So often in the past we have been told that it is difficult to find space in the Capitol, or in the House buildings for additional artwork commemorating women. So adding pieces to commemorate the contributions of women has been limited. That argument will not be valid with respect to the new Capitol Visitors’ Center, where we will have an opportunity to get it right from the beginning.

As our constituents, especially our young constituents, come into this Capitol they should be impressed with a sense of inclusion. America is made up of both men and women, mighty in strength and mighty in spirit, of Native Americans, of pilgrim Americans, of immigrant Americans and of recent Americans. Each and every one of these groups deserves to be recognized and celebrated for the contributions they have made to building this magnificent Republic.

Mr. Speaker, it is my sincere hope that at long last we can consider this resolution this year so we can begin to provide the level of recognition that the contributions of women to American society deserve, and I implore my male colleagues, this is not a heavy lift. This is actually a fairly straightforward initiative that can be accomplished in regular order. Please give the women of America the recognition that they rightly deserve in these important buildings.

COMPARISON OF THE REPUBLICAN AND DEMOCRATIC BUDGETS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker’s announced policy of January 3, 2001, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BENTSEN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. BENTSEN. Mr. Speaker, the House today adopted a budget which is pretty much in line with the budget that President Bush sent up to Congress just a few short weeks ago.

This budget, while it is a budget for one year, it would set America on a fiscal policy course impacting us for 10 years and really, quite frankly, impacting us for many years beyond that as it relates to very important and successful Federal programs, the Medicare program and the Social Security program.

Now, there is a clear divergence on which path to take between the Democrats and the Republicans. While there is commonality between the two parties in terms of many of the spending priorities on the discretionary side and, I would argue, commonality between the two parties in saying that there should be a tax cut, the diversion occurs really in two areas. It occurs as it relates to how much or what we will do with respect to Medicare and Social Security; and it occurs in what we will do with respect to paying down our obligations, that is, the publicly held debt.

The Republican-passed budget is predicated in large part, if not in total, on funding a very large tax cut on the basis of 10-year economic assumptions, which I will talk about shortly. But the tax cut that the Republican budget assumes starts out at about $1.6 trillion, the figure that the President used during the 2000 Presidential campaign.

We know now that that tax cut is more around $2 trillion to $2.5 trillion before we include the additional interest on the debt associated with it. Because we know the income rate tax portion which the House has already adopted exceeds what the President assumed by about $150 billion over 10 years, and we also know that the tax phaseout, the estate tax phaseout that the President proposed, is now estimated by the Joint Committee on Taxation, the nonpartisan arbiter and scorer of tax bills for the Congress, that bill is now estimated to cost about $100 billion over 10 years as opposed to the $250 billion that the President proposed. So already, we are seeing that the upper limit of the tax cut is increasing.

But what is important between the two parties is that the Republican budget not only does nothing to extend the solvency of Social Security and Medicare; in fact, we would argue that the budget proposal will hasten the insolvency of Social Security and Medicare. Let me start first with the President’s and the Republicans’ plan for Social Security.

The projected surplus for Social Security is about $2.5 trillion over the next 10 years. Now, the Republicans and the Democrats currently are working to dedicate that to pay down the national debt, but the difference occurs in that the Republicans do not believe that we can pay down as much debt as the Democrats do. In fact, nobody really knows how much debt is payable. We would argue we ought to keep paying it down until we cannot buy any more bonds in the open market at a fair price. But nonetheless, the President’s budget and the Republicans’ budget assumes this would take about $600 billion of the projected Medicare hospital insurance, part A of the Medicare trust fund dollars and spend it on that, we are not spending it on that, we are not spending it on a new benefit within the Medicare system like the proposed prescription drug plan of the President, which is unworkable in any event, but if we spend it on that, we are not spending it on the benefits for which it is already obligated. As a result, we have to make up that $150 billion; and we have again because of the insolvency of the Medicare trust fund, and we have a chart to show that.

Again, like the Social Security, where just last week the actuaries for the Medicare trust fund said that Medicare hospital insurance, part A of Medicare, would be solvent until about 2028, this proposal, the Republican proposal of carving out at least $150 billion...
would have the effect of shortening the life span of the Medicare trust fund by as much as 8 years. So the only way we can make that gap smaller by cutting benefits, raising payroll taxes, or incurring more debt.

