

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PEASE). Will the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SAM JOHNSON) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas 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 has passed without amendment concurrent resolutions of the House of the following titles:

H. Con. Res. 278. Concurrent resolution authorizing the use of the Capitol Grounds for the 19th annual National Peace Officers' Memorial Service.

H. Con. Res. 279. Concurrent resolution authorizing the use of the Capitol Grounds for the 200th birthday celebration of the Library of Congress.

H. Con. Res. 281. Concurrent resolution authorizing the use of the East Front of the Capitol Grounds for performances sponsored by the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.

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

S. 2323. An act to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to clarify the treatment of stock options under the Act.

S.J. Res. 40. Joint resolution providing for the appointment of Alan G. Spoon as a citizen regent of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution.

S.J. Res. 41. Joint resolution providing for the appointment of Sheila E. Widnall as a citizen regent of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution.

S.J. Res. 42. Joint resolution providing for the appointment of Manuel L. Ibáñez as a citizen regent of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair advises the Members that it will entertain one 1-minute request only from the gentleman from New York (Mr. NADLER). All other 1-minute requests will be postponed until the end of the day.

HONORING RABBI JACOB J. SCHACHTER

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

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor this morning's guest chaplain, Rabbi Jacob J. Schachter of the Jewish Center in New York City whom I have known for almost 20 years.

Rabbi Schachter has been the spiritual leader of the Jewish Center since 1981. Under his leadership the Jewish Center has tripled in its membership. Rabbi Schachter has brought enthusiasm for Jewish life to the synagogue and to the local community throughout his tenure.

Rabbi Schachter received Rabbinic ordination from Mesvita Torah Vodaas and holds a Ph.D. in Near East languages from Harvard University. Among his many accomplishments, Rabbi Schachter is an accomplished author, having collaborated on "A Modern Heretic and a Traditional Community, Orthodoxy, and Americana Judaism" and is the founding editor of the Torah u-Madda Journal. He is also the founding president of the Council of Orthodox Jewish Organizations of Manhattan, is a much sought after speaker on interdenominational dialogue under the auspices of the Jewish Community Center and the 92nd Street Y, and is a member of the Board of Governors of the New York Board of Rabbis.

Unfortunately, Rabbi Schachter will soon be leaving the Jewish Center to become the dean of the Rabbi Joseph Soloveitchik Institute in Brookline, Massachusetts, where his daily insights, wisdom and leadership will be invaluable to the State of Massachusetts and to the Jewish community, especially in Massachusetts. I want to wish him well in his new endeavors and thank him for all that he has done for the Jewish Center, for the Jewish community, and for the entire community in New York over the last 20 years.

□ 1030

CONFERENCE REPORT ON HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 290, CONCURRENT RESOLUTION ON THE BUDGET, FISCAL YEAR 2001

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 474 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 474

Resolved, That upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider the conference report to accompany the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 290) establishing the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2001, revising the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2000, and setting forth appropriate budgetary levels for each of fiscal years 2002 through 2005. All points of order against the conference report and against its consideration are waived. The conference report shall be considered as read. The conference report shall be debatable for one hour equally divided and controlled by chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Budget.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PEASE). The gentleman from Florida (Mr. GOSS) is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the distinguished gentlewoman from New York (Ms. SLAUGHTER), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

Mr. Speaker, H. Res. 474 is a straightforward typical rule providing for the consideration of the annual budget resolution conference report. The rule waives all points of order against the conference report and against its consideration and provides that the conference report be considered as read. The rule further provides for 1 hour of debate, equally divided and controlled between the chairman and ranking member of the Committee on the Budget.

The two Chambers have come to a speedy agreement on the fiscal year 2001 budget resolution, sorting out differences between the Houses in a responsible manner. I am pleased to note that the conference report to be considered today adheres to the six major principles that we outlined when this process began, including continuing our historic achievement of paying down the national debt, protecting 100 percent of the Social Security trust fund, boosting our national defense, providing for prescription drug coverage and Medicare reform, offering tax relief, and supporting our localities in the all-important arena of education of our youth.

In each of these areas, the budget package we have before us today keeps the faith with our pledge to the American people. We are delivering on our promise to make the government work better for taxpayers, while managing this extraordinarily blue sky fiscal period in a very responsible manner.

In this budget we are reaffirming our commitment to maintaining fiscal discipline, something that can prove even harder to do when times are good than when times are bad. Yet, in this budget we have provided for \$1 trillion, \$1 trillion, in payment on the national debt. That is something that we are doing that will benefit every American today and, of course, all of our children and grandchildren for years to come.

\$1 trillion in debt reduction. That is a concept that was totally unimaginable for most of us just a few short years ago when deficits were soaring and the debt was mounting at a terrifying pace. What a long way we have come.

Mr. Speaker, this budget document outlines an important set of priorities that highlight preservation of the programs Americans count on most; reinforcement of our ability to defend the national security in today's ever more dangerous world and the necessity of enhancing tax fairness for families and businesses.

I would like to emphasize the importance of the defense and security component of this budget which would, of course, include intelligence. Last night in the Committee on Rules, we discussed the significance of the investment this budget makes in our defense, not for fancy or high-priced or untested projects, but rather for the core capabilities that have been so underfunded and so severely tested in recent years.

I applaud those who fought for and won the increase in funding, and I stand ready to work to make sure we put those resources where they will matter the most in our personnel, in our readiness, in our basic equipment, in our eyes and ears, that is our intelligence, and in our training to make sure our military folks are the best trained in the world and can take the best possible care of themselves.

Unlike the budget presented to us by the President, we have here today a budget that realistically meets the needs and the challenges of the coming year, without returning to the bad old days of spending for today without any eye to the future at all.

I am proud of our Committee on the Budget Members and the leadership for their efforts in this budget blueprint. Specifically I would like to thank the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KASICH), our courageous Committee on the Budget chairman, for all his work, not just this year, but throughout his distinguished tenure in the House. I know there will be many accolades to come for the gentleman from Ohio (Chairman KASICH), as this is the final act of his official House budget career, all of them well deserved.

Mr. Speaker, I hope my colleagues will join me in voting for this budget, and, in the meantime supporting this fair and appropriate rule, so we can get to the debate.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me the customary 30 minutes.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the rule because I oppose the hasty process that this rule embraces. This resolution waives the rule that requires the availability of conference reports for 3 days before their consideration. This House rule, an important rule, allows Members time to read and study the report before they cast their votes. Since this conference report has been available to most Members for less than 12 hours, I have grave doubts that most Members have any real knowledge of about what it includes.

From what I can tell, the conference report once again repeats the follies of the leadership's continued obsession with large tax cuts. It does little to extend the solvency of Social Security or

Medicare and cuts funding for critical education and housing programs.

I wish my colleagues would drop the charade and reflect for a moment. These surpluses on our horizon, if they materialize, offer an extraordinary opportunity. They allow us to pay down the large public debt, thereby providing the ultimate tax cut for our constituents in the form of lower interest rates.

The surpluses allow us to make Social Security and Medicare sound and solvent for future generations. They mean that we can close the gaping hole in the Medicare coverage and provide a true prescription drug benefit. They make it possible for us to do more for education at all levels. But this document squanders that opportunity and instead we continue to pass billion dollar tax breaks for wealthy special interests.

The conference agreement suffers from the same fundamental flaws as the House-passed resolution. The \$170 billion tax cut is so large that it pushes aside Social Security and Medicare solvency, debt reduction, education, and all other national priorities.

The conference agreement is a political gesture, rather than a credible budget plan that would provide a meaningful guide for subsequent budget legislation. The spending cuts are so deep and unrealistic and the tax cuts so large that the resolution puts us on a track for another appropriations train wreck in September.

Like the House-passed resolution, the conference agreement puts the budget on course to spend the Social Security surplus. Even taking at face value this budget's implausible cuts in non-defense programs, it skates along the edge of on-budget deficits for the first 5 years and invades the Social Security surplus after 2008, if not sooner.

Moreover, the conference report puts funds for education and training on hold. In 2001, the conference agreement provides \$4.8 billion less than the Democratic alternative budget, and \$4.7 billion less than the President's budget for appropriations for education, training, and social services. This low funding level will require the majority to cut current education programs or to eliminate the President's proposals to renovate the crumbling schools, to hire and train more teachers, to add \$1 billion to Head Start and to double the amount for after-school programs. Outlays for 2001 actually are \$400 million below a freeze at last year's level.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to focus for a moment on how the measure came up short on Medicare prescription drugs. The conference agreement allows a prescription drug benefit of up to \$40 billion over 5 years, but only if accompanied by unspecified Medicare reforms. By contrast, the Democratic alternative budget re-

quired that a full \$40 billion be devoted to a prescription drug benefit, with or without other changes in Medicare.

In both 1998 and 1999, the American people rejected these same unrealistic cuts in essential Federal spending and excessive tax cuts. Why on Earth would anyone believe that the American people will suddenly change their minds and reject essential government services like Social Security and Medicare in favor of tax cuts?

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

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, I am privileged to yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania (Mr. SHUSTER), the chairman of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, my friend and colleague.

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, if you care about building America, this is a rule and budget resolution that one can support. In fact, it is one of the best budget resolutions that we have seen in many a day.

I want to commend the leadership of the Committees on the Budget of both the House and Senate for honoring their commitments to fully fund transportation. The conference report allocates sufficient transportation function funds so that we can fully fund TEA 21, the highway and transit legislation, including the adjustments resulting from the increased revenues going into the gas tax collections into the Highway Trust Fund.

It also fully funds AIR 21 capital programs and it fully funds the President's request for FAA operations, which is at the full AIR 21 level. In addition, there are no cuts in Coast Guard or in Amtrak, despite the predictions of the critics during our debate and consideration over AIR 21. So those predictions simply have not come to pass in this budget resolution.

The conference report keeps faith with the American people. The taxes collected for highways and transit improvements will go into the Highway Trust Fund for highway and transit improvements. The taxes collected for aviation will go to aviation improvements. Gone are the days of using trust funds to mask the size of the deficit.

The budget resolution restores honesty to the budget process. This is a budget resolution which we can be proud to support, because it is a budget resolution which helps build America.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPRATT).

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding me time.

Mr. Speaker, this is another rule that was passed late at night to bring to the floor a conference report that, in all due respect, does not deserve the name. It is hard to call this a conference report when nobody has conferred. We have had no consultation. There is no

mutuality in the process, so it is not hard to believe that there will be no mutuality, no common ground, in the final result.

I am not just saying this because I am miffed at being left out of the process. If you cannot take rejection, you better not be in politics. But we set a model 3 years ago for how to do this. We sat down and tried to negotiate a common agreement, given the fact that we have a divided government, and, when we got to the end, it was a pretty good product. We called it the Balanced Budget Agreement of 1997. We have not had such mutuality, such collegiality, since, and certainly not in this result here.

As I said, I am not miffed, but we have meritorious arguments to make. We made them on the House floor, we made them in the committee markup. I am not sure they were heard in either place, but if we could have made them in conference, I think we could have improved this product, because in conference if we had had a conference, we would have said you are asking for \$121.5 billion now in real reduction and budget authority for non-defense programs over the next 5 years. Is this realistic?

Let us look at the last 5 years that have gotten the attention in conference. Let us look at the last 5 years. The reduction in the increase in the last 5 years was 2.5 percent.

□ 1045

That was a time when we had caps, spending caps. That was a time when we were coping with the deficit and trying to reduce the deficit.

Now we have surpluses and no spending caps, because that is one of the omissions of this bill, it does not reset the spending caps at all. It simply assumes, with no enforcement mechanism, that we can achieve what we have not achieved over the last 10 years, \$121.5 billion in real reduction in our defense spending. Too bad we did not have an opportunity to look at that argument realistically in conference.

