

the globe. The distinguished group of more than 69,000 Citizen Airmen consists of enlisted military troops, officers, and civil servants tasked by law to support our Armed Forces in the defense of our freedom.

The Air Force Reserve traces its roots back to the aeronautical division of the United States Army's Office of the Chief Signal Officer, which took charge of military balloons and air machines in 1907. Ten years later, the first two Air Force Reserve units were deployed to France, as the United States entered World War I, providing the war effort with around 10,000 trained pilots.

With 1,500 Reserve pilots and 1,300 nonrated officers and 400 enlisted airmen, reservists later played a critical role in World War II. The legendary Jimmy Doolittle was among the soldiers in this force and, in response to Pearl Harbor, went on to lead the Doolittle Raid, the first bombing attack on the Japanese mainland.

In wars and in combat operations that followed, Citizen Airmen have supported the core function of the United States Air Force, as well as providing for disaster relief after events like hurricanes and wildfires.

When terrorists attacked our country on September 11, 2001, Air Force reservists responded in full force to protect American cities and assist in the security efforts.

Spanning seven decades, the Air Force Reserve has fulfilled the promise of the early air pioneers and exceeded their expectations. I want to join all of my fellow Citizen Airmen, past and present, in celebrating the 70th anniversary of the United States Air Force Reserve.

No matter where you go in the world, you will find an Air Force reservist and the flag flying high and the sound of freedom in the air.

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BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, it is so poignant that PAUL RYAN announces his retirement the same week that the Republicans bring to the floor the so-called balanced budget amendment, which signals surrender. Republicans can't budget responsibly.

After the largest transfer of wealth in American history with their tax bill that was so flawed they could not even risk having a hearing on it, it was literally being written while we were in work session in the committee. They changed provisions by the hour in a mad scramble for votes and special-interest support.

RYAN leaves as his legacy—a guy who on the Budget Committee railed about deficits, deficit spending, who tried slashing social spending—he leaves as his legacy trillion dollar deficits for as

far as the eye can see, and providing with this balanced budget amendