or to any motion to dispose of an amendment between the houses on the bill.

Mr. Speaker, the growth in Federal tax revenue has consistently outpaced the growth in income of the American people paying those taxes. For the first time in American history, taxes have reached war era levels during peacetime. Budget projections show taxes at above 20 percent of the gross domestic product for the next 10 years. Last year, and at least for the next few, this ratio exceeds the levels of taxation during 1945, when America was involved in every corner of the world during and after World War II.

In short, the American people are paying too much taxes. The American

people have given the Federal Government too much of their money, and we have to decide what to do with it. We committed ourselves to a certain cost of government in the 1997 balanced budget agreement. Since then, the American people have grown the economy so much they have paid too much for their government, and it is time to give it back.

That is exactly what the Taxpayer Refund and Relief Act proposes to do, make change for the American people on their tax bill.

On every other bill we get in the mail, for credit cards, the power bill, the phone bill, if we overpay, the company notes a little CR credit on the bill, crediting that amount for the next month. What would we think if businesses one day decided they could spend that overpayment better than we could, and just added it to their income statement at the end of the year? Why would we let the Federal Government do this to us?

That is what many of our colleagues in the House and the President are trying to do. Just a few months ago President Clinton said, we could give it all back to you, and hope you spend it right, but. But of course he believes that he knows how to spend our money better than we do, and he would rather let the Federal Government decide how to use our overpayment.

We in the majority believe our constituents have overpaid enough and are burdened every day by oppressive taxes. Let us think about what Americans must pay. First we are taxed on our income, then we are taxed on our savings and investments. Then we are taxed on our business, and irrationally, if we get married, we get a marriage penalty tax.

If that is not enough, there are death taxes levied on us after we have died. Our tax relief bill begins to change this pattern. This bill entirely eliminates the death tax, which has prevented thousands of Americans from keeping their family-owned businesses or family farms. It provides a 1 percent reduction in every American's tax rate, ensuring that every American who has been overcharged for their government will receive a refund. The bill seeks to expand on the investment that has helped to give us this surplus by cutting capital gains.

The Taxpayer Refund and Relief Act also provides \$100 billion in relief from the marriage tax penalty, a tangled web of tax provisions that have punished Americans for marrying for far too long.

H.R. 2488 expands opportunities for families to save for their children's education or their retirement, and it allows the self-employed to deduct the full cost of their health care.

In total, this bill provides \$792 billion in well-deserved tax relief for the American people. Tax relief is about

freedom, freedom to save, spend, or invest, as we see fit. It is about returning dollars and decisions back home to the American people and American families.

With this bill, hard-working Americans will not have to work as long to pay the IRS. That means parents will have more time to spend with their kids or take care of an elderly parents. They will also have the financial freedom to do the things they want to do. I trust the American people to make these decisions for themselves.

Mr. Speaker, we are going to hear a lot today about how we are supposedly slashing funds for education, social security, Medicare, and every other program in the Federal budget. Frankly, though, if Congress wants to reduce revenues to the Federal Treasury, cutting taxes is one of the worst ways to do it, because every responsible tax cut in the past has increased revenue, not reduced it. The tax cuts passed in 1981 doubled the revenues to the Treasury because they doubled the size of the economy.

We are not cutting taxes to reduce the size of government, we are doing it because it is the right thing to do, the honest thing to do, and the best way to manage the people's trust and their hard-earned money.

Let us be clear from the start, we are not talking about debt reduction because the Republican budget, calls for \$2.2 trillion in debt reduction over the next 10 years. We are not talking about social security, either, because the Republican budget, enforced by the lockbox legislation passed this year, protects every dollar of the social security surplus.

What we are talking about here is taxing and spending. This bill cuts taxes by \$792 billion over 10 years, and the Clinton budget hikes spending by \$937 billion over the same period. It is regrettable that the President has chosen to turn this opportunity to refund Americans' tax overcharge into a political game, but I feel confident that the American people agree that their money is safer in their pocketbooks than in Washington.

I congratulate the gentleman from Texas (Chairman ARCHER) and the conferees for their hard work on this historic legislation. I urge my colleagues to support the rule so we may proceed with the general debate and consideration of the merits of this legislation.

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

□ 1030

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LINDER) for yielding me the customary half hour, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I realize that Congress is nearing the end of a session. I realize that people have been working very

late. But this bill is so convoluted I am surprised my colleagues, my Republican colleagues, can keep a straight face.

They say they want the so-called tax bill to become law, but everyone knows it is dead on arrival at the White House. For that reason, my Republican colleagues do not want to send it over there until after the August break.

But for some reason, Mr. Speaker, this so-called tax bill is being rushed through the House at breakneck pace. It was handed to the Committee on Rules after midnight last night. Now 9 hours later, it is here on the House floor. Meanwhile, my Republican colleagues are not planning on showing it to President Clinton for another month.

If I did not know any better, Mr. Speaker, I would say that my Republican colleagues are embarrassed by this bill. They do not want Members of Congress to know what is in it. They do not want members of the press to know what is in it. They do not want the American people to know what is in it either. I cannot say I blame them.

Republicans want to raid the Social Security and Medicare Trust Funds and give a huge tax break back to those fat cats.

Democrats, on the other hand, want to save the surplus. They want to protect Social Security and want to protect Medicare.

Because, Mr. Speaker, while my Republican colleagues say they do not want to hand out enormous tax breaks to the rich Americans, the baby boomers are getting closer and closer to retirement which will cause Social Security and Medicare to buckle starting the year 2015.

My Republican colleagues' so-called tax break for the rich is not even much of a tax break after all. It is more of a hoax.

Any tax breaks people would get under this bill are taken away in 8 or 9 years. That is right, Mr. Speaker, these so-called tax breaks vanish into thin air after 8 or 9 years, and they are back where they started.

For the first few years, it will look like individual income tax are being reduced. Then in the year 2008, suddenly they shoot right back to where they were before. Long-term capital gains will start to go down, and then, in the year 2008, they will suddenly shoot back up.

Even the marriage penalty, listen to this, Mr. Speaker, even the marriage penalty will be back before it is fully repealed. So I do not know what it is going to do to the divorce courts.

Mr. Speaker, if my Republican colleagues are so hell bent on giving tax breaks to the very rich, why do they not go ahead and do it. Why do they not go ahead as their plan would indicate and cut taxes for the very rich while Medicare and Social Security follow path.

The reason is very simple, Mr. Speaker, it costs too much. This all-you-can-eat tax break smorgasbord is unbelievably expensive. So my Republican colleagues decided to do away with it after the year 2009. That is right, Mr. Speaker. After the year 2009, the tax break buffet is over. Income tax rates shoot back up, debt taxes are reimposed, and the marriage penalty is back where it started.

Mr. Speaker, if any of my colleagues doubt that this bill raises rates in the years 2008 to 2009, I would tell them to look at the rule. This rule, once again, waives the required three-fifths vote for tax increases. This is the same party, Mr. Speaker, that wanted to put this in the Constitution, and here they are again waiving the three-fifths needed for the tax increase.

So the tax breaks worth thousands of dollars that my Republican colleagues want to give to the richest taxpayers will fade just as quickly as the hundred dollar tax break nearly everyone else will get.

Mr. Speaker, everybody agrees that hard-working Americans deserve tax relief. Democrats have consistently stood for targeted tax cuts that benefit the middle class. Democrats believe that we shore up Social Security and Medicare and pay down the national debt while providing targeted tax cuts to the middle class.

The Republican tax breaks for the rich will disappear after 10 years; but at that point, Mr. Speaker, after 10 years, Mr. Speaker, the damage to Social Security and Medicare will already have been done.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to oppose this rule and this conference report.

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

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Staten Island, New York (Mr. FOSSELLA).

Mr. FOSSELLA. Mr. Speaker, I thank very much the gentleman from Georgia for yielding me this time and also for his steadfast commitment to fight on behalf of the American taxpayer.

I think it was the comment of the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LINDER) that this is about freedom, this debate.

I think what we are going to have before us, first the rule, and then the underlying legislation, are two arguments. One that wants to strengthen personal freedom, one that recognizes that government has a responsibility to all of the folks that we represent throughout our great Nation. The other side of the argument is we have a responsibility and we also want to take as much of one's money as possible to spend it here in Washington.

First, let us say what we are doing. We are protecting and strengthening and preserving Social Security and

Medicare. There are those who are going to scare seniors, scare women, scare anybody within earshot if they can do it, and that is sad.

I think the American people are wise enough to understand that the Republican Congress has set aside the Social Security taxes for Social Security. We are strengthening our national defense. We are funding education. We are protecting our environment. That is what we are doing.

Then the question becomes, what do we do with this projected surplus? Our economy over the next 10 years is projected to grow to about \$100 trillion. We are talking about tax relief of less than a trillion, which is less than 1 percent of our Nation's economy, to send back to the people who generated it.

So if we are committed to continuing economic growth, if we are committed to preserving personal freedom for the people who are working hard every single day, then the question becomes, do we take that projected surplus and leave it here in Washington like leaving candy on a table with little kids around, or do we send it back to the folks who earned it?

The question becomes, again, who benefits? Well, under this bill, every American who pays taxes benefits. If one is a small business owner, 30, 40 years or two or three generations, one has been building up one's small business and one goes to sell it, and one has Uncle Sam there waiting for his part of the pie, this eliminates the death tax so one can pass that business on to one's family so they can make that small business become a big business.

If one sets money aside every paycheck to buy a few shares of General Motors or Ford or Coca-Cola or whatever, and then one goes to sell that stock so one can pay for one's child's education, if one has two or three kids these days in college, \$100,000 a year practically, and one sets that money aside for 20 or 30 years, and one says, "Do you know what? When Johnny goes to college, I am going to sell that to pay his tuition," capital gains reduction helps that person.

Frankly, I think we can find a common ground here. The common ground is very simple. With this money that the people from Staten Island and Brooklyn generated, the people from Georgia, the people from California who work hard every single day to keep our engine humming, to keep this economy moving, whether one is a truck driver or worker behind the counter at Dunkin' Doughnuts, the fact is, when we give one more of one's money back, the American people benefit.

Yes, there are those who want to spend all of one's money. Do not believe them. We believe in the American people. We have faith in the American people. We trust the American people to spend their money as they see fit.

I urge my colleagues to support this rule and stand up for the American taxpayer.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from New York trusts the American people to spend their money only for 10 years, though. Then they want to pull it back.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL), the ranking member of the Committee on Ways and Means.

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I have been in this House and privileged to serve for a long time. I have seen a lot of political things, but I have never seen a sham like the one that we are trying to pull on the American people today.

There is not a Republican in this House of Representatives that can look their constituent in the eye and say that this bill is going to become law. There is not a Republican in this House or in the other House on the other side that would be able to say that there is an economist that they can find any place in the United States that says we can spend the same money four different ways.

If we were talking about a \$4 trillion tax cut and an \$800 billion tax cut to go into effect in the next decade, one would think, with a five-vote margin, one would reach out to some of the Democrats, some of the Democratic leaders. Maybe one might even talk to a Democrat or two on the tax writing committee.

But this has nothing to do with tax writing. That is why my colleagues had the Majority Whip there, not the tax writing people. I feel sorry for a lot of Republicans who were not able to get involved in it. But fear not, because, instead of their involvement, the lobbyists did the job for them.

What this is, really, is a rule to have Christmas in August. It is a wish list so that every contributor that one can find listed in the FEC will get a promise that maybe one day if they keep the majority they can keep these things away.

Because my colleagues know in their heart of hearts that the President and the American people are too responsible to let this happen. So they have a freebie. They got your Christmas list, and they know it never, never, never will become law.

But it would seem to me that now is the time to be bipartisan. Once my colleagues know this thing is going to be vetoed, at least have a small tax bill that they think that they would be able to work with.

But just listen to this, because I want to listen to the distinguished gentleman from California (Mr. DREIER) from the Committee on Rules, late into the night, the Republicans give away as much as they can to the other body to see that they can get 51 votes so that they can at least pass it.

With all of this rush, one would believe that they are rushing the bill to the White House. That is the process: House, Senate, conference, White House. Oh, no. They want this bill to turn slowly in the wind at every Republican fund-raiser around the country and to be able to say, "You see, we even turn chicken manure into electricity. It only costs \$500 million. But in our bill, we are the only party to take care of chicken manure for the chicken farmers so that we can get a great charge out of it." I tell my colleagues this.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL).

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. RANGEL. I yield to the gentleman from California.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I would like to say that, as we look at the prospect of some kind of tax increase, God forbid, I am convinced that there is no better expert at putting together a tax increase bill than the gentleman from New York standing in the well. I want him to know that, Mr. Speaker, if we ever, ever on this side were to consider any kind of tax increase, the gentleman from New York is the first person to whom I would look for direction and advice and counsel on doing just that because he is so expert in it.

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from California can tell the people that he works with, those shelters, that "Rangel is coming for you."

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, they are ready for the gentleman from New York.

Mr. RANGEL. Everybody wants a tax cut.

Mr. DREIER. They are ready for the gentleman from New York.

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, everybody wants a tax cut. But some of us believe that we are paying off our debts first.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, that is what we are in the next five years by a six to one ratio.

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, we cannot pay off our debts, take care of Medicare, take care of Social Security.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I tell the gentleman from New York, keep fighting for those tax increases.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. STARK) a member of the Committee on Ways and Means.

□ 1045

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, I thank the distinguished ranking member for yielding me the time, and want to remind one of the previous speakers, who suggested that, I suppose he means Democrats who are working for wages, could buy a couple of shares of Kodak.

That would cost them about \$160 a month out of their paycheck. Or Coca-Cola, I guess he said. Now, the tax bill is going to give this worker \$136 a year. The worker already is not able to pay his or her bills, buy long-term care insurance, pay the house mortgage and get the kids to college. So I suggest that it is very disingenuous to gratuitously say to that worker, go ahead and save 160 bucks a month, we will give you \$136 a year towards it.

As a matter of fact, this bill was really designed to help Dr. Kevorkian and the undertakers. Several of my colleagues have already heard from their adult children wondering how we intend to commit suicide so we can escape the inheritance tax.

Everybody has been bleeding on the Republican side for these poor multimillionaires who are going to have to pay an inheritance tax. Talk about term limits. They have said to the owners of small businesses and the owners of family farms, "Die baby. Die in the next 10 years, and you can give the farm away to your kids tax free. But if you live, it goes right back up, and we sock you for a big inheritance tax."

"They change the rules to make funny speeches. We argued here sometime ago about a 60 percent rule, screaming that only the irresponsible people in this House would vote to raise taxes and they needed a supermajority. Well, with this bill they are going to raise taxes, and they have had to waive their own rules.

One of the more serious issues is that they have really decided to turn their back on Medicare, and they are going to let Medicare destruct. They voted in committee against their own bills.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume to respond to the Member in the Republican Party who said that these people should take the money and invest it in Coca-Cola. With the money the people on the bottom part of that chain will get, they will only be able to invest in a six pack of Coca-Cola.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN).

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, one word three times, reckless, reckless, reckless. That is what the Republicans are doing. Fiscal discipline guards our prosperity here, and they are turning their backs on it.

The choice this year is clear. As Chairman Greenspan said, let the surpluses run, pay down the debt, or let the deficits grow again. The Republicans are back at it, letting the deficits grow again.

And even if the budget assumptions are correct, and those assumptions are wrong, there would be no money left to strengthen Social Security and Medicare. The chairman of the Committee on Ways and Means has a Social Security plan that would use the same tril-

lion dollars that he is using for the tax cut.

Look, the choice in 8 or 9 or 10 years would be this. Continue the tax cuts that are in this bill and explode the deficit or let the tax cuts expire and that would be the biggest tax increase in American history, \$175 billion a year, if we let this bill be sunsetted.

The Republicans like to talk about the biggest American tax increase in history in 1993, \$275 billion over 5 years. This would be, under their plan, if there is a sunset, a \$175 billion tax increase in a year.

Lastly, this bill is grossly unfair. If the Republicans shed any tears here, they are crocodile tears for middle and low-income taxpayers. Here is what Deloitte & Touche says: A couple with an annual income of \$50,000 with 2 children would get a tax cut of \$265; a couple with \$200,000 would get a tax cut of \$2,720; and, look, the millionaire would receive a tax cut of \$9,861 compared to the family of \$50,000, \$265.

It is not only excessive it is grossly unfair. Let us turn it down.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume to respond to that silliness.

The top 1 percent of all the income earners in this country earn 17 percent of all the income and pay 32 percent all the taxes. The bottom 50 percent of the income earners pay 4.8 percent of all the taxes.

We now have 40 million American families that pay no income taxes, and that is who the Democrats want to help. They want to turn this into welfare.

If we are going to cut taxes because we have overtaxed in this country, the people who pay taxes are going to get the tax relief. The top 10 percent of the income earners in this country earn 42 percent of all the income and pay 63 percent of all the taxes. If we are going to cut taxes because it is hurting the economy by taking too much into Washington, the people who pay taxes are going to get the tax relief.

That is what the Democrats cannot stand, because they want this money to stay in Washington so they can dole it out to folks who do not pay taxes.

My biggest fear, my biggest fear is that one day they will be back in charge of this House and pass their tax relief that will take 60 percent of America off the tax roles entirely, and we will have a huge bias in favor of more government, more spending and, ultimately, more taxes because most of America is not paying taxes.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. OSE).

Mr. OSE. Mr. Speaker, I stood in the back of the chamber here listening to the debate, and it is somewhat perplexing. I am trying to figure out what it is the gentlemen and the gentlewomen on the other side object to.

Is it the reduction in the rates on ordinary income? Is it the provision for

the deductibility of health insurance? Is it the credits given for adoptions for special needs children? Are they objecting to these things? Is it the provision allowing for increased savings for the education of our children and grandchildren? Is it the marriage tax penalty relief that the Democrats object to? Is it the increase in the private savings that is so greatly encouraged by the revisions to the IRA and other retirement programs? Is it the fact that the President wants to save 62 percent of the Social Security revenue, and we want to save 100 percent?

Exactly what is it the other side objects to here? If it is, in fact, an objective of the other side to defeat this bill, then they should vote against it. They should just tell the people of America that they are in opposition to all these things. I encourage my colleagues to do so.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DOGGETT).

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, I will tell my colleague exactly what we object to. We object to funding tax breaks for special interests by jeopardizing Social Security and Medicare. That is what this bill is all about.

They call it the Financial Freedom Act. Well, it provides a little more freedom for some folks than for others. In the words of Dr. King, some people are "free, free, God Almighty, free at last." And at the top of the list are the chicken manure producers. Hundreds of millions of dollars of tax subsidies for chicken manure producers in this country. Down in Texas we have Whataburger. Well, "What a chicken" this is. They have given new meaning to "chicken deluxe," to "chicken special" in this bill by giving hundreds of millions of dollars of tax relief to chicken manure producers.

And who do my colleagues think pays for that? I think it is best summed up in this copy of a painting that hangs here in Washington. It is entitled "Plucked Clean." And that is exactly what happens to Social Security and Medicare. They get plucked clean. Social Security and Medicare do not enjoy the benefits of the chicken manure producers. They get plucked clean.

This \$2 trillion figure that they keep talking about, it is not a surplus, it is the money that hard working men and women across this country are expected to pay into the Social Security System. It is their money; it is there for Social Security. In this bill, Republicans do not add one additional dollar for Social Security. And we know the money, that \$2 trillion, is not by itself enough to fund Social Security forever.