Now, the problem with that is that if we incur more debt, we are going in the opposite direction than we want to be going in at a time when we are achieving some surpluses in the economy. It is a misuse of the trust funds on the part of the President’s and the Republicans’ budget resolution.

Now, on top of that, we believe that the Republican budget resolution cuts it a little too close in trying to build around this huge tax cut, in addition to including the President’s own new spending request. The President in his budget resolution requests $250 billion of new debt and may, in fact, drive us that is already there, not including other programs that he says will come later. Defense buildup, national missile defense, which is estimated to cost from as much as $100 billion, additional educational funding that the President wants. So the President’s own budget increases Federal spending and, at the same time, puts at risk the trust funds. It is all predicated on these very rosy scenario projections of what the surplus is going to be.

If we look at what CBO tells us about the surplus, we know right now the projected 10-year surplus is to be about $5.6 trillion over 10 years, with two-thirds of it occurring in the latter 5 years. But what CBO, the Congressional Budget Office, the nonpartisan budget arbiter of the Congress, tells us is that the margin of error increases dramatically the further out we go in that 10-year period. In fact, we could increase to the good, but we could also increase to the bad. They are going to use the same money buying a prescription drug benefit.

The margin of error over 5 years is about 2 percent of GDP; and with respect to the margin of error over 10 years, the CBO tells us quite frankly, they do not have any confidence in giving us an estimate of what the margin of error would be.

What that means is that we have a budget which may not pay down very much debt and spay, in fact, drive us back into deficits, and most certainly could end up and would end up spending Social Security and Medicare trust fund dollars today that are obligated for tomorrow.

Again, there are really only a few ways to make it up: cut benefits, raise payroll taxes, or incur more debt. What is the problem with incurring more debt? Because we know in the out-years, long beyond this 10-year window that we are looking at, when the baby boomers retire in earnest, and keep in mind that the baby boomers start retiring in just 8 short years, but in about 20 years when they are retiring in earnest, we know that the debt-to-GDP ratio will go much higher than we have seen since the Second World War. So the time has come for us to recognize what the problem is. At the same time, we also believe, rather than cutting the solvency of Medicare and Social Security, we believe we ought to extend the solvency of Social Security and Medicare. That is what we propose in our budget resolution.

On top of that, Democrats believe that rather than taking money that is already obligated for Medicare beneficiaries and the hospital insurance trust fund, that people have paid with their FICA tax every month or every week on their paycheck and taking that money and spending it on something else that if the American people really want a prescription drug program under the Medicare program, and we hear both major Presidential candidates in the last election believed it, so much that they offered it, that we ought to be willing to put one up that is not only a real plan that benefits all senior citizens who want to participate in it, but also is a plan that does not shorten the life span of the Medicare trust fund.

At this point, Mr. Speaker, I would like to yield to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. McDermott), my colleague on the Committee on the Budget, and a member also of the Committee on Ways and Means, who has worked on this issue for many years to talk about our prescription drug plan.

Mr. McDermott. Mr. Speaker, I think this issue of Medicare is one that I think people have a lot of interest in, and I want to talk about some of the kind of shell game aspects of this whole business. I brought this out here. The gentleman knows this, of course, is the blueprint for New Beginnings. That is what President Bush stood up here and outlined for us a few weeks ago.

On page 14, he says that we have a $645 billion shortfall over the next 10 years in Medicare. That means we are $645 billion short of paying for what we actually promised people.

I put this chart up here because he says right on page 14 of his budget that we are $645 billion short. But if we read further, and we always have to read the whole thing, if we go back to page 51, and by that time most people are asleep, but if we read it, he says, I am going to put in $156 billion.

Mr. Speaker, we do not have to be a rocket scientist or a CPA or a great in-
using it to buy benefits, they are using it for shoring up the whole issue, and they are still saying, we are going to give a wonderful drug benefit.

The Democrats in our budget today offered $330 billion in drug benefits, twice as much as the Republicans. It is what CBO says we would have to put into the program to actually make it work.

What the President is proposing with that $153 billion is to give little bits of money to every State; he calls it Helping Hands. What that means is he gives the Governor of Texas or the Governor of Oregon, as my colleagues are here, or the Governor of the State of Washington, gives them some money and says, “Put together a program to help the poor old people in your State.”

So if one’s mother is poor and has drug needs, if you want it to be for all seniors, we do not want to make old people say, “I am poor, and I need some money to help me pay for my prescriptions.”