This bill calls for \$175 billion in tax reduction. We showed on the House floor how if we do \$40 billion for Medicare and a \$200 billion tax cut, we will wipe out the surplus in 1 year and thereafter have a zero balance, no cushion whatsoever. In case there is a downturn we are back in deficit. We are back into the social security count, putting the budget on thin ice, perilously close to deficit for the next 5 years.

They have mitigated that. I think they maybe after all read our chart, and mitigated that to the tune of \$25 billion. They say they want to pay down the national debt. That means over 5 years we will pay it down by \$12 billion by our calculation, over 10 years by \$1 billion.

Why is that? What looks like a more moderate tax cut than last year, what looks like a moderate tax cut, a tax cut of \$175 billion, over a 10-year period of time works out to a tax cut of \$929 billion, by our calculation.

Last year the tax cut was \$156 billion over 5 years, and \$792 billion over 10. This year, if we do \$176 billion, the out-year implications are \$929 billion of revenue reduction plus debt service adjustment. It literally puts us back in deficit.

But they conveniently did not run the budget out 10 years, in this case. That is another thing we could have done in conference, give us a 10-year run-out of the budget, not a 5-year run-out, because in the second 5 years it becomes harder to defend.

These are some major issues we did not touch on. We certainly did not touch on Medicare and prescription drugs. There is a time-honored tool that is put in the Budget Act in 1974 that the Committee on the Budget uniquely can use. If it wants to see something done, it can say to the committee of jurisdiction, you have the authority and the obligation, and here is the money to report out a prescription drug benefit by a date certain so that the House can vote on it.

But every time we mention that, they dodge. This bill right here not only dodges again, because it does not have reconciliation mandates in it. This particular resolution does not even resolve the issue. There is \$40 billion for Medicare reform and prescription drugs if the Committee on Ways and Means gets around reporting such a bill, and then in the Senate, there is a totally different prescription.

The idea of a conference report is to bring the two bodies together. On this most critical issue, which is at the top of the chart, they fail to do it. We do not have a clear course and we do not have a mandate to get it done.

I know what we will hear today is the budget resolution is on time, we are going to pass it by April 15. I am going to tell the Members what I said last year, it is on time for a train wreck that will be coming in September. That is what this budget resolution will do for us.

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. SMITH).

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I have been on the Committee on the Budget for a full 7 years. This is my eighth year. This will be only the second budget that we have passed on time by April 15 during that time. In fact, in the total history of the Committee on the Budget, this will only be the third time that we have passed a timely budget resolution.

So I would like to compliment the Committee on Rules, certainly the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KASICH) on the Committee on the Budget. If we look at

where we were 7 years ago, we were looking at deficits as far as the eye could see, between \$200 billion and \$300 billion a year. We have come a long ways.

We made the decision last year that we are not going to spend any of the social security trust fund surpluses on anything except social security. This has been a huge change, huge progress. We have agonized as we have tried to hold down spending to make sure ultimately that our kids and grandkids are not going to be saddled with a huge burden of Medicare and social security.

If there is one disappointment in this budget, and I met and talked to John Podesta this morning from the White House, it is that we could not get leadership from the White House to move ahead on social security reform. It is going to come up and be a tremendous disadvantage to our kids and our grandkids if we do not attack and face up to the huge problems of resolving the unfunded liability of social security and Medicare and the entitlement programs.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4½ minutes to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. McDERMOTT).

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, this budget resolution sort of reminds me of one of those good news-bad news jokes. The good news is that this law says that we should pass a budget resolution by April 15. We are going to do that. That is the good news. The bad news is that it is a joke.

If we look at this and listen to what the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPRATT) said, the gentleman is one of the most thoughtful, one of the most intelligent people. He actually was a banker once. He knows about money. He gave a very erudite explanation of this budget.

If we listen to the gentleman, the most important thing he said was that this resolution puts us on record for the train wreck in September. We are right on track. We are going to do it all over again this year what we did last year.

We could talk about Medicare, Medicaid, and all those issues, social security and education, all the issues that are not dealt with here. But this budget resolution contains \$100 billion more in cuts. We did not do that last year, we added, and we are heading right down the same track.

I know people's eyes kind of glaze over when we talk about the budget resolution. What is this? This is an outline for what is going to happen in this country in this Congress.

One of the issues on \$1.9 trillion, that is a figure that is sort of out of the reach of most of us, but let us just take one issue. That is the issue of pharmaceutical prescription drugs; how people, how seniors are going to get that paid for. Everybody says it is a good idea. But when we look at this budget

resolution, I have brought this chart here because it really points out what is all about this budget resolution.

The Democratic proposal was for \$40 billion locked in for the drug benefit. The Republican budget says, if the Committee on Ways and Means gets around to it, we could spend up to \$40 billion. Which would we rather have, have it locked in, or if they happen to get around to it?

Does it require action this year? The Democrats say yes. The Republicans say no. There is no requirement in this budget.

The gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPRATT) talked about reconciliation and all those fancy words. What that means is that the Committee on Ways and Means must do something, and it is not in this bill.

Who is covered? In the Democrats' proposal, every senior citizen is covered. In the Republicans' budget, they have to be poor. So we are going to turn this into a welfare program, it is not a Medicare program.

Mr. Speaker, this turns this program, the Republicans', into a welfare program. Senior citizens are not entitled to it, they have to go down and prove at the welfare office that they are poor enough and ask for help, beg for help. What kind of a benefit is that for us to be giving to senior citizens?

The Democratic proposal says all seniors are covered. As an American over 65, you are entitled. But the Republicans do not believe in that.

The benefit? The Democrats define what people are going to get. What the Republicans say is, here is a little money. Why do you not go out and see if you can buy yourself an insurance policy?

The HIAA, the health insurance industry, says that the private insurance market will not sell policies simply for drugs, for pharmaceuticals. They are not going to do it. It is too risky. So the Republicans are giving them the money and saying, okay, folks, go out and find it. But it is not there. They will never find it.

This budget resolution is basically a PR document. Pass it on time, we want to get it done, we will all stand up here and say it is the first time in 29 years that we have had a budget resolution, and all the rest, but the fact is that it is a nonsense piece of paper.

It is really sort of like Alice in the Looking Glass. The more we look at it, and the reason they ran it through at midnight last night, is because they did not want us to have any time to look at it, because it becomes curiouser and curiouser.

I urge Members to vote against this budget resolution.

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, I am happy to yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. GREEN), a member of the committee.

Mr. GREEN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding time to me.

Mr. Speaker, it is going to be very interesting to watch this debate today. Everyone here today recognizes that some great things have been happening with the economy. Unemployment is at a 30-year low, the economy continues to grow.

Now there are some on the other side who want us to go back to the old days, the days of tax and spend and spend and tax. That is really what they are talking about when they bring out their numbers, their interpolated charts and numbers. That is what they are trying to do. They are trying to move us backward.

Still others want us to sit back and do nothing. They want us to enjoy the fruits of our labor and the fruits of this growing economy.

But the majority budget, the budget we take up today, recognizes that we have a once-in-a-generation opportunity to make progress, to secure America's future. That is what this reform budget does. This budget reinforces retirement security to the social security lockbox.

Secondly, it pays down the debt, reduces it by \$1 trillion over 5 years. It eliminates the public debt by the year 2013.

It reinvests in public education, a 9.4 percent increase over last year. It sets in motion a plan for providing prescription drug benefits to seniors. It begins to rescue our military from years of neglect and misuse.

Yes, and I know this is blasphemy to some, yes, it does provide tax relief. It allows Americans to keep more of what they earn.

I hope today will be a good debate. I think it will show the clear differences between the two parties, between those who want to move backwards and those who want to charge ahead. Today should be a good debate.

I urge my colleagues to support this good, open, fair rule. More importantly, I urge my colleagues to vote for this budget. When we go home over the Easter break, I urge them to talk about the great things we are doing, the challenges that we are meeting, and the steps we are taking.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE).

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from New York for yielding time to me.

Mr. Speaker, allow me to thank the ranking member, the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPRATT), for a very detailed analysis of the process. Many of us are concerned about process. But in the course of his defining the process, he really captured the substance of my opposition to this resolution at this time.

The gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPRATT) is right, the 1977 budget reconciliation was one of our finest

hours. The reason is that some of us agreed with aspects of it, and some of us disagreed. But we found that the synergism of providing a budget surplus was a key element to our support.

We now find ourselves in the year 2000 with a budget surplus, but we also find ourselves with a budget where many of us disagree because the principles of opportunity are denied. We give a tax cut that I imagine is to cater to a candidate running for president of the United States on the Republican ticket.

We do not do anything to deal with extending social security and Medicare. One thing that we certainly throw to the winds and leave it encumbered with all kinds of problems is the senior citizen prescription drug benefit.

Members can imagine in a district like the Eighteenth Congressional District, probably representative of many across the Nation, with a high number of senior citizens, there is not a place that I go that they do not say, what choices do you want me to make, food, housing, or my health care?

I do not see why we are prepared to give a \$929 billion tax cut, if we project it over 10 years, to placate the presidential politics when we have individuals in our community who have worked, who have paid taxes, who are living by themselves and cannot provide for their health care, cannot get prescription drugs?

We have a plan. The Democrat plan is unencumbered. Yet, we could not get that resolved in this budget process.

□ 1100

In my State, a mere 20 percent of our young people get college degrees. We are fighting this whole issue of the digital divide, realizing that e-commerce is driving the economy, begging to get our young people educated, needing more teachers professionally developed, needing our crumbling schools being rebuilt, and, yet, this budget does not provide for that in its educational piece.

It slows up on the idea of education. In particular, Mr. Speaker, it does not allow for the President's proposals to renovate crumbling schools. We leave out money to hire and train more teachers. I was in a meeting with members of the e-commerce industry, and one of the things that we noted in that discussion was we appreciate our teachers, but we must make them professionally aware of the technology.

We do not have the money, Mr. Speaker, for Head Start. How many Head Start graduates do we have in leadership positions and owners of small business. There is a definitive measure that we can have to determine that Head Start is a successful program.

So I certainly ask my colleagues and my Republican colleagues, in a time of

opportunity, what are we challenged to do? We are challenged to give opportunity to others who may not have walked that walk before. We need to be fiscally responsible, but we did that in 1997, and that is why we are here today.

Now we need to establish priorities. A prescription drug benefit for seniors that is unencumbered, education for our children, compensation for our teachers, the rebuilding of crumbling schools, the protection of Social Security and Medicare, and the heck with the \$929 billion tax cut that no one is asking for except presidential politics. We can do better than that, Mr. Speaker. I ask to vote down the resolution and do a better job.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. MORAN).

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I think we know what this budget resolution conference report is all about. The majority wants to provide the Republican presidential candidate with a budget that he can work with, and that is fine. I read on the front page of the Washington Post today that Presidential Candidate George Bush has recommended another \$46 billion of spending this week alone, \$13 billion more for education, \$25 billion more for defense, and then, of course, he wants a tax cut of over one and a half trillion dollars over the next 10 years.

Well, that is great. We are all for many of those things. But the thing that troubles us the most is that we have what may be a once in a lifetime opportunity to do right by our children's generation. We have an unprecedented surplus ahead of us. Is it right to use that surplus for our own benefit, or is it better to use that surplus to pay off the debt that we incurred so our children do not have to pay it off and so our children do not have to pay the quarter of a trillion dollars in interest costs that are due every year. And those interest costs will be a lot more when they are our age.

We are the ones who had the benefit of running up that enormous deficit during the 1980s. We now have the responsibility to pay it off. First things first. Pay off the \$3.7 trillion of our public debt so that our children are not burdened with that debt.

Second thing, provide for our own retirement, provide for our Social Security and Medicare. That is our second responsibility. Do not leave it to them to have to provide for our retirement and our health care when we are no longer working and doing so well.