Likewise, with reference to Medicare, Republicans do not add an additional dollar for Medicare. They are not funding the long-term solvency of Medicare or covering the much-needed prescription drugs.

Why is it that every time that there is some tax cut, it goes to the special interests? And if my colleagues need further verification of the fact that Social Security and Medicare are being plucked clean in order to provide tax breaks for the special interests, examine the phony "trigger" mechanism in this bill. It will supposedly cut off, in certain circumstances, some of the future tax relief provided by this bill. But the "trigger" does not apply to the chicken manure producers; it only applies to the section of the bill addressing tax cuts for individuals. Special interests get the special treatment; individual taxpayers get left out.

This is wrong. Do not pluck Social Security and Medicare clean to help the chicken manure producers and most every other special interest which has a lobbyist and a political action committee.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I might consume to respond to a couple of things.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to point out that what we are proposing to send back to the American people, \$792 billion, the President's budget proposes to spend, not on chickens and not on manure and not on Medicare but on 80-some new Federal programs.

The question is do we give it back to the American people or does Washington spend it with new bureaucracies?

Having said that, I would also like to finish Mr. Greenspan's quote. He has been quoted here as saying that his first priority would be to let the surpluses run. He then went on to say this. "As I have said before, my second priority is, if you find that as a consequence of those surpluses they tend to be spent, then I would be more in the camp of cutting taxes, because the least desirable is using those surpluses for expending outlays."

Read the President's budget. He wants to spend that money.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. WELDON).

Mr. WELDON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time, and I rise in strong support of this rule and the underlying bill providing tax relief for working Americans.

For years, I, as a private citizen, saw the politicians in Washington not only spending all of the money that comes in, in terms of the Federal withholding, but as well spending the Social Security surplus, and additionally then spending even more than that. And as we all know, we ran huge deficits.

All the years that I was working in my medical practice in Florida, I kept seeing the reports coming back from Washington, \$100 billion, \$200 billion, \$300 billion of red ink. Now, I have been in this Congress for 5 years, and I have been very proud to be part of turning things around. We have been able to

successfully stop the business of spending more money than what comes in every year and have been able to produce balanced books for the first time in 25 years.

And then we were finally able this year to do something that I have been asking for and fighting for since the day I arrived, which is to set the Social Security funds aside and to not spend those monies as has been done year after year. Unfortunately, our Social Security lockbox is still being played with by the minority in the other body, but, hopefully, we will ultimately get that enacted into law.

And, yes, we are beginning the process today of taking some of the money and saying, no, we do not want to keep it in this city but we want to return it back to working Americans. Because, after all, it is their money.

And what are some of the things we have in this bill? Well, tuition tax credits, so that it will be easier for parents to send their kids to college. We have adoption tax credits for special needs kids. In my State in Florida and every State of this country, there are kids with special needs sitting in the social systems waiting to be adopted.

□ 1100

We also have a provision in this bill that would make it possible for people to deduct the cost of having their elderly parents living in the home rather than sending them into nursing homes. And, yes, we have capital gains relief.

I happen to believe that is the best thing to help perpetuate this robust economy and creating new jobs. Because when we cut capital gains, it is the best thing to cause people to invest money in the economy.

And, yes, we have a reduction or an elimination of the death tax or the inheritance tax. In my district, it is causing the break-up of family farms, of orange groves, of cattle ranches. These things are being sold off for development or being sold off for agribusiness. And by doing this, we can allow it to stay in the family.

This is a good tax bill, and everybody should be supporting it.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 10 seconds to the gentleman from California (Mr. STARK) from the Committee on Ways and Means.

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to ask any of my Republican colleagues if they know how much they are really helping poor Americans? It is only the Republicans who can take a bill full of chicken manure and turn it into a turkey. As soon as the public finds out how to do that, we will solve the homeless-and-the-hungry problem.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Ohio (Mrs. JONES).

Mrs. JONES of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the rule.

In 1998 when I ran for Congress, I promised the people of the 11th Con-

gressional District that I would come to Washington to fight to save Social Security and Medicare, fight for the Patients' Bill of Rights, fight to improve educational opportunity, and fight to continue debt reduction.

This is my first opportunity to debate a tax conference report. I would not fulfill my commitment to the people of my district if I did not stand in fervent opposition to this report.

My father, a skycap for United Airlines for 40 years, always said, "Stephanie, never count your chickens before they hatch."

This conference report does just that. It spends a surplus we do not even have. Domestic priorities are crushed. The seniors in my district want to have a prescription provision in Medicare, not a tax cut. The children in my district want to and deserve to go to schools where the roofs are not leaking, the classes are smaller, where they can be linked to the Internet and prepare for the new millennium. They do not want a tax cut.

The working men and women in my district want assurance of health care coverage, not a tax cut. They want an increase in minimum wage that will be fueled by economy that continues to grow wherein there is no tax cut. Veterans in my district want greater assistance, not a tax cut.

The proponents of this bill suggest that this cut will put money in the pockets of American people. Working men and women will get no money in their pockets. They are not telling the people that. They are only telling the people that someone will get a tax cut, but they are not telling whom. What they are not telling the people is that the money will come at the expense of Social Security, Medicare, educational opportunities, health care, and that the 10 cents that is put in their pockets will never buy them health care, will never buy educational opportunities, will never give them a tuition credit.

I urge my colleagues in this House to vote against this rule, to vote against this irresponsible tax cut, and to vote to protect the people of America.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume to respond to the gentlewoman from Ohio (Mrs. JONES) who could not have made my case more clearly.

She wants to spend money. The Democrats want to spend it on more government. We want to give it back to the American people. In their entire presentation, she had 10 or 15 new spending programs that she wants it used on. We want to give it to the American people.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Mrs. MYRICK) my colleague on the Committee on Rules.

Mrs. MYRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of this rule and also the tax relief bill because I am excited about the fact that we are doing

something responsible to help the American people.

This bill is something that people have been waiting for for a long time, to be able to keep more of their money in their own pockets. And it really is possible to do that today through the surpluses that we are going to be looking at. Over the next 10 years, it is projected there will be \$3.3 trillion in surpluses.

Now, we are not going out on a limb and saying we are going to spend all of that this year. This is a very responsible bill. It is going to be phased in over a period of time. As the money becomes available, then it will be given back to the people.

But the most important thing we need to remember is 75 cents out of every dollar in this surplus that we are going to be using, this \$3.3 trillion, is going to be going back into saving Social Security and preserving Medicare and improving education and our national defense. Only 25 cents of every dollar is going to be given back to the American people.

Now, this 25 cents is income tax surplus they are going to be paying, money that is more than we need to run the government. So why should it stay here in Washington and be spent? Why should it not go back to the people? They deserve to have that money to use.

This tax bill is going to provide some marriage penalty relief in the form of people who are married to be able to deduct twice as much money as the individual is so they can be treated fairly and we do not penalize marriage anymore.

We are going to be putting money into extending the research and development tax credits. That also spurs the economy. It develops new technologies. It provides capital for our businesses in this country. That also helps to provide new jobs for people, which, of course, we are always interested in doing.

The death tax repeal is something that is crucial. I hear all the time in my district, I am really concerned about how I can leave the farm or how I can leave my small business to my kids because everything is going to be eaten up in taxes.

It is like we penalize people. The American way is to do well for ourselves, save, try to put a little away for our kids, for the future. And then we come along and say, Oh, no, they have got to pay it to Uncle Sam so they can die.

The same with capital gains relief. We are going to provide capital gains relief again for the second time. This also spurs the economy and it helps middle-class Americans. It is not the rich that it helps. It helps all of us when we sell our homes and to be able to save some of that money.

The same with education savings accounts. It helps us send our kids to

school and college and put that money away tax free.

So these are good things that the people at home have been asking for. I am proud to stand here today and support the bill.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I constantly hear from the other side that unless we give the surplus away in tax breaks, the rich right now, the politicians, will spend it.

Well, is the gentleman so afraid of his own party? Has the gentleman forgotten that the Republicans control this House, they control the Senate, and no money can be drawn except through the appropriations process, which they also control?

I would think they should have more confidence in their party and know that they could use the money well here.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. TIERNEY).

Mr. TIERNEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the soon-to-be chairman of the Committee on Rules for yielding me the time.

Mr. Speaker, I recommend a "no" vote on this rule and, obviously, object to the entire Republican risky bill. It is risky because the Republicans who are putting forth this program are endangering our families, our businesses, and our seniors.

This scenario that they are going to have \$3 trillion in 10 years is by no means assured by anyone. Two-thirds of that is entirely Social Security monies that should go to protect Social Security.

Nothing in the Republican plan extends Social Security for even one day. Nothing in their plan even addresses Medicare's needs, in particular, prescription drug needs.

The only way they would get the other third to be able to put for any tax breaks at all is if they design to cut education, cut veterans' needs, cut research and development, cut a myriad of other programs that Americans depend on every day. That is the only way they get the kind of surplus they are talking about. And already they have shown that they have no intention of doing that.

It is going to be the Ronald Reagan plan again, borrow and spend, borrow and spend until we have trillions of dollars in debt to pay off. And after they have put all of this at risk, who are they putting it at risk for? The wealthy.

One of the gentlemen from the other side said that we object to certain tax breaks and listed off things that he did not find objectionable if they are put in at the right time and if they are in fact the tax breaks that people are getting.

What we object to is the \$80 billion of corporate welfare, including by now

the well-known chicken manure credit, but also breaks for three-martini lunches.

As the Washington Post said, the details in this tax ban highlight the Republican predilection for constant breaks for multinational corporations, real estate ventures, and other special interests.

They spend nearly a tenth of their breaks to favorite corporate America. \$24 billion over 10 years would benefit multinational corporations. It is a break for foreign oil and gas income that would cost the Treasury more than \$4 billion.

This is in fact a plan, as the President rightly said, that is risky and plainly wrong. Even Mr. Greenspan says that this is not appropriate in timing and in substance on this particular deal. They are going to raise interest rates over the roof. The American businesses and families, when they pay their mortgages, are going to suffer.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KASICH), the chairman of the Committee on the Budget, reversed the President's 1993 budget to bring us the surpluses.

If we will recall, by 2001 and 2002, the President's 1993 budget agreement predicted a \$300 billion and \$400 billion annual deficit. The gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KASICH) has turned that around.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KASICH).

Mr. KASICH. Mr. Speaker, I think we should not miss the big picture in this debate. The debate in America today is about where power ought to be. Should power lie with the government and with big institutions in this society; or, conversely, should we attempt to strengthen the individual in America, the family in America, and the community in America.

That is the debate here today. The single biggest manifestation of empowering individuals and families in America is to give them a tax cut. Well, we ought to also give them school choice and individual retirement accounts, the opportunity to have more control of health care.

But fundamentally, the single greatest manifestation of the transfer of power and the building of the individual is when the individual has more money in their pocket and that individual could then share it with those in their communities or with their family members.

The fact is the next model is not about running America from the top down with big bureaucracies, whether it is big government or big business or big labor or big media, trying to tell us how to live our lives.

The model that I believe we ought to operate with into the 21st century is

the fact that power should flow from our families and our communities and from the individuals who make up those families. They ought to be strengthened in America. Because once they are strengthened, then they must assume responsibility.

But in America today, we are all worried about Littleton, we are all worried about being islands unto ourselves, we are all worried about the fact that we tend to have to go it alone today in America.

We must break that model. We have got to recover what has made this country so great, and that is a virtue system that says to individual Americans that they have a responsibility not just to themselves and not just to their families but to people who live in their neighborhoods. Because we are all connected.

The reason why we must transfer power to people is because with that power and with that freedom comes a set of responsibilities. The fact is that if they can have more money in their pockets as a family, then they can assume more responsibility for those around them.

Maybe we can begin to end the frustration and the cynicism that so many Americans have today. Because the choice in the 21st century is really are we going to eat the last piece of pizza or are we going to look out for those who live near us and around us and those who are in our families.

My colleagues, do not mix the issue here. Power is a zero-sum gain. If government has more, the individual has less. If government has more, the individual will be frustrated, more cynical, more road-blocked.

What we need to do is to set Americans free, more freedom, more power, more responsibility to connect ourselves again to one another, to connect our hearts and our souls together so we can shine up America and restore its vigor.

Support the tax bill.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE).

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I just had the opportunity to visit with a number of seniors who are visiting the United States Congress today. I came back to the floor because I thought this was an important debate on their behalf. And even as I listened to my good friend who chaired the Committee on the Budget talk about power and its distribution, I was disappointed that he did not give us the facts about a tax bill that I plan to enthusiastically oppose.

□ 1115

The corporate welfare in this package is enormous. The power is being transferred from the people who work for a living to the large corporations who take their money for a living.

One lobbyist was quoted as stating, "We got the sun, the moon and the stars in this tax bill." Another lobbyist was joking and said, "We've been trying to get these cuts since the beginning of dawn."

It made me reflect upon who really is in charge in this country. If I have to cast my lot anywhere in the United States, it will be with the working people, the senior citizens who understood what the Depression was all about, understood what making ends meet is all about, and they realize that when this tax bill is passed, the mortgage rates on their children will go up \$100, the interest rates will go up \$100, the ability to secure a loan, to do things like send their children to school and college and remodel their home will be enormous. They understand in 1981 when the Reagan tax cut came in, there was nothing but devastating financial days. We in Houston, Texas collapsed, bankruptcies were at their highest amount, homes were foreclosed on.

I beg my colleagues on the Republican side, stand with the working men and women, the senior citizens who understand, the people who want to educate their children, good health care, good environment. This is not taking your money. This is bringing down the deficit. This is bringing down the debt. This is what Chairman Greenspan said. Let the surplus increase so that when you move into the 21st century, you will be able to have a quality of life. Save Social Security and Medicare. Let me tell my colleagues where the power is. It is not with the working people of America. It is with the power-hungry people of America, and I am going to vote against this tax bill.

Mr. LINDER. At the risk of sounding remedial, Mr. Speaker, I would like to point out to the gentlewoman from Texas that there were more bankruptcies last year than any other year in history.

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

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire as to the remaining time for my friend from Georgia (Mr. LINDER) and myself?

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HEFLEY). The gentleman from Massachusetts has 9¼ minutes and the gentleman from Georgia has 5 minutes.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. ROEMER).

Mr. ROEMER. Mr. Speaker, Thomas Jefferson explained to his Treasury Secretary, and I quote, "I consider the fortunes of our republic as depending in an eminent degree on the extinguishment of the public debt." He later explained to that same Secretary of the Treasury that retiring the national debt would be his highest priority.

The Democratic proposal puts more money into debt reduction and debt relief than the Republicans do. Why is

that important for us? They have a \$1 trillion tax cut, we have a targeted \$250 billion tax cut, but we put more emphasis on Social Security and debt relief. Why? Because if you are a small farmer in Indiana and you are trying to buy a \$150,000 combine, that debt reduction can save you \$10,000, for all farmers, not just for the wealthy. We also target the small businesses who are trying to buy and update the technology and capital equipment. That debt reduction that we put more money into helps them with tens of thousands of dollars in reductions for million-dollar capital equipment. We have targeted estate tax relief in our New Democrat proposal, targeted at small businesses and small farmers and American families that have someone sick with Alzheimer's or Parkinson's disease.

This is not a question of whether Democrats support tax cuts or not. We do. But we pay for them. According to one economic analysis, some 50 percent of the tax cuts would benefit, in the Republican plan, those earning \$300,000 or more. How many of you watching today are in that category in America?

We have two choices: A Republican plan on prayed-for projections that answers the plans of the wealthy and the prayers of the wealthy. We have a Democratic plan that gives a tax cut and debt relief to every single American. The choice is easy.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, again at the risk of sounding remedial, I would like to point out that our budget reduces the debt \$200 billion more than the Clinton-Gore budget.

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

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. SMITH).

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I support tax cuts, but I also support fiscal responsibility. This bill only does the former. We will hear and have heard ad nauseam from the opposition about how this bill protects Social Security and reduces the debt. I guess if you say something often enough, you figure you will make it true, the facts be damned.

This bill cuts taxes by nearly \$1 trillion, period. It does not do anything to protect Social Security. And it does not do anything for debt reduction. All it is is a \$1 trillion tax cut over 10 years.

Let us look at those numbers that they use to assume how they are going to cover all of these promises that they have made. We hear of a \$3 trillion surplus over 10 years. Right off the top, \$2 trillion of that is in the Social Security surplus. Then we hear that the folks on the majority side are kindly setting aside this \$2 trillion for Social Security. They do not have to. It is already there. It is in the Social Security trust fund. Furthermore, that \$2 trillion regrettably does not do anything

to help us with the coming shortfalls in Social Security. That is the current system. That is not doing anything for Social Security. That is just covering the existing debts. It does not do anything to help with the coming problem.

So to say that you are setting that \$2 trillion aside for Social Security is meaningless. Yet that is what we continue to hear. So we are left with \$1 trillion. Well, that is all gone in tax cuts. Where is the debt reduction?

We hear from them that they have all this debt reduction, which is not in the bill and the numbers are clear: \$3 trillion over 10 years, \$2 trillion is gone for Social Security, \$1 trillion is left and it is done in tax cuts. Yet we hear this constant rhetoric, we are doing all of these things, debt reduction, Social Security, occasionally they throw in Medicare. It does not add up. It is overpromising. It is based on projections, furthermore. And those projections include two key projections: One, it already locks in 20 percent cuts in existing spending over those 10 years to get to that number. We have not even begun to do those cuts. In fact we just declared the census an emergency yesterday to get around them this year, much less 10 years from now. Furthermore, these projections count on continued growth, no recession. So if any of this does not come to pass, we do not even have that \$1 trillion that is already to be done in tax cuts.

Lastly, we hear that this is all about giving money back to the people and letting them make their decisions. Medicare and Social Security are two things the government does. Should we get rid of those programs to give the money back? Some programs need to be funded. The government does need to do some things.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. TURNER).

Mr. TURNER. Mr. Speaker, the chart to my right compares the Republican tax cut plan with the tax cut plan of the Democrats. It is really very simple. We take the \$1 trillion general operating budget surplus and we apply it to some very legitimate problems that we are facing in the Federal Government. We apply 25 percent to tax cuts, we apply 25 percent to save Social Security and Medicare, we apply 50 percent to debt reduction. Under the Republican plan, all of it is devoted to tax cuts.

This is a very risky plan for us to follow. First of all, the Republican tax cuts are aimed at Wall Street, not at Main Street where our plan aims them. Secondly, we save Social Security and Medicare by applying 25 percent of the on-budget surplus to those purposes. The Republicans like to claim that they have saved Social Security in their plan. Well, frankly, we have already done what they say they are doing in their tax cut. We have lock-

boxed Social Security, we all voted for it, Democrats and Republicans. We have taken care of that and it is important that we do that.

Finally, we apply 50 percent of the on-budget surplus to debt reduction. After 29 years of running up \$5.5 trillion in national debt, do you not think that we could at least wait 1 year until we have a true on-budget surplus? Apparently the Republicans do not think so. Democrats do. We think we ought to lock-box 25 percent for tax cuts, lock-box 25 percent to save Social Security and Medicare, and let us lock-box 50 percent of the on-budget surplus to reduce the national debt so we will not be passing that on to our children and grandchildren. That is what makes sense for American families. That is what makes sense for America.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I hope the gentleman will be as enthusiastic in convincing the Democrats in the other body about the lockboxes as he is in this Chamber.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SHAW), a member of the Committee on Ways and Means.