What kind of dignity is there in that? The Democrats are spending $330 billion better. It is not for all seniors. We do not want to make old people say, “I am poor, and I need help.” Most of these people, they have raised us, they have put us through college, they have taken care of us, and now when they get old, we say, we will help you if you are poor enough. That is what the Helping Hands program of President Bush is. It is not a program that goes for everybody in Medicare.

The gentleman’s point made earlier was absolutely correct. If we do not keep this half a trillion dollars for use between now and 2011, we are going to have a bigger hole.

It is easy to explain why that is true. If there is a diet, let us say I am going to lose 1 pound between now and the first of the year. I am going to lose 1 pound between now and the first of September, and then by the first of November I am going to lose a second pound, and then I am going to lose 8 pounds in the last 2 months of the year, through the Christmas and Thanksgiving season. If I said that, everybody would laugh. They would say, “That is a stupid diet. You have to lose 1 pound a month and get into a rhythm of doing it.”

If we do not start saving money now, when those baby boomers, those people who are right now about 55 years old, when they come to 2010 and they get on the Medicare program, the numbers in Medicare are going to go from 40 million to 80 million, double. That is what is happening to us. We know it. They are all out there living, paying taxes and so forth. They all believe that Medicare is going to be there for them. If we do not save this money now, we are not going to have it when they get there and come to need their hospital benefits. I think that the hardest thing for those of us who are in the Congress, and the gentleman has been here all most as long as I have, people do not want to think about something 10 years out. It is kind of too far out before we can have $200 billion of debt, we could be gone in a year. My term ends next year. I have to get elected four more times to get down to 2010.

People tend to think, let us give them a big tax break. That is why the President has given $1.6 trillion. He is hoping that the people are going to buy Social Security until 2014. That is the only thing on his mind, how do I give this money back to the people, and they will think I am a wonderful guy, and they will reelect me in 4 years.

That is what it is all about.

As an additional benefit, though, for the Republicans who do not want to do social services, there will not be any money left. This particular thing, which says that we start with a $5.6 trillion tax base and take out the $2.5 trillion for Social Security the gentleman was talking about earlier, and then we take out the half a trillion for Social Security, then we only have $2.5 trillion left. Then we take the $1.6 trillion that the President is promising as a tax break for everybody, take it and run, have a good time.

What he does not tell us is that if we do not use that money to pay off debt, we wind up paying another $500 million in interest, because the government has to borrow that money. So if we do not take the $1.6 and pay down the debt, we wind up having to borrow more money.

The second thing that happens with this new proposal of the President that he never tells anybody about is that because of the tax law, there are going to be about 28 million people who start to have to figure their income tax twice.

We have something called the AMT. That is the adjusted minimum tax. That is put into the law because we do not want rich people to some way figure out how to not pay anything, so we have said that everybody ought to pay at least a minimum tax.

And the shell game is going to wind up with 25 million people, instead of 2 million today, 2 million have to figure it twice. Suddenly it is going to 25 million. If we fix that in the Congress, which I think we will, it is going to be $200 million.

Now, that leaves us $200 billion for everything else that could happen to the country in 2010, if we believe this estimate, as the gentleman showed in this chart. Who knows what is going to be in 10 years? But if we believe that there is going to be $5.6 trillion, we have $200 billion to deal with all the problem.

The President has promised this prescription drug benefit. He has promised defense. I remember the gentleman in this building who believes that defense is not going to get a boost up.

How about if we are going to do something about education? Everybody says we cannot leave any child behind, and we have to do educational things, so that is going to come out of that $200 billion. What can we save land, save parks and so forth? Or dealing with crime, that all has to come out of that $200 billion over the next 10 years. That is $20 billion a year.

If we want to give tax cuts to people for long-term care, that is, buying nursing home insurance, and if someone buys their own health insurance, that is another $40 billion. And then we have the faith-based initiatives. We are going to give money to churches to do various things. That all comes out of the $200 billion.

That does not talk about crop failures. My good friend, the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Mrs. CLAYTON), is going to be here to talk about agriculture. It is not only about a crop failures or earthquakes, like we just went through in Seattle. It does not say anything about any natural disasters or wars, or any kind of military action we get into, like Bosnia or Kosovo. Every bit of that has to come out of this $207 billion.

That is just reckless. This is a reckless plan because of that $1.6 trillion. It is particularly reckless for a program like Medicare.

I appreciate that the gentleman would take the time to come out here and run this special order here tonight, because I think people need to sit and think about the three shells: How much can they move this money around? Can they confuse the people? It really is based on making the people believe something is over here when, in fact, we are also using it in two other places.

