

House, one that is fiscally responsible. This White House realizes we are talking about the people's money.

Mr. Speaker, tax relief will result in job security and economic growth and give some of the money back to the people who earned it in the first place. Let us cut their taxes. Let us do it now.

THE PRESIDENT'S TAX CUT

(Mr. TURNER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. TURNER. Mr. Speaker, the President's recently submitted general budget outline leaves a lot of questions remaining about his tax cut plan. Frankly, it appears that trying to fit his tax cut into a realistic budget is like trying to fit a size 11 foot into a size 6 shoe.

The American people understand there is no surplus today and that forecasting the surplus for the next 10 years is a lot like making a 10-year weather forecast. We do not want oversized tax cuts to take us back to the choice of deficit spending or higher taxes for our children. Now the leadership in the House wants us to take a vote on a major tax cut before the House has even adopted, or even debated, a budget.

Tax cuts are an important priority, but equally important is paying down our \$5.6 trillion national debt, saving Social Security and Medicare for the future baby boomer retirement, and strengthening education and national defense.

Blue Dog Democrats have come to the floor this morning to say we are for the largest tax cut we can afford, and to know what we can afford we need a budget first.

A RESPONSIBLE BUDGET FOR AMERICA'S PRIORITIES

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

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, it is important that all of us work with the President when he presents his budget in April. All of us should be committed to three things: A budget that fits America's priorities; second, a budget that reduces the largest debt in history; and, three, provide fair and responsible tax relief to all American taxpayers.

Consider this. Washington will take in \$28 trillion in the next 10 years and President Bush's tax cut relief is \$1.6 trillion. This is about 5.7 percent of the total revenues brought into this government in the next 10 years. Surely we can return about 6 percent of this money to the taxpayers.

This is not a massive tax cut, as the Democrats say. In April, as we do every year, we bring in the budget. We will

vote on it. That is just how we do it around here. The economy will be strengthened and jobs will be secure with a tax relief program for the American taxpayers. We cannot wait. The economy needs this incentive now.

THE PRESIDENT'S TAX CUT

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

Mr. JOHN. Mr. Speaker, I think it is imperative that this Congress provide a tax cut to the American people. We can afford it. It has positive economic impacts, and we should do it. But I think equally important is paying down our national debt. And then we factor in priority spending on education, which is important to us, prescription drugs for Medicare benefits, missile defense, agriculture, the list goes on and on. How do we know how much money to allot in different places? How do we know that \$1.6 trillion is not too much of a tax cut? How do we know if \$1.6 trillion is not too little of a tax cut? How do we not know if \$1.6 trillion is just right?

Please present a budget to us so we can prioritize the surpluses that may occur over the next 10 years. I urge the other side to show us the budget. It is important for the American people to provide not only a tax cut but to prioritize the spending of this country for the next 10 years.

PROTECTING SOCIAL SECURITY AND MEDICARE FROM BIG GOVERNMENT SPENDERS

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

Mr. COOKSEY. Mr. Speaker, senior citizens and all Americans deserve to know that Medicare and Social Security will be there when they need it. Yet for years, politicians in Washington have shortchanged Medicare and Social Security by spending these limited resources on wasteful, big government programs.

The Social Security and Medicare Lockbox Act of 2001, which is H.R. 2, would lock away all surpluses from the Social Security and Medicare Trust Fund. This bill locks up the \$2.9 trillion surplus from the Social Security and Medicare Trust Fund. This was overwhelmingly passed by the House of Representatives in the last Congress. Yet it was stymied by the Democrats in the Senate.

Mr. Speaker, we have a unique opportunity this year to provide meaningful tax relief for hardworking Americans while guaranteeing the Social Security and Medicare Trust Funds remain untouched. We have promised our seniors that Social Security and Medicare will

be there for them. This lockbox legislation will help to deliver on that promise.

THE PRESIDENT'S TAX CUT

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

Mr. BACA. Mr. Speaker, my father had 15 children. He knew what money was in his paycheck to be budgeted for all of us to have shoes and shelter, to make sure that we had enough food to eat. He had to do it wisely and budget it. Otherwise we would have gone bankrupt. We would not have had enough money for shoes, food or shelter.

What the Republicans are trying to do is to make a commitment for 10 years without a budget. If a family tries to do that or a business, it would be bankrupt in a few years. That is just what this tax bill that the Republicans rushed through will do. We owe it to the American people to give them a tax cut. No one disagrees. However, we owe it to them to do it right. We have to do it responsibly. We have to do it wisely. We have to have a budget first.

This tax plan is based on phony-baloney numbers. There is no substance without a budget. There is no beef, Mr. Speaker.

THE PRESIDENT'S TAX CUT

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

Mr. MOORE. Mr. Speaker, I got a call at 3:30 yesterday afternoon from a senior administration official.

He said to me, "Congressman, can you be with us on this tax cut?"

I said, "I'd like to be direct with you."

He said, "Please do."

I said, "Number one, I have a grave concern that we don't have a budget. And, number two, when it comes to this \$1.6 trillion tax cut, it relies on projections of \$5.6 trillion over the next 10 years. Projections."

Sunday night I was lying in bed watching the news and the weather and the weatherman projected a 12-inch snow in Washington, D.C. I wondered if I would make it back here for this tax cut vote.

That was a projection that did not come true. My concern is that these projections, these economic projections, may also not materialize just like the snow did not. If that happens, we are going to be in deficit mode again. We owe it to our children, we have placed a \$5.7 trillion mortgage on their future, to start to pay down our debt and live within our means.