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Georgia for yielding me this time.

In looking at the figures that the previous speaker had up, holding 25 percent of the surplus out to save Social Security, 25 percent for Medicare, as chairman of the Subcommittee on Social Security, that interests me greatly because I want to know where the Democrat plan is. I want to know where that 25 percent figure came from. I think that could be very, very interesting.

But there is another thing that I want to know for those who have spoken before and those to come later. What is it that you do not like about eliminating the limitation on the deduction for the interest on student loans? What is it that you do not like about eliminating and phasing out the death tax where you have to see the undertaker and the Internal Revenue Service on the same day? What is it you do not like about an across-the-board tax deduction for all American taxpayers? What is it you do not like about reducing the cap on capital gains? What is it about the marriage penalty that you like that you want to hold on to? Why not eliminate it? Why not join with the Republicans? What is it you do not like about deducting health insurance costs? What is it you do not like about increasing the amount you can put into educational savings accounts? Last of all, what is it you do not like about getting a deduction for taking care of your elderly parents?

This bill has been drafted very, very carefully. This bill is a wonderful bill. This bill just uses a small portion of the surplus and leaves plenty, believe

me, plenty. By the passage of the Archer-Shaw Social Security plan, Members will see that we are going to save Social Security and they will also see that we are going to get many Democrats that are going to join with us. This is the plan that we have and we are going to do it. We are also going to reduce the accumulated debt that is going to pester our descendants so much unless we do something about it.

Let us get together. Let us in a bipartisan way do these things that the American people want us to do. Let us pass this rule and pass this very fair and very good tax plan.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. OLVER).

Mr. OLVER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time. I rise to oppose this rule and the bill that underlies the rule.

Mr. Speaker, like the instinctive march of lemmings over a cliff, it is instinctive for the Republican leadership to give huge tax breaks to the richest individuals and special interests. In their bill, the 1 million wealthiest families whose income is greater than \$300,000 per year will get about \$1,000 a week of tax breaks. But for the 120 million American families whose income is under \$125,000 a year, and that, by the way, includes everybody virtually whose income is under that of Members of the Congress, for those 120 million families, they are going to get enough to buy a cup or two of coffee a week, so that they can stay awake while they are working their double jobs. That is not the tax relief that the middle class needs and deserves. But they simply cannot help themselves. It is in their genes. It is their genetic defect. They deliberately, deliberately crafted a bill that makes the richest 1 percent of Americans a very great deal richer, a bill that gives away the projected surplus, not one dime of which has yet been produced. But they give away that projected surplus in order to produce that kind of tax break, distribution of tax breaks. They deliberately have not extended the life of Social Security by so much as a single day so that in the year 2030 when they open the lockbox, which all of us have voted for, they are going to find that the lockbox is empty.

□ 1130

They have deliberately left not a single dollar to extend the life of Medicare, which provides healthcare for all of our senior citizens and our disabled citizens, so in the year 2014, Medicare is going to be bankrupt too.

This plan is not just risky, it is reckless. This bill should be rejected.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I yield the balance of my time to the gentleman

from California (Mr. DREIER), the Chairman of the Committee on Rules.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HEFLEY). The gentleman from California is recognized for 3 minutes.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the resolution. It is really sad to listen to the tried, age-old, and failed argument of class warfare. The previous speaker was just once again getting into that "us" versus "them" argument. The fact of the matter is we are all in this together, and I think that we need to recognize that, yes, there are some people in this country who have been successful.

One of the greatest things about this Nation is that we provide opportunity. We provide opportunity for people to succeed, and we also in this country have an opportunity that some people are not all that successful. But I find that virtually everyone wants to have the opportunity to succeed, and that is what this tax bill is all about. We want to make sure that we maintain the kind of economic growth and expansion which this Nation has seen for the past several years.

We have today the highest tax rate in 50 years. The American people are paying more in taxes than they have in 50 years. We have been able to see the great benefits of surpluses that have been building, and what we are saying is that to maintain economic growth, we think it is important for people to be able to keep some of their own hard-earned dollars.

Guess what? That, in fact, is what we are going to do, and I hope very much that the President of the United States sees the way, as he has on the Y2K bill, welfare reform, on the National Ballistic Missile Defense bill, on the Education Flexibility Act, to come around to what is the right position, and that is to sign the bill.

I know that there are public opinion polls out there that are saying, gosh, we do not overwhelmingly, as the American people, support a tax cut. But we are proceeding with it. Why? It may not right now be the single most popular thing, but we know it is the right thing to do. That is why we are stepping up to the plate and doing just that.

As we look at the fact that 100 million-plus Americans are investing in the market, they are people who are often called "rich" by our friends on the other side of the aisle, but they consist of people who have maybe a few thousand dollars they are investing. What is it we are doing? We are going to allow them to keep more of that so they can choose to save or invest it by reducing that top rate on capital gains from 20 percent to 18 percent, and the very important provision in 2003 which allows us to see indexation of capital gains.

Then, extending for 5 years the research and development tax credit, that is very, very important. Forty-five percent of our Nation's gross domestic product growth in the past 4 years has come in the high-tech industry. Not only have hundreds of thousands of jobs been created by those investors, by new technologies, but we have also dramatically improved the quality of life for people here in the United States and around the world. We must do everything that we can to continue that.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support this rule and to support a very, very good bill, and then, Mr. President, please sign it.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The previous question was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the resolution.

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

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Evidently a quorum is not present.

The Sergeant at Arms will notify absent Members.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 224, nays 203, not voting 7, as follows:

[Roll No. 377]

YEAS—224

Aderholt	Condit	Graham
Archer	Cook	Granger
Armey	Cooksey	Green (WI)
Bachus	Cox	Greenwood
Baker	Crane	Gutknecht
Ballenger	Cubin	Hansen
Barr	Cunningham	Hastert
Barrett (NE)	Davis (VA)	Hastings (WA)
Bartlett	Deal	Hayes
Barton	DeLay	Hayworth
Bass	DeMint	Hefley
Bateman	Diaz-Balart	Herger
Bereuter	Dickey	Hill (MT)
Biggart	Doolittle	Hilleary
Bilirakis	Dreier	Hobson
Bliley	Duncan	Hoekstra
Blunt	Dunn	Horn
Boehlert	Ehlers	Hostettler
Boehner	Ehrlich	Houghton
Bonilla	Emerson	Hulshof
Bono	English	Hunter
Brady (TX)	Everett	Hutchinson
Bryant	Ewing	Hyde
Burr	Fletcher	Isakson
Burton	Foley	Istook
Buyer	Fossella	Jenkins
Callahan	Fowler	Johnson (CT)
Calvert	Franks (NJ)	Johnson, Sam
Camp	Frelinghuysen	Jones (NC)
Campbell	Galleghy	Kasich
Canady	Ganske	Kelly
Cannon	Gekas	King (NY)
Castle	Gibbons	Kingston
Chabot	Gilchrest	Knollenberg
Chambliss	Gillmor	Kolbe
Chenoweth	Gilman	Kuykendall
Coble	Goode	LaHood
Coburn	Goodlatte	Largent
Collins	Goodling	Latham
Combest	Goss	LaTourette

Lazio	Pombo	Smith (TX)
Leach	Porter	Souder
Lewis (CA)	Portman	Spence
Lewis (KY)	Pryce (OH)	Stearns
Linder	Quinn	Stump
LoBiondo	Radanovich	Sununu
Lucas (KY)	Ramstad	Sweeney
Lucas (OK)	Regula	Talent
Manzullo	Reynolds	Tancredo
McCollum	Riley	Tauzin
McCrery	Rogan	Taylor (NC)
McHugh	Rogers	Terry
McInnis	Rohrabacher	Thomas
McIntosh	Ros-Lehtinen	Thornberry
McKeon	Roukema	Thune
Metcalf	Royce	Tiahrt
Mica	Ryan (WI)	Toomey
Miller (FL)	Ryun (KS)	Traficant
Miller, Gary	Salmon	Upton
Moran (KS)	Sanford	Vitter
Morella	Saxton	Walden
Myrick	Scarborough	Walsh
Nethercutt	Schaffer	Wamp
Ney	Sensenbrenner	Watkins
Northup	Sessions	Watts (OK)
Norwood	Shadegg	Weldon (FL)
Nussle	Shaw	Weldon (PA)
Ose	Shays	Weller
Oxley	Sherwood	Whitfield
Packard	Shimkus	Wicker
Paul	Shuster	Wilson
Pease	Simpson	Wolf
Petri	Skeen	Young (AK)
Pickering	Smith (MI)	Young (FL)
Pitts	Smith (NJ)	

NAYS—203

Abercrombie	Farr	McCarthy (MO)
Ackerman	Fattah	McCarthy (NY)
Allen	Filner	McGovern
Andrews	Forbes	McIntyre
Baird	Ford	McKinney
Baldacci	Frank (MA)	McNulty
Baldwin	Frost	Meehan
Barcia	Gejdenson	Meek (FL)
Barrett (WI)	Gephardt	Meeks (NY)
Becerra	Gonzalez	Menendez
Bentsen	Gordon	Millender
Berkley	Green (TX)	McDonald
Berman	Gutierrez	Miller, George
Berry	Hall (OH)	Minge
Bishop	Hall (TX)	Mink
Blagojevich	Hastings (FL)	Moakley
Blumenauer	Hill (IN)	Moore
Bonior	Hilliard	Moran (VA)
Borski	Hinche	Murtha
Boswell	Hinojosa	Nadler
Boucher	Hoefel	Napolitano
Boyd	Holden	Neal
Brady (PA)	Holt	Oberstar
Brown (FL)	Hooley	Obey
Brown (OH)	Hoyer	Olver
Capps	Inslee	Ortiz
Capuano	Jackson (IL)	Owens
Cardin	Jackson-Lee	Pallone
Carson	(TX)	Pascrell
Clay	Jefferson	Pastor
Clayton	John	Payne
Clement	Johnson, E.B.	Pelosi
Clyburn	Jones (OH)	Peterson (MN)
Conyers	Kanjorski	Phelps
Costello	Kaptur	Pickett
Coyne	Kennedy	Pomeroy
Cramer	Kildee	Price (NC)
Crowley	Kilpatrick	Rahall
Cummings	Kind (WI)	Rangel
Danner	Klecza	Rivers
Davis (FL)	Klink	Roemer
Davis (IL)	Kucinich	Rothman
DeFazio	LaFalce	Roybal-Allard
DeGette	Lampson	Rush
Delahunt	Larson	Sabo
DeLauro	Lee	Sanchez
Deutsch	Levin	Sanders
Dicks	Lewis (GA)	Sandlin
Dingell	Lipinski	Sawyer
Dixon	Lofgren	Schakowsky
Doggett	Lowe	Scott
Dooley	Luther	Serrano
Doyle	Maloney (CT)	Sherman
Edwards	Maloney (NY)	Shows
Engel	Markey	Sisisky
Eshoo	Martinez	Skelton
Etheridge	Mascara	Slaughter
Evans	Matsui	Smith (WA)

Snyder	Thompson (MS)	Watt (NC)
Spratt	Thurman	Waxman
Stabenow	Tierney	Weiner
Stark	Towns	Wexler
Stenholm	Turner	Weygand
Strickland	Udall (CO)	Wise
Stupak	Udall (NM)	Woolsey
Tanner	Velazquez	Wu
Tauscher	Vento	Wynn
Taylor (MS)	Visclosky	
Thompson (CA)	Waters	

NOT VOTING—7

Billray	Mollohan	Rodriguez
Lantos	Peterson (PA)	
McDermott	Reyes	

□ 1154

Mr. MOORE and Mr. MALONEY of Connecticut changed their vote from "yea" to "nay."

Mrs. KELLY changed her vote from "nay" to "yea."

So the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Mr. ARCHER. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 274, I call up the conference report on the bill (H.R. 2488) to provide for reconciliation pursuant to sections 105 and 211 of the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2000, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KOLBE). Pursuant to House Resolution 274, the conference report is considered as having been read.

(For conference report and statement, see proceedings of the House of Wednesday, August 4, 1999, at page H7027.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARCHER) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARCHER).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ARCHER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous matter on the conference report on H.R. 2488.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. ARCHER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, this conference report keeps our commitment to protect the taxpayers and not the tax takers. This Congress has already secured social security, Medicare, paying down the debt. Now we are ready to provide real tax relief.

□ 1200

Mr. Speaker, the American workers have known for a long time that they are caught in a tax trap. The harder they work, the longer they work, the more they pay; and that is not right.

It is their hard work and success that has provided the resources to give Washington a windfall surplus. That is an amount over and above what the government needs to operate. The amount is projected in the next 10 years to be \$3.3 trillion.

The question is, Mr. Speaker, what do we do with that surplus? Republicans said strengthening Social Security and Medicare should happen first. We have already done that with the lockbox to ensure that every penny that goes into Social Security and Medicare cannot be spent on any other government programs. We have set aside 100 percent of the Social Security and Medicare surplus to be used only for Social Security and Medicare.

The Archer-Shaw Social Security plan available and publicized in detail has been certified by the Social Security Administration to save Social Security for all time at a cost of only half of that set-aside surplus. So there is plenty of money still there for Medicare.

Out of the surplus, surely we should be able to leave in the pockets of the people who have earned it and provided it one-quarter of the surplus. Twenty-five cents out of every dollar should be left in their pockets. In the meantime, we are paying down the Federal debt.

As has been mentioned earlier, the Congressional Budget Office non-partisan body has said that the Republican budget pays off \$200 billion more of the debt than the President's budget. The Democrats' statements that have been made over and over again are just flat wrong, and they know it. But it serves their political purposes to continue to state it over and over again because it employs fear. They know fear is a very, very powerful motivation with many Americans.

They have put every hurdle in the way of tax relief ever since we came into the majority in 1995. They revelled in their largest tax increase in the history of the United States which they passed on a straight party-line vote in 1993. They fight ferociously to keep money in Washington.

It expresses, I believe, Mr. Speaker, the genuine difference between our parties, generally held, that the Democrats believe Washington knows how to spend the people's money better than the people do themselves.

The President said this in Buffalo, New York, the day after his State of the Union Address when he said, "We have a surplus. What should we do with it? We might be able to give some of it back to you, but then who would know that you would spend it right."

So the Democrats say keep it in Washington, and we will spend it. We know better than the people who have earned it. We disagree. We do not think it is Washington's money. We think it belongs to the people who earned it.

After we have done all of these things, of saving Social Security, Medi-

care, paying down the debt, yes, we can use a part of the non-Social Security surplus for tax relief. If we do not get that money out of Washington, politicians will most surely spend it. They always have.

So I ask the President and my Democratic colleagues to reconsider their staunch opposition to this breath of relief to hard-pressed American families and individuals. Do not mock broad-based tax relief to every income taxpayer in this country, I say to my Democrat colleagues.

Do not discourage marriage by blocking marriage penalty relief. Let us help people caring for elderly relatives at home. Do not stop that. Do not block health and long-term care insurance tax deductibility. Do not stand in the way of pension incentives that will help more men and women enjoy retirement security. Do not block education incentives to make college more affordable and to give parents the ability to save for their children's education beginning in kindergarten through high school and college.

Now, many Democrats say they are for tax relief. In fact, some of them have cosponsored bills to end the marriage penalty. Some of them have cosponsored bills to end the punitive death penalty tax. Some have cosponsored bills to help the pension provisions that are in this bill and to expand IRAs.

I would say to my Democrat colleagues, now is their chance. Do not follow the political path of fear that has been put in their hands by their leaders and which has been articulated over and over again in this debate. Stand with married couples rather than more Washington spending. Stand with the family farms and businesses, and defend the death tax instead of more Washington spending.

In summary, help us protect the taxpayer, not big government and more spending. Because, Mr. Speaker, what this debate is really all about is downsizing the power of Washington and upsizing the power of people.

This is a great bill. I urge its passage.

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

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I was really moved by the chairman's speech, almost to the extent that I would think that he would think this is on the level here. The theme of this is let us get this money out of Washington before the politicians in Washington spend the taxpayers' money. This is like the theme, "Stop me before I kill again."

Mr. Speaker, at the last count, even though it is dwindling, the Republicans are in charge. We cannot stop them. They may kill again. We watch them every day. So we know they are out of control. But do not just say spend the money. Send the money back that they have not got.

Now, first of all, the gentleman from Texas (Chairman ARCHER) said, when the Republicans came into office, they had great ideas. They have been in office and the leadership for 5½ years attempting to pull the tax code up by the roots. Now, the last we saw of the tax code, we cannot get a truck to bring that bill over from the Senate over to the Committee on Rules. It is loaded with fertilizer. So what are they pulling up by the roots?

This is something that they really should not want to go home and campaign on, except if they know it is not on the level, and except if they know it is going to be vetoed, and except if they know that, after they finish all this work, they are not going to take it to the President.

Why would they not put this bill on the President's desk until after Labor Day? Answer: it is not a bill. It is a piece of campaign literature. It is a lobbyist's wish list. It is Christmas in July, and the President is supposed to be the scrooge and veto it and deny the Republican contributors the things that they wanted to give them.

Give us a break. If my colleagues really wanted a tax bill, they would have found at least one Democrat in the House they could have trusted, one Democrat in the Senate that they could have trusted. They could have brought in the administration for a trillion dollars.

It is not a Republican thing; it is something that we should work with in a bipartisan way. So I am suggesting that my colleagues have taken one big political crapshoot in what they have done, and it is my belief that they are going to pay for this with their campaign bill.

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

Mr. ARCHER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GOODLING), chairman of the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

Mr. GOODLING. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, improving retirement security is one of the top priorities that Congress has this year. Just improving the retirement security by fixing Social Security will not do it.

In this legislation, fortunately, we have 15 provisions from H.R. 1102, which is the Comprehensive Retirement Security and Pension Reform Act that was reported out of our committee in a bipartisan fashion. These reforms will directly improve the retirement security of millions of American workers, particularly low and middle-income American workers.

So I am very pleased that the 60 Republicans and 60 Democrats that co-signed this legislation for pension reform finds that it is part of this very important piece of legislation that we are going to enact today.

I would hope that the President looks thoroughly at the entire bill and understands that there is an awful lot here that will help families in the future to save and to have a decent retirement in their golden years.

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN), a member of the committee.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the ranking member for yielding me this time.

Quite frankly, Mr. Speaker, if one looks at this conference report and one supports it, one is going back to the days of large deficits for our country. That is why the Democrats want an economic program that will continue our economic prosperity into the future.

We think, and I think the American public will agree, that the approval of this conference report is reckless, and it is an unreasonable risk for our future.

Let me explain why. The gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARCHER), the chairman of the Committee on Ways and Means, explains that we are projecting a \$3 trillion, projecting a \$3 trillion surplus over the next 10 years. Now two-thirds of that, approximately \$2 trillion is generated because of Social Security. Now we have all agreed we should not touch that money. We cannot use that. We have got to protect it for Social Security, and I agree.

But that gives us a \$1 trillion surplus to work with. We have not gotten one dime of it yet. Yet this conference report would spend just about all of that projected surplus. Not a dime would be available for Medicare. No money would be available for the programs that already are being spent by calling them emergency spending.

That is why we believe this is reckless and wrong. We think priorities should be set. The surplus should first be used to preserve Social Security and Medicare. Then we should pay down the debt.

