

parents to commit to raising their children together.

It is time we remembered the traditional two-parent family. Single parents often do a great job, even against the odds. There are millions of heroic single parents in this country doing their best to support and raise their children. But ask them what they think, and they will be the first to tell you that kids would be better off with both mother and dad caring for them.

#### TIME TO PASS A FLAT TAX

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

Mr. TRAFICANT. From the womb to the tomb, Madam Speaker, the Internal Rectal Service is one big enema. Think about it: they tax our income, they tax our savings, they tax our sex, they tax our property sales profits, they even tax our income when we die. Is it any wonder America is taxed off? We happen to be suffering from a disease called Taxes Mortis Americanus.

Beam me up. It is time to pass a flat, simple 15 percent sales tax, and fire these nincompoops at the IRS.

Think about it.

I yield back the socialist, communist income tax scheme of these United States.

#### THE BUDGET, BY THE NUMBERS

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

Mr. GIBBONS. Madam Speaker, the facts are in, and the numbers do not lie. The budget proposed by this Republican-led Congress will meet not only all of the needs, but the priorities as well of the American people.

This budget continues our commitment to improving education by investing \$80 billion next year, that is a 14 percent increase, in the education budget; and it supports our national defense with a \$14 billion budget increase, and a \$5.7 billion increase specifically for improving service members' pay, housing, and veterans health care.

In addition, this budget also includes \$153 billion for Medicare reform, and \$2.8 billion for the National Institutes of Health. We pay down a historic \$2 trillion of the public debt, and ensure that the \$2.6 trillion Social Security trust fund remains safe from the Washington spendthrifts.

Madam Speaker, we achieve all these goals while still giving the American families meaningful and fair tax relief, meaning \$1,600 for the average family of four will be back in their pockets for them to spend.

Madam Speaker, the numbers simply do not lie. And there is one more, mil-

lions, and that is how many Americans want us to pass this reasonable budget and tax relief now.

#### 180TH ANNIVERSARY OF GREEK INDEPENDENCE

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

Mr. CROWLEY. Madam Speaker, I am pleased today to rise in honor of the 180th anniversary of Greek independence.

It was 180 years ago that the Greek patriots rose up against the Ottomans in a courageous act of defiance. Many of them fought and died for what they believed in, the right of self-determination, self-governance, that an independent Greek nation should rightfully exist alongside other sovereign nations, free of foreign domination, oppression and constraints.

A country with a rich history stretching back more than 4,000 years, Greece remains the cradle of democracy and one of the most important contributors to Western Civilization.

When the Founding Fathers of this country sought to create a government of, by, and for the people, they reached for inspiration in the words and theories of the great Greek philosophers.

On this day we reaffirm the common democratic heritage we share. Like our day of independence on July 4th, in which we are always reminded of the cost of freedom and independence, it is only fitting that the Congress of the United States commemorate the struggle that led to Greek independence. We fought the same battles, and won, as did those Greek patriots.

#### PROTECTING SOCIAL SECURITY AND MEDICARE USING A LOCK BOX

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

Mr. STEARNS. Madam Speaker, more than 76 million baby boomers are marching toward retirement, creating the greatest demographic challenge this Nation has ever faced. Our government is not prepared to meet their needs. Medicare could be insolvent in the near future. In just a few years, Social Security could be in the red.

The implications are frightening. Seniors currently rely on Social Security for nearly half of their incomes. Medicare provides a staggering amount of the elderly with their basic insurance benefits.

That is why the Republican Congress has taken the first step. We stopped the 30-year raid on the Social Security trust fund, and also on Medicare. Republicans made retirement security a priority and followed through on our

word. Now Congress has adopted a lock box on the Social Security program and the Medicare program.

Madam Speaker, Republicans stopped Congress from spending the surplus out of these trust funds for new spending programs.

#### RECOGNIZING NATIONAL AGRICULTURE WEEK AND AG DAY

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

Mr. KENNEDY of Minnesota. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the men and women of America who help feed the world. This week is National Agriculture Week, and today is Ag Day. It is a time when we take a moment to pay tribute to those that work the land to feed our world.

For many of the constituents in my district, it is a very special day. Southwest Minnesota is a national leader in producing soybeans, corn, sugar, turkeys, pork, and dairy products.

The efficiency of U.S. farmers is a benefit to all Americans. American families spend approximately 9 percent of their income on food, compared to 11 percent in the United Kingdom, 17 percent in Japan and 53 percent in India.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues not to forget the farmer among all of the other pressing issues of the day. Agriculture is a vital link to the success of our Nation, and we must help our farmers by working to grow demand for their products.

#### ADMINISTRATION DOING NOTHING TO HELP POWER CRISIS

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

Mr. DEFAZIO. Madam Speaker, the Pacific Northwest is locked in an unprecedented drought. We have lost hydropower generation and we are going to have to buy energy. But the energy markets have gone haywire because of the failed California deregulation. Prices are 10 times what they were a comparable month 2 years ago.

This is outrageous price gouging and profiteering on the part of some national energy companies. It is threatening residential ratepayers and businesses alike in the Northwest and California.

The Northwest delegation just met with Vice President CHENEY, and we have had the response of the Bush-Cheney administration. They will do one thing to help us, one thing to help the residential ratepayers and the businesses of the Pacific Northwest in the face of this catastrophe that is coming with huge rate increases for profiteering by a few national energy companies based, strangely enough, in Texas.