How wrong a legacy to leave the public debt to our children's generation, to leave it to them to pay for Social Security and Medicare. How right to pay off our debt now, to provide for our own retirement, and, to the extent we can, target tax cuts where they will benefit the economy, where Allan Greenspan

will not have to raise interest rates to offset their stimulus effect. Target them and then invest in the next generation in education, prescription drugs research and development, and infrastructure. That is what we should be doing. That should be our legacy for our children.

This conference report does not accomplish that legacy. Let us do the right thing, the responsible thing. Reject this selfish, short term budget policy. We can do better than this. Much better.

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the distinguished gentleman from California (Mr. DREIER).

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I simply rise in strong support of this rule and the budget conference report itself.

We are making history here by, on time, proceeding for the first time in the quarter century since we have had the 1974 Budget Impoundment Act with doing back-to-back budgets on schedule. I believe that that is a very clear signal that this Congress, under the leadership of the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HASTERT) is on track towards doing the kinds of things that he said when he stood in this well in January of 1999. He has proceeded with regular order following with the rules and the structure that we have in place here.

What is it that we are doing? Well, we have established the priorities the American people very much want us to address. Education is a great concern to the people whom I am honored to represent in Southern California. It is a concern all across this country. We need to make sure that, as we deal with this global economy, that the American people have the expertise that is necessary to be competitive. The best way to do that is to enhance the education level that we have in this country. This measure goes a long way towards doing that.

We have a priority. The gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KASICH) who came before the Committee on Rules last night made it very clear in his testimony that, what is it that the Federal Government can do and has the responsibility to do that no other level of government can do whatsoever? That is those very, very important words right in the middle of the preamble of the Constitution, "provide for the common defense." That is exactly what this budget does by dramatically enhancing our ability to deal with our national security and the security of our interests around the world. Ensuring that we get our very brave men and women off of food stamps, that is a priority that we have here.

So as we look at this budget, it is a very, very important conference report.

I will say, since I am standing here in the well and I am looking at the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KASICH) who is

in the back of the Chamber, that he will be sorely missed. It has been his leadership over the past several years that has played a big role in getting us to the point where we are today, and I look forward to great things from him in the years to come.

The best way that we could send him off when he does leave here months and months from now is to overwhelmingly pass this rule and to pass this budget conference report with strong bipartisan support.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY).

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, there were three main issues associated with this conference. First, should we add \$4.1 billion to defense spending, increasing overall spending by that amount, and reducing the surplus by that amount? The conference said "yes" to that question.

Second question: Should we increase efforts to fight dreaded diseases by increasing spending for NIH by \$1.6 billion, which would increase overall spending by that amount? The conferees said "no" to that question.

Third: Should we increase student assistance by as much as \$200 per grant in order to offset the higher cost of higher education and pay for that by a small cut in the size of tax breaks planned for the high rollers in this society? The conference again said "no."

Those are the issues before the conference. Those are the issues before the House today.

This huge Republican tax cut will simply not permit us to do what nearly everybody knows we ought to be doing to help students get the kind of education they need. That reflects what Candidate Bush said in my State last week. He is reported in the Eau Claire newspaper saying as follows: "George W. Bush gave strong indications Thursday he is not inclined to increase Federal spending to give more grants to students to go to college. Bush, who attended both Yale and Harvard, conceded that some people have complained that loans carry a repayment burden. "Too bad," he said. "That is what a loan is." There is a lot of money available for students and families willing to go out and look for it. Some of you are just going to have to pay it back, and that is just the way it is." What this really is is Richey Rich indicating that he does not have a clue about how the other half lives.

What this conference also does today is gut our ability to deal with the problems we need to deal with respect to health problems.

This chart shows the amount by which every appropriation to attack major diseases will be cut from the Senate amendment in order to make room for my colleagues' Republican tax cut today. They have been talking to folks about how they are going to

promise to help increase research on diabetes. This says they are going to have to cut \$47 million below the amount in the Senate amendment. They are going to have to cut \$14 million for Parkinson's disease. They are going to have to cut \$350 million for all types of cancer research. They cut \$41 million from research that could have taken place on Alzheimer's and \$180 million from research that could have taken place on AIDS.

So when my colleagues vote on this conference today, think of the 150 people a day who will be diagnosed with cancer this year, think of those suffering with diabetes and Parkinson's and Alzheimer's, and think of all of the students who are struggling every day to get a decent education who my colleagues will not be able to help.

That may be consistent with the Republican values. It is not consistent with the values of the people I represent.

[From the Leader-Telegram, Mar. 31, 2000]

BUSH AVERSE TO MORE COLLEGE GRANT FUNDING—LET STUDENTS GET LOANS, CANDIDATE SAYS IN EC

(By Doug Mell)

Texas Gov. George W. Bush gave strong indications Thursday he is not inclined to increase federal spending to give more grants to students to go to college.

Instead, Bush said, he has more affinity for giving students loans.

"I support Pell Grants (the federal government's main college grant program)," Bush told reporters after visiting Locust Lane School in Eau Claire. "I support student loans."

Bush, who attended both Yale and Harvard, conceded that some people have complained that those loans carry a repayment burden.

"Too bad," he said. "that's what a loan is."

Bush, the Texas governor and likely GOP presidential nominee, added: "There is a lot of money available for students and families who are willing to go out and look for it."

"Some of it you are going to have to pay back, and that's just the way it is because there is nothing free in society. College is not free."

He also said the federal government should not get involved in setting tuition levels for state colleges and universities.

Here are edited remarks from a question-and-answer session between Bush and reporters after visiting Locust Lane School:

What are your plans to increase school accountability?

We are going to ask the question, are children learning? We are going to say to states, "If you accept federal money, you have to develop an accountability system." I believe a national test will undermine local controls of schools.

Under the Title 1 initiative, it says that after a three-year period, if standards aren't being met for disadvantaged students—in other words, if students remain in failed schools—instead of subsidizing failure, something must happen. You can't have an accountability system, you can't measure, unless ultimately there is a consequence. Otherwise, there is no accountability.

And the consequence is, the parents get to make a different choice. It's funding children and it's battling failure.

I believe if you set high standards and hold people accountable, people will learn. I've seen it with my own eyes.

Is it the school's fault when test scores are low or is it a combination of things?

I think it's the system's fault. When you have kids that can't pass a basic test, it sounds like to me that they have just been shuffled through the system. Because nowhere along the line has someone blown the whistle and said, "Now wait a minute; we are not going to move you through until you know what you are supposed to know."

When you have high school kids who can't pass basic reading comprehension exams, you've got a problem. If a kid can't read when he gets to high school, something is fundamentally wrong with the system.

That's why it is so important to address these problems early, before it is too late.

What has been the response to your proposals from teachers?

I differentiate between the union leaders and the teachers. I think the teachers are helping. I think teachers want the best. I think really good teachers do not care about being held accountable. I think they understand that accountability is not a punishment.

We need to expand the program at the federal level that encourages, trains, pays stipends to, ex-military people who come into classrooms.

I want to increase the teacher training, teacher recruitment aspect of the federal expenditures, but I want to send it back to the states with a lot of flexibility.

One of the cornerstones of the education reform package at the federal level is maximum authority and maximum flexibility back to the states. The more flexibility states have to spend federal money to meet their needs, the more money is freed at the local level as well.

I think there needs to be a teacher protection act, which will say that if teachers uphold standards of discipline in their classrooms, they can't get sued under civil rights statutes.

Could Gov. Tommy Thompson play a role in your administration?

Tommy is a friend, and he's smart and he's capable. He's led the way on a lot of interesting initiatives and education reforms. There is a lot of different roles Tommy could play.

Have you approached anyone concerning being a vice presidential candidate?

No, and I won't with anybody. I obviously have thought about it. People say to me all the time, "Why don't you consider so and so, and why don't you consider this and that?"

But I have yet to put a process in place. Over the next couple of weeks, I will be thinking through the strategy.

I think there is going to be a need to have a different attitude in Washington. There has to be a different type of politics and a different type of attitude about expending political capital.

And I tell people point-blank in this state and every state: If you want four more years of Clinton-Gore, I'm not the right guy. That's really what much of the election is about.

What are your plans on dairy policy?

I'm going to say the same thing that other presidents have: We need to have a national plan, a national dairy policy. Until there is one, until there is one that the country can agree to, there is going to be compacts.

Do you oppose dairy compacts?

I'd like to see a national dairy plan.

That includes something on compacts?

It would include a national plan that all regions of the country could live with. If you had a national dairy plan, hopefully, if it made sense, it would make them moot.

I'm going to be a president for everybody. Surely there is plan that is best for the nation.

Would Wisconsin dairy farmers get a fair break under your administration?

I think what Wisconsin dairy farmers can expect is a fair, even-handed policy that tries to develop a national dairy strategy. I recognize it's going to be difficult to do.

What is your position on the Elian Gonzalez controversy?

He should have his day in a family court in Florida. And the (Clinton) administration has been heavy-handed on this issue, and I disagree with them, I strongly disagree with them.

There needs to be a full hearing, and I hope his dad gets to come over (from Cuba) and testify.

I don't trust Fidel Castro. I don't trust the system. I do not believe we ought to trade with Cuba and Fidel Castro, because foreign trade with Castro becomes an avenue for propping the administration up.

I hope the dad is given the chance to make the decision in a free world, give him a chance to make a decision about his son in a totally free environment. There needs to be a venue to make that decision.

What is your position on trade with China?

I do believe we ought to have China in the World Trade Organization. But as opposed to trading with government entities, most of the trade with China, as a result of the World Trade Organization, will be with private entities.

What is your position on campaign finance reform?

I think we ought to have campaign funding reform. It starts with people being honest about the law. Secondly, I think we ought to ban corporate soft and labor union soft money, so long as you have paycheck protection.

We need instant disclosure who the campaign contributors are and I want full instant disclosure on what went on in the White House when the vice president was there.

I think we can make it more fair, more open and more realistic so people know what is going on.

I'd love to work with Sen. (Russ) Feingold and Sen. (John) McCain on that issue. I would hope he (Feingold) would allow paycheck protection so union members don't have their money spent by union bosses without their permission.

What is the first bill you would send to Congress after you are elected.

First is to go to the Defense Department, the secretary of the defense, and ask for a top-down review, a top-to-bottom review of the strategies in place to reconfigure our military.

I worry about haphazard spending, political spending when it comes to procurement, research and development. And I want there to be a procedure in place to reconfigure how war is fought and war.

Our military needs to be lighter, more lethal, easier to move, harder to find. We need to think 20 or 30 years down the road.

The first bill I would like to see coming out of education is Title 1 reform with flexibility to states.

I would like Congress to pass a tax-relief package, with a tax fairness component, I think we need to get rid of the death tax.

This code we have today penalizes people who live on the outskirts of poverty. If you

are a mother making \$22,000 a year and you have two children, for every additional dollar you earn, you pay a higher marginal return than someone making \$200,000. It's not right.

So my simplification plan drops the bottom rate from 15 percent to 10 percent and increases the child credit, which facilitates upward mobility among people who are struggling.

It may sound strange to hear a Republican talking that way, but I'm passionate about this subject. Al Gore is going to say it's risky.

But what is risky is locking people in place in America. What we ought to believe in is having a tax code that encourages upward mobility, not discourages upward mobility.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, how much time do I have remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PEASE). The gentleman from Florida (Mr. GOSS) has 18 minutes remaining.

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

Mr. Speaker, whenever anybody leaves an institution, an institution is obviously diminished, a little poorer, especially when it is a good person. Obviously people get replaced through the election process and through the hiring process here, but there is still always a sense of loss when we lose one of our spectacular people.

Much has been said about the gentleman from Ohio (Chairman KASICH), and I want to be associated with those remarks, the extraordinary job he has done through the years here today. We acknowledge that.