The conference report is estimated to provide the average family in this Nation 10 years from now when it is fully implemented a little over \$200 a year in tax relief. But, yet, what the proponents are not telling us, is that because of the recklessness of the bill, interest rates were likely to go up, and we are going to take away more in increased interest costs to the average taxpayer.

I urge my colleagues to reject the conference report.

Mr. ARCHER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. THOMAS), chairman of the Subcommittee on Health of the Committee on Ways and Means.

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. Speaker, I do find it rather curious that this line of argument now comes from the Democrats. In fact, the gentleman from Maryland

(Mr. CARDIN), who just spoke, voted for the 1997 tax bill, which clearly we were in a much more serious budget situation.

I think perhaps the situational ethics, that the politics of the situation dictates their rhetoric, their concern about our trying to put a budget together for 10 years and how reckless that is.

Let me go back to January 19 when the President was in this Chamber and said, "Now we are on course for budget surpluses for the next 25 years." No concern from them about looking a decade and a half beyond where we are.

The President went on to say that he is going to dedicate 60 percent of the budget surplus for the next 15 years to Social Security. How reckless is that? We do not know what the next 15 years is going to look like. Republicans put 100 percent away.

□ 1215

We have a plan that will save Social Security forever. The President goes on to talk about Medicare. He has a program to ensure it for the next 15 years. We have a program that does better than that.

The Democrats are now the party of "I can't." Republicans are "we can." We can do this.

Something else is interesting. The last time the Democrats were in the majority, they passed a tax bill that the low rate was 15 and the high rate for the rich folks they are talking about was 28 percent. This bill lowers that bracket on the lower end to 14 and it is 38 percent for the rich people.

When we listen to them, they are arguing politics, not policy.

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY).

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to this conference report.

I rise in opposition to the conference agreement on H.R. 2488, the Financial Freedom Act.

This bill is the Republican's risky scheme for how they want to help the rich. The majority knows that their only bread and butter issue is tax cuts, whether or not the American people ask for them, whether there is a budget surplus or a deficit, and whether other important tax cuts instead or priorities get squeezed out, such as protecting Social Security, saving Medicare, strengthening education, and paying down the national debt.

The American people won't be fooled. This bill provides very little for the average working family. The bottom sixty percent of Americans by income will only see about 8% of the tax cuts in this bill. Approximately \$10 a month. Whereas, the top 10% of Americans will receive almost 70% of the benefits under this bill.

Plain and simple, this bill is one big tax cut for those who need it the least.

I would also like to mention that there are a number of pension provisions included in this bill, some of which are good policy and some

which are not. Overall, however, this bill does little to significantly improve the retirement security of working Americans. Our current pension and tax system already favors the well-off. Over 80% of individuals earning over \$75,000 a year have tax deferred pension income whereas only 8% of those earning under \$10,000 and 27% earning between \$10,000 and \$15,000 have pension coverage.

I oppose this irresponsible raid on our Federal budget to benefit the wealthy and special interest at the expense of the average working family.

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. NEAL).

Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, there are so many reasons to oppose this tax bill it is hard to know where to start.

I have spoken on the floor about the need to save the surplus for Social Security and Medicare. I have spoken about their importance as the premier government programs that keep millions of elderly Americans out of poverty. I have discussed the importance of deficit reduction and the need to maintain on-budget surpluses in the face of unrealistic budget assumptions.

Every day that goes by, it is more and more clear just how unrealistic these budget assumptions currently are. If we hold this bill until September, it will be as clear as a pie in the face.

The Washington Post this morning has a long article about how Republicans have already spent the on-budget surplus for next year. If we cannot maintain discipline for 1 year, how on earth will we guarantee that surplus for the next 10 years. We cannot.

The Democratic approach here is entirely reasonable. We want to go slow. Let us not repeat the errors of the last 18 years and pass a massive tax bill. Let us be for modest, reasonable tax cuts that become clear when the budget surplus really arrives.

Mr. ARCHER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BOEHNER), another member of the conference committee.

Mr. BOEHNER. Mr. Speaker, I stand in strong support of this historic tax cut, one that will protect Social Security and Medicare and still put some \$800 billion back in the pockets of the American people.

Mr. Speaker, while others dwell on the past, Americans look to the future. We strive, we dream, and we sacrifice so that we and our children can have a better future. Our work, our dreams, and our sacrifices have more to do with realizing that than any program that is hatched here in Washington.

That is what this tax bill is really all about, letting the American people keep more of what they earn so that they can make the plans and do the work that will lead to a better future for them and their children. That is why we are lowering marginal tax

rates, cutting the capital gains rate, fixing the marriage penalty, and increasing deductibility for retirement savings and health care. It is so our constituents can have the future that they deserve.

I want to commend the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARCHER) for working with the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GOODLING) and myself to include important pension reforms introduced in the House by the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN) and the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN).

These reforms will directly improve the retirement security of American workers by expanding small business retirement plans, allowing workers to save more, making pensions more secure, and cutting the red tape that has hamstrung employers who want to establish pension plans for their employees. They are important, bipartisan proposals and they will benefit every American worker who is trying to save for retirement.

But I also want to commend him for the much larger package. It returns money that our constituents have earned and that Washington hasn't. That's why we owe it to our constituents to vote for the conference report.

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. McNULTY), a member of the committee and my colleague from New York.

Mr. McNULTY. Mr. Speaker, I thank my leader for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, we will hear a lot of speeches today, and a lot of them are going to sound the same. Mine will be different in one minor respect. I am not going to attack the other side of the aisle. I am just going to ask what I think is a very salient question. Do we not learn anything from history?

In the 1980s, the leaders of this country, in a bipartisan fashion, decided to attack the national budget deficits. A Republican president proposed and this Democratic House of Representatives adopted a plan which called for a massive tax cut. It was bipartisan. So if there is any blame to go around, there is plenty for everyone.

But I hearken back to the words of President Harry Truman. Let us look at the record. What happened when we did that? We had the largest budget deficits in the history of the United States of America. In the ensuing 12 years we quadrupled the national debt. All of the debt accumulated in this country from George Washington to Jimmy Carter was quadrupled in a period of 12 years.

So I do not attack the other side today. I just make a very simple plea. Let us not make the same mistake. Let us not do it all over again. Let us pay down the national debt and stop stealing our children's money.

Mr. ARCHER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. HERGER), a respected member of the Committee on Ways and Means.

Mr. HERGER. Mr. Speaker, I would like to respond to my good friend from New York, his comment on the 1980s, during the Reagan administration, regarding the tax cut. I would like to state the facts during that time. During that time, the tax rates were cut in half and revenues during the 1980s actually doubled. But the then Democrat Congress tripled the spending, so we ended up spending more.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Taxpayer Refund and Relief Act. The time has come to allow hard-working Americans to keep more of their money. Mr. Speaker, our plan sets aside three-fourths of the anticipated surplus, 75 cents out of every dollar for Social Security and Medicare.

Now we must take the next step. The legislation before us today provides all taxpayers with broad-based tax relief by reducing tax rates for all income taxpayers, allows parents to save more for educational expenses, and phases out both the destructive marriage penalty and death tax.

Mr. Speaker, let us side with hard-working Americans over Washington bureaucracy. I urge all my colleagues to support the Taxpayer Refund and Relief Act.

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN), a member of the committee.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, the truth squad needs to work overtime here. The chairman of the committee has said this bill secures Social Security and Medicare, and a subcommittee chairman said it saves Social Security forever. That is eternally untrue.

Mr. SHAW. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. LEVIN. No, I will finish, and then I will yield.

Mr. SHAW. That is not true what the gentleman is saying.

MR. LEVIN. It is.

Mr. SHAW. The chairman did not say that.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KOLBE). The time is controlled by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN).

Mr. LEVIN. It is untrue. The lockbox saves what is already coming in. It does nothing for the future.

What the Republican bill does is take money from the future to apply it now. Medicare is in jeopardy. It will run out of money in 2015.

The Republicans say give back some of the money. We Democrats are in lower interest rates. The Democratic program is also trying to save some money to assure Social Security and Medicare.

The gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARCHER) said his bill is a breath of relief. What it is in the future is a hurricane of red ink. The Republicans were wrong in 1981, they were wrong in 1993, and they are wrong today. Reject this reckless bill.

Mr. ARCHER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from

Michigan (Mr. CAMP), another respected member of the Committee on Ways and Means.

Mr. CAMP. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, I think the challenge here today is to listen and not to mischaracterize. We are talking about tax relief after we have set aside \$2 trillion of our budget surplus for Social Security and Medicare. Locked it away. And by doing so, we begin to pay down our national debt.

Today, the question is should we return what is left to the taxpayer or should it stay here and be spent on big government? This bill is tax relief for the American family. Close to 90 percent of the tax relief in this bill goes to families. The average American family pays double in taxes today what they paid in 1985, and that is just too much.

Let me give my colleagues a few examples of how this bill helps families. This bill cuts taxes for every taxpayer. It provides tax relief from the marriage penalty, so couples do not have to pay higher taxes just because they are married. And we kill the death tax. We also increase the adoption credit for parents with special needs children. We give an extra personal exemption to families caring for an elderly relative in their home. And people can provide more for their retirements in this legislation by saving more in their IRAs and paying less in investment taxes.

This legislation will help American families. Vote for the Tax Refund and Relief Act.

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. TANNER), a member of the committee.

Mr. TANNER. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman for yielding me this time and simply say this. I think the American people are ahead of the Congress on this. I think they know instinctively that we cannot have debt reduction, save Social Security, save Medicare, take 80 percent of a projection over the next 10 years and cut taxes today. It is called a free lunch, a bridge in Brooklyn, or any way we want to paint it. The American people know we cannot do all that and they are ahead of us on that.

The comment was made earlier in the debate about this, that if we keep the money, any of it, the bureaucrats will spend it. The last time I looked, a bureaucrat cannot spend any money unless we have 218 votes on that board. All my colleagues can well remember the government shutdown. Nobody here can spend money or authorize money but us. So what do my colleagues mean when they say if we keep the money the bureaucrats will spend it? That is patently untrue.

The other thing I would like to do is quote one of the leaders of this tax bill today regarding a comment made in 1996. "It is about our Nation's debt. Our

debt stands at over \$4.9 trillion then, now it is \$5.6 and growing. For a family of four, their share is \$72,000, increasing each week by \$89, each month by \$383, and each year by \$4,594. Sometime, some day, someone has to pay that debt, and that someone is today's younger workers, their children and their children's children."

Now, I asked in a motion to recommend last week just to take half of this projected \$1 trillion on-budget surplus and give it to the children. That was rejected. So when we say give it to the people, are kids, nonadults, are they not people too? They are the ones that have to pay this, not us.

Everybody within the sound of my voice under 35 years old ought to insist that we take at least half of it and split it with them. It is the honorable thing to do.

Mr. ARCHER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. NUSSLE), another respected member of the Committee on Ways and Means. We have tremendous talent on our committee.

Mr. NUSSLE. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman yielding me this time.

It is interesting that today we hear lots of slogans on the other side but not one debate point on any provision of this bill. Think about it. They are not against any of the provisions. In fact, they cosponsored half the provisions in this bill.

□ 1230

But not one debate on any provision.

Let us just bring up one, the farm accounts, that came back in the conference report that has not gotten much attention just yet.

What that does, and I appreciate the assistance of the chairman in getting this into the conference report, what that says to farmers who are struggling right now is we want to be able to carry forward some income so that they can spread out the peaks and the valleys of what is happening in farm country right now.

That combined with the death tax relief, the capital gains relief gives a real shot in the arm to American agriculture, who needs it right now.

Now, I understand there are some quotes on the other side about what the leadership said. Let me remind my colleagues of a quote from the Democratic leadership: "I think we will write off rural America."

Well, with their vote today they are writing off rural America. If they say no to death tax relief, if they say no to capital gains relief, if they say no to the farm accounts, they are saying to those farmers that are struggling right now that we can spend their money more wisely than they can.

Well, go right ahead. Because, my colleagues, it is not our money. We have not even gotten the check yet

from the American people, and they are already claiming it, saying what they do with it. Well, for the last 30 years they spent the Social Security surplus. We do not want them to spend this surplus.

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I think the gentleman has said it all, we have not gotten the check yet and he is putting out the tax cut.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DOGGETT).

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, I would say to the gentleman that we say "No" to their chicken manure subsidy, and we say "No" to a bill that jeopardizes Social Security and Medicare in order to provide tax breaks to chicken manure producers and many other special interests in this country.

This so-called \$3 trillion surplus is nothing but a figment of a Republican political imagination. \$2 trillion of this amount simply represents the money that hard-working Americans will be paying into Social Security, and that \$2 trillion, as large as it sounds, is not enough to ensure Social Security will be there for future generations of Americans.

Republicans do not provide one new dollar to help Social Security or to help Medicare in this bill. The other trillion dollars is funny money.

The Republicans have already consumed all of this funny money, this projected surplus for next year with the bills that they have under consideration in this Congress. That \$1 trillion is as unreliable as a 10-year weather forecast.

But what I really object to is plucking Social Security and Medicare clean in order to provide tax breaks for most every special interest with a PAC and a lobbyist. This is wrong. Reject this bill.

Mr. ARCHER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentlewoman from Washington (Ms. DUNN), another respected member of the Committee on Ways and Means.

Ms. DUNN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for yielding me the time.

Mr. Speaker, over the next 10 years, Americans on average, each American, will pay \$5,300 to the Federal Government in income taxes, more than it costs to run the government. This is above and beyond the Social Security surplus which we save in a lockbox.

This is a fair tax bill. This bill reverses the Clinton tax increase of 1993 by reducing income tax rates for every single person who pays them and by reducing taxes for lower-income Americans by expanding the 15-percent bracket.

It also will save married couples an average of \$1,400 a year by doubling the standard deduction and keeping couples whose combined earnings are up to \$5,100 in the 15-percent tax bracket.

Most importantly, Mr. Speaker, it eliminates the death tax. This unfair tax has caused often tragic hardship for families who are trying to build a legacy to pass on to future generations. We should honor the values of the hard work, not tax them.

I call upon the President to help us roll back the 1993 tax increase, which he himself admitted was too much. Join us, Mr. President. Let us do this bill together. Give something back to the American people. It is their money. Give it back.

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Florida (Mrs. THURMAN), a respected member of the Committee on Ways and Means.

Mrs. THURMAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me the time.

Mr. Speaker, first of all, to answer the questions, we have not written off rural America. For some reason we quit remembering that we gave \$275 billion in 1997. We gave capital gains. We gave death taxes. We did education. And we did the family tax relief. It is now time to pay down the debt.

However, what I do not understand and what I am having a hard time today is we could have been having a debate where we would have been on the verge of fixing Social Security. We could have been strengthening Medicare. We could have possibly been providing a drug benefit. But if we were to pass this tax cut and if it was not vetoed, we would be able to do either of these.

While I may disagree with the different Republican Social Security proposals, I applaud them for having the courage to suggest a politically difficult proposal. But today I now know more than ever that they just are not serious about finding a solution.

The reality is that with this tax cut bill they have abandoned any hopes of enacting even their own ideas of how to solve Social Security.

Here is why: the risky tax cut before us today will cost nearly \$1 trillion. The Republican Social Security plan requires roughly \$1 trillion to fund new private accounts. They will say they have done that. However, this is money already going into Social Security, not new money.

Mr. Speaker, they can do both. The tax cut would use up nearly all of the \$1 trillion in projected non-Social Security budget surpluses. Once this money flows out in tax cuts, once it has gone and spent, the only, and I repeat "only" surplus left are in the Social Security Trust Fund. The only way to fix Social Security, fix Medicare is by using the non-Social Security surplus.

So today, my colleagues, the Republican leadership has made a choice. It is clear and simple. This is short-sighted and irresponsible.

Mr. ARCHER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. COLLINS), another respected member of the Committee on Ways and Means.

Mr. COLLINS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me the time.

Mr. Speaker, opportunity knocks only once, while temptation will beat the door down.

In 1995, the President and I were at Warm Springs, Georgia, the Georgia home of F.D.R., friend of the little man.

As the President and I were departing company that day, I looked at him and I told him, "Mr. President, I want to leave you with one particular thought. That is, we must look after the little man. Because the big man can take care of himself. But every now and then, you have to give the big man just a little something so he will help the little man."

He was nodding his head in agreement. I said, "Mr. President, that is our tax bill."

That was the 1995 tax bill. He vetoed that tax bill. He missed his opportunity, because that veto ended that tax bill.

This tax bill today that we are dealing with targets American workers, American families, and American business, American business that provides the jobs for American workers and American families.

I ask my colleagues to resist the temptation of a Clinton-Gore veto looking for another day. Do not miss the opportunity to give tax relief to the American worker and the American family and the American business.

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO).

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me the time.

This is an irresponsible special-interest tax giveaway. It is a tax cut for the wealthiest corporations and Americans that is paid for by the middle class. It reflects the upside down values of this Republican-led Congress and does not reflect the values of American families. It is risky. It threatens our economic progress. And it does not pay down the national debt.

Tax cuts are a priority for those that support middle-class families who need a tax break. If we take a look at this chart, the family that makes under \$30,000 a year gets \$278 in the tax break and the family that makes \$837,000 a year gets a \$46,000 tax break. Where is the equity in that?

This plan jeopardizes Social Security and Medicare to pay for special-interest tax breaks. Corporations can write off a three-martini lunch. And there is even a tax credit for burning chicken manure. A chicken manure tax break.

Where are our priorities, Mr. Speaker? Hundreds of millions of dollars to

chicken manure farmers but chicken feed for the rest of us.

Vote "no" on this conference report.

Mr. ARCHER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. ENGLISH), another respected member of the Committee on Ways and Means.

Mr. ENGLISH. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for the opportunity to rise in strong support of the taxpayer refund and relief act.

Let me say, I have trouble believing some of the arguments I am hearing on the other side. Tax cuts for the wealthy, special-interest legislation. This is much-needed tax relief that provides tax relief for virtually every American household and in many ways and especially for the middle class.

For example, it makes the dream of higher education more accessible for millions of students in the struggling middle class. This legislation makes college more affordable by extending tax breaks on student loans, by permitting private universities to offer tax-deferred, prepaid tuition plans, and by exempting the earnings of all tuition plans from taxation.

It also eliminates the 60-month limitation on student loan interest deductions. This is critical to college graduates struggling to pay off student loans as they begin their careers, and it extends the tax exclusion for employer-provided tuition assistance.

This is important legislation to make education more affordable; yet we have heard the demagoguery on the other side.

I hope that my colleagues are persuaded that this is legislation that provides middle-class tax relief where and when it is needed at a time when we are clearly running a surplus, yet setting aside the needed resources to put Social Security on a sound footing and save Medicare.

We have done it. It is time for a tax break for the middle class.

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Missouri (Ms. MCCARTHY).

Ms. MCCARTHY of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me the time.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to vote for a tax bill, but I cannot vote for this one. It is too risky. It is fiscally irresponsible. It does not help the families who really need tax relief. They will end up with less money in their pockets and pay higher interest rates.

Our priority should be to retire the debt so we do not put America's economy at risk. Who does it help? The special interests, like foreign oil. Foreign oil and gas interests get a tax credit in this bill that will cost the American taxpayers more than \$4 billion. That is right, \$4 billion.

A family of four earning \$50,000 gets a \$265 tax cut. That is just about \$20 a month in their pockets.