People get confused. Even listening to me, I am sure people do not really understand all the technologies. I am telling the Members that I have been doing this for 30 years. This is the biggest shell game I have ever witnessed. The people are the ones who are going to suffer.

Mr. BENNETSEN. I appreciate the gentleman taking the time. I might quickly ask a question. I think there are a couple of points here.

One is, I think, as the gentleman points out, in the Democratic prescription drug plan it only do we want a universal prescription drug plan for every senior who wants to participate in it, but in addition to that, we do not fund it out of the Medicare Trust Fund.

The other point that I think is important is we heard a lot during the debate on the budget last night and today that Democrats were just trying to scare senior citizens about this. I think I would ask the gentleman, before I yield to my colleague, the gentlewoman from Texas, if the President is going to explain what our proposal is versus the consequences of their proposal?

Sometimes people do not like to hear consequences, but, in fact, again, the
Mr. McDERMOTT. My colleague, my colleague, and I am some, but is that not the truth? Mr. BENTSEN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for asking. I sat on the Medicare Commission for a year listening to this whole debate. People want to talk about it, and they use the word “modernization,” and use all those fancy words, but what they are talking about is trying to move senior citizens from a program where they have guaranteed benefits, hospitalization, seeing the doctor, laboratory work, x-rays, and adding the pharmaceutical benefit, that is a guaranteed benefit package: what the Republicans are trying to do when they say “modernization,” what they mean is we are moving to a guaranteed benefit contribution. That is, they give a voucher. They give a voucher to my mother and to the gentleman’s mother. Everybody gets the same amount in the whole country. Every senior citizen would get about $5,500.

Mr. Speaker, with that $5,500, they would have to go out and buy their own plan. My mother is 91. I do not know how old other people’s mothers are, but there are not very many insurance companies who want to insure somebody who is 91. Here, instead of guaranteeing my mother gets these benefits, they say to her, here, Mrs. McDermott, here is your $5,500, you can go out and shop and find the deal you can. That is what is in their presentation.

We are not scaring anybody. That is what they said in the Medicare commission.

Mr. BENTSEN. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, I might also say that one of the sponsors of that in the other body, the senior senator from Louisiana, has even said that that program alone will not achieve the savings that are proposed to modernize or privatize, but certainly to extend the solvency of Medicare, that there must be other things that have to be done.

Mr. McDERMOTT. We will have another night to talk about this issue.

Mr. BENTSEN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his remarks.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Oregon (Ms. HOOLEY), my colleague who is also a member of the Committee on the Budget.

Ms. HOOLEY of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BENTSEN), my colleague, and I am going to talk about something very specific tonight. When you do a budget, whether you do it at home or you do it for an organization, one of the things you do is you have priorities. You put money into those priorities.

For example, you just watched the gentleman from Washington (Mr. McDERMOTT), my colleague, go through the budget. The Republican budget tax cuts are a priority, they have $1.6 trillion in that priority. They also talk about a priority being education. Part of the problem with that priority is they have not put any money in that priority.

We had started a program, for example, to reduce class sizes. Well, why do you want to reduce class sizes? You want to reduce class sizes because if you do that, particularly in kindergarten through third grade, kids learn better. They do better in school and they do better in school, not only in kindergarten through third grade, but they do better in school throughout their educational career.

We started a program by saying let us put 100,000 new teachers in the schools to help reduce class sizes. That program is going away.

When you talk to school districts, they say what is really important. We have huge issues out about $2 billion worth of school repair and modernization that needs to occur. Again, this budget diverts $1.2 billion out of that program, and then it eliminates it for the next year.

There are still things in the budget. For example, President Bush has suggested testing, vouchers and so forth, that all has to come out of their budget, but their budget is only a 5.7 percent increase, which has to take care of inflation, new programs and population increase.

Mr. Speaker, one of those programs that I am terribly concerned about is a promise that we made 26 years ago to our school districts and to our students that the people in our districts said those students that have disabilities are special needs students, they need an appropriate free education like every student does. And the Federal Government said, school districts, if you do this, we are going to pay 40 percent of those excess costs. Well, we have not done that.

I grew up in a family that said if you make a promise, you have to keep a promise. If you make a commitment, you have to keep a commitment. We have said we want to fund that at 40 percent and, yet, right now, we are only at 14.9 percent. So we have a long ways to go.