I know in the general debate, he is going to have the great opportunity to display his brilliance, and we are going to have the opportunity to further thank him.

Mr. KASICH. Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the gentleman will yield to me.

Mr. GOSS. I am happy to yield to the gentleman from Ohio.

Mr. KASICH. Mr. Speaker, I want to point out what the Republicans have done since they took the majority in dramatically increasing the funding for the National Institutes of Health.

□ 1115

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, I appreciate the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KASICH) bringing that forward.

I was going to make the observation that this is really a debate about the rule, and I think we agree it is a brilliant rule and deserves everybody's support; and we are trying to get to the debate when the distinguished chairman can make the kinds of points that are so relevant to the debate and the final vote on the budget.

But today I also want to recognize and publicly thank an outstanding Hill staffer who has set an admirable standard for the past 12 years and who is now heading for new challenges.

Today's rule is the last piece of legislation that Wendy Selig will handle before she heads off to a leadership position of the American Cancer Society.

Wendy personifies skill and professional competence in her work, whether it is as a press secretary, an administrative assistant, the majority counsel on the Subcommittee on Legislative and Budget Process that I chair, or as a special assistant on the House Committee on Intelligence. All of these jobs she has done at one time or another or sometimes simultaneously.

Wendy brings a special brightness to whatever she touches, as all those who have worked with her knows. We wish her all success in her new endeavor. We will miss her a lot.

Mr. Speaker, 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 (Mr. PEASE). The question is on the resolution.

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

Ms. SLAUGHTER. 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 221, nays 205, not voting 8, as follows:

[Roll No. 124]

YEAS—221

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

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

NAYS—205

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

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

NOT VOTING—8

Borski	Houghton	Stark
Combest	Myrick	Wynn
Cook	Northup	

□ 1137

Mr. SAWYER and Mr. BALDACCI changed their vote from "yea" to "nay."

Mr. HULSHOF changed his 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. KASICH. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 474, I call up the conference report on the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 290) establishing the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2001, revising the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2000, and setting forth appropriate budgetary levels for each of fiscal years 2002 through 2005.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PEASE). Pursuant to House Resolution 474, the conference report is considered as having been read.

(For conference report and statement, see proceedings of the House of April 12, 2000, at page H2206.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KASICH) and the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPRATT) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KASICH).

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

Mr. Speaker, let me one more time run through what this budget proposal and outline does today, because it is, I believe, the right combination and the right direction for our country, although I will tell my colleagues right off the bat, it spends too much. But with what we are working with here, with a narrow margin and a lot of diverse interests, I think we have come up with a very good proposal.

First of all, for the second year in a row, the second time in 40 years, we are not going to touch the Social Security surplus. We are not going to take any money that is in surplus that comes in from the Social Security taxes to pay benefits for our seniors; we are not going to take it and spend it on any other government program. That means that that surplus is going to be available to fix Social Security for the

baby boomers and their children. So we will keep our mitts off of that.

Secondly, we are going to strengthen Medicare with a prescription drug program and other Medicare reforms. We think that is important. Now, we hear people on the other side of the aisle criticizing our Medicare proposal. The President first of all cuts Medicare and secondly does not have a prescription drug program until 2003. I like to call it the "somewhere over the rainbow program." We believe we ought to get Medicare reform and prescription drugs today, and we are going to be unveiling our plan to strengthen Medicare.

Thirdly, we are going to retire \$1 trillion of the publicly held debt. Now, for so long around here, we talked about passing all this debt on to our children. We are going to pay \$1 trillion of the publicly held debt down; and in fact we are on track, if we wanted to, to pay off the public debt by 2013. We are also going to strengthen education and science. Let me just make the point that some folks have said on this House floor that we do not do enough for Pell grants.

□ 1145

Well, we have had a 50 percent increase in Pell grant funding since 1995 when we took charge. As you can see, under a Democrat President and Democrat Congress, Pell grants were not a priority, but under the Republican Congress, starting in 1995, we have significantly increased Pell grants every single year.

Now, I know that some people say it is never enough, but the fact is that we do, in fact, want to accomplish these other missions, having to do with Medicare and retiring debt, and having a small tax cut at the same time. I will get to that in a second.

For those who do not think we make education a priority in this budget, they are wrong. We significantly increase education, primary and secondary, and we continue our march to make Pell grants more available. But I would suggest to many of my colleagues, why do we not have a few conversations with these university presidents who cannot seem to control costs that are going up in higher education by far faster than the rate of inflation? No matter what we do in this body, we cannot solve the problems of the cost of higher education until we get some help on the side of the people who run these institutions who have not been able to manage costs. But let there be no mistake, we have increased the amount of money for Pell grants in this Congress by 50 percent.

In addition to our support of education and basic science, a basic science program that we believe stresses programs like the human genome project, which offers so much hope for everyone in this country for a healthier life for our families; not just

extend life, but improve the quality of life with the major breakthroughs that are occurring by the ability to code the human gene.

Mr. Speaker, they say that sometimes advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic, and the fact is when we think about efforts that go on today to decode the human gene system, it is just remarkable. We believe in basic science research in this House.

In addition to that, we are promoting tax fairness for families and farmers and seniors. Let me talk a little bit about this. We have a guarantee of \$150 billion in tax cuts out of a \$10 trillion budget. I can only define that as puny. The President today is going to say that that is too much of a tax cut. Well, of course it is for the President. He raises taxes. But to cut \$150 billion, guaranteed, out of a \$10 trillion budget, and to somehow say that is risky and out of line, well, sure it would be for somebody who thinks that we ought to just get our paychecks and send it all to the government. Of course, they think that is too much.

But I tell you, it is interesting when we have votes on things like repealing the earnings test tax, so that seniors can be independent and not get penalized on their Social Security, everybody votes for it. When we put the elimination of the marriage penalty tax on the floor, it is amazing the bipartisan support we get for that.

I will tell you another thing. We bring a bill up here to reduce the inheritance tax, the death tax, on farms, you watch the people that will vote on a bipartisan basis in this House, because, you know what? The day you die, you should not have to visit the IRS and the undertaker on the same day.

The fact is that we need more tax relief. I am disappointed we do not have four times as much tax relief in this bill, because the American people know that America is strengthened from the bottom up, not from the top down; that in this new era, bureaucracy and centralization is not the key. In this new era, it is the power of the individual to compute and to communicate and to re-knit our families together, in our schoolhouses, in our churches, in our synagogues, and community organizations. Let us strengthen them, not strengthen the power of the central government in a far-away place.

Finally, we are going to restore America's defense. We are going to restore it because we do not think that our soldiers and sailors and airmen ought to be in a position where they are on food stamps, where we have spread them out all over the world and not given them the tools they need to be an effective fighting force.

Let us not forget that providing for the common defense is the number one priority of the central government. We need to rebuild our Nation's defense,

and, I hope at the same time, to reform our Nation's defense.

Mr. Speaker, I think we ought to come to this floor on a bipartisan basis and we ought to support a budget that saves Social Security, that strengthens Medicare and allows our seniors to have access to prescription drugs, that reduces the publicly held debt by \$1 trillion, that gives our children a fighting chance to have a better tomorrow, that strengthens the support for education and basic science, that promotes tax fairness and reduces the tax burden on small business and families and family farms, and restores America's defense establishment. If we can accomplish all of that in one vote today, we should have no reluctance on a bipartisan basis being able to support this.

We should come here with a firm eye and send a message to the American people that we are starting to get it, we are starting to understand them. We want them to have the power, and we want them to have the responsibility to rebuild this country.

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

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. GEPHARDT).

Mr. GEPHARDT. Mr. Speaker, this conference report is essentially the same document as the resolution Republicans had on the floor last month. The Republican budget plan, if implemented, would threaten our record prosperity and undermine the values of middle-class families. This budget reflects the irresistible urge Republicans have to enact massive, irresponsible tax cuts above all other needs and priorities of the American people.

They give tax cuts a higher priority than extending the life of Social Security and Medicare, they are willing to sacrifice a real Medicare prescription drug plan for all seniors, and they are willing to make deep cuts in health and education in order to make their budget add up.

There is not one dime in this budget for Social Security and Medicare. Republicans' unwillingness to do anything to prevent the long-term insolvency of these programs that serve as the bedrock of retirement security for millions of Americans is inexplicable.

This budget pretends that it pays for a prescription drug plan. But, if you look closer, you will see there is not one penny appropriated for a drug plan. The money is "reserved." It is a budget gimmick. It is not real. It will not happen. Talk is cheap; prescription drugs are not. This budget does not solve the problem.

This budget contains Draconian cuts in non-defense appropriations. Nearly \$120 billion in cuts need to be made, and, if Republicans have their way, they will cut deep into important priorities like education, health, veterans' affairs, and the environment.

It is clear what the American people want. They want a fiscally responsible budget that will keep interest rates low and the economy growing, they want to strengthen Social Security and Medicare so that retirement security is protected for current and future retirees, they want a drug plan in Medicare that covers all seniors who want it, and they want to invest the surplus in their priorities, like making sure that children get the best public education we can provide.

Mr. Speaker, this budget did not get better in the conference. It probably got worse. It continues to ignore the voices of working families who have made it perfectly clear that they reject the efforts to bleed the surplus dry for political tax cuts instead of investing in Social Security, in Medicare, in paying down the debt, in ensuring the future of this great country.

Vote against this budget. We can do better than this.

Mr. KASICH. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. RYAN).

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I am a new Member of Congress, but I was not born yesterday, and I hear this rhetoric come to the floor of Congress every time we bring these budgets together. You hear the other side of the aisle castigate each other, as if the world is going to end tomorrow. You hear these inflammatory accusations of what is actually happening.

Mr. Speaker, I would like just to point to the facts. I would like to go over what is actually included in this budget, rather than inflammatory remarks about political posturing.

A budget outlines the priorities of a country. A budget outlines the priorities of Congress. That is what we are achieving in this budget, so it is more than just numbers.

What we are achieving in this budget is really truly historic. This budget, for the first time in 30 years, is stopping the raid on the Social Security trust fund.

Imagine that. In 1969, they passed a bill back then which gave the government the ability to dip into the Social Security trust fund, take the money out, both Republicans and Democrats did it, and then spend it on other government programs that have nothing to do with Social Security. We are putting an end to that. This budget is doing that.

This budget is also strengthening Medicare. It is reserving \$40 billion to create a prescription drug plan for seniors beginning next year, not in the year 2003 as the President has been proposing. This budget retires the entire national public debt by the year 2013. It pays off our public debt by the year 2013. It supports education and science. It promotes tax fairness for families, for working families and for seniors, and it does restore our vital national

defenses and the quality of life for our military personnel.

What I would like to guide you to is the Social Security part, because this is something that is very important to me. I am a younger Member of Congress, and I fundamentally believe that it is our obligation in this body to make Social Security a program that is not just solvent for this generation, but for the generation after that, which is the baby boomers, and the generation after that. So we have got to act now to prepare for the problems we have coming in Social Security.

Last year the President came to Congress in the State of the Union address and he said, "Let's dedicate 62 percent of the Social Security surplus back to Social Security and take 38 percent out of Social Security to the government programs." He said he would take 38 percent out of Social Security to spend it on the government programs. That is the budget last year that the President brought to Congress. That was the culture in Washington, that was the way things were done.

We countered with a different proposal last year. 100 percent of the Social Security surplus should go to Social Security, and, by golly, we actually accomplished that. Last year, for the first time since 1969, we stopped taking money out of Social Security. This budget stops the raid on Social Security, not just for now, but forever, so we can pay off the debt and preserve Social Security for future generations.

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY).

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, it is a joke to hear Members of the party that tried to blow up Social Security for 30 years now pretending that they are defending it.