Mr. Speaker, this bill is a grab bag for special interests. I am for tax relief, but we need to do it right. Vote against this report. Go back to the conference table and produce a prudent measure that will put money in the pockets of working families, not foreign oil interests.

Never mind we have spent two decades trying to reduce our dependency on foreign oil so we will never again experience those high prices and long gas lines at the pump like we did in the 1970s.

Mr. ARCHER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. HAYWORTH), another respected member of the Committee on Ways and Means.

Mr. HAYWORTH. Mr. Speaker, I thank my good friend from Texas for yielding me the time and for his leadership on the Committee on Ways and Means.

Well, despite the pledge not to engage in name-calling, we have heard it again from my dear colleague from Missouri. We even heard claims about chicken manure from my friend from Connecticut and my other friend from Texas. It is interesting where the chicken manure really resides here on the floor of the Congress.

I just think there is a simple fact we need to point out. The \$3.3 trillion in the surplus, for every one of those dollars, this is what we are prepared to do: take 75 cents of that dollar and lock it away to save and strengthen Social Security and Medicare and pay down the \$5-trillion debt hanging over the heads of our children. It leaves a quarter. Nothing risky, nothing irresponsible about giving the American people back their hard-earned money.

For my friends on the left who fancy themselves champions of the working people, here is the challenge: join us with this bill. Because included in it is much needed tax relief for the inner cities, for Indian reservations, to inspire savings, to offer help for business start-ups, to help those families who feel the brunt of economic pain.

I challenge my friends on the left to join with us, adopt the conference report, real tax relief.

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Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. KLECZKA) a respected member of the Committee on Ways and Means who, too, was excluded from the conference. I might add that all respected Democrats were excluded.

(Pursuant to a subsequent order of the House by unanimous consent of Mr. KLECZKA, the remarks of Mr. KLECZKA have been deleted.)

Mr. ARCHER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. WELLER) another respected member of the Committee on Ways and Means.

Mr. WELLER. Mr. Speaker, today we are taking another step in our effort to

balance the budget for the third time in 3 years. We are taking the step where, of course, earlier this year we set aside \$2 trillion of the projected surplus for saving Social Security and Medicare. I would point out in our balanced budget that for every \$6 in debt retirement over the next 5 years, we provide \$1 in tax relief and that over the next 10 years that pays down \$2.2 trillion of the national debt, which is 10 percent more than the Democrat proposal to retire the debt.

I rise in support of this legislation for a particular reason. I have often asked the question over the last several years and, that is, is it right, is it fair that under our tax code a married working couple pays more in taxes just because they are married? Is it right, is it fair that 28 million married working couples pay more in taxes just because they are married than an identical couple living together outside of marriage?

Let me introduce Shad and Michelle Hallahan, two public school teachers in Joliet, Illinois. When they chose to get married in the last couple of years, they discovered something. They now pay higher taxes just because they got married, similar to 28 million married working couples throughout America. Michelle, by the way, is due any day to have a baby. She notes that their marriage tax penalty, which is just over \$1,000, will provide 3,000 diapers for the Hallahan family. Those who oppose our efforts to eliminate the marriage tax penalty would much rather spend those dollars here in Washington.

Mr. Speaker, this deserves bipartisan support. I ask for bipartisan support.

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. EDWARDS).

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of my children and all children in America, I rise against the risky, budget-busting, trillion-dollar tax cut.

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. CLEMENT).

Mr. CLEMENT. Mr. Speaker, let us sustain economic growth. Vote "no" on the Republican tax package.

Mr. Speaker, this tax cut is simply too large. It spends almost all of the projected on-budget surplus for the next 10 years.

My colleagues on the other side of the aisle have locked on to the quote by Senator KERRY in which he said that in an era when we have a budget surplus of \$3 trillion, it is not unreasonable to pass a tax cut of \$1 trillion. What they don't tell you is that \$2 trillion of that supposed surplus is Social Security money, which both sides have agreed should be set aside solely for Social Security. That means that money is off the table. So, if you set aside \$2 trillion for Social Security and pass a tax cut of \$1 trillion, how much does that leave for Medicare, debt reduction, veterans health care, the National Institutes of Health, and other important domestic programs? It's simple math: 3-2-1=0.

The leadership in this body is in a big hurry to pass this conference report on a tax scheme they know has no chance of going anywhere so they can go home for a month and tell their constituents what they accomplished for them. Of course, they're not in quite as big a hurry to send it to the president. They don't want the president to rain on their parade by vetoing their wonderful bill before they have a chance to convince people how wonderful it is. What they don't realize is that the American people already know that this irresponsible tax cut is a bad deal. When asked what we in Congress should do with this surplus, the American people have consistently said "save Social Security, save Medicare, and pay down the national debt."

Let's defeat this ill-conceived, irresponsible tax scheme and get to work on a real tax relief package that will provide relief to those who need it while still allowing us to fulfill our obligations to pay down the national debt, save Medicare and Social Security, and adequately fund important domestic programs that millions of Americans rely on.

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GREEN).

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to H.R. 2488, the so-called Financial Freedom bill. I only wish it were so.

In reality, this bill should be called the Medicare and Social Security elimination act—because it irresponsibly spends the projected budget surplus without committing a single penny to the future of those programs.

The decisions the majority have made will ultimately hurt the very people they say they want to help—the American people—by forcing through a tax scheme that place our nations economy at risk in the future.

The fundamental problem with this bill is that it bets the future of Medicare and Social Security on economic projections ten years away. If we spend the money today, almost 80% of the projected surplus, on this risky tax scheme, what will happen if the projections fall short?

Ten years ago, not a single economist could have predicted how strong our economy is today and has been over the last five years. As best they try, it is a very inexact science.

In fact the Congressional Budget Office, whose numbers the majority is relying on, has been off by billions of dollars on even one year projections. Now they want to bet the farm on projections over ten years.

If this bill becomes law, there will be an insufficient amount of money left over to ensure the long term stability of Social Security, Medicare, other programs such as veteran's health.

Now don't get me wrong, there will be enough there to take care of today's beneficiaries.

But without dedicating portions of the surplus to Medicare and Social Security today, we will force our children and grandchildren to either pay higher taxes or receive significantly lower benefits tomorrow.

You just can't have it both ways—as much as everyone here would love to eliminate taxes completely, and believe me I would, it just isn't the responsible thing to do.

Another major problem with the Republican scheme is that it fails to provide any money to

pay down our national debt. If this bill becomes law, interest rates on car loans, mortgages, and credit cards could rise.

Our nation's debt is finally going down—but if we follow the plan of the republicans, it will go right back up and fall squarely on the shoulders of our children and grandchildren.

We need to reject the Republican's risky scheme, because it could balloon the debt, send us back to huge deficit spending.

We need to do the right thing and wait for the money to become real, see how much is there, and then decide where it needs to go—and at that time, tax cuts should and would be included in that formula.

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. KIND).

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to this conference report.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to the conference report on H.R. 2488. This is a very serious debate about a serious piece of legislation. If this tax cut were to pass and actually be signed into law, it would set the course of fiscal policy for the next several decades in this country.

And I don't get it. When a family in western Wisconsin enjoys good times, they see it as an opportunity to take care of existing obligations first. For the Federal Government, this should mean paying down the \$5.7 trillion national debt and shoring up Social Security and Medicare for future generations.

What this legislation proposes, however, is the equivalent of my wife Tawni and I going into our local bank and telling our bank officer, "Yes, we know we have a mortgage and a car loan and credit card payments. But we would like to restructure those debts so we can enjoy some additional money now and shift these debt obligations onto Johnny and Matthew, our 3-year and 1-year-old sons." We would get laughed out of the bank if we said that. I didn't come to Congress to leave a legacy of debt to my children and mortgage their future with an act of such irresponsibility. That's why I oppose this riverboat gamble of a tax cut.

A short time ago, before former Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin retired, I had the opportunity to ask him what he felt we, as policymakers, should do to ensure the prosperity of our nation in the next century. His response was two-fold—first, we should pay down the \$5.7 trillion national debt, and second, we should not shortchange our investments in education. This legislation fails both of these goals. This tax cut proposal also ignores the words of Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan, who has repeatedly testified before us in Congress that the first, best use of any budget surplus is to reduce the debt.

An emphasis on debt reduction would provide real tax relief to all American families, not just the top 1 percent who receive the bulk of the benefits of this proposal. A lower national debt would benefit everyone by lowering interest rates. Families who make mortgage, car, credit card, and other loan payments would realize tremendous cost savings, and businesses would be able to invest at lower cost, create jobs and increase productivity. Finally, lowering our national debt would be fair to future generations who would otherwise have to repay an obligation they did not create.

A vote today against this legislation is a vote for fiscal responsibility and fiscal sanity. It is a vote for our children's future, and for continued economic growth and the promise of prosperity for our kids. I urge my colleagues to vote against this bill.

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. FROST), chairman of the Democratic Caucus.

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, as we are all aware, the chief complaint of the right wing of the Republican Party over the past few years has been that their leadership lacked real commitment to the core right-wing principles of their conference.

Well, today, Mr. Speaker, the Republican right wing should be pleased, because the true believers have asserted their control over this Republican Congress. Today, the Republican Congress makes its priorities crystal clear. Today, the Republican Party plainly states its commitment to risking Social Security, Medicare and our economy on fiscally irresponsible, budget-busting tax breaks for the wealthiest that could cost us \$1 trillion over the next 10 years.

Why, Mr. Speaker, would Republicans risk exploding the deficit once again, driving up interest rates and hurting an economy that is the envy of the world? Do Republicans believe that Americans want their mortgage payments to go up? Do Republicans believe that Americans want their credit card bills to go up?

Mr. Speaker, I have pointed out before that the record of the Republican Congress makes clear their belief that Congress' only job is providing red meat for the right-wing extremists controlling their party. Why else would they insist on squandering the surplus on tax breaks for the wealthiest and refuse to devote even a few dollars to saving Medicare?

Nothing speaks more clearly to the priorities of this Congress. Just 16 years from now, Medicare faces a death sentence, but Republicans refuse to use a dime of the surplus to delay that execution by even a day.

Mr. Speaker, Democrats support fiscally responsible tax cuts, targeted to the middle class, but we cannot support risking Social Security, Medicare and the economy. I urge defeat of this bill.

Mr. ARCHER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN), another respected member of the Committee on Ways and Means.

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time. I want to start by commending him for his determination and vision in moving this tax relief proposal to this point.

There are a lot of great provisions in the bill before us today. They have been focused on by others, eliminating

the marriage penalty, expanding everybody's opportunities to achieve a good education for themselves and their children, helping Americans afford health care for themselves and for their elderly family members.

I want to focus for a moment on the retirement security provisions. The Financial Freedom Act before us today contains the most comprehensive reforms of our pension laws since ERISA was passed 25 years ago.

By strengthening 401(k)s for all Americans, by strengthening defined benefit plans, the traditional plans and other plans, by allowing workers to save more in their pensions, save more in their IRAs, by making pensions portable so workers can take them from job to job, by providing a catchup for workers over 50 years old, by modifying section 415 to help union workers to be able to have a better multi-employer plan, by doing all these things, we allow all Americans to save more for their own retirement, to have more peace of mind in their own retirement, and we are going to allow millions of American workers who do not currently have any kind of a pension at all, that is half of our workforce, to be able to come into a system where they have a pension, to be able to provide in their retirement years for their own retirement security.

This, Mr. Speaker, is why this bill makes sense for the American people, why this bill is going to be supported today. I urge the President to sign it.

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BERRY).

Mr. BERRY. Mr. Speaker, we all want tax cuts. Let us not spend money that does not exist. When we have some surplus, let us reduce the debt, save Social Security and Medicare, get our priorities straight. Let us not create another \$5 trillion debt to burden our children and grandchildren.

I urge my colleagues to vote against this conference report.

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER).

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, I was here in 1981 when we cut \$749 billion in revenues. Those on this floor represented that this would be a great step forward. Howard Baker, the then majority leader of the United States Senate, said, no, that it was a riverboat gamble. It was, Mr. Speaker, a riverboat gamble that we lost. We quadrupled the national debt. Now, that is a nice phrase, but what does it mean? It means we plunged the children of America deeply into debt, because we did not provide for the spending that our generation votes for.

Let us not take this risky step again. Let us not put at risk the solvency of Social Security. Let us not put at risk the vitality of Medicare. Let us not put

at risk the defense of this Nation. My Republican colleagues talk about just taking \$1 trillion of \$3 trillion. \$2 trillion is in a lockbox for Social Security, they say. But the appropriation bills we have been passing belie that lockbox theory because we are about to spend that Social Security revenue.

My friends, reject this risky, river-boat gamble. Ensure that our children's security is safe. Do not again go on the path of quadrupling the national debt. Rather, let us be fiscally responsible, target tax cuts, give relief to Americans who are most in need, working Americans, Americans with children who need care, Americans who are sending children to school. Do not take this risky road to further debt and unresureness.

Mr. ARCHER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. GRANGER).

Ms. GRANGER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Taxpayer Refund and Relief Act of 1999. I want to commend the gentleman from Texas for leading the way to the future by lowering the taxes on our people. The gentleman from Texas will be dearly missed if he leaves us after this Congress.

This bill represents tax relief of \$792 billion over the next 10 years, including the elimination of the marriage penalty, 100 percent deductibility for the health insurance of the self-employed, and lowering the capital gains tax.

But this bill is not really about numbers and figures or phase-ins and credits. This bill is about the American people, their hopes for the future and their dreams for their children.

To that end, I want to thank the gentleman from Texas for including in this package my legislation to encourage both public and private colleges to establish prepaid college tuition plans. These plans allow parents to begin paying for tomorrow's college education at today's tuition prices.

This legislation will allow middle-class families to pay for college out of savings instead of paying for it out of debt. This will make a college education more affordable for more people. I thank the gentleman from Texas for including this in his legislation.

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. BONIOR), our distinguished Democratic whip.

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Mr. BONIOR. Risky. Dangerous. Deceptive. That is what this Republican bill is. Instead of building on the strongest economy in a generation, they would roll the dice. They would take \$1 trillion. They would slap it down on the table, they would spin the wheel, and hope for the best.

What they are doing is playing Russian roulette with the whole U.S. economy. And it is our money they are

gambling, our Social Security, our Medicare, our education, our future.

The Republicans say their tax plan will benefit the average American, that it will put money back into their pockets. But if you look at the numbers, the truth comes out.

Under their plan, a family that makes \$52,000 a year gets a tax cut of about \$11 a week. The super-rich, the people who pull in more than \$300,000 a year or more, the Republican plan gives them \$127 a day, \$900 a week, \$46 thousand a year. So when you compare the numbers, those who really need tax relief, they get chump-change, and those, of course, who do not, get a brand new Cadillac.

After the party is over, what then? What is the long-term cost to the American family? Higher interest rates on our credit cards, on our mortgage payments, on our car loans; higher interest rates and payments on the national debt, which already cost the average American family \$2,000 a year; and a higher probability that Social Security and Medicare will not be there when Americans need them.

This Republican plan is risky, it is dangerous, and it is deceptive. We need to pay down the national debt, not to drive it up. We need to take care of first things first, Social Security, Medicare, education. Let us address these national priorities first, and then cut taxes; and, when we do, let us get it to the middle-income people in this country, and not the super-rich.

We need to invest in the future, not gamble it away. This Republican plan is risky, it is wrong, and it will wreck the economy.

Mr. ARCHER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. MCCRERY), a respected member of the Committee on Ways and Means.

Mr. MCCRERY. Mr. Speaker, I was not going to talk on the conference report today, I spoke on the bill when it was on the floor earlier, but I got tired of hearing some Democrats say that we were jeopardizing Social Security and Medicare by giving a tax cut to the American people. That is just not true.

The gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARCHER) and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SHAW) had a Social Security plan that is fleshed out and demonstrates clearly that we only need \$1.2 trillion of the almost \$2 trillion Social Security surplus to solve the Social Security problem. That leaves \$700 billion with which to pay down the debt, to help fix Medicare. Speaking of Medicare, what we do not need is to throw more money at it. We need fundamental reform. We also have a plan for that.

Mr. ARCHER. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. RAMSTAD).

Mr. RAMSTAD. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this important tax relief bill for America's families.

Mr. Speaker, as a member of the Ways and Means Committee, I have seen firsthand the excellent leadership of Chairman ARCHER in putting together this package that will bring meaningful relief to millions of over-burdened taxpayers who deserve to keep more of what they earn.

This is broad-based tax relief that makes sense. This conference agreement promotes issues that people care about most—fairness for families, education, health care, retirement savings, growing jobs and being able to pass farms and businesses on to the next generation.

I want to highlight two provisions of this legislation I authored. Although these items will cost very little in terms of federal revenue, they send a powerful statement about the level of fairness in this bill.

The first provision is based on legislation I introduced to provide relief to volunteer drivers for charities. This common sense change will dramatically improve the ability of charities to attract volunteer drivers to serve vulnerable people.

As many charities in my home state have told me, a volunteer reimbursed for mileage expenses has taxable income if the reimbursement exceeds 14 cents per mile, even though an employee performing the same function could be reimbursed at 31 cents per mile.

This creates a significant disincentive for people considering volunteering for food delivery programs, patient transportation, and other services which rely on volunteer drivers. There have been examples of volunteer drivers being audited and subjected to back taxes, penalties and interest because of unreported volunteer mileage reimbursement, even though the reimbursement did not exceed the allowable business rate and the dollar amounts are quite small.

This bill will codify relief to reimbursed volunteer drivers if the amount of their reimbursement is less than the business mileage rate. This solution will allow America's charities to attract the volunteers they need to for critical services like transporting elderly patients to the doctor and food to the hungry.

The second provision I offered as an amendment in committee. It ensures consistent tax treatment of survivor benefits received by families of public safety officers killed in the line of duty.

Survivor benefits of public safety officers slain in the line of duty are currently tax-free for the wives, husbands and children who are left behind, but only if the officer died after December 31, 1996. This means that the survivor benefits of families who lost a loved one before January 1, 1997, are still subject to tax. I see no sound tax policy reason for this discrimination. This bill corrects this inequity and will allow all families of slain public safety officers to enjoy the same tax relief.

Nothing can compensate for the loss of those who pay the ultimate price by giving their lives for their communities. However, this bill will provide tangible help to the families of our slain heroes.

These are only two examples of the many provisions in this package that will improve the lives of Americans in very real ways.

I urge my colleagues to support this tax relief package for American families. We have

already set aside the portion of the surplus needed to save Social Security and Medicare. Now, we need to return a portion of the tax overpayment to the families who earned it. If we don't, Washington will surely find a way to spend it.

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, it is my distinct honor to yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. GEPHARDT), the minority leader.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KOLBE). The gentleman from Missouri is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GEPHARDT. Mr. Speaker, I want to address my comments to American citizens all over the country and to ask them a simple question, and that is, do they do better with the Republican plan that is on the floor today, or would they do better our Democratic plan, which is much less revenue cost, but a tax cut that is more targeted to middle-income families?

If one looks at the Republican plan, it offers a family of four earning \$50,000 a year about a \$278 a year tax cut. In other words, their taxes would be reduced by about, to make it rough, \$280 a year. That comes out to about 76 cents a day. That would not even buy a cup of coffee in most of our modern coffee houses.

