Members of Congress and looking up to them but wondering how they could, how they would be allowed to, and why they would spend more money than they raised in taxes and why they would deficit spend. I knew I could not do that in the statehouse. I knew that in the statehouse that we had to spend only what we raised in taxes. If we spent more, we would have a deficit, and we were not allowed to by law.

I just think that it is immoral for a country that gets, in a sense, I hear the imagery of a farmer, I will use that same imagery, our forefathers gave us a farm and it did not have much debt, and this generation has mortgaged the farm to the hilt and is passing it on to the next generation with so much debt you can hardly pay the bills, and that is where we were at. We are here because 20 years of deficit spending has put us in the mess we are in.

I am not going to say that it is the Democrats' fault, because it is not. We had a Congress on one side which was mostly Democrat. You had a Republican Presidency for most of that time. The White House, Republicans did not want to cut defense, or at least they did not even want to control the growth of defense. You had Democrats who did not want to control entitlements. You had Republicans who thought there was no defense program that they did not want to spend money on, and you had Democrats who realized that half the budget are entitlements, and they continued to go up and up. So Republicans did not give in on defense, and Democrats did not give in on entitlements. The end result is we have had one deficit after another.

I vowed when I was elected that I would be part of a process to help get our financial house in order, and that is what we are doing. The sad thing is we are doing it now without the help of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle that know we have to get our financial house in order, and we are doing it without the help of the President.

I am as proud as I could be to be part of this effort to get our financial house in order. We want to do that and balance the budget.

The second thing we want to do is save our trust funds, particularly Medicare which needs to be protected and preserved and strengthened. It is going insolvent next year. It goes bankrupt in 7 years, totally bankrupt.

The third thing we want to do is we want to change the social, corporate, and farming welfare state into an opportunity society. I look at this, and I say how can anyone justify 4 miles of public housing in Chicago, 17-story buildings, that is the legacy of the welfare state; the legacy of the welfare state, our 13-year-olds having babies, 14-year-olds selling drugs, 16-year-olds killing each other, 18-year-olds who cannot even read their diplomas, 24-year-olds who have never had a job, 30-year-old grandparents. We have got to change that.

In our society we become a caretaking society instead of a caring society. What ultimately has to happen is Republicans and Democrats, one, have to realize we have to balance the budget. I would like it in 4 years. If it takes 7, so be it. We have to get our financial house in order.

The second thing we have to do, clearly, is decide how we do that. We have a disagreement with the White House right now. The White House does not want to weigh in on a 7-year budget. They are going to have to do that. The one thing I am not giving in on is to continue to say we are going to balance the budget out years and years out, but the President does not have to take our 7-year budget. The Democrats do not have to take our 7-year budget. If they do not like that, they can come in with a proposal as some of them have, but the bottom line is we have to get our financial house in order.

I hear the dialog about cutting things, cutting school lunch programs. No. They are going up 4.5 percent each year. Yes, they would have gone up 5.2 percent. We think they should go up 4.5 percent.

Cutting Medicare? Give me a break. Medicare, we are going to spend $1.6 trillion in the next 7 years. The last 7 years we spent about $900 billion. It is going to go up over $675 billion. We are going to spend 75 percent more in the next 7 years than we did in the last 7, 75 percent more, excuse me, 73 percent more. Only in this place where the virus is fed, where you spend 73 percent more, do people say it is a cut.

In this year compared to the 7th year, we are going to spend 54 percent more. The 7th year, in Medicare, 54 percent more than today. People say you have more beneficiaries. Even if you take it on that, we are going to spend $4,800 per beneficiary today, $4,800. It is going to go up to $6,700 in the 7th year. That is a 40-percent increase. Only in this place when you spend 40 percent more per beneficiary do people call it a cut.

Are we going to force people out of Medicare into private care? No. They can stay where they are. They have no increase in copayment, no increase in deductions. The premium is going to remain the same, 31.5 percent. Taxpayers are going to continue to pay 68.5 percent unless you are the most affluent.

I have the most affluent in my community. Yes, they are going to have to pay more. If they are married, after $150,000, they pay all of Medicare part B. If they are single, after $100,000, they pay all of Medicare part B. For the most affluent, people want to talk about how we want to help the wealthy, we are saying the wealthy should pay for more for Medicare to help save the trust fund.

