

gross domestic product to surge by 3.8 percent. It has created over 4 million jobs. The stock market has appreciated over \$6 trillion. There is a record percentage of homeownership; and, for the first time ever, over 50 percent of minorities own their own homes.

I appreciate President Bush's leadership. I look forward to more successes.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September 11.

MEDICARE PART D

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

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, next week, on November 15, senior citizens across America will have the opportunity to sign up for a benefit that is long overdue, and that is prescription drug coverage.

The initial sign-up date for Medicare part D runs from November 15, 2005, through May 15, 2006. Coverage starts January 1, 2006, so the sooner seniors sign up, the sooner they can start saving.

Here is what seniors should know about Medicare part D. It is available to all Medicare beneficiaries. The benefit is voluntary, so seniors will need to choose to sign up. They will have a choice of plans with a low monthly premium, and all Medicare-approved plans will cover both generic and brand-name prescription drugs and will be accepted at pharmacies close to home.

There are several ways seniors can sign up for Medicare part D. Watch the mail for information from Social Security and Medicare; call 1-800-Medicare, where trained staff can answer questions and help you sign up 7 days a week, 24 hours a day; or visit the Web site www.medicare.gov.

If our seniors have access to affordable prescription drugs, they will reap the benefits of modern medicine and live healthier lives.

GOP DOUBLETALK ON ENERGY

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

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow some of the biggest names in the oil industry are coming to Capitol Hill to testify on why their companies are making record profits at the same time American families are struggling to heat their homes.

We are hearing some really big talk from Republicans. Why, if you were Rip Van Winkle, you might actually believe the Republicans were trying to do something about gas prices. Yet the tune they are singing now is really different from the tune they were singing back in the summer when they passed the energy bill. Back then, they were singing from the energy industry's hymn book.

The fact is, thanks to a Republican-backed energy bill loaded with tax-

payer subsidies to big oil to the tune of \$14 billion, American families are struggling with sky-high energy bills and oil companies are struggling for ways to count their cash.

Just an example: ExxonMobil recently reported that their profits increased by 75 percent in the third quarter, and so what do we do? We give them \$14 billion as taxpayer subsidies to help them run their business plan.

Americans are seeing a Congress that has done nothing to help them and do everything to help the oil companies.

Mr. Speaker, it is wrong to hand out money to energy companies who are making record massive profits and then cut funding for home heating assistance to our elderly. We need a change. We need new priorities. America can do better.

SOMETHING IS NOT RIGHT

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, something is not right. When you look at the budget reconciliation act and you look at the terrible devastation of Hurricanes Katrina and Wilma and the impact in the Gulf region, and you see the impact on schools like Xavier and Dillard and Tulane and Loyola, and then Texas Southern University in Texas that has taken over 600 hurricane Katrina students, along with the University of Houston, and we are attempting to cause our students billions of dollars in aid in the Budget Reconciliation Act, something is not right. Something is not right when small and disadvantaged businesses cannot even participate in the rebuild after Hurricane Katrina. Something is not right when large corporations are blocking the opportunities for small businesses to be engaged.

The Budget Reconciliation Act is not a problem solver. It creates problems. How can you put the burden of the deficits created by House Republicans and others on the backs of students who are attempting to achieve an education? Something is not right when we are cutting billions of dollars of student aid.

REDUCING DEFICIT SPENDING FOR THE GOOD OF AMERICA

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

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, once again, we continue to hear gross mischaracterizations of what it is that we are trying to do. Democrats and Republicans alike decry deficit spending. They say we have to balance the budget, both sides of the aisle.

We have come together with what I hope will be a bipartisan package at the end of the day that is designed to bring about 50-plus billion dollars in

spending reductions. We all decry the fact that mandatory spending is out of control.

What is it we are doing with this package? Well, for the first time in a long time, we are trying to rein in so-called mandatory spending. The reason is that we believe in growing our economy, not Federal spending; we believe in reducing the reach of government, not limiting the reach of individuals; and we believe in government's helping hand, not government's heavy hand.

Mr. Speaker, it is very important that the day after tomorrow, when we look at this important legislation, that we do all that we can to come together and try to do what the American people want us to do, and that is reduce the size and scope and reach of the Federal Government.

REPUBLICAN RAID ON STUDENT AID SHOWS MISGUIDED PRIORITIES

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

Mr. CARNAHAN. Mr. Speaker, parents and students should take note: College may soon get a lot more expensive if House Republicans get their way.

This week, they plan to bring a budget reconciliation bill to the floor that cuts \$14 billion in Federal student aid, the largest cuts in the program's history. Included are nearly \$8 billion in new charges that will raise the cost of college loans through new fees and higher interest for millions of American students and families.

For the typical student borrower already saddled with over \$17,000 in debt, these new fees and higher interest charges will cost up to \$5,800 more.

Financial barriers should never prevent a qualified student from going to college, and that is why America has long since made the commitment to help all Americans afford a higher education. Studies show that financial barriers alone will prevent over 4 million high school graduates from attending a 4-year public university over the next decade and prevent another 2 million from attending college at all.

Mr. Speaker, the wrong priorities in this Republican budget reconciliation will put college out of reach for millions of American students. It should be rejected.

\$10 BILLION FIX FOR MEDICARE REIMBURSEMENT NOT INCLUDED IN HOUSE BUDGET RECONCILIATION

(Ms. BERKLEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. BERKLEY. Mr. Speaker, my community has the fastest growing senior population in the United States. I also have numbers of doctors that are telling me they can no longer afford to