

fighters for them. We need the opportunity to address the real needs of the American people.

**BIENNIAL BUDGET PROCESS  
WOULD ELIMINATE ELECTION  
YEAR GRIDLOCK**

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

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, I support the biennial budget process. That is that we should have: The budget process every 2 years and not every year. I have a bill, H.R. 493, to provide such a process. Senator DOMENICI, in the Senate, has a companion bill.

Why is this an improvement over the current process? I believe that by adopting such a measure we would remove all this political in-fighting partisanship every year, plus all the pork barreling that occurs so often.

What I would like to see is that in the first session we pass the first 13 appropriations bills, then in the second session we do oversight to find out what has happened with all this legislation that we passed. Is it working? The second session could also be reserved for looking at the emergency spending.

I think the current process is very partisan and we should remove it. So please support H.R. 493, the biennial budget process.

**CONGRESS SHOULD PUT ITS  
FINANCIAL HOUSE IN ORDER**

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

Mr. MOORE. Mr. Speaker, it is time we put our financial House in order. We have the opportunity for the first time in a generation to do the right thing for ourselves, for our country, and for future generations.

We must begin to conduct our financial affairs in this country the way families across America have for years and years. For years they have observed three very simple but unspoken rules: Number one, do not spend more money than is made. Number two, pay off debts. And number three, take care of basics.

The basics for our country, Mr. Speaker, are Social Security, Medicare, national defense, and a number of other things that we could all talk about here.

Our willingness to do the right thing now will pay tremendous dividends to us now and to our children and grandchildren in the future in terms of lower interest rates, and in terms of \$243 billion that we paid in 1998 as interest on the national debt.

If we do this now, Mr. Speaker, we will do a tremendous thing for our

country, and I ask all of my colleagues in Congress to join with me in an effort to begin the debate to pay down our national debt.

**DO AWAY WITH MARRIAGE TAX  
PENALTY**

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

Mr. WELLER. Mr. Speaker, over the last several years many of us have asked a very fundamental question, and that is, is it right, is it fair that under our Tax Code if individuals get married they pay higher taxes than if they stay single? Is it right, is it fair that under our Tax Code that 28 million married working couples pay on average \$1,400 more in higher taxes just because they are married?

Well, this House, under the leadership of the Speaker, is going to do something about that. Today, the House Committee on Ways and Means is going to have committee action on H.R. 6, legislation which will wipe out the marriage tax penalty for the vast majority of those who suffer it, providing marriage tax relief for 28 million married working couples; couples such as Shad and Michelle Hallihan, two public school teachers from Joliet, Illinois, who suffer the marriage tax penalty just because they are married.

Now, their marriage tax penalty is about \$1,000, just below average. But Michelle Hallihan told me, she said, "Tell your friends in Washington that the marriage tax penalty is real money for real people." That thousand dollar marriage tax penalty that Shad and Michelle suffer, they just had a baby, and she pointed out that that \$1,000 would purchase for her and her husband and her child 3,000 diapers.

Let us eliminate the marriage tax penalty. I am pleased a dozen Democrats have finally joined with us. We are going to make a bipartisan effort and wipe out the marriage tax penalty.

**NEW DEMOCRATIC BUDGET**

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

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, last week the Congressional Budget Office released its latest estimates for the budget surplus. The CBO laid out three different on-budget surplus estimates ranging from \$800 billion to \$1.9 trillion.

Depending on the actions of this Congress, we can use the surplus wisely or it can be unwisely spent, without paying off the debt, shoring up Social Security, or funding desperately needed programs, such as providing prescription drug coverage for Medicare recipients and school construction and modernization of our schools.

Mr. Speaker, it is imperative that we pay down the national debt. I fully support the President's goals stated in his State of the Union Address to eliminate public debt by 2013.

As has been indicated, this Congress, and implied by my colleagues on the other side of the aisle, the Republican leadership will not adhere to the spending caps in the fiscal year 2001 budget. For this reason, it is imperative that we use the surplus to ensure the long-term solvency of Social Security and pay off the national debt.

Once we have done this, we can then use the remaining surplus and the money saved in interest payments on our debt to enact a voluntary prescription drug plan so that seniors do not have to choose between food and medication. We can help our crumbling schools and build new classrooms to relieve a system bursting at its systems. And, yes, we can even give targeted tax cuts to help hard working American families make ends meet.

**ELIMINATE THE MARRIAGE TAX  
PENALTY**

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

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, 20 years ago my wife, Libby, and I walked down the aisle. And we were lucky, we had a lot of family and friends there, who showered us with gifts. My wife seemed to have written thank you notes for a month or two afterwards trying to catch up.

Now, we got married in October. Well, come April we got a little notice from Uncle Sam. It was not a wedding gift, though. It was the marriage tax penalty. Because we decided not to live with each other; because we decided to get married, we had to pay more money. And just like Michelle and Shad Hallihan in Joliet, Illinois, we in Savannah, Georgia, had to pay extra.

Now, as the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. WELLER) said, Michelle is pregnant. She is going to have a baby. Uncle Sam is going to take away about \$1,000 worth of diapers because of the marriage tax penalty. But they will also be having to buy diaper changing tables and cribs and all kinds of other things, such as car seats and so forth. Why? Because they are doing the right thing. Because they are making a lifetime commitment.

Because they are going to become property taxpayers, to send their kids to the schools, they are going to contribute to the United Way and to all the charities and the churches, for that Uncle Sam is penalizing them. Common sense says we need marriage tax relief. It is a good bill. I hope that we can pass it soon.