On the other hand, the Democratic tax cut would have had an impact on the real budgets of middle-income families. We wanted to provide a \$1,000 credit for a family trying to take care of a disabled parent who they were trying to keep at home or a \$500 credit for parents who care for an infant at home. In other words, for ordinary families, we could have done a tax cut today that would really have an impact on their lives, not just 76 cents a day.

But it is also worth noting that the real expense cut that we ought to be talking about today is what getting rid of the deficit would do for ordinary American families. The Research Director for the Concord Coalition put it well. He said debt reduction is a tax cut for future generations.

We now pay \$218 billion a year at the Federal level on interest on the national debt every year. That is \$900 for every man, woman, and child who lives in the United States. Eliminating that debt could put that money back in their pockets or certainly allow us to do some things with Medicare and Social Security that would put money into their pockets in the future. This is a fundamental decision we are having to make. If we could get that debt down, it would hold interest rates down.

Let us talk about the family out there that has maybe a \$100,000 mortgage on their house right now. If we could lower interest rates by 1 percent or, maybe to put it another way, hold them where they are and not let them go up from where they are now, that could be \$1,200 a year that goes right

into that family's pocket because we have not gone with this risky tax cut that puts in jeopardy the financial wherewithal of that family of four that is trying to pay off that mortgage. This is not even talking about credit card debt and auto loan debt that they have to pay.

The big tax cut that we ought to be talking about is holding interest rates down so that family out there does not face higher interest rates.

Let me end with a story. When I was a young kid, my mom and dad told me that if I do chores around the house, they would give me an allowance. Usually a quarter or two is what I would earn, carrying out the trash, doing the dishes, cooking dinner, sometimes even cleaning up the basement.

My mother used to always say to me, because she would give me the quarters, usually two quarters, 50 cents, she would always say, "Dick, those quarters are burning a hole in your pocket." Because what I loved to do with those quarters was go up to the corner confectionery and buy a Mars Bar. I loved Mars Bars, it had that soft marshmallow center, chocolate; and I loved to buy baseball flip cards. That is what I really wanted to do. Sure enough, whenever I would get those quarters, I would run up to the corner confectionery and blow all my money and get that Mars Bar that had that soft marshmallow center and buy those flip cards. Instant gratification is what I was looking for.

She used to always say to me, "If you would save those quarters, maybe you could buy that ball glove you have been talking about or that bicycle you wanted to buy, and that would even be better, if you would save for the future so you could really do something important."

This is the very same decision we face today as a country. Do we want instant gratification, do we want to hand out candy bars, make people feel good right now with, again, 76 cents a day for that average family, or do we want to save money, pay down the debt, keep interest rates down, give a targeted tax cut that would really mean something to hard-pressed middle-income families? That is the choice we have today.

I urge Members to reject instant gratification and to save this money for the future, pay down the back debt of this country, save Social Security and Medicare, give a targeted tax cut that will really help middle-income families, and do the right thing for the future and future generations of this country.

Mr. ARCHER. Mr. Speaker, I yield the balance of my time to the very respected and distinguished gentleman from Florida (Mr. SHAW), the chairman of the Subcommittee on Social Security of the Committee on Ways and Means.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Florida is recognized for 4½ minutes.

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time, and I want to compliment him and those on the staff and members of the Committee on Ways and Means and the other committees for crafting as near a perfect tax bill as I have seen in the years I have been in Congress.

Mr. Speaker, the minority leader just spoke of targeted tax cuts for people who really need it. Let us talk for just a moment about who really needs the tax cuts in this country. Let us see who we should exclude from that category.

Americans who care for their elderly family members at home, with an additional exemption in this bill of \$2,750. What is wrong with that?

We allow parents to save up to \$2,000, rather than only \$500, in Education Savings Accounts. What is wrong with that?

We eliminate the 25 percent contribution limit on pre-tax salary to 401(k)s. Saving for one's retirement, what do you have against that?

Reducing the capital gains rate by a small percentage, but saving it so that Americans can invest for their future, why are you against that?

Allowing Americans who purchase their own health insurance to deduct 100 percent of the premium, who can be against that?

Cutting the marriage penalty. We now penalize people when they get married where you have got two earners in the family. What in the world can somebody be against in cutting that back, cutting that penalty back?

Permitting private colleges and universities to establish prepaid tuition programs for parents of prospective students. Currently only public universities are allowed to do this. We extend that to private universities. Who could be against that?

Reducing the individual income tax rates for all American taxpayers. That is something we should all be for.

Allowing Americans who purchase long-term care insurance, we allow them to deduct the full amount of their premiums from their taxes. That is something we should encourage, and we encourage it by allowing the deduction.

Phasing out the death tax. The death tax is the biggest destroyer of American farms and American businesses in this country today. It is an evil tax that should be eliminated, and this bill would phase it out over a period of time.

Student loans. Right now when you get a student loan, you can only deduct the interest that you pay for 5 years. After that it is not deductible. I can tell you from the young people who work in my office that I have talked to, this is a very important part of their income, and they should be able to at least deduct it. This is important.

Mr. Speaker, during this debate we have heard a lot about Social Security. Interestingly enough, and I have kept score, I do not believe that one person who stood up here and said that we are going to do nothing about Social Security has any inkling how to solve the problem, and, if they do, they have not come out and put that down.

The gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARCHER) and I and the Committee on Ways and Means and many of us are working together and reaching out to Democrats in order to be able to do precisely that. We have come up with a plan that does precisely that, and it saves Social Security for all time. Very shortly, that plan will be going to some type of a markup, and I look forward to that. We will continue to reach out across the aisle to the Democrats.

But I can tell you right now, and I think the American people should hold all of us to this standard: Do not talk about saving Social Security on the floor of this House unless you are ready to step forward to do it.

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Sitting back and doing nothing will do nothing to save social security for our seniors and for our kids and for our grandkids. It is time that we stop this rhetoric, and we go forward and work together in a powerful way to save social security.

The Republicans now are reaching out to the Democrats. Join with us. Let us do this before the end of the year, and before this Congress goes out for our November-December break. Let us come back and work together and save social security.

Mr. COYNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to this misguided legislation. This legislation has many serious shortcomings, but given my limited time, I will mention just three.

This bill is paid for with a surplus that doesn't yet exist and which is based upon economic projections that have proven wrong in the past.

This bill would disproportionately benefit the richest people in this country—instead of the working- and middle-class families who deserve relief the most.

And this bill would cut taxes before we've reduced our massive national debt or ensured the future stability of Social Security and Medicare.

Enactment of this tax bill would put us right back where we were six years ago, with projected deficits as far as the eye can see—and with a national debt that is growing rather than shrinking.

I urge my colleagues to join me in opposing this unwise legislation.

Mr. SANDLIN. Mr. Speaker, I have heard my friends on the Republican side talk about how their budget sets aside \$2 trillion of the \$3 trillion projected surplus for debt reduction. While this certainly sounds appealing to those of us who have been talking about the importance of paying off the national debt, the facts just don't match the rhetoric.

My Republican friends neglect to point out that they are double-counting the Social Security

surplus in order to claim that they are reducing the debt. This body has overwhelmingly voted to exclude Social Security surpluses from budget calculations. These surpluses are essential to meet future obligations to Social Security. Every Member of this body, Republican and Democrat alike, have said that Social Security surpluses should only be used for Social Security, and should not be counted for any other purposes. But despite all of the rhetoric about Social Security lockboxes and taking Social Security off-budget, some folks on the other side of the aisle keep counting the Social Security surpluses when it suits their purposes.

Using the Social Security surplus to reduce debt held by the public simply offsets the increased debt held by the Social Security trust fund. If all we do is save the Social Security surplus, we won't reduce the total national debt by one dime, and we will have done nothing to reduce the burden we leave to our children and grandchildren. In fact, despite all of the rhetoric from the other side of the aisle about saving money for debt reduction, the total national debt will increase by \$200 billion over the next five years under the Republican budget.

The truth is, they don't want the American people to know the consequences of their massive tax cuts. They don't want them to find out that, if we want to be fiscally responsible and stay within the spending caps we agreed to in the 1997 budget, passing their tax cut will require a 38% reduction in spending on important programs—programs like FEMA, class size reduction, and law enforcement. Both parties agree that defense spending needs to increase if we want to preserve military readiness, but if the Republicans pass their tax cuts, our military will suffer as well. While these important programs that benefit ALL Americans will have to be cut, TWO-THIRDS of the tax cut will benefit only those people who fall in the top income tax bracket.

The fiscal irresponsibility does not stop there. The new trick in Republican accounting books is the "emergency" spending designation being used to bypass the spending caps. They have even resorted to calling the 2000 census an "emergency"—an outrageous claim considering that the Constitution requires a census every ten years! This "emergency" spending comes straight out of the "projected" surplus Republicans want to use to finance their tax cut.

This creative accounting is unacceptable. I am a strong advocate of a sound budget and fiscally responsible tax cuts, but the best tax cut we can give the American people is a promise we will first pay down the national debt by setting aside some of the true surplus—the non-Social Security surplus. The Blue Dogs have put forward a proposal that would lock up half of the true budget surplus to pay down the national debt. This approach will truly reduce the burden on future generations.

I am proud to be an original co-sponsor of this legislation. The Blue Dog's Debt Reduction Lockbox bill would save 100% of the Social Security surplus by requiring that the budget be balanced EXCLUDING the Social Security surplus. It also helps ensure a fiscally responsible budget by establishing a point of

order against any budget resolution that contains a on-budget deficit or any legislation that would result in an on-budget deficit and would prohibit OMB, CBO and other federal government entities from including the Social Security trust fund as part of budget surplus or deficit calculations.

While the Republican tax cut bill's debt reduction provisions are merely a rhetorical gesture at best, the Blue Dog bill delivers on debt reduction. It places 50% of the projected on-budget surplus over the next five years in a Debt Reduction Lockbox, away from those who would squander it on irresponsible tax cuts.

The Blue Dog bill also delivers on our promise to save Social Security and Medicare by reserving the Debt Reduction Dividend—the savings from lower interest payments on the debt resulting from its reduction—for these two programs. Seventy-five percent of these savings would be reserved for Social Security reform and 25% for Medicare reform.

Mr. Speaker, the fundamental tenet of the Blue Dog proposal—debt reduction—has been recklessly omitted from the Republican bill. Our primary goal as we debate how to divide the projected budget surplus should be to maintain the strong and growing economy that has benefited millions of Americans. Irresponsible tax cuts, however, are not the means to achieving this end. Using that simple objective as our guide, it is clear that the best course of action this body could take is to use the budget surpluses to start paying off the \$5.6 trillion national debt. Reducing the national debt is clearly the best long-term strategy for the U.S. economy.

Economists from across the political spectrum agree that using the surplus to reduce the debt will stimulate economic growth by increasing national savings and boosting domestic investment. Paying down our debt will reduce the tremendous drain that the federal government has placed on the economy by running up a huge national debt. Quite simply, reducing the federal government's \$5.6 trillion national debt takes money that is currently tied up in debt and puts it back into the private sector where it can be invested in plants, equipment and other investments that create jobs and economic output.

Federal Reserve Board Chairman Alan Greenspan has repeatedly advised Congress that the most important action we could take to maintain a strong and growing economy is to pay down the national debt. Earlier this year, Chairman Greenspan testified before the Ways and Means Committee that debt reduction is a much better use of surpluses than are tax cuts, stating:

The advantages that I perceive that would accrue to this economy from a significant decline in the outstanding debt to the public and its virtuous cycle on the total budget process is a value which I think far exceeds anything else we could do with the money.

We should follow Chairman Greenspan's advice by making debt reduction the highest priority for any budget surplus.

There has been a lot of discussion here in Washington about a "grand bargain" on the budget that would divide the surplus between tax cuts and higher spending. Our constituents are giving a very different message. I would

encourage my colleagues to ignore this inside the beltway speculation, and listen to the American public. Our constituents are telling us to meet our obligations by paying down the national debt.

The folks I represent understand that the conservative thing to do when you have some extra resources is to pay your debts first. They don't understand how we can be talking about grand plans to divide up the budget surplus when we have a \$5.6 trillion national debt. They want us to use this opportunity to pay down our debt.

We hear a lot of talk about "giving the American people their money back." I would remind my colleagues that it is the American people who owe the \$5.6 trillion national debt we have run up. If we are truly interested in giving the surpluses back to the American people, we should start by paying off the debt we have run up on their credit card.

I would suggest that the best tax cut we could provide for all Americans, and the best thing that we can do to ensure that taxes remain low for our children and grandchildren, is to start paying down our \$5.6 trillion national debt. Reducing our national debt will provide a tax cut for millions of Americans by restraining interest rates. Lower interest rates will put money in the pockets of working men and women by saving them money on variable mortgages, new mortgages, auto loans, credit card payments, and other debts. The reduction in interest rates we have had as a result of the fiscal discipline over the last few years has put at least \$35 billion into the hands of homeowners through lower mortgage payments. Continuing this fiscal discipline and paying down the debt is the best way to keep putting money into the hands of middle class Americans.

Just as importantly, reducing the national debt will protect future generations from increasing tax burdens to pay for the debts that we have incurred. Today, more than twenty-five percent of all individual income taxes go to paying interest on our national debt. The amount of income taxes the government will have to collect just to pay the interest on the debt will continue to increase unless we take action now to pay down the national debt.

Every dollar of lower debt saves MORE than one dollar for future generations. These savings that can be used for tax cuts, covering the costs of the baby boomers retirement without tax increases or meeting other needs. We should give future generations the flexibility to deal with the challenges they will face, instead of forcing them to pay higher taxes just to pay for the debt we incurred with our consumption today.

I urge my colleagues to vote AGAINST reckless spending by voting AGAINST the Republican tax cuts—but let's not stop there. Join me in supporting the Blue Dog Debt Reduction Lockbox bill and let's eliminate our debt.

Mr. BENTSEN. Mr. Speaker, let me say, first off, that a tax cut would be appropriate if we could afford it, if it would stimulate further economic growth, and if it were fair. Our first priority should be to use most, if not all, of the projected on-budget surpluses to pay down the \$3.6 trillion debt held by the public.

The tax cut considered this morning is contingent upon maintaining the spending caps,

which we have broken, although nobody is willing to admit this fact. It is contingent on maintaining a reasonable level of emergency spending, although emergency spending is now an escape hatch to avoiding the caps. Above all, it is contingent upon projected on-budget surpluses. But, there is not on-budget surplus and if there ever was, it disappeared this week. In fiscal year 2000, the Congressional Budget Office projects a \$14 billion on-budget surplus. But, Farm relief and the \$4.5 billion price tag for the Census have been categorized as emergency spending. Yesterday's votes in the House and Senate ate up \$12 billion.

Here is a more realistic scenario. If the caps are lifted so that overall discretionary spending remains at FY 1999 levels, adjusted only for inflation and emergency spending stays at the historical average of fiscal years 1991 through 1998, on-budget surpluses would equal \$112 billion over the next 10 years. Some 89 percent of the projected on-budget surplus would disappear.

If these surpluses do not materialize, the consequences could be severe. It took us 15 years to climb out of the deficits created by the 1980's tax cuts and spending increases. In 1981 we passed broad based tax relief. The consequences were catastrophic. Publicly held debt quadrupled between 1981 and 1993. Interest payments on the debt doubled as a share of the federal budget from seven to 15 percent. Interest on the debt is now the third most expensive government program behind Social Security and defense spending. Adding to that debt is the height of fiscal irresponsibility. Why would we want to repeat that scenario?

I know that it is unpopular for Democrats to talk about the distributional consequences of tax relief. But fairness and progressivity are critical elements of our tax code. I believe we have an obligation to fight for those principles. Tax relief, as the definition of relief would indicate, is for those who need relief. There has been such little discussion in this body and in the press on the distributional effects of this cut. Just because we talk about the distributional benefits of a tax cut does not mean that we are promoting class warfare. But, we ought to tell it like it is. I understand that the wealthiest in this country pay a large share of taxes collected. They also earn the greatest benefits from the policies in place that helped create this unparalleled prosperity. But, the middle class does not fair as well as the upper end in the bill before Congress today. The Treasury Department estimates that the average tax cut for the richest one percent of Americans would be \$37,000 a year when the tax cuts are fully in effect. The average tax cut for the bottom 60 percent of the population would be \$134.

What about intergenerational fairness? Let me quote Herbert Stein, a conservative economist, writing on the Wall Street Journal's op-ed page yesterday.

"The argument about fairness is complicated . . . The government's revenue is really the taxpayer's money, but the government's debt is the taxpayer's debt too—and one can say in fairness that they should repay it. Is it fair for today's generation to leave the debt burden to its children?"

No, of course it isn't.

This tax cut is another river boat gamble. Again, our first priority should be to pay down the \$3.6 trillion debt held by the public.

Tax cuts are difficult undo. In the 1980s, the nation spent a decade undoing the across the board tax cuts by raising taxes on everything else, such as airline tickets, luxury boats, and foreign cars. Deficit reduction is painful. Debt reduction is easy. If we need to stop because of a recession or a war to raise capital, no problem. We can always go back to it.

As Alan Greenspan has repeatedly said, paying down the debt would create more wealth for all Americans. He favors reducing the debt because with less debt, interest rates decline. That makes it easier for American families to buy a house . . . to buy a car . . . to start a business. Now, what Mr. Greenspan did say after that is he would prefer a tax cut to spending. But, that's because he is an economist and a conservative who believes in a less activist government.

He also pointed that there is a "shadow cost" to not paying down the debt. A tax cut without offsets will add more debt, raise interest costs and interest rates. Our new Treasury Secretary, Larry Summers said today that for every three one-hundredths of a percentage point in reduced interest rates on the total debt, the Government ultimately saves \$1 billion a year in interest costs.

Less debt means that there is less competition between the private sector and the government in the bond market. As government gobbles up less capital, interest rates should decline. A two percent dip in interest rates, from eight to six percent, would decrease mortgage payments on a \$115,000 home by \$155 a month. That is a better tax break than anything Congress could put together.

With lower interest payments, government can make crucial investments to improve productivity. If productivity is one percent a year, it take 70 years to double our standard of living. At two percent a year, it takes only 35 years.

As any student in an introductory macroeconomics course can tell you, a tax cut stimulates consumption. Americans are consuming at such a fast rate, there is no personal savings. Why would we encourage more consumption, when it crowds out savings and drives up interest rates? It is just bad fiscal policy!

Finally, we have a chance to shore up Social Security and Medicare. We finally have a chance to prepare for the future and we are going to squander newfound resources on a risky RIVER BOAT gamble of a tax cut, that is unnecessary, unaffordable, and unfair. Thank you.

Mrs. FOWLER. Mr. Speaker, as we look at surpluses as far as the eye can see, there is only one thing Republicans want to say to the American people today: We believe this money is your money. You are the ones who have worked hard. You are the ones who have struggled to make ends meet. You are the ones who have sacrificed time with your loved ones because there just isn't enough money in your wallet.

Republicans think it is shameful that the government takes more money from you, than you spend on food, clothing, shelter and

health care combined. That's why we offered this excellent tax relief package. It's your money, and you should be able to make the decisions over how to spend it.

When Republicans took the reins of Congress in 1995, we made a solemn promise to the American people to return our government to a government of the people, by the people and for the people. To me, the only way to accomplish this is to return to the American people control over their lives and over their money.