I would like to just make two points: It has been suggested that our comments with respect to National Institutes of Health funding are inaccurate. Does the other side deny that they turned down the Senate amendment that would have added \$1.6 billion to NIH?

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

Mr. OBEY. I have 1 minute. You can get your own time.

Mr. NUSSLE. You asked a question.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I would like order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PEASE). The gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY) controls the time.

Mr. OBEY. The gentleman understands the rules.

Mr. Speaker, I would point out with respect to Pell grants, their standard bearer, Richie Rich, or, excuse me, George Bush, said in my state last week when asked if he would help students who have such a huge debt overhang, "Too bad, that is what a loan is. There is a lot of money available for

students and families willing to go out and look for it. Some of you are just going to have to pay back, and that is the way it is."

Do you disagree with that? Do you disagree with your standard bearer? You certainly cannot tell it from your budget resolution. You specifically eliminated the \$600 million the Senate added for Pell grants. I think that makes clear where you stand.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. SHAYS) controlling the time of the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KASICH).

There was no objection.

□ 1200

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. HOLT).

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from South Carolina for yielding time to me. I also would like to state how much I appreciate the leadership of the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPRATT) in the Committee on the Budget.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to see the increase in the budget for research, especially for the National Science Foundation. This bodes well for the fate of the support of research in Congress this year.

Turning to the budget resolution overall, which is supposed to represent our national priorities, I would like to point out how skewed these priorities are contained in this blueprint that we have before us. They are not the ones that the families in New Jersey tell me about.

New Jersey families tell me that the things that are most important to them are shoring up social security, Medicare, education, environmental protection, and they see the benefit, the direct benefit, to them of paying down the national debt.

I would like to point out that the Democratic substitute would have devoted three times as much to paying down the debt as the one that is before us now. The majority's budget resolution has one overriding priority, exorbitant tax cuts at the expense of everything else.

In the Committee on the Budget, I offered an amendment that would have invested more resources in school construction, smaller class sizes, larger Pell grants. It was rejected in favor of enormous tax cuts.

We offered an amendment in committee to pay down our national debt faster. It was rejected in favor of tax cuts.

Earlier this week on the House floor Democrats offered motions, a motion that said simply, let us wait on the enormous tax cuts until Congress has had a chance to pass bipartisan legislation modernizing Medicare. That, too, was rejected.

Make no mistake, there are appropriate tax cuts. I myself have crossed the aisle to support marriage tax relief, estate tax cuts, and other reductions. But the irresponsible tax cuts contained in this legislation are a direct affront to our obligations, I mean the obligations of our society to provide a good education for all of our children, to give access to good health care for all, to protect our air and water and land for those who come after us. This headlong obsession with large tax cuts even puts at risk social security.

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 10 seconds.

Mr. Speaker, I would say that only in Washington would a colleague have the motivation to say that a 2 percent reduction in taxes is an enormous tax cut.

We are going to have \$11 trillion in revenue. We are cutting taxes \$150 billion, and the gentleman calls that enormous?

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2½ minutes to my colleague, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SUNUNU).

Mr. SUNUNU. Mr. Speaker, the previous speaker talked about priorities, that the priorities of this budget should be setting aside the social security surplus.

We set aside every penny of the social security surplus for the third year in a row. This was first proposed last year by Republicans in response to the President's suggestion that we should spend 40 percent of the social security surplus. That is simply wrong.

The speaker suggested that one of the priorities should be providing prescription drug coverage for Medicare beneficiaries. We set aside \$40 billion to put together not just prescription drug coverage, but coverage that includes reforms that protect the options and choices of those senior citizens that currently have prescription drug coverage.

There was a suggestion that our priority should be paying down the debt. We do. We are on a glide path to pay down the debt by 2013.

The suggestion was that the priorities should be education and science, and they are. He pointed out specifically the additional funding for the National Science Foundation. Indeed, we also have over \$1 billion that is focused toward the special education mandate that burdens cities and towns across the country.

We also have the kinds of tax fairness that the previous speaker suggested that he supported: eliminating the marriage penalty, getting rid of the social security earnings test, getting rid of death taxes for millions of our citizens.

Of course, we promote a strong national defense.

I want to talk specifically, though, about the record on debt reduction. The suggestion was that an alternative

had three times the debt reduction that this resolution has. That is quite frankly a fiction, because this resolution has \$1 trillion in debt relief over the next 5 years.

Was there any resolution brought to the floor that provides \$3 trillion of debt relief over 5 years? Of course not. That is simply not possible.

However, we pay down \$1 trillion over the next 5 years. That is not just a pie in the sky projection, because if we look at what we have already done, the achievement is quite significant: \$50 billion in debt paid down in 1998, \$88 billion in 1999, over \$150 billion this fiscal year.

As we debate the budget here on the floor today, we are going to pay down over \$170 billion in the next fiscal year, \$450 billion in debt reduction over a 4-year period, an historic achievement. It keeps interest rates low, it keeps the economy on the right track.

Certainly we could keep penalizing seniors and pay down a little bit more debt, but that would be wrong. We could keep penalizing married couples and pay down a little more debt, but it would be wrong.

We have a proposal here that sets the right tone for the American economy and achieves the right goals for the taxpayers.

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2½ minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BENTSEN).

Mr. BENTSEN. Mr. Speaker, the budget before us today is kind of like a decoy budget because it is like putting your duck decoys out in the pond. You have increased defense spending by \$4 billion. Now we have locked that in. We know this September that money is now committed and there is no way of going back.

Then they are proposing to cut other spending by \$7 billion. That is probably not going to happen because their own members on the Committee on Appropriations on the Republican side are not going to want to do it, but the decoy ploy has worked pretty well.

The budget is well crafted from the standpoint of getting a document done. It is not well crafted from a budget policy standpoint. I think at the end of the day it is going to be a failure, like the other budgets that the Republican Congress has tried to adopt.

We have heard a lot about the social security surplus. I will just say since I have been around here, since fiscal year 1995, the Republicans have been trying to spend the social security surplus on tax cuts. It was not until the economy under the Clinton administration had gotten so strong that we had such surpluses because of the Clinton recovery, and the political beating that they took for their attempts to do that, that now they are able to have this renewal of faith and say that, in fact we support social security and we are not going to touch it.

Their numbers do not add up. They say they want to increase NIH, but they rejected the amendment that the Senate had adopted to increase NIH. The way the function is in the budget, they do not leave any room to increase NIH.

They are going to cut community health, which is contrary to what the standardbearer said yesterday where he wants to increase community health by \$4 billion. Their tax cut still works out to be about \$800 billion over 10 years, which will probably push this budget, if it were to become law, into spending the social security surplus.

Finally, with respect to prescription drugs, we have yet to see the plan. It reminds me of when I was a boy, kind of, of President Nixon's secret plan, not yet President Nixon, to get us out of Vietnam. It never actually happened. I think that is probably true with the prescription drug plan. The budget resolution still says if, maybe, whenever, but it does not say when like it does with taxes.

We can pass this budget today. We will be here in September writing the real budget.

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Mrs. CLAYTON).

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

Mr. Speaker, this conference report is good if one is among the few who are well off and healthy, but it is bad if one is like so many of our citizens, they are struggling and facing poor health.

This conference report gives a \$150 billion tax cut to the wealthy while, in reverse form, Robin-Hood like manner, it takes from the old, the young, the students, families, communities, especially farming communities.

This conference report cuts programs from agriculture at a time when indeed our agriculture communities are struggling. Discretionary spending for agriculture is cut. Resources needed to process claims and make timely loans are cut. Funds for programs to provide vital information to farmers are cut.

Over a 5-year period, this budget resolution cuts the purchasing power of agriculture by 9.1 percent over the next 5 years. It provides \$500 less in income assistance to farmers than the House-passed resolution, and that was, indeed, inadequate.

Mr. Speaker, with this conference report education funds are cut, the Head Start program is cut, after school programs are cut, Pell grants are cut, and there is no school repair nor monies provided for more teachers.

Rural seniors indeed need help. Rural seniors on Medicare are over 50 percent more likely to lack prescription coverage for the entire year over urban beneficiaries.

Mr. Speaker, this conference report is good, indeed, for those who need no

help. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I urge Members to reject this conference report. It is bad for America.

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, to set the record straight on agriculture, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. CHAMBLISS).

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. Speaker, I beg to disagree with the gentlewoman, who is my dear friend and who I work with very closely on the Committee on Agriculture. But as a member of the Committee on the Budget, I just want folks involved in agriculture to know and understand that we worked very hard over the last 2 years to provide money in the budget for real, meaningful crop insurance reform; that we have also provided money in this year's budget in anticipation of a bad year in agriculture for more money to go to our farmers in the form of an additional AMTA payment.

The gentlewoman is probably right, we are going to cut out some of the bureaucratic function of Washington, DC with respect to agriculture, but this budget, which is the best budget our chairman has ever produced, in my opinion, in the 6 years that I have been here, is going to put more money in the pockets of farmers than any other budget we have ever passed in the 6 years that I have been here.

It is at a time when our farmers are in dire straits all across the country, whether it is Georgia or Iowa or whether it is New England. This particular budget is going to go to put more money in the pockets where it is needed.

Sure, it is probably going to take some money out of the bureaucracy, but we are going to put it where it is important.

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. MCDERMOTT).

Mr. MCDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPRATT), the ranking member, a distinguished and thoughtful man, said earlier today that we are preparing to get the train wreck on schedule. That is what we have in front of us here is the schedule, where it is going to stop on the highway.

The reason I say that is that it is just like the one we did last year and the year before. It has built into it \$100 billion worth of cuts in nondefense spending.

Most people say, what does that mean, nondefense spending? Well, I mean FBI agents, they want to cut some of those, or drug enforcement agents, they want to cut them, or maybe it is Pell grants they want to cut, or the National Institutes of Health. That is a nondefense area. There are \$100 billion in cuts.

If Members think the level out there right now is too high, we have too many FBI agents, too much at the National Institutes of Health, then Mem-

bers will think this is a real nice budget.

The only way they are going to get around that is that they are going to have to go over and get that social security money that is sitting there. They say, we have covered it, it is all protected, we have it in a lockbox. But all we have to do is come out here and pass a resolution on the floor and it is gone. It is a lockbox with a hole in the bottom. So we are looking at a budget that has built into it all the seeds of not passing the appropriations acts, and winding up being back here in September, 2 months before the election.

Mr. Speaker, somebody is going to get up here, and I have listened to the debate so far and I have never heard this phrase yet, because it is the favorite Republican phrase, where are we going to find that \$100 billion? Fraud, waste, and abuse. That is the one, we get out here and beat our breast, waste, fraud and abuse.

When we start looking at what that really means, it is the Department of Social Health Services.

□ 1215

The Department of Human Services goes out to hospitals in our districts and starts going through the records of the doctors and the hospitals, and the place is flooded with Members back here saying we have to give them back that money.

So when one thinks they are going to find \$100 billion in fraud, waste and abuse, they ought to think very carefully about that. What is going to happen is in September the election will be upon us, the Republicans will cave to the President of the United States, and we will get a decent budget.

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2½ minutes to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. PRICE).

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I want to suggest five reasons why our colleagues should vote against this Republican budget resolution.

The first reason is that it contains indiscriminate and risky tax cuts that, under realistic assumptions about defense and nondefense spending, will take up more than the available non-Social Security surplus over the next 5 years. The tax cut in this budget resolution, \$175 billion over 5 years, exceeds the total non-Social Security surplus forecast by the Congressional Budget Office under an assumption of discretionary spending frozen at inflation-adjusted levels.

Reason number two, it proposes to significantly undercut nondefense discretionary programs that Americans depend on. Over 5 years, the Republican plan would cut nondefense programs by \$122 billion below inflation adjusted levels. That would mean, for example, Pell grants for 316,000 fewer students. It would eliminate Head Start for more than 40,000 children.