The Democratic budget is $129 billion over 10 years more than the Republican budget. We have put our money where our mouth is and we say education is important. Here is what we want to do for our school districts. We wanted to reduce the classroom size. We want to help with modernization for schools, because that is a perfect program for the Federal Government.

We have said we want to help with special education, with students with disability. So we put money into those programs. And you heard from the gentleman from Washington (Mr. McDERMOTT), my colleague, talking about that money that is left over, which is $200 billion over the next 10 years.

If you funded the disability excess costs to our schools and you did it over the next 5 years, getting up to that 40 percent level, which is what the Federal Government promised, just that program alone is $3 billion a year each year for the next 5 years.

If you divide that 10 years into the $200 billion, $20 billion a year, and you are trying to do in one little program take that money out of it, you can see that money does not go very far.

Again, if you believe that education is a priority, then you show that it is a priority, not by just talking about it, but by funding your money. I know that is what the Democrats have done. They have put that additional money into education. We have set it as a priority. We need to have the best education system in the world.

We are the richest nation in the world. We are the richest nation. We are the most powerful Nation, and that is one thing that we should do for all of our students is to give them opportunities by funding education. I would like to see us increase that education budget. I would like to see us keep our commitment to individuals with disabilities. And, again, I think if you make it a priority, you have to put your money there.

Mr. BENTSEN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Oregon (Ms. HOOLEY) for her remarks. I think the gentlewoman made an interesting point, I think what the Democrats are saying is that we are trying to keep the promises that we made. The promises we made on special education, but also the promises we made on Social Security and Medicare.

Really, the difference we have with our Republican colleagues is we believe that they are overcommitting. They are overcommitting on the basis of overly optimistic projections. They are overcommitting on the basis of using the Medicare and Social Security trust funds while not extending the solvency of those programs.

We laid out in our budget alternative our idea for extending your money. I know that is what the Democrats are doing.
and there are only three ways to make it up; more debt, higher payroll taxes, or reduce benefits.

All we are saying is, if that is the proposal, then lay that proposal on the table, but do not overcommit us to the point where we either drive the country back into more debt or that we have to make those choices as a last resort, without having to debate those with the American people.

We do not favor those choices. We favor paying down more debt. We favor extending the solvency of Social Security and Medicare. And we think we can do that and have a tax cut, but we do not believe you can overcommit and achieve those goals.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Mrs. CLAYTON), my colleague.

Mrs. CLAYTON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BENTSEN) for yielding to me.

I also thank the gentleman for holding this important hearing and Special Order on our budget and, in particular, I want to focus again on Medicare trust funds, because we are so worried about that, and as my other colleagues said, I would be remiss if I did not talk about agriculture.

Let me say I think that the Democratic budget approach was a very simple approach; that we were at a unique opportunity where we could indeed give a tax cut and indeed have a flexible, responsible, and apply one-third of those funds for writing down the debt, and one-third of those would be for priorities like securing Medicare and Social Security trust funds.

That is the principle, not that we should not give a tax cut, but it should be a reasonable tax cut that all working Americans could benefit from, not just the rich. When you start from the premise that only the rich get it, you, indeed, have difficulties.

We surely have to do everything to ensure the integrity of the Medicare trust fund, because this is a major health issue. There are thousands and thousands of senior citizens in my district who would get no health care whatsoever, unless they are dependent on Medicare. It is not sufficient, but indeed it is the only thing they have.

As I said, the President’s proposed $1.6 trillion, tax cut over the next 10 years has now been passed, and if that is the case, it is going to cost approximately $2 trillion, not $1.6 trillion when you account for the debt that is involved.

The Congressional Budget Office has reminded us that the Medicare beneficiaries are expected to pay $1.5 trillion for prescription drugs during the next 10 years. So we do not cover that. That is the costs that are coming out of senior citizens pockets or their children’s pockets or they are doing without that care.

The Medicare trust fund indeed will be further encumbered by the fact, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BENTSEN) is right, that the $153 billion they proposed is not the actual surplus of the Medicare trust fund. So the trust fund which, indeed, must be there for the 77 billion new baby boomers that we know actually will be drawing on that. They will have to know now that there will be less than we need to deal with the prescription drug.