That's why we committed to locking away 100% of what Americans pay in to Social Security and Medicare for only Social Security and Medicare, to paying down \$2 trillion in public debt, and to returning money to hard-working Americans. When you have a \$3 trillion dollar surplus, the people have paid too much. Responsibly, 75 cents of each dollar of the surplus will go toward strengthening Social Security, reforming Medicare, paying down the public debt, rebuilding our military, improving public education and other vital programs. Fairly, the remaining 25 cents will be returned to the people who earned it: the hard-working American taxpayer.

Instead, the Democrats and the President propose a risky scheme of \$937 billion in new spending. I guess the President really did mean it when he said back in January that he didn't trust the American people to spend their money correctly that "we could give it back to you and hope you spend it right."

The Republican tax relief plan follows a fair, responsible commonsense principle: it returns dollars and decisions home. Rather than viewing the wallets of the American People as ATM machines, the Republican tax relief plan remembers whose money this really is and who, in the end, is in charge: the hard-working American people.

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I strongly support tax relief for all Americans. As Governor of Delaware, I reduced income taxes three times. As Delaware's representative in Congress, I supported the significant tax relief for families and businesses in the Balanced Budget Act of 1997. I hope to have the opportunity to vote for significant, broad-based tax relief in 1999. However, in the past each time I signed or voted for legislation to reduce taxes I worked to ensure it was as part of a comprehensive balanced budget plan. Unfortunately, this legislation, at a cost of \$792 billion over ten years—80% of the projected budget surplus—does not allow for a complete plan to preserve the surplus and a balanced budget.

When this legislation was considered by the House, I proposed an alternative tax relief plan that would have provided \$514 billion in tax relief. My proposal would preserve \$482 billion of the projected surplus for debt reduction, emergencies and other needs. Unfortunately, the House was not permitted to vote on that alternative. I hope when Congress and the President finish staking out political positions on this issue, we can come together in the fall and reach a comprehensive agreement that provides for solid tax relief and sets aside funds for debt reduction, potential emergencies and a realistic plan to fund defense, education, Medicare and other important priorities over the next ten years.

The size of this tax legislation is the most serious issue. The bill would commit \$792 bil-

lion of a projected \$996 ten-year surplus to tax reduction. It just does not make sense to commit 80% of a surplus we have not yet achieved to one purpose. It leaves very little margin for error. Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan testified just last week that ten-year economic projections are not reliable. The surplus will grow to \$996 billion only if the economy remains strong and if there are no other changes in tax or spending policy. If we spend more or have less revenue, interest payments on the debt will be larger and the surplus will be smaller. If we commit \$792 billion to tax reductions, virtually all of the rest of the \$996 surplus will be needed to pay higher interest costs on the debt. If we experience an economic downturn, these surpluses could easily turn to deficits. The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) which made these predictions stated that they could vary by as much as \$100 billion in any year.

The assumptions necessary for a \$792 billion tax cut leave no room for the unplanned, but almost certain expenses like natural disasters and other emergencies. Over the past ten years, emergencies have averaged at least \$8 billion per year. It is a fact: hurricanes, floods, droughts and military emergencies happen virtually every year. This year, Congress has already spent \$15 billion in emergency funds for Kosovo. Just yesterday, the Senate passed a \$7.4 billion emergency disaster relief package for farmers. Delaware and virtually every state in the eastern U.S. is suffering from one of the worse droughts of the century. The billions in emergency aid now in the Senate will almost certainly be followed by the need for more drought assistance.

Those funds will come straight from the surplus. There will be emergencies every year and those likely costs must be factored into our calculations of what size tax cut is possible. Furthermore, while Medicare is currently fundamentally sound, there are growing problems in the area of home health care, HMO's and rural and teaching hospitals. Correcting those problems may require additional funds. Finally, important programs like defense, education, and veterans must be adequately funded. The size of this tax legislation is based on completely unrealistic assumptions that domestic programs can be drastically reduced. Congress is already avoiding those cuts this year. We can and should limit spending, but cuts of 10 percent or more are just not realistic.

My second concern is the need for debt reduction. The federal debt is \$5.6 trillion and requires 15 percent of the annual federal budget to service. If we do not take the opportunity to pay down this debt during strong economic times, then when will we? Tax relief is important, but it should be balanced with the need to begin to pay down at least some of the \$5.6 trillion federal debt. Committing 80 percent of the projected surplus to tax reductions, simply does not allow enough of the surplus for debt reduction. I was pleased to be involved in the negotiations that produced the amendment to condition the phase-in of the broad-based tax relief provisions on reducing the debt. This "tax cut trigger" is a positive addition to the bill, but it does not go far enough. Billions in tax relief to businesses will go forward regardless of whether we are meeting

our debt payment goals. More of the projected surplus should be reserved to pay down the debt. When I talk to people in Delaware, they almost always tell me that should be our top priority because they know everyone benefits from lower interest rates on their own debt, including credit card and mortgage rates. In fact, a 1 percent drop in interest rates saves Americans \$200–\$250 billion in mortgage costs. That is real middle class financial relief.

We can and should provide tax relief to all taxpayers, but we must balance tax relief with debt reduction, future emergencies, national defense, health care and education and the need to protect against an economic downturn. The tax alternatives proposed by House Democrats and President Clinton are not adequate. We can provide more than \$250–\$300 billion in tax relief to working Americans without jeopardizing other priorities. Clearly the President must become actively engaged to achieve a true compromise.

I cannot support his legislation today because it does not balance tax relief with the need to reduce the national debt and a realistic cushion for the inevitable emergencies and other budget problems that will occur over the next ten years. When Congress returns in September, I hope we can engage in serious negotiations with the President that utilizes the good proposals for broad-based tax relief in this legislation but at a more affordable level. I look forward to working with all members of Congress and the Administration to ultimately produce legislation to give every American significant tax relief.

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of common sense tax relief for American families and small businesses. I also rise in support of saving Medicare and Social Security, two programs critical to today's seniors and future generations.

Unfortunately, the tax conference report before us today is fiscally irresponsible. It would threaten our ability to ensure the long term solvency of Medicare and Social Security. It would also restrict our ability to pay down national debt and to make needed investments in national defense, education and environmental protection.

By using virtually the entire projected surplus for permanent tax cuts, this bill would leave no money for modernizing Medicare or reforming Social Security. This is simply unconscionable. Medicare is desperately in need of modernization—specifically, the lack of prescription drug coverage is a gaping hole in this critical safety net for seniors that must be fixed. And while Social Security is fiscally sound for the near future, the coming retirement of the baby boom generation will strain the system beyond its limit. We owe it to future generations to act now to reform these programs while there is still plenty of time to do so.

I strongly support tax relief for middle income families, which this bill unfortunately fails to provide. For example, the across-the-board tax cut in the measure will cost almost \$300 billion, but would give someone on the Central Coast making \$30,000, a tax cut of only 37 cents per day! That's not even enough to buy a copy of my local newspaper.

The tax plan I voted for earlier this year would have fixed the marriage penalty and ensured middle class families can take full advantage of the various per-child, education and child care tax credits. It would also have increased the per-child tax credit by \$250 for families with children under age five.

The bill I supported would have helped families by providing \$25 billion in school construction bonds to modernize our overcrowded public schools and make employer-provided assistance tax free for undergraduate and graduate education. This measure would institute a \$1,000 long term care credit and make health insurance fully deductible for the self-employed beginning next year. And it would make permanent the R&D tax credit, so critical to ensuring future economic growth on the Central Coast, as well as credits to help move people from welfare to work.

I have also supported cutting the estate tax for our small business owners and family farmers like those on the Central Coast of California who are imperiled by the death of the head of the family. We must increase the exemption for businesses like these above the current \$1.3 million. The high value of Central Coast land, for example, can make even a modest sized farm or ranch impossible to pass down without being subject to high estate taxes that can force the sale of the property. By increasing this exemption, we would keep family farms and businesses in the family and off the auction block.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I would like to express my profound disappointment in the partisan handling of this tax bill. I believe there is general agreement among the vast majority of Members that we can and should provide tax relief this year. But the House leadership has pursued a partisan course designed to make political points and not to pass meaningful legislation. How sad it was that Democratic members were literally locked out of the conference committee that wrote this legislation.

The leadership knows this bill will not become law. By seriously sitting down and negotiating a common sense tax bill we could easily pass legislation this year and give families and businesses the tax relief they deserve. I hope that we can put the partisanship aside and work together on formulating real tax reform this year. Our constituents deserve nothing less.

Mr. CRANE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the Conference Report of H.R. 2488, the Taxpayer Refund and Relief Act of 1999.

I'd like to commend our Ways and Means Committee Chairman BILL ARCHER and our Majority Leader DICK ARMEY for their leadership, not to mention the wise counsel of Speaker HASTERT, who crafted this tax relief package for all Americans. I was honored to be named a conferee for the Taxpayer Refund and Relief Act and am proud of the product of labors.

Mr. Speaker, during my long service in this body, I have had too few opportunities to cut taxes for the American people. I had to wait 12 years, until 1981, for the first major tax cut provided by the leadership of President Reagan. It was another 16 years, in 1997, before I could vote for another major tax cut. However, this Taxpayer Refund and Relief Act of 1999 is far and away my favorite. Not only

is it the largest, providing \$792 billion in tax relief, but it does so from budget surpluses provided by taxpayers. In effect, we're giving taxpayers a refund for overtaxing them. At the same time, we will be using the remaining surplus to pay down the national debt—as much as \$2 trillion over the next decade—as we lock away \$1.9 trillion to preserve and protect Social Security and Medicare.

However, talking about all those numbers is the stuff of Washington policy works. Let me tell the American people what this tax cut means for them.

Our Republican tax plan will give all taxpayers a cut in their income tax rates. In addition, 28 million working married couples will see a substantial reduction in their marriage penalty. Our bill also repeals the alternative minimum tax on individuals that will save taxpayers money while simplifying their tax returns. This provision is similar to legislation I introduced in this Congress to abolish the alternative minimum tax.

For farmers, small business owners and older Americans, our bill will reduce, then abolish, the estate tax over the next 10 years. This confiscatory tax, with rates as high as 55 percent, has forced families to sell the fruits of a lifetime of labor to pay the taxman instead of passing it on to the next generation.

The growth of the capital markets has given investors from all walks of life an opportunity to invest and save for the future. To further spur growth in these investments, H.R. 2488 will reduce tax rates on capital gains from 20 percent to 18 percent and from the lower rate of 10 percent to 8 percent. In the future, capital gains will be indexed so that investors won't be paying taxes on artificial gains from inflation. I am also pleased that my provision to cut capital gains taxes on the settlement funds which pay beneficiaries of class action lawsuits was included in the final package.

To further assist Americans saving for retirement, H.R. 2488 also includes \$35 billion in incentives for saving with individual retirement accounts, or IRAs. Savers will be able to contribute much more—up to \$5,000—to their IRA accounts. Also included among these incentives is my provision to allow IRA holders to rollover their funds to needy charities.

This bill has more good tax policy than I have time to mention. I do, however, want to say how pleased I am that my provisions to simplify the tax returns of affiliated groups of life insurance companies and another to encourage more foreign investment in U.S. mutual funds were also included in the final product.

I urge all my colleagues to support this tax relief package so that we may start to return the tax overcharge to the American taxpayers. Furthermore, I hope the President will not stand in the way of needed tax relief by vetoing this measure.

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the conference report on HR 2488.

Let me just highlight a few of this bill's flaws:

The Republican tax bill would spend \$792 billion over the next 10 years out of a budget surplus that will never occur. This tax cut is based on a false premise: without enacting spending cuts, the surplus simply won't occur.

By spending what we don't really have on tax cuts, this bill raids the Social Security sur-

plus and endangers Medicare. It pulls a fast one today's workers who's payroll dollars are creating the surplus that exists today.

The bill is a hoax even on those it portends to help. The individual tax rate cuts are dependent on no increase in national debt from now until 2009. One slight increase in interest rates is all that it takes for the national debt to increase. When was the last time interest rates did not increase over a ten year period?

This bill is a huge hoax because it claims to phase in all sorts of tax relief but all the tax changes end on October 1, 2009 as sure as Cinderella's coach turned back into a pumpkin.

For example, the estate tax repeal is not fully phased in until January, 2009. By October 1, 2009, the tax law reverts back to today's rates and provisions. What kind of incentive does a nine month tax-free window for estates create for families?

The Republican tax bill expands retirement savings incentives at the expense of average workers. How many working couples can afford to increase their IRA contributions from \$2,000 to \$5,000 per spouse? The Republican bill does nothing to help those who barely make enough to fund IRAs at current contribution levels. Rather than helping lower and moderate income taxpayers to save, this bill helps those who have already made the maximum contribution under current IRAs and 401(k) plans save even more.

Worse than just helping those in the upper brackets, this bill harms lower-wage workers depending on pensions. The Republican tax bill guts the "top heavy" rules enacted to assure that tax-favored pensions would be available to all workers and not skewed to help mainly those at the top. The "top heavy" rules are gutted just as the contribution amounts and benefits are increased. This bill does not bolster pension security; it increases pension insecurity for rank and file workers.

There is a gesture to assist with health expenses but this, too, is flawed. The prescription drug benefit is what the Republicans call a "place holder", not a real benefit for real people who today are making hard choices about whether to fill their prescriptions or to buy food and pay their rent and utilities. Our seniors need prescription drug help now, not a promise to deal with drug costs in some undefined way at some later time.

The Republican bill is flawed in the ways it throws money at special interests. Business tax breaks, unlike the rate reduction for individuals, will be in effect no matter how high the national debt soars.

The Republican tax bill throws \$24 billion in tax breaks at the multinational corporations. These are the same folks who move American jobs overseas.

It throws about \$650 million at the oil and gas industry which has a hand out in hard times but never gives credit due consumers in good times.

There is even a tax break to produce power from chicken droppings, a real turkey of a provision if there ever was one.

Timber growers get over \$275 in taxpayer assistance for reforestation, something timber growers already do.

Life insurance companies get a billion dollar tax break which allows them to file consolidated returns with their affiliates to shelter income from tax.

Another billion goes to nuclear power plant stockholders with the taxpayers picking up the tab for the decommissioning costs.

The Republican tax bill spends close to \$4 billion on raising business meal deductions but average workers won't be at the table for that perk. They don't get to take clients out for steak and martinis.

The Republican sponsors boast that their bill returns money to American families but they don't even do that in a fair way. Sixty percent of the taxpayers in the middle income quintile (annual income of \$23,800 to \$38,200) would receive an average tax cut of \$278 a year, less than 8% of the total money to be given back to families.

Compare that to the best off one percent of taxpayers—those making more than \$301,000—who would get an average tax reduction of more than \$46,000 a year under the Republican bill.

The bill does nothing to shore up Social Security or Medicare. It precludes paying down the debt with any surplus that occurs.

Although the Republicans have the votes to pass this turkey of a bill, they won't have my support for it. I will vote NO on HR 2488.

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I vehemently oppose this Republican tax bill to give money to the richest from a phantom surplus. Our surplus comes from Social Security funds and cuts in essential programs in housing, community oriented policing, legal services, anti-discrimination, research, environmental protection, and a host of other programs essential to America's families.

Let's look at the facts.

Sixty percent of tax payers of middle income and below would receive less than 8% of the total tax cuts. Their average tax reduction would be only \$138 a year.

The top 1/10th of taxpayers would receive 69% of the tax reductions and get an average annual tax cut of \$7,600.

Those making more than \$300,000—would get an average annual tax reduction of more than \$46,000 a year.

Let's look at the other 85% of our people. Personal savings are at an all-time low and 1/3 of the people have no assets at all.

Another 20% have negligible assets. Almost half of all American children live in households with no financial assets. More than 10 million Americans don't even have a bank account.

We are leaving too many behind. The rich have indicated they don't need the tax cut. Thank goodness they want a society with excellent schools, a skilled and healthy labor force, safe towns, all the things that the rest of us want.

The Republican tax bill for the rich who don't want it is an awful bill and will be rejected by the people.

Mr. SHOWS. Mr. Speaker, I favor cutting taxes. We all do.

But the Republican tax bill offers pie-in-the-sky, campaign promises that will give most Americans nothing but pocket change.

By failing to attack the \$6 trillion national debt, Republicans will give all Americans higher interest rates and higher prices for everything they buy, every day, for years to come.

We need a coherent fiscal policy, not feel-good election year across-the-board tax cuts. We can reduce taxes, but we need reasonable

tax cuts and incentives that really help working families and small businesses. Cutting capital gains and estate taxes, and the marriage penalty, are a good start.

But we should not squander this opportunity to put our fiscal house in order. We should use budget surpluses to pay off the debt as soon as we can.

But the Republicans are merely leading us down a road we have already traveled—a road that leads to greater deficits, higher interest rates, and a higher cost of living for every American.

Mr. Speaker, we need to do the right thing, and we have the resources to do it. Save Social Security and Medicare, reduce the national debt, and apply tax reductions where they will do the most good.

Mr. VENTO. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to H.R. 2488, the Republican tax bill. This legislation reminds me of the favorite books of my youth. I enjoyed reading the Hardy Boys series which always dealt with some mystery, usually the disappearance of something. This legislation would be a classic Hardy boys case—they would call it "The Case of the Disappearing Tax Cut."

The story would unfold with the Republican Leadership going around the country touting the major tax break for working families and how families would be able to take this tax break and meet all of their needs. And lo and behold, come next year when families were actually filing their taxes, that tax break would be gone. It would have vanished into thin air. At that point, Speaker HASTERT and Majority Leader DELAY would call in the Hardy Brothers to find out what happened to the tax breaks that they had promised.

Mr. Speaker, it won't take the Hardy Boys to solve this mystery. There will be no generous tax break in 2000 because it was never there. Under this legislation, families with an income of \$30,000 will receive an average \$278 tax cut—that's a cut of 76 cents a day when the bill is fully phased in. There's not a lot that can be done with that windfall.

As with every Republican tax bill, this legislation overflows with tax breaks heavily skewed towards special interests and the very rich while giving working families minimal assistance with maximum braggadocios. While working families will take home less than \$300, families earning more than \$301,000 will get an annual \$46,389 bonus from uncle Sam. That is \$127 in new tax breaks per day and it is more than most of my constituents earn.

On top of that imbalance, this legislation provides all sorts of goodies for the special interests. The GOP tax bill phases out the corporate minimum tax, gives special tax breaks to utilities to close nuclear power plants and special tax treatment for multinational giants. Who knows what other goodies are tucked away in this package? Certainly not the House Action Reports upon which many of us rely. The GOP Leadership and their staff gave them less than \$650 billion of the \$792 billion in ten year tax breaks. Well what's \$150 billion in tax breaks between friends: "Don't worry, be happy." These facts won't come out until this package has been forced through the House.

In their rush to reward their friends, the Republican majority refuses to set aside even

one dollar of the on-budget surplus to extend the solvency of the Medicare Trust Fund or the Social Security Trust Fund. Over \$4,100 a month in new tax breaks for taxpayers earning more than \$301,000 but not a penny for resolving the Medicare and Social Security programs. Mr. Chairman, it is time for a reality check. The problem in this issue is not ideology. We would all like a tax cut. The problem is basic arithmetic. This GOP tax bill doesn't add up.