Reason number three, the Republican plan does nothing to extend the solvency of Medicare and Social Security. We ought to be using a portion of our surpluses to extend the solvency of these programs, which would have the important added benefit of locking in additional debt reduction.

Reason number four, under the Republican budget resolution's unrealistic spending targets, we are once again headed toward an end-of-the-session train wreck and efforts to circumvent the budget process through new and improved gimmicks. Appropriations leaders in both parties have already given warning that they may not be able to produce passable appropriations bills this year under this budget resolution's spending limits. This is simply more evidence that it is not really the budget process that is out of whack around here. What is needed is a responsible use of that process and a realistic budget resolution.

Finally, reason number five, a vote for this budget resolution would send a message to the American people that the cynicism they feel about Congress and their cynicism about the budget process are, alas, justified. We should be sending our constituents a positive message that in a time of budget surpluses we are going to invest in the future of this country, through affordable and targeted tax cuts, through continued debt reduction, and through adequately funding those programs on which older Americans and working Americans and the most vulnerable among us depend.

Take the responsible course. I urge my colleagues, vote against this irresponsible budget resolution.

Mr. KASICH. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HASTERT), the Speaker of the House.

Mr. HASTERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this budget conference report, and I applaud the work of the Committee on the Budget. For the second year in a row, under the leadership of the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KASICH), the Committee on the Budget has produced a quality work on time. If the House will look at this, it is the first time in the history of the House that we have met this budget on time ever.

When the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KASICH) first became budget chairman, our government's finances were a mess. We had high taxes. We had expanding government. We had a huge debt and a budget deficit of \$200 billion, and I quote the administration, "as far as the eye could see." Today we have a responsible and a balanced budget which keeps America on the right track. Today we have a goal of balancing the budget, paying down the debt, securing Social Security; and, yes, we hear all the ifs on the other side, but that is our

goal, that is our target and this budget gets us there.

Those who would like to spend more are not keeping their eye on the target, which is balancing the budget, paying down the debt, protecting Social Security. Also, besides protecting Social Security in this budget, the money that goes into Social Security is reserved for Social Security. We pay down \$1 trillion of debt over the next 5 years, \$1 trillion of debt. We modernize Medicare by providing \$40 billion for a prescription drug benefit so no senior should be forced to choose between putting food on the table or taking life saving prescription drugs.

We provide additional educational spending; additional educational spending. I believe our goal is simple when it comes to education, that every child in this country deserves an opportunity to go to a good school.

We improve our national security by giving our men and women in uniform the resources they need to protect America from the dangerous world outside. We include tax fairness in this common sense budget. We believe it is morally wrong to penalize young couples who want to get married, up to \$1,500, simply because they are married as opposed to being single. We believe it is unfair to tax people just because they die, and we believe that the Tax Code must encourage people to save for their children's future education.

Today, my friends, we continue to keep this Nation on the right track. We have balanced the budget; and we have a balanced, responsible approach to govern.

I commend the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KASICH) for his hard work on this budget, to the Committee on the Budget and to this institution and to the American people for the many years of his service. I would say thanks to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KASICH).

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. STENHOLM).

Mr. STENHOLM. Mr. Speaker, unfortunately this budget is not about the past. It is about the future. Any way we want to explain it, the centerpiece of this budget resolution today is a massive tax cut at the expense of debt reduction, Social Security, agriculture and defense. The numbers do not lie.

It is gratifying to hear my friends on the other side adopting the Blue Dog rhetoric about the importance of paying off the debt. I only wished their resolution carried through on what they say. Once they take away all the double counting in this resolution, it would leave only \$12 billion of the non-Social Security surplus, approximately 8 percent, for debt reduction over the next 5 years. That is \$73 billion less than the Blue Dog budget and \$430 billion less debt reduction over the next 10 years, and that is a fact. No rhetoric is going to change that.

I wish they paid more attention to what the tax cut does in 2010 to 2014 when the Social Security system is going to need this money. This budget and this tax cut, if it is implemented, which fortunately I do not believe it will be, will wreck the Social Security program beginning in 2014, and that is irresponsible.

Also, the budget provides money for another short-term agricultural relief package, which we all appreciate; but why did we not take the opportunity, as the Blue Dog budget suggested, of having a 5-year, fix-the-policy, look-at-the-baseline problem? Why are we doing a 1-year fix again? Why can we not find the support on both sides of the aisle to match our rhetoric with the needs of the country?

When we look at the agricultural needs today, this budget comes up tremendously short.

The American people continue to tell us that paying off the debt should be our first priority using the budget surplus. Over and over and over they tell us that. Unfortunately, this budget continues to ignore this message from the American people, and I am very disappointed that once again we have not been able to find a responsible middle ground, but that is what this is all about. If the priorities are a massive tax cut at the expense of debt reduction, Social Security, agriculture and defense, vote for this resolution.

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2½ minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DAVIS).

Mr. DAVIS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, somebody very wise once said that everybody is entitled to their own opinion but not their own version of the facts. We need to get the facts down here today because the one thing we owe to the public is to have an open and honest debate about exactly what we are doing.

The major fact here that is going unstated is the 10-year price tag associated with this tax cut. Now today there is the admission that we are talking about \$175 billion tax cut over 5 years. Last year we debated a \$792 billion tax cut over 10 years that was fiscally irresponsible and wildly unpopular, rejected by the American public. By the math we have done over here, what we are debating today, but we are not willing to say, is an \$875 billion tax cut over 10 years. It undermines everything that has been said on this floor about paying down the debt and spending.

I would be happy to yield to the chairman of the House Committee on the Budget if he wants to correct me and tell us what the real price tag is over 10 years on this tax cut. The gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KASICH), I would be happy to yield to him if he would like to tell me what the price tag is over 10 years on the tax cut contemplated by this budget resolution we are going to vote on.

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

Mr. DAVIS of Florida. I yield to the gentleman from Ohio.

Mr. KASICH. Mr. Speaker, it is our job to come up with a 5-year number. We believe that the 10-year number will fit. I also want to commend the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DAVIS) for voting for the tax cuts that we have brought to this floor, particularly eliminating the tax on the senior citizens. So it would be good if we could even bring a couple more to the floor that he would vote for, but the point is that we believe it will fit and we will be able to have tax relief plus save Social Security.

Mr. DAVIS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, this remains the dirty little secret about this budget resolution, that we do not have the 10-year price tag associated with the tax cut, and I stand on my assertion it is an \$875 billion tax cut which undermines what should be our Nation's highest priority, paying down the debt.

In 1999, we spent \$230 billion on interest payments alone on this \$3.47 trillion Federal debt. That is 13 percent of our total spending. It is more than we spend on Medicare. It is slightly less than what we spend on national defense. Paying down the Federal debt should be our highest priority. It contributes to lower interest rates. It allows us to preserve the solvency of Social Security and Medicare for the retirement of the baby boomers, and we cannot do that and sustain an \$875 billion tax cut. We ought to be willing to talk about it. We ought to be honest with the American public. We ought to do responsible tax cuts, but we ought to pay down the Federal debt first.

Mr. KASICH. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPENCE), the chairman of the House Committee on Armed Services.

Mr. SPENCE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KASICH) for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the fiscal year 2001 budget resolution conference report.

This budget resolution provides \$4.5 billion more for national defense than the level requested by the President. With this budget resolution, Congress will have increased the President's defense budget request for over 6 years in a row by a total of nearly \$50 billion.

While this is a significant amount of money, it is not enough to offset the drastic cuts in defense we have experienced during the tenure of this administration.

Underscoring this point, the military service chiefs testified before our committee earlier this year that the President's budget, even with a significant increase, still leaves more than \$84 billion short over the next 5 years, including a \$15.5 billion shortfall in fiscal year 2001.

The budget resolution before us will once again allow us in Congress to step up to the plate. With these additional funds, the Committee on Armed Services has already begun to mark up the fiscal year 2001 defense authorization bill and to address the broad range of shortfalls that result from the President's request, serious shortfalls in military health care, modernization, readiness, and quality of life programs.

I want to thank the leadership for their support in arriving at this defense number; but especially I want to thank the gentleman from California (Mr. LEWIS), the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MURTHA), the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SKELTON), and the 285 other Members who joined with me in passing the amendment to the supplemental appropriations bill. Now is the time to carry through and protect this money. We have it in the budget.

The conference report before us, while not providing everything that is needed, does provide another significant installment payment by Congress toward restoring our military to the level of excellence that the American people expect and that national security requires.

I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on this conference report.

□ 1230

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. BONIOR).

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPRATT) for his work on this resolution. I thank my colleagues on this side of the aisle for all of their work.

Unfortunately, I do not think this measures up. This budget is an important document, not because of what it says, but because of what it fails to do. This budget could have provided an opportunity to begin to pay down the national debt, but it will not. This budget could have been an opportunity to do some things to strengthen Social Security, but it will not. This budget resolution could have been a chance to provide some sensible Medicare prescription drug benefits for older Americans. It does not do that either.

Of course, it would be one thing if all this resolution did was to ignore the problems facing American families. But the problem here is that it just adds to their problems. It adds to them by failing to extend the solvency of the trust fund by one single day. In fact, this budget plan would even cut the funds Social Security and Medicare needs to perform some basic administrative functions to make it work.

Now, there is one group of Americans in this budget who will get some special help. It is the wealthy who stand to gain hundreds of billions of dollars from this budget.

If this all sounds familiar, it should. Because it is the same budget the leadership tried to sell us last year. It is, in fact, the same platform that George W.

Bush is trying to sell the American people this year. It did not make sense then, and it does not now.

America does not need a huge tax cut for the wealthiest individuals in our society. We need a budget that allows us to, one, pay down that debt. With that interest savings we accrue by paying down that debt, strengthen Social Security, strengthen Medicare, invest in education, and invest in prescription drug care for our seniors. We need a budget that would move this country into the future. This budget, I regret to say, throws us back into the past.

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, before yielding, can I just reaffirm how much time is remaining on each side.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PEASE). The gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. SHAYS) has 9¼ minutes remaining. The gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPRATT) has 8½ minutes remaining.

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to gentleman from Iowa (Mr. NUSSLE).

Mr. NUSSLE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Connecticut for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, while I think I understand what the tactic is on the other side. We have heard about train wrecks today. In fact, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. BONIOR), the distinguished minority whip, came in and talked about how this is not going to work, how it does not mean the priority. We have heard about the Democrats rushing to the floor saying that, oh, at the end of the year, there is going to be a train wreck.

Well, if there is a train wreck, Mr. Speaker, it is for one reason. It is because the Democrats are in an election year, and they are running for their lives. They are slapping on the camouflage, and they are sneaking up, they are crawling up that hill, going toward that railroad track, and they are planting the dynamite. They are planting the demolition chargers, and they are trying to blow it all up because they know one thing. If this train makes it to the station, they lose.

That is unfortunate. Because in America, it does not have to be win-lose. It can be win-win. When we had our conversation with America, when we went to town meetings across the country, Americans in Iowa, Americans in Minnesota, in Connecticut, in Ohio, South Carolina, all across the Nation said that they wanted to have some goals in this budget put firmly in place.

Protect 100 percent of Social Security. The gentleman from Michigan (Mr. BONIOR) said it did not do that. What is he reading? What is he reading? Strengthen Medicare with prescription drugs. Forty billion dollars, the first time we have ever set up a Medicare lockbox to set aside \$40 billion to do that. The previous speaker

says it does not do that. What is he reading? Who is he listening to? Who is writing his speeches these days?

At least read the document that my colleagues are going to be voting on today. It not only provides 100 percent set-aside for Social Security so that it is not touched, the first time we have been able to accomplish that, the first time in a row that we have been able to accomplish that; but, under Medicare, we not only set aside \$40 billion, but we have a prescription drug benefit.