Do we force people to get off private care? No. They can stay there. If they want to go into private care, they can do that. Why would they want to do that? Because they can maybe get better eye care for the same cost, might get dental care, might get a reduction or rebate in their premium. They might not have to pay that copayment or a deductible with some private care plans. So they can do that. Nobody makes them. If they decide to go into private care under our Medicare-plus plan and they do not like it, they can come back.

For 2 years every month they can go in and come out. They do not have to wait a year. Only in the third year would they have to stay in the plan.

When I hear people say we are cutting, I think, yes, we are cutting some programs. We are not cutting Medicare. We are not cutting Medicaid. They continue to go up. We are slowing the growth of those programs. We are changing them. We are allowing people to have other opportunities.

I hope eventually the rich-and-poor dialog just falls by the wayside because it is simply a sham. We have the biggest cut in our tax program is two-thirds of our cut is $500 tax credit per family. You mean to tell me if you have a kid under 18 and those who might be listening to this right now, you ask yourself if you are wealthy, if you have a child under 18, you are going to get a $500 tax credit; you are going to get one; and if you are wealthy, then we fit the description. But if you happen to be like most Americans, 75 percent of whom make less than $75,000, they are going to get that $500 tax credit.

The earned income tax credit is being eliminated? No. We are saying it is not going to increase above $28,000. If you are at $28,000 and you and your husband are working and you only make $28,000 or just one is working and you have 4 kids, you pay no Federal taxes. You get actually a rebate. You are paid by the Federal Government, no tax; you are paid. We are just saying we cannot increase that to $35,000. We are also saying that if it applies to a senior, you know, Social Security should count as an income.

So I listened to the rhetoric and some of it has some truth to it, some of it, but some of it is just so off base.

I am just proud to be part of this Republican majority that has the courage and the determination to get our financial house in order.

REPEAL OF THE NURSING HOME PROTECTION ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida [Mr. DEUTSCH] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DEUTSCH. Mr. Speaker, I have been listening to the 5-minutes this evening for over an hour now, about an hour and a half, and I think one thing that anyone who has been watching or been listening can conclude is that neither side of this aisle has a monopoly on wisdom, and there really is both wisdom and ignorance on both sides of the aisle.

I think that when you look at this bill that we are going to vote on tomorrow, there are things that I can support and that I do support in this bill, but there are some things that truly will cause unneeded suffering for Americans and really things that are just out of place when you look at the facts.

Yesterday evening I talked about one of them. I talked about the Medicare program, the fact that the $270 billion in cuts has nothing to do with what the actuaries say. The 7-year actuarial life, in 12 of the 30 years it has had a shorter actuarial life.

Tonight I want to focus in on something that has no place in that bill, and that is, it is not in a couple of thousand page bill, it is really probably just a page and a half, and that is repealing the 1987 Nursing Home Protection Act. That is one of the many things this bill does that really is unprecedented and really, truly tragic.

Prior to 1987, I think there are many people who are listening and watching remember reading and seeing stories, really horrible stories, stories about nursing home patients being tied down in nursing homes, being in their own feces, in their own urine, being drugged so they would not move, nursing home residents really dying in nursing home facilities because of lack of fire exits, nursing home facilities that had no 24-hour staff, I mean, horror stories on, if not a weekly basis, definitely on a monthly basis throughout the country.

There is a reason we do not hear those horrors today, because in 1987 this Congress passed a law providing nursing home residents, the weakest of the weak, the most vulnerable of the most vulnerable in our society, protection against things like being tied down, like being drugged, like making sure that there was 24-hour nursing facility and a trained person in that facility, three meals a day, fire exits. You know, if that is overregulation, then I am for overregulation.

But I do not think most Americans think that that is overregulation. I think most Americans think that that is sound public policy that really is in the public interest.