I agree with the majority that we need to work on prescription drugs. I just think we need to fund it in a separate way rather than taking from already committed funds for another cause to do that. We agree on the need to have a prescription drug, because in my district, I can tell you the population is getting older. Because of the climate and the weather we have in our areas, a number of retirees are coming to the community, and we are going to find ourselves in a community where there are less working people and mostly senior citizens and yet they will be drawing on the resources of the Federal Government. And it would be unfortunate if they would not be able to do that.

If we do not do that, by the year 2029, when they say that we have moved the insolvency; we are going to need it not to be solvent because we, indeed, draw these extra dollars from that.

If President Bush’s plan, as it has now been passed, which is unfortunate, if we act under the assumption, and this is what he says, he says that he makes the assertion that Medicare is not running a surplus. That is in his blueprint. It is not running a surplus. He is not taking the surplus from Medicare.

If he is making that assertion then, would you not think if indeed he is adding a new program of $153 billion, would he not be adding that to it, or if not that amount, be adding as much of a surplus from that program so the Medicare surplus if his assumption is true that we do not have a surplus?

I think we do have a surplus in Medicare, because the Medicare surplus is based on Social Security and those who are paying for Social Security are paying for their Medicare. It is just a matter of how they want to describe that. I predict in 10 years, indeed, we do not have to predict, we know that the 77 million baby boomers will become and will retire by year 2029.

Let me just say a word about this ever-dependent contingency fund. We have more claims on this contingency fund than there really are dollars. Anyway, when you asked in the Committee on the Budget, we have this reserve fund.

We have this contingency fund. They say the contingency fund is larger than that, the truth of the matter is the contingency fund really has fuzzy numbers. At best, given this number to be true, we need to not only secure a Medicare trust fund, but we also need to keep the commitment that we say we are going to do about defense.

We do not know what that will cost. We also are talking about agriculture policy. We are writing a farm bill this year, and it means new opportunities that we need to do the next 5 years, we do not even consider the experience that has been documented, $9 billion consecutively for 3 years.

We simply ask them just put it in at what our experience has been, $9 billion. Now, most of the agriculture sector that is coming to the Committee on Agriculture said that we need more than the $9 billion, we need $12 billion. The Blue Dogs put that in their budget.

So, indeed, if we find that this ever-shrinking contingency fund is going to meet all this need, this is really going to be a false promise, because that the budget that we have passed can be the budget that will indeed secure the opportunity for having the priorities and the opportunities as we go forward.

We can give a tax cut, and we should give a tax cut, but we also ought to pay down the debt. We ought to be meeting the ever-evolving priorities and those emergencies as we know it. Education, prescription drugs, our defense, our environment, and our agriculture, those are issues we know that are evolving. The energy issues, those are evolving. They will be greater issues, not less of an issue. We see them. We do not have to wait for them.

I come from an area that was flooded 2 years ago. I can tell my colleagues I hope that does not happen to anyone else. But it is going to happen somewhere, maybe even my State. We have not planned for those contingencies. So not only Medicare and agriculture, but all of the priorities and the contingencies that are so necessary to respond to the needs of the American people.

I will say all the money belongs to the American people, not just to a select people. All of the tax revenues belong to all of the American people, not a select people. All working people pay taxes. They may not pay their taxes as income, but they pay Federal taxes in proportion to their income. Many of them pay higher proportion for payroll than some people pay for their income.

So I think it is disingenuous to suggest and to segregate and to make one taxpayer seem less honorable than another taxpayer. If we are going to have a tax break and give a tax incentive, and the President is now saying the tax incentive is to respond to the recession, well, what better way of making that tax break more affordable and accessible to those who would use the
dollar cut that the House passed a couple
ready, as I mentioned, the income tax
not including interest on the debt. Al-
ting on the tax side. The $1.6 trillion
lar of debt we can as quickly as we can.
come down, sometimes it is economi-
nances their mortgage when rates
billion that we think we might not be
Budget Office said there is about $880
trillion, $1.2 trillion that we absolutely
Medicare, be it paying down the na-
obligations, be it Social Security, be it
want to be honest about meeting those
addition to wanting a tax cut for the
Cut time and again. But we also say, in
money. And the Democrats really do
improvement of the product that we are
 equitable and fair as we have. So it is

I hope, indeed, that the Senate will
our debt, but, also, we are not having
the opportunity to meet our priorities,
and we are not making that tax cut as
equitable and fair as we have. So it is
a misopportunity.