Frankly, this fiscal tax expenditure scheme, which is based on speculative projects, risks undercutting the solid economic growth of the U.S. and the global economy. This scheme threatens to blow a hole in the budget, stacking up dollar after dollar in deficit red ink with no chance to pay down the U.S. \$5.6 trillion debt, while starving the defense and domestic program to death with commitments significantly less than in 1999. Ironically, we cannot even meet the needs today and this tax scheme assumes more cuts over the next ten years. This action and projection assumes no emergency spending, no military needs, no natural disasters, no new investment in families and places the U.S. economy in a straight jacket. At its best, this measure is irresponsible, unneeded, unfair, unworkable and represents bad judgement and politics at its worst.

Yesterday, the House voted to fund the 2000 Census categorized as a \$4.5 billion emergency and the Senate added \$7.4 billion as an agricultural emergency. The way this Congress is moving on emergencies there will be no budget surplus in FY 2000.

I believe that it is possible for Congress to get real and approve a targeted tax cut that will benefit working families. But first let us get the fiscal house in order and secure Social Security and Medicare, pay down the \$5.4 trillion debt and then move to enact a fair working family tax cut. Such a tax cut could include fairness in the marriage penalty and incentives to help families to help themselves. Such a tax cut should be based on real economic projections and not be viewed through the rose colored glasses that the Republicans wear. Above all else, these tax cuts should not be achieved at the expense of Social Security and Medicare.

When the Members vote for this measure they ought to use their "charge cards" because they are voting for new deficits. They want to go back to the pre-Clinton 1993 budget when our nation faced \$200 billion to \$300 billion deficits each year as far as the eye could see. This "charge it" policy is not for me nor is it for the American people who lived through 20 years of the Reagan inspired instant gratification philosophy. It is time to put away the credit card and reject this irresponsible, unfair politically inspired tax and fiscal mess.

Mr. Speaker, let's write a new ending to "The Case of the Disappearing Tax Cut." Let's work together on a bipartisan tax bill that does not jeopardize Social Security and Medicare; that does not sentence us to new deficits; that does provide real tax relief for working families and does simplify the current tax code.

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the Republican Tax Bill.

As I read through the Republicans' Tax Bill, I am reminded of the prayer in Saint

Augustine's Confessions, in which he asked God to "Give me chastity and continence, but not just now."

The Republican Leaders in Washington want to genuflect on the altar of fiscal responsibility.

But when it comes down to using the surplus to strengthen education, preserve Medicare and give seniors a prescription drug benefit, and pay down the debt, they say: "Give us chastity and continence, but not just now."

And with this bill, we are seeing the GOP embarking on a budget-busting bender.

The top 10 percent of the taxpayers will get 48 percent of the total benefits. The middle class tax breaks are phased in slowly, and may not happen at all depending on the strength of the economy. In contrast, the special-interest corporate tax breaks and estate tax repeal are automatic.

This isn't tax relief. It's deficit debauchery. This bill will squander the surplus on tax breaks for the rich, do nothing for Social Security, nothing for Medicare, and nothing on a prescription drug benefit. And at the same time, it will threaten to send us back to the days of deficits.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KOLBE). All time for debate on the conference report has expired.

Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the conference report.

There was no objection.

MOTION TO RECOMMIT OFFERED BY MR. RANGEL

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I offer a motion to recommit this bill to the conference, hoping that Democrats this time might be included so we can clean up this bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL) opposed to the conference report?

Mr. RANGEL. Yes, in its present form, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the motion to recommit.

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. RANGEL moves to recommit the conference report on the bill, H.R. 2488, to the committee on conference with the following instructions to the managers on the part of the House.

1. In order—

A. to preserve 100 percent of the Social Security Trust Fund surpluses for the Social Security program and to preserve 50 percent of the currently projected non-Social Security surpluses for purposes of reducing the publicly held national debt, and

B. to insure that there will be adequate budgetary resources available to extend the solvency of the Social Security and Medicare systems, and to provide a Medicare prescription drug benefit,

the House managers shall, to the extent permitted within the scope of conference, insist on limiting the net 10-year tax reduction provided in the conference report to not more than 25 percent of the currently projected non-Social Security surpluses (or if greater, the smallest tax reduction permitted within the scope of conference).

2. The House managers shall, to the extent permitted within the scope of conference, insist on not including in the conference report any provision which would constitute a lim-

ited tax benefit within the meaning of the Line Item Veto Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The motion to recommit is not debatable.

Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the motion to recommit.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to recommit.

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

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Evidently a quorum is not present.

The Sergeant at Arms will notify absent Members.

Pursuant to clause 9 of rule XX, the Chair will reduce to a minimum of 5 minutes the period of time within which a vote by electronic device, if ordered, will be taken on the question of agreeing to the conference report.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 205, nays 221, not voting 8, as follows:

[Roll No. 378]

YEAS—205

- Abercrombie
- Ackerman
- Allen
- Andrews
- Baird
- Baldacci
- Baldwin
- Barcia
- Barrett (WI)
- Becerra
- Bentsen
- Berkley
- Berman
- Berry
- Bishop
- Blagojevich
- Blumenauer
- Bonior
- Borski
- Boswell
- Boucher
- Boyd
- Brady (PA)
- Brown (FL)
- Brown (OH)
- Capps
- Capuano
- Cardin
- Carson
- Clay
- Clayton
- Clement
- Clyburn
- Condit
- Conyers
- Costello
- Coyne
- Cramer
- Crowley
- Cummings
- Davis (FL)
- Davis (IL)
- DeFazio
- DeGette
- DeLaHunt
- DeLauro
- Deutsch
- Dicks
- Dingell
- Dixon
- Doggett
- Dooley
- Doyle
- Edwards
- Engel
- Eshoo
- Etheridge
- Evans
- Farr
- Fattah
- Filner
- Forbes
- Ford
- Frank (MA)
- Frost
- Gejdenson
- Gephardt
- Gonzalez
- Gordon
- Green (TX)
- Gutierrez
- Hall (OH)
- Hastings (FL)
- Hill (IN)
- Hilliard
- Hinchee
- Hinojosa
- Hoeffel
- Holden
- Holt
- Hooley
- Hoyer
- Insliee
- Jackson (IL)
- Jackson-Lee (TX)
- Jefferson
- John
- Johnson, E.B.
- Jones (OH)
- Kanjorski
- Kaptur
- Kennedy
- Kildee
- Kilpatrick
- Kind (WI)
- Kleczka
- Klink
- Kucinich
- LaFalce
- Lampson
- Larson
- Lee
- Levin
- Lewis (GA)
- Lipinski
- Lofgren
- Lowey
- Lucas (KY)
- Luther
- Maloney (CT)
- Maloney (NY)
- Markey
- Martinez
- Mascara
- Matsui
- McCarthy (MO)
- McCarthy (NY)
- McGovern
- McIntyre
- McKinney
- McNulty
- Meehan
- Meeke (FL)
- Meeks (NY)
- Menendez
- Millender-McDonald
- Miller, George
- Minge
- Mink
- Moakley
- Moore
- Moran (VA)
- Murtha
- Nadler
- Napolitano
- Neal
- Oberstar
- Obey
- Olver
- Ortiz
- Owens
- Pallone
- Pascrell
- Pastor
- Payne
- Pelosi
- Peterson (MN)
- Phelps
- Pickett
- Pomeroy
- Price (NC)
- Rahall
- Rangel
- Rivers
- Rodriguez
- Roemer
- Rothman
- Roybal-Allard
- Rush
- Sabo
- Sanchez
- Sanders
- Sandlin
- Sawyer
- Schakowsky
- Scott
- Serrano
- Sherman
- Shows
- Sisisky
- Skelton
- Slaughter
- Smith (WA)
- Snyder
- Spratt
- Stabenow
- Stark
- Stenholm
- Strickland
- Stupak
- Tanner
- Tauscher
- Taylor (MS)
- Thompson (CA)
- Thompson (MS)
- Thurman
- Tierney
- Towns
- Traficant
- Turner
- Udall (CO)
- Udall (NM)
- Velazquez
- Vento
- Visclosky
- Waters
- Watt (NC)
- Waxman
- Weiner
- Wexler
- Weygand
- Wise
- Woolsey
- Wu
- Wynn

NAYS—221

- Aderholt
- Archer
- Armye
- Bachus
- Baker
- Ballenger
- Barr
- Barrett (NE)
- Bartlett
- Barton
- Bass
- Bateman
- Bereuter
- Biggert
- Bilirakis
- Bliley
- Blunt
- Boehlert
- Boehner
- Bonilla
- Bono
- Brady (TX)
- Bryant
- Burr
- Burton
- Buyer
- Callahan
- Calvert
- Camp
- Campbell
- Canady
- Cannon
- Castle
- Chabot
- Chambliss
- Chenoweth
- Coble
- Coburn
- Collins
- Combest
- Cook
- Cooksey
- Cox
- Crane
- Cubin
- Cunningham
- Danner
- Davis (VA)
- Deal
- DeLay
- DeMint
- Diaz-Balart
- Dickey
- Doolittle
- Dreier
- Duncan
- Dunn
- Ehlers
- Ehrlich
- Emerson
- English
- Everett
- Ewing
- Fletcher
- Foley
- Fossella
- Fowler
- Franks (NJ)
- Frelinghuysen
- Galleghy
- Gekas
- Gibbons
- Gilchrest
- Gillmor
- Gilman
- Goode
- Goodlatte
- Goodling
- Goss
- Graham
- Granger
- Green (WI)
- Greenwood
- Gutknecht
- Hall (TX)
- Hansen
- Hastert
- Hastings (WA)
- Hayes
- Hayworth
- Hefley
- Heger
- Hill (MT)
- Hilleary
- Hobson
- Hoekstra
- Horn
- Hostettler
- Houghton
- Hulshof
- Hunter
- Hutchinson
- Hyde
- Isakson
- Istook
- Jenkins
- Johnson (CT)
- Johnson, Sam
- Jones (NC)
- Kasich
- Kelly
- King (NY)
- Kingston
- Knollenberg
- Kolbe
- Kuykendall
- LaHood
- Latham
- LaTourette
- Lazio
- Leach
- Lewis (CA)
- Lewis (KY)
- Linder
- LoBiondo
- Lucas (OK)
- Manzullo
- McCollum
- McCreery
- McHugh
- McInnis
- McIntosh
- McKeon
- Metcalf
- Mica
- Miller (FL)
- Miller, Gary
- Moran (KS)
- Morella
- Myrick
- Nethercutt
- Ney
- Northup
- Norwood
- Nussle
- Ose
- Oxley
- Packard
- Paul
- Pease
- Petri
- Pickering
- Pitts
- Pombo
- Porter
- Portman
- Pryce (OH)
- Quinn
- Radanovich
- Ramstad
- Regula
- Reynolds
- Riley
- Rogan
- Rogers
- Rohrabacher
- Ros-Lehtinen
- Roukema
- Royce
- Ryan (WI)
- Ryun (KS)
- Salmon
- Sanford
- Saxton
- Scarborough
- Schaffer
- Sensenbrenner
- Sessions
- Shadegg
- Shaw
- Shays
- Sherwood
- Shimkus
- Shuster
- Simpson
- Skeen
- Smith (MI)
- Smith (NJ)
- Smith (TX)
- Souder
- Spence
- Stearns
- Stump
- Sununu
- Sweeney
- Talent
- Tancredo
- Tauzin
- Taylor (NC)
- Terry
- Thomas
- Thornberry
- Thune
- Tiahrt
- Toomey
- Upton
- Vitter
- Walden
- Walsh
- Wamp
- Watkins
- Watts (OK)
- Weldon (FL)
- Weldon (PA)
- Weller
- Whitfield
- Wicker
- Wilson
- Wolf
- Young (AK)
- Young (FL)

## NOT VOTING—8

Bilbray	Largent	Peterson (PA)
Ganske	McDermott	Reyes
Lantos	Mollohan	

□ 1336

Mr. HALL of Texas changed his vote from “yea” to “nay.”

Messrs. ANDREWS, CONYERS, RA-HALL and PAYNE changed their vote from “nay” to “yea.”

So the motion to recommit was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KOLBE). The question is on the conference report.

Pursuant to House Resolution 274, the yeas and nays are ordered.

This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 221, nays 206, not voting 7, as follows:

[Roll No. 379]

YEAS—221

Aderholt	Ewing	Linder
Archer	Fletcher	LoBiondo
Armey	Foley	Lucas (KY)
Bachus	Fossella	Lucas (OK)
Baker	Fowler	Manzullo
Ballenger	Franks (NJ)	McCollum
Barr	Frelinghuysen	McCrery
Barrett (NE)	Gallegly	McHugh
Bartlett	Gekas	McInnis
Barton	Gibbons	McIntosh
Bass	Gilchrest	McKeon
Bateman	Gillmor	Metcalf
Bereuter	Gilman	Mica
Biggert	Goode	Miller (FL)
Bilirakis	Goodlatte	Miller, Gary
Billey	Goodling	Moran (KS)
Blunt	Goss	Myrick
Boehlert	Graham	Nethercutt
Boehner	Granger	Ney
Bonilla	Green (WI)	Northup
Bono	Greenwood	Norwood
Brady (TX)	Gutknecht	Nussle
Bryant	Hall (TX)	Ose
Burr	Hansen	Oxley
Burton	Hastert	Packard
Buyer	Hastings (WA)	Paul
Callahan	Hayes	Pease
Calvert	Hayworth	Petri
Camp	Hefley	Pickering
Campbell	Herger	Pitts
Canady	Hill (MT)	Pombo
Cannon	Hilleary	Porter
Chabot	Hulshof	Portman
Chambliss	Hoekstra	Pryce (OH)
Chenoweth	Horn	Radanovich
Coble	Hostettler	Ramstad
Coburn	Houghton	Regula
Collins	Hulshof	Reynolds
Combest	Hunter	Riley
Condit	Hutchinson	Rogan
Cook	Hyde	Rogers
Cooksey	Isakson	Rohrabacher
Cox	Istook	Ros-Lehtinen
Crane	Jenkins	Roukema
Cubin	Johnson (CT)	Royce
Cunningham	Johnson, Sam	Ryan (WI)
Danner	Jones (NC)	Ryun (KS)
Davis (VA)	Kasich	Salmon
Deal	Kelly	Sanford
DeLay	King (NY)	Saxton
DeMint	Kingston	Scarborough
Diaz-Balart	Knollenberg	Schaffer
Dickey	Kolbe	Sensenbrenner
Doolittle	Kuykendall	Sessions
Dreier	LaHood	Shadegg
Duncan	Largent	Shaw
Dunn	Latham	Shays
Ehlers	LaTourette	Sherwood
Ehrlich	Lazio	Shimkus
Emerson	Leach	Shuster
English	Lewis (CA)	Simpson
Everett	Lewis (KY)	Skeen

Smith (MI)	Taylor (NC)
Smith (NJ)	Terry
Smith (TX)	Thomas
Souder	Thornberry
Spence	Thune
Stearns	Tiahrt
Stump	Toomey
Sununu	Upton
Sweeney	Vitter
Talent	Walden
Tancredo	Walsh
Tauzin	Wamp

Watkins
Watts (OK)
Weldon (FL)
Weldon (PA)
Weller
Whitfield
Wicker
Wilson
Wolf
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

## NAYS—206

Abercrombie	Green (TX)
Ackerman	Hall (OH)
Allen	Hastings (FL)
Andrews	Hill (IN)
Baird	Hilliard
Baldacci	Hinchee
Baldwin	Hinojosa
Barcia	Hoefel
Barrett (WI)	Holden
Becerra	Holt
Bentsen	Hooley
Berkley	Hoyer
Berman	Inslee
Berry	Jackson (IL)
Bishop	Jackson-Lee
Blagojevich	(TX)
Blumenauer	Jefferson
Bonior	John
Borski	Johnson, E.B.
Boswell	Jones (OH)
Boucher	Kanjorski
Boyd	Kaptur
Brady (PA)	Kennedy
Brown (FL)	Kildee
Brown (OH)	Kilpatrick
Capps	Kind (WI)
Capuano	Kleczka
Cardin	Klink
Carson	Kucinich
Castle	LaFalce
Clay	Lampson
Clayton	Larson
Clement	Lee
Clyburn	Levin
Conyers	Lewis (GA)
Costello	Lipinski
Coyne	Lofgren
Cramer	Lowey
Crowley	Luther
Cummings	Maloney (CT)
Davis (FL)	Maloney (NY)
Davis (IL)	Markey
DeFazio	Martinez
DeGette	Mascara
Delahunt	Matsui
DeLauro	McCarthy (MO)
Deutsch	McCarthy (NY)
Dicks	McGovern
Dingell	McIntyre
Dixon	McKinney
Doggett	McNulty
Dooley	Meehan
Doyle	Meek (FL)
Edwards	Meeks (NY)
Engel	Menendez
Eshoo	Millender-
Etheridge	McDonald
Evans	Miller, George
Farr	Minge
Fattah	Mink
Filner	Moakley
Forbes	Moore
Ford	Moran (VA)
Frank (MA)	Morella
Frost	Murtha
Ganske	Nadler
Gejdenson	Napolitano
Gephardt	Neal
Gonzalez	Oberstar
Gordon	Obey

## NOT VOTING—7

Bilbray	McDermott	Reyes
Gutierrez	Mollohan	
Lantos	Peterson (PA)	

□ 1347

So the conference report was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

## CONFERENCE REPORT ON S. 507, WATER RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT ACT OF 1999

Mr. SHUSTER submitted the following conference report and statement on the Senate bill (S. 507) to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources, to authorize the Secretary of the Army to construct various projects for improvements to rivers and harbors of the United States, and for other purposes:

## CONFERENCE REPORT (H. REPT. 298)

The committee of conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the amendment of the House to the bill (S. 507), to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources, to authorize the Secretary of the Army to construct various projects for improvements to rivers and harbors of the United States, and for other purposes, having met, after full and free conference, have agreed to recommend and do recommend to their respective Houses as follows:

That the Senate recede from its disagreement to the amendment of the House to the text of the bill and agree to the same with an amendment as follows:

In lieu of the matter proposed to be inserted by the House amendment, insert the following:

**SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.**

(a) *SHORT TITLE.*—This Act may be cited as the “Water Resources Development Act of 1999”.

(b) *TABLE OF CONTENTS.*—The table of contents of this Act is as follows:

*Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.***TITLE I—WATER RESOURCES PROJECTS**

*Sec. 101. Project authorizations.*

*Sec. 102. Small flood control projects.*

*Sec. 103. Small bank stabilization projects.*

*Sec. 104. Small navigation projects.*

*Sec. 105. Small projects for improvement of the quality of the environment.*

*Sec. 106. Small aquatic ecosystem restoration projects.*

**TITLE II—GENERAL PROVISIONS**

*Sec. 201. Small flood control authority.*

*Sec. 202. Use of non-Federal funds for compiling and disseminating information on floods and flood damage.*

*Sec. 203. Contributions by States and political subdivisions.*

*Sec. 204. Sediment decontamination technology.*

*Sec. 205. Control of aquatic plants.*

*Sec. 206. Use of continuing contracts for construction of certain projects.*

*Sec. 207. Water resources development studies for the Pacific region.*

*Sec. 208. Everglades and south Florida ecosystem restoration.*

*Sec. 209. Beneficial uses of dredged material.*

*Sec. 210. Aquatic ecosystem restoration.*

*Sec. 211. Watershed management, restoration, and development.*

*Sec. 212. Flood mitigation and riverine restoration program.*

*Sec. 213. Shore management program.*

*Sec. 214. Shore damage prevention or mitigation.*

*Sec. 215. Shore protection.*