EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

RECOGNIZING LIEUTENANT COLONEL DAVID WISECARVER

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 27, 2006

Mr. GRAVES. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Lieutenant Colonel David Wisecarver, a native of Kansas City, Missouri. On June 24th, 2006, Lieutenant Colonel Wisecarver will receive a promotion to the rank of Colonel in the United States Army.

Lieutenant Colonel Wisecarver enlisted in the Army Reserve in 1981 and completed Basic Training, Advanced Individual Training, and served in the 190th Transportation Company as a CH–47 mechanic and crew chief before entering the Reserve Officer Training Corps. He was then commissioned as an Infantry officer from Northwest Missouri State University in 1985. He holds a Bachelor of Science in Industrial Technology and a Master of Arts Degree in Business Management from Touro University.

After posts in Fort Campbell, Kentucky, Schofield Barracks in Hawaii, and finally in Savannah, Georgia, Lieutenant Colonel Wisecarver participated in Operation Uphold Democracy in Haiti in 1994. He completed Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, and was assigned as the Executive Officer to the Director of Officer Personnel Management System, Task Force XXI in Washington, DC. His next assignment was back to the 101st Airborne Division, where he served in Operation Desert Focus, in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait in 1999. The Lieutenant Colonel's last assignment was Task Force 2, Senior Observer/Controller at the Joint Readiness Training Center, Fort Polk, Louisiana, where he trained twenty-one Battalion Combat Teams deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan. His upcoming assignment will be to Rawalpindi, Pakistan, to attend the National Defense College for a year.

He is highly decorated and has been awarded the Defense Meritorious Service Medal, the Army Achievement Medal, The National Defense Service Medal, the Humanitarian Service Medal, the Overseas Service Ribbon, the Expert Infantryman's Badge, the Aircrewman's Badge, the U.S. Army Ranger Tab, the Senior Parachutist Badge, the Pathfinder Badge, and the Air Assault Badge, among others.

Lieutenant Colonel Wisecarver has been married for eighteen years to the former Dianna K. Huntley of Fort Lauderdale, Florida. They have two young children, Samantha and Matthew.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in recognizing Lieutenant Colonel David Wisecarver as he assumes the new responsibilities of the rank of Colonel. Over the years, he has served the United States with dignity and courage and I am proud to be able to represent him in the United States Congress.

VETERANS' COMPENSATION COST-OF-LIVING ADJUSTMENT ACT OF 2006

SPEECH OF

HON. SILVESTRE REYES

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 26, 2006

Mr. REYES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 4843, the Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2006.

As a cosponsor of this bill, I would like to thank my colleagues in the House Veterans' Affairs Committee for expediting its consideration in committee and for their strong bipartisan support.

H.R. 4843 would raise disability compensation for veterans and dependency and indemnity compensation for their survivors by 2.2 percent beginning December 1, 2006. It would also increase benefits for spouses with children under 18 who recently experienced the death of a husband or wife due to military service.

Rising medical expenses coupled with disabilities generate some of the most burdensome financial situations veterans face. El Paso, TX, is home to approximately 60,000 veterans, many of whom depend on government compensation to sustain them as well as of their families. Increasing rates for veterans' compensation is an important part of recognizing and repaying veterans after they so courageously risked their lives in service to our country.

Mr. Speaker, our Nation's veterans and their dependents deserve our utmost appreciation for their service to our country. I ask all my colleague to join me in voting favorably on H.R. 4843.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 5638, PERMANENT ESTATE TAX RELIEF ACT OF 2006

SPEECH OF

HON. BETTY McCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thurday, June 22, 2006

Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to H.R. 5638, the latest deficit busting tax giveaway from this Republican-controlled House. This enormous Republican tax giveaway completely ignores the real economic needs faced by the 99 percent of American citizens who work hard, pay their taxes and receive zero benefit from this bill. Instead, the priority of this Republican Congress is providing special handouts to estates with assets worth tens and hundreds of millions of dollars—America's economic elite—and then have these tax cuts for the privileged paid for by middle class families.

This legislation should be called the "Add Debt on America Tax Giveaway Act" since this bill will have the effect of adding nearly $800 billion to the national debt—10 percent of the total current debt—over the next 10 years. The cost of Republicans cutting and running from common sense and fiscal responsibility is that 99 percent of Americans will be forced to pay for the debt created by this nearly $800 billion tax cut for the super-rich.

Less than 1 month ago this Congress passed a tax bill providing capital gains and dividend tax cuts that primarily benefit families making over $1 million a year. Now Republican leaders are giving away nearly $800 billion in tax cuts for the 7,500 wealthiest families in our country, including an estimated 75 who live in Minnesota. Estates valued at over $20 million account for 43 percent of the value of this legislation and will receive an average tax break of $5.6 million. This so-called virtual elimination of the estate tax is an attack on the middle class and an abandonment of equity or fairness in taxation.

The Bush administration and Republicans in Congress are addicted to tax cuts that bust our Federal budget and add trillions of dollars to the national debt. Since 2001, Republicans have taken a $5.6 trillion Federal budget surplus left by President Clinton and turned it into a $3.2 trillion deficit. Republicans in Congress have raised the debt limit four times—for a total of $3 trillion—and our Nation now faces a national debt approaching $9 trillion. The answer to this fiscal disaster is not cut-and-run tax policies that ignore the needs of 99 percent of American citizens. The response from this Congress should be to enforce fiscal discipline—including a restoration of pay-as-you-go rules to balance the budget. It is time to return the focus of Congress on to the real priorities of middle class American families who are being squeezed at the gas pump, at the grocery store, paying college tuition and paying for skyrocketing health care costs.

During the last 8 years, special interest lobbyists for the 7,500 wealthy estates have been paid $600,000 a year to push the elimination of the estate tax Congress. These lobbyists have spun the myth that the estate tax hurts small businesses and family farms. However, the New York Times searched for a farmer hit by the estate tax but failed to find a single farm lost because of the estate tax—not on single family farm in all of the United States that needed to be protected because this tax giveaway is not about farmers or small business owners, but our Nation's most privileged millionaires and billionaires.

Today, middle class families are being hurt by Republican cut-and-run policies that cater to the super-wealthy who hire lobbyists to get Congress to pass legislation—like H.R. 5638—that will protect their assets tax-free by passing their tax burden on to hard working families. Students struggling to afford college received a $12 billion cut to student aid, families cannot afford health insurance after Republicans have made deep cuts to Medicaid and Medicare, and our senior citizens continue to worry about access to affordable prescription drugs since this Congress passed a law