The Democrats have put forth a tax
cut bill that the President proposed
has now been scored by the Joint Com-
posed in his budget. The estate and gift
tax bill that the President proposed
has been scored by the Joint Com-
ced exactly as $400 billion greater
than what the President pro-
posed. So, quickly, we are pushing
harder and harder against that contin-
gency fund.

What concerns us as Democrats is,
not only that we will not meet our ob-
ligations, but because of the hard work
done by the American taxpayers and
the American economy over the last 18
years to dig us out of the hole of debt
that quadrupled our national debt
when we had deficits as high as $300 bil-
lion a year to now when we are finally
seeing blue skies with surpluses and
not deficits, that we might miss this
window of opportunity so soon before
the baby boomers retire and push us
back into a major debt. There is no
window of opportunity so soon before
the baby boomers retire and push us
back into a major debt.

We have our differences with the Re-
publicans and with the President on
this. We believe there can be a tax cut,
but we believe we must meet our oblig-
lations equally with that tax cut. That
is a very direct difference that we have
with the Republicans.

We will continue to work as we spend
the rest of this year putting through
this budget and trying to put through a
budget that, not only gives tax relief to
American families, but also ensures
that American families will not be sad-
dled with more debt today and in the
future.

ANGEL OF REBUTTAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr.
CRENSHAW). Under the Speaker’s an-
ounced policy of January 3, 2001, the
gentleman from Colorado (Mr.
McNICHOLS) is recognized for 30 minutes.

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, as be-
coming customary around these facili-
ties, I find myself being the angel of re-
buttal. I sat here for the last 30 or 40
minutes and heard my colleagues from
the Democratic side of the aisle.
I would add from the liberal side of
the Democratic side of the aisle, the
reason I think some of the views being espoused by
the liberal side of the Democrats
do not track with some of those
topics that are being shared or espoused
by the conservatives and the Democrats. So I
think we should split that out.

I would like to rebut just a few of the
comments that have been made by pre-
ceding speakers whom were not rebut-
ted. There was no opportunity to rebut
them. Those are the rules. I understand
that. This is my chance, however, to
explain or at least discuss what I be-
lieve are some of the liberal attacks on
President Bush’s policy.

Let me begin by saying that I heard
repeatedly, especially from the gen-
tleman from Texas, that the Repub-
licans for some reason are mathemati-
cally challenged. We do not have time,
we do not need to spend our time this
evening making those little kind of, in
my opinion, cheap shots.

What concerns me is, if you look at mathe-

matics, it does not take a lot of under-
standing to understand and to have
some kind of comprehension as to what
is happening in our stock market, what
is happening in our economy.

From my liberal friends from the
Democratic Party, this just did not
happen in the last 8 weeks since Presi-
dent Bush has had office. This has
happened. We began to see the trend sev-
eral months ago. This is exactly, frank-
ly, what their side of the aisle has
handed President Bush.

Now, President Bush has not spent
his time out there expressing anger
about the economy that the Demo-

cratic leadership through Bill Clinton
gives to him. Instead, he has gone
to their side of the aisle, he has gone
to the Democratic side of the aisle
and said, “All blame aside, let us keep
the ship afloat. Before we decide who
put the hole in the side of the ship, why
do we not try and patch the hole?”
Then, before we put any more water in
the bucket, why do we not patch the holes
in the bucket. Let us see if we cannot
resolve this as a team.

Many of my colleagues on the liberal
side of the Democratic Party have
down here to the White House to have
discussions with President Bush. Presi-
dent Bush in a very professional, non-
partisan, bipartisan manner has ex-
tended his hand. He is attempting to
work with them.

But night after night, they are down
here at this microphone bashing Presi-
dent Bush. Night after night, they are
saying, “We are in trouble.” My colleagues
can say what they want, they can say all
the feel-good things out there, but take
a look at the layoffs that have occurred
just in the last 6 weeks. This is not the
time to bash President Bush. This is not the
time to bash his economic plan simply for the reason of
being in opposition, of expressing or
being in political opposition to it.

I understand that there is a dif-
ference between the Democratic
and Republican Party. I understand
we have to take political positions. But,
look, when the ship could sink, and I am
not saying it is sinking, but it has
a hole in the side, and when there is a
hole in the side, the ship’s colleagues
should do something other than for the
sake of opposition and for the sake of
standing at this microphone and bash-
ing this stuff. Why do they not step for-
ward and work in a positive fashion. I
think that the President has done that
and I think that the Republican side
has done that with them.

Frankly, there are many Democrats,
fortunately of conservative leaning,