Now, it is not the one they want. Of course, Democrats have a different philosophy of the way prescription drug benefits ought to be administered. They say, let the government take it over. Give it all to the Health Care Finance and Administration, let them write the plan.

Of course Republicans have a little bit different idea. We say we do not trust the government to run this health care system very well. It has not done a good job. Let us look for some free market ways of doing it. So there is a difference of opinion. But do not say we do not have it when we have it.

Then of course we retire the debt by 2013. The gentleman from Michigan (Mr. BONIOR) said there is no debt retirement. Again, what is he reading? Three trillion dollars of debt retirement as a result of this bill, and we have to be proud of that, all of us, again, in a win-win situation. Strengthen support for education.

There has been talk today about NIH cuts. There is a \$1 billion increase for NIH the last 2 years alone, 13 percent the first, 14 percent the second. Increases in NIH funding, not cuts. So let us vote for this plan, but it does the things that America wants, and it is win-win.

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. WEYGAND).

Mr. WEYGAND. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank our ranking member for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, I am rising to oppose this resolution and this piece of legislation simply because we have not set our priorities straight.

There will be a lot of rhetoric today about some of the nuances of the bill and the conference report. There will be a lot of rhetoric about the little things that are in there. But let us talk about the broad stroke, the very large issues of priority.

In this bill, the Republicans have determined that their priority is a \$175 billion tax cut. They do not hide that. They show that in the full light of the day. They say this is what we want. They also have said what we want is absolutely no money for school reconstruction, absolutely no money to reduce our classroom size, absolutely no money that is truly dedicated to prescription drugs.

Yes, there is some semblance of money that is in there. But if one reads the true fine line, one will find that there is really no money there for any one of those priority items.

Education and health care are simply smoke and mirrors. Tax cuts, they have the full force of law under this resolution, under this conference report. They would prefer to spend the \$175 billion over the next 5 years, \$800 billion over the next 10 years for tax cuts, but not for prescription drugs, not for reducing our classroom size, or not reconstructing our schools, as most Americans, most Americans, want to have.

Yes, this bill is about priorities. It is about leadership. It is about what the people of America want and do not need. What they do not need are the tax cuts. What they do need are prescription drugs, reconstruction of our schools, and smaller classroom size.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote against this conference report.

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

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, how much time do I have remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPRATT) has 6½ minutes remaining.

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 6½ minutes.

Mr. Speaker, this budget resolution was not produced until late last night; and this morning, we found it on our doorsteps. Some Members who have had only a cursory opportunity to look it over may think, well, they have touched it up here, tuned it up here. This resolution runs better than the last vehicle that left the House. But before my colleagues buy it, let me suggest we look under the hood.

It is true that, in this resolution, they have mitigated the unrealistic reduction in nondefense spending that they assumed in the last one, but it is only at the margin. This resolution still requires \$121.5 billion real reduction in nondefense discretionary spending. This is not just another number among hundreds of numbers in the documents before us that we can hit or miss with impunity. This whole budget turns on this unrealistic assumption.

If we do not attain it, if we do not cut nondefense discretionary spending by 9.8 percent, on average, over the next 5 years, there is no surplus. There is no debt reduction. The budget is in danger of being in deficit again.

This chart right here in technicolor tells us why. For the last 5 years, if we look on the far side of the chart, we will see that, even though we had a deficit during much of that period of time, and even though we had spending caps on discretionary spending, under Republican dominion here in the House and the Senate, nondefense discretionary spending still grew by 2.5 percent above the rate of inflation.

Now, what we are asked to believe in this resolution is that we can reverse that trend, and in an era of surpluses, not deficits, and without any spending caps, because there is no mechanism for enforcement here, no spending caps extended in this budget, no sequestration, with no enforcement mechanism, we can go from 5 years with real spending growing 2.5 percent a year to 5 years where it declines 9.8 percent on the average over 5 years. I do not believe it will happen. I am not saying it is not possible. I do not believe it. It puts the budget in peril if it does not happen.

Look, tax cuts, same thing. The last time this budget was on the floor, they were proposing a tax cut of at least \$200 billion. Here I have to say I think our Republican colleagues listened. Because we came to the floor of the House, and we took their spending numbers and their tax cuts, and we combined them, integrated them into one chart over 5 years. We show it by a chart here in the well of the House that, if this budget were adopted in 1 year, the surplus would vanish, it would be wiped out in 1 year. We challenged our colleagues to counter if we were wrong, and they never countered. They never corrected the numbers. When the debate closed, our chart stood.

I said, and I think the analogy is appropriate, they are going to put the budget on thin ice. No cushion. If anything happens, any reversal in the economy occurs, we are back in deficit, borrowing from Social Security again.

Well, this budget resolution is a bit less risky. That is because, instead of having \$200 billion in tax cuts, it has \$175 billion in tax cuts. But here is the bottom line on this chart. We have redone the chart. Look at the bottom line. One will see the numbers are very, very small. There is precious little cushion left, if my colleagues pass this resolution, for any kind of downturn in the economy or for the eventuality that \$121 billion in real reduction and discretionary spending simply cannot be attained.

Let me tell my colleagues one other thing that is risky about this budget. There is a certain slight of hand here, as the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DAVIS) called it a minute ago, it is a dirty little secret. Last year, we had a 10-year price tag. Last year we very honestly ran out the projections of the budget, including the tax cut, over 10 years.

This year, we only have a 5-year projection. Why is that? Because in the first 5 years, the tax cuts seem much, much more modest. This budget, unlike last year's, only goes out 5 years, and it seems that we have got \$175 billion tax cut.

But if we run that over 10 years, and if we use the same rate at which last year's proposed tax cut expanded, by

our calculation, the total tax cut with debt service adjustment is \$929 billion, and look what happens. It is a small number, yes, but we are back in the red again. This budget brings back the deficit.

That is why we say it is risky. After all we have done to get rid of the deficit, that is why we say it is risky.

Let us take Medicare. The gentleman from Iowa (Mr. NUSSLE) here said, what are they reading? I will tell the gentleman what we are reading. We are reading their budget resolution. It has got two different paragraphs. Section 214 and section 215, they say different things. A conference report is supposed to reach agreement between the House and the Senate, but the Senate has one provision and my colleagues have another provision.

Instead of using this time-honored device we call reconciliation, one tool that is unique to the Committee on the Budget to get something done. What do they do? They say, here Committee on Ways and Means, here is \$40 billion we are putting aside in reserve fund if you can use it, if you can come up with a prescription drug bill and structurally reform Medicare, then you can report a bill at some particular point in time. No dates are named.

Go back to our resolution, and we show one how to do it. So we do a prescription drug benefit. We say to the Committee on Ways and Means and the Committee on Commerce, go do it.

I do not have time to go through the other details. We have not had time to do it in a budget resolution. But let me tell my colleagues something, look at military health care. We tried to put a little bit of money in there to do something for the retirees, \$5.4 billion over the next 5 years. Do my colleagues know what they provide? \$400 million.

The Speaker was here talking about education. Well, we looked up the numbers on education. We have got \$4.8 billion for next year. They have got a cut in education below a freeze for next year.

□ 1245

Health care, which the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KASICH) was talking about. Look at function 550. They are \$900 million below a freeze. We are above a freeze for health care.

So for all these reasons this budget resolution ought to be voted down. It ought to be sent back to a real conference where we can do debt reduction, do tax relief, do realistic spending levels, do Medicare prescription drugs, extend the life of Medicare and Social Security.

We can do it better, and we ought to do it better. Vote this resolution down.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PEASE). All time for the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPRATT) has expired.

Does the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KASICH) reclaim his time?

Mr. KASICH. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. STEARNS).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KASICH) reclaims his time and yields 1 minute to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. STEARNS).

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, let me just say to the ranking member that I was here last year and the year before, and I say to my colleagues that every one of his arguments he has used almost in the same format every year.

Now, what is interesting about his argument this year, it is all predicated upon a 10-year projection. But this is not a 10-year projection. We are talking about 5 years.

The gentleman from Florida (Mr. DAVIS) talked about a dirty little secret. There is no dirty little secret. This tax cut is less than 2 percent. Less than 2 percent. We do not even have accuracy charts around here in Congress that we can guaranty anything less than 2 percent. And for the gentleman to project out on his chart for 10 years, that it is possibly a deficit of \$1 billion, is really pushing the numbers.

When we look at this tax cut for Americans, what are the components? It is a marriage penalty tax, a death tax, an education savings account, health care deductibility, community renewal, and pension reform. All these things are for Americans. So I urge passage.

Mr. Speaker. I rise to speak in favor of the budget resolution conference report which outlines our spending priorities for fiscal year 2001.

First of all it provides \$150 billion in tax cuts, including repeal of the marriage-penalty tax and small business tax relief. Since Small Businesses produce so many new jobs and are responsible for the state of our economy, we need to make sure this prosperity continues.

This is long overdue and I wholeheartedly support providing America's working men and women the opportunity to keep more of their hard earned dollars.

The fiscal year 2001 Budget Resolution also protects the Social Security surplus by creating a "lock box" and dedicates the \$161 billion surplus to the Social Security Trust Fund.

This budget also sets aside \$40 billion for Medicare reform and to fund a prescription drug benefit. We should give seniors the same choices that other Americans already have, including Members of Congress and the President.

I believe that we must pay down the debt and this budget resolution dedicates \$1 trillion over the next five years toward that end. What's more, by 2013 it will be completely eliminated.

It is vital that the men and women who serve our country are fully equipped and it is our responsibility to make sure that our military is no longer asked to carry out its duties without the necessary resources. The defense budget is increased by \$20 billion for fiscal year 2001.

When the men and women who defend our country return home we must not forget them. That is why we have funded the VA at the level requested by the Veterans Committee, which represents \$100 million for health care over the President's VA budget proposal.

To sum it up, this budget resolution taxes less, spends less, places restraints on government growth, provides for a strong defense, protects 100 percent of Social Security surplus and reduces the debt.

This is a budget that we can all be proud of and I urge my colleagues to vote for this conference report.

Mr. KASICH. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. HOEKSTRA).

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time, and I want to congratulate him on the budget work that he has done over the last number of years.

What we are now taking a look at is we are taking a look at a budget that is not going to steal from Social Security. But perhaps one of the most important things about this budget is that we reinvest in education. We reinvest in education in a way that will make an impact for our kids.

What we do is we take dollars away from a Washington bureaucracy, and we move the rules and regulations away from the process and target getting dollars back to our children. We get the dollars into the classroom. We get the dollars into a school district where the people who are making the decisions for our kids and for the learning process are the people that know the names of our kids. But more importantly, not only do they know the names of our kids, they also know the needs of our kids. They know the needs of the community and the school district.

So what we will get is we will get more effective decision-making, we will get more dollars to the classroom where they actually make a difference.

Mr. KASICH. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. GUTKNECHT).

Mr. GUTKNECHT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time, and I also thank him not only for what he has done for this budget but what he has done over the years to bring some fiscal sanity to this city.

I can remember when I was back in the State legislature and we would marvel at how much the Federal budget would go up every year. It seemed like back in the 1980s that we were talking about budgets going up double, triple, and sometimes almost quadruple the inflation rate. It was no wonder they were piling deficits upon deficits.

Now, we have heard a lot of interesting arguments this morning, but John Adams said something pretty powerful about 200 years ago. He said facts are stubborn things. And if people

forget everything else that has been said today, I hope they will remember this: in the fiscal year that we are in today we are going to spend \$1,780 billion. In my opinion, that is too much. Under this budget, we are going to spend \$1,830 billion. I still believe that is too much. But more importantly, that means that total spending will only increase this year by 2.8 percent. That is less than the inflation rate, and it is almost half the rate the average family budget will go up.