Let me just go on in terms of what this regulation prevents from happening. I served in the State legislature for 10 years, from 1982 to 1992. Prior to that I served as a director of a Medicare advocacy group, 1982 and 1981. During that period, about once a week I would get a call from either the spouse or the child of someone who was being evicted from a nursing home, and I will tell you, I remember as if it were today, those phone calls because I have never heard since really just the tragedy. You can imagine what it means, someone's spouse, their parent is being evicted from a nursing home, and they called me and they asked me to do something. My response had to be there was nothing I could do, because the law did not protect those people either in Florida or in the United States. That does not exist today. People cannot be evicted from nursing homes in the United States of America today. No one gets those calls in the United States of America today.

The tragedy that happened to thousands, tens of thousands of families in this country, does not happen, and in fact, the facts are that there was just lots of empirical evidence that was pointed out in hearings for this legislation in the 1980's that people died when evicted from nursing homes. That does not happen today, because of a piece of legislation that is going to be repealed tomorrow by that bill, and it should not be.

My colleagues on the other side of the aisle, and I propose this as an amendment to the Committee on Rules, my colleagues on the other side of the aisle say, well, the States can do better; the States know better; we want to return this issue to the States.

You know, my colleagues on the other side of the aisle really have selective memory when they think about the States doing better. They pick and choose the issues they think the States can do better on.

Two hundred years of tort law in America, forget that, the Federal Government knows best in the areas of medical malpractice. We are going to obliterate 200 years of States' rights in that area. My colleagues on the other side of the aisle, there is one mandate, one State mandate in the Medicaid bill, in this bill. There is one State mandate, and that State mandate is that States cannot choose to spend money for abortions.

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It is an amazing concept when you think about that. Mandating that issue, which they prioritize, but they say we cannot mandate, that there cannot be nursing home evictions.

I urge my colleagues tomorrow to really defeat this legislation for this and other reasons, and hopefully that people who are listening and watching will call their Members to let them know this is a provision in this bill that they do not want to see enacted.

CONGRESS' MARCHING ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentleman from Washington [Mr. TATE] is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. TATE. Mr. Speaker, I am excited tonight to talk about what is truly a historic day that is going to occur tomorrow, and I have four of my colleagues here this evening. I have the gentleman from Spokane, Mr. NETHERCUTT, the gentleman from up north Washington State, in the second district, Mr. METCALF, and what I call an honorary member of the Washington delegation, my good friend the gentleman from Pennsylvania, Mr. FOX, and also Mr. WHITE here from Washington State as well.

The reason we are all here tonight to talk and really have a dialog among ourselves, but with the American people, is about what is going to occur tomorrow. It is truly a historic day. It really brings to a close in really a grand finale of what we have said is our motto, ''Promises made, promises kept.''

That is what we have done. We all ran and campaigned with the Contract With America because we believed it was the right thing to do. When we got here, we started on day one and began implementing the Contract With America, many of those issues we believe that are important. Between now and the time that we conclude, some time in mid-November, the sooner the better, to get the people's work done, there are four main issues we are going to accomplish, and those are embodied in this Reconciliation Act we are going to be working on tomorrow and passing.

The four main issues, and really they are Congress' marching orders, first and foremost, obviously, is to balance the budget within 7 years. The second is saving Medicare from bankruptcy, not for just this generation of seniors but the next. Reforming the welfare system, to get people on self-dependency. Last, but definitely not least, is allowing people to keep more of their hard earned money.

All of us here tonight engaged in this colloquy can bring personal experiences from people we talked to at home about these important issues. The first issue we will talk about is the whole issue of balancing the budget.

I know the gentleman from the second district in Washington State has probably been working on this issue longer than all of us in his elected career. He has done a phenomenal job. I would like to ask the gentleman from the second district of Washington, to tell us a little bit about what you have heard at home, why balancing the budget is important and why you are looking forward to casting an aye vote tomorrow and what this will really mean to working people at home, not just using the overall numbers, but what it will mean to families.

Mr. METCALF. Mr. Speaker, this is in fact more than just how it will impact the individuals, and it will. We have to solve this problem. I look at it from my point of view basically as more about my grandchildren. What are we leaving for them?

Norma and I have really in a small way realized the American dream. We own our own home, we use our own home for our own small business, and we were able to gain our home and we own it free and clear. I worry about that for my grandchildren. I think that the debt, the huge debt, the payments of $1,300 per person per year, not taxpayers, $1,300 per man, woman, children, all over America, I believe that is destroying the American dream for our children and grandchildren. I think