That is a giant step in the right direction. This is a good budget, and I hope the Members will join me in supporting it.

Mr. KASICH. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman is recognized for 3¾ minutes.

Mr. KASICH. Mr. Speaker, I would like to just take a moment and, before I finish with the policy, I would like to just spend a few minutes to say that any person who is trying to carry out a program, to run a committee, a committee chairman, cannot be successful without staff. They are the ones who are the least recognized and the hardest working of all the people here.

I do not want to leave anyone out, and I hope I have not, but I wanted to thank Greg Hampton, who came to my congressional office at the Committee on the Budget, the same with Mike Lofgren. Mike an expert on defense, Greg on health care. Jim Bates, who I do not see on the House floor, is a guy who worked until 2, 3 o'clock in the morning to try to be able to make sure that everything, all the T's were crossed and all the I's were dotted and that we followed all the parliamentary procedures. He has a very tough job. And Pat Knudsen, who was in charge of so many activities, including just being able to put together our communication program. And a very special "thank you" to my friend and staff director Wayne Struble. I have never known anybody who has come to this government with more conviction, more determination, and more absolute and total consistency to stay on a path to try to make this country a little better.

Now, they never get recognized; and I want their parents to know how important they were to me. They made me a much better leader because of the work that they put in. Oftentimes they are neglected, but they are not neglected with me.

Secondly, I was trying to think back to the members of the Committee on the Budget that have been with me since 1973. I think the gentleman from California (Mr. HERGER), who had contributed a great amount; and to my dear friend, the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. SHAYS), who has sat there through thick and thin, has been on this Committee on the Budget since 1995; and the gentleman from Michigan

(Mr. HOEKSTRA), my great friend, who actually went off in order to accommodate another member for a short period of time. It goes without saying that without their support, guidance, and advice we would not have been as effective.

I want to just close the debate by just suggesting that we get some bipartisan support for this product. I think it is a good product. It will allow us ultimately to have the money that we need in order to be able to fix Social Security for three generations.

We will be able to strengthen Medicare and pay down that trillion dollars in the publicly held debt, provide that tax relief, try to provide some more resources for education, and of course rebuild America's defense.

I would be remiss, by the way, if I did not take a second to thank my good friend, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. HOBSON), who came on the floor and who sat with me in the tough times when we were trying to put these budgets together and make them work.

So let me just say to the membership today, I think we have a great opportunity to make another down payment on our goals. We have a long way to go, but I think we have come a long way and would ask for support for the conference report.

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

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to recognize my staff, just as the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KASICH), has, before we go to the vote.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for allowing me this opportunity.

Since January, when the budget first began emerging from the White House, through last night, our staff, which is a small staff because we are the minority staff, has worked diligently and really performed Herculean efforts to stay on top of the budget, and I could not ask for more and the House could not either.

My chief of staff is Tom Kahn. Richard Kogan is our policy director. Hugh Brady, Susan Warner, Lisa Irving, Jim Klumpner, Sarah Abernathy, Andrea Weathers, Sheila McDowell, Linda Bywaters, Sandy Clark, Kimberly Overbeek, Pepper Santalucia, Sarah Day, an intern from Winthrop College, and Joseph Ortiz. As I said, they have put in Herculean efforts, wonderful work on the budget; and without them we simply could not have mounted the arguments that we have on the floor.

I thank the gentleman very much for giving me the opportunity to recognize them for their wonderful work.

Mr. BENTSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the conference report on the concur-

rent budget resolution for Fiscal Year 2001. As has been the case with previous budget resolutions, this budget not only tests the bounds of fiscal reality, but fails the test of fiscal prudence and priority. We all know that as soon as the appropriations process begins in earnest and the depth of the necessary cuts to non-defense programs come into focus, this budget will become irrelevant.

The Majority has chosen to spend virtually all of the budget surplus on tax cuts and on a \$21 billion increase to defense spending, while requiring cuts of \$7 billion below a freeze in Fiscal Year 2001 in other programs and \$121.5 billion below inflation over 5 years. If enacted, this would result in 500 fewer FBI agents, 600 fewer DEA agents, 40,000 fewer kids in Head Start and 300,000 fewer students receiving Pell Grants to go to college. We would also have to cut community development and scale back funding increases for the National Institutes of Health.

Like the House-passed resolution, and other Republican budgets, this proposed budget sacrifices everything in the name of giving the largest possible tax cuts without doing anything to address the long-term needs of Social Security or Medicare. The solvency of Social Security and Medicare are in no way enhanced. Recall that the Democratic alternative budget, which all my Republican colleagues voted against, extended the life of Social Security by as much as 15 years and the life of Medicare by as much as 10 years.

With respect to debt reduction, the conference agreement devotes 8 percent (a mere \$12 billion) of the on-budget surplus, over a five-year period, to paying down the national debt. Again, recall that the House Democratic substitute devoted 40 percent of the on-budget surplus to debt reduction over 10 years. When the Republicans claim to care about paying down our nation debt, clearly they are being disingenuous. While the Republicans claim that they will not spend any of the Social Security Surplus, their history indicates otherwise. Since gaining the Majority in 1995, Republican budgets have increased discretionary spending greater than the rate of inflation. If they were to enact their massive tax cut and increase spending as they always have, their budget would eat into the Social Security Surplus and add to the national debt.

Turning to a voluntary prescription drug benefit for Medicare beneficiaries, I am dismayed that Republicans have explicitly provided for tax cuts, particularly for the highest income bracket, but have done nothing to make definite their plans for a Medicare prescription drug benefit. While Medicare has been a tremendously successful program in providing health care for senior citizens and a better quality of life, the rising use and cost of prescription drugs demands congressional action. Prescription drugs now account for about one-sixth of all out-of-pocket health spending by the elderly. The percent of beneficiaries without coverage who cannot afford to buy their medicine is about five times higher than those with coverage, ten percent compared to two percent. Almost 40 percent of those over age 85 do not have prescription drug coverage. The Republican budget only says there will be a benefit 'if' or 'when' the Ways and Means Committee proposes a plan.

While I opposed the conference report, I am pleased that it includes language from the amendment that I offered with Congresswoman BALDWIN to Republicans included language I proposed to increase access to Medicaid CHIP and fund access to Medicaid coverage for uninsured women diagnosed with breast cancer. In my state of Texas, there are more than 800,000 Medicaid-eligible kids who are not enrolled in the program but still get sick, and we have more uninsured women, whom if they contract breast cancer, are in dire straits.

Taken all together, the only reasonable conclusion I can arrive at is that the Republicans have once again thrown together a haphazard budget scheme that is not fiscally sound, does not pay down the debt, does not extend the life of Social Security or Medicare and provides no meaningful prescription drug benefit. For these reasons, I am compelled to vote against H. Con. Res. 290.

Mr. CLEMENT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong opposition to this fiscally irresponsible budget resolution conference agreement. Not only is this agreement bad fiscal policy, but it is flawed economic strategy. America has emerged from an era of struggling to eliminate billion-dollar deficits into a new age of setting priorities for an expanding budget surplus. Instead of seizing the opportunity to help American families prepare for the future, this budget resolution proposes deep cuts in domestic programs to make room for a fiscally irresponsible tax cut that could force us to return to spending the Social Security trust fund.

We owe it to our nation's seniors to enact a Medicare prescription drug plan this year. Prescription drugs now account for about one-sixth of all out-of-pocket health spending by the elderly. Ensuring our seniors can afford the prescription drugs they need should be a higher priority than providing tax relief to the wealthiest members of our society.

This conference agreement allows a prescription drug benefit of up to \$40 billion over five years but only if accompanied by unspecified Medicare "reforms." Under this agreement, the Republicans have chosen to hold the prescription drug benefit hostage to unspecified Medicare reforms which may or may not be enacted. By contrast, the Democratic alternative budget required that a full \$40 billion be devoted to a prescription drug benefit.

We should be focusing on taking care of our elderly, ensuring the long term solvency of Social Security and Medicare, educating our children and paying down the national debt. This agreement sacrifices these national priorities for a massive tax cut. Passing such an irresponsible budget resolution will force the Appropriations Committee to either invent gimmicks that make a sham of the entire budget process or produce bills with significant deficits in funding. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to reject this conference agreement.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the conference report.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the conference report.

Pursuant to clause 10 of rule XX, the yeas and nays are ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 220, nays 208, not voting 7, as follows:

[Roll No. 125]

YEAS—220

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

NAYS—208

Abercrombie	Blagojevich	Clyburn
Ackerman	BlumenaUER	Conyers
Allen	Bonior	Costello
Andrews	Boswell	Coyne
Baca	Boucher	Cramer
Baird	Boyd	Crowley
Baldacci	Brady (PA)	Cummings
Baldwin	Brown (FL)	Danner
Barcia	Brown (OH)	Davis (FL)
Barrett (WI)	Capps	Davis (IL)
Becerra	Capuano	DeFazio
Bentsen	Cardin	DeGette
Berkley	Carson	DeLaunt
Berman	Clay	DeLauro
Berry	Clayton	Deutsch
Bishop	Clement	Dicks

Dingell	Lantos	Porter
Dixon	Larson	Price (NC)
Doggett	Lee	Rahall
Dooley	Levin	Rangel
Doyle	Lewis (GA)	Reyes
Edwards	Lipinski	Rivers
Engel	Lofgren	Rodriguez
Eshoo	Lowey	Roemer
Goss	Lucas (KY)	Rothman
Etheridge	Luther	Roybal-Allard
Evans	Maloney (CT)	Rush
Farr	Maloney (NY)	Sabo
Fattah	Markey	Sanchez
Filner	Mascara	Sanders
Forbes	Matsui	Sandlin
Ford	McCarthy (MO)	Sanford
Frank (MA)	McCarthy (NY)	Sawyer
Frost	McDermott	Schakowsky
Gejdenson	McGovern	Scott
Gephardt	McIntyre	Serrano
Gonzalez	McKinney	Sherman
Gordon	McNulty	Shows
Gutknecht	Meehan	Skelton
Green (TX)	Meek (FL)	Slaughter
Gutierrez	Meeks (NY)	Smith (WA)
Hall (OH)	Menendez	Snyder
Hastings (FL)	Millender-	Spratt
Hill (IN)	McDonald	Stabenow
Hilliard	Miller, George	Stenholm
Hinches	Minge	Strickland
Hinojosa	Mink	Stupak
Hoeffel	Moakley	Tanner
Holden	Mollohan	Tauscher
Holt	Moore	Taylor (MS)
Hooley	Moran (VA)	Thompson (CA)
Hoyer	Morella	Thompson (MS)
Inslee	Murtha	Thurman
Jackson (IL)	Nadler	Tierney
Jackson-Lee	Napolitano	Towns
(TX)	Neal	Turner
Jefferson	Oberstar	Udall (CO)
John	Obey	Udall (NM)
Johnson (CT)	Olver	Velazquez
Johnson, E. B.	Ortiz	Vento
Jones (OH)	Owens	Visclosky
Kanjorski	Pallone	Waters
Kaptur	Pascrell	Watt (NC)
Kennedy	Pastor	Waxman
Kildee	Paul	Weiner
Kilpatrick	Payne	Weygand
Kind (WI)	Pelosi	Wise
Klecza	Peterson (MN)	Woolsey
Klink	Phelps	Wu
Kucinich	Pomeroy	Wynn
LaFalce		
Lampson		

NOT VOTING—7

Borski	Houghton	Wexler
Campbell	Myrick	
Cook	Stark	

□ 1321

Ms. DANNER and Ms. HOOLEY of Oregon changed their vote from "yea" to "nay."

Mr. BARTON of Texas changed his vote from "nay" to "yea."

So the conference report was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. KASICH. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on the conference report on House Concurrent Resolution 290.

The SPEAKER. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Ohio?

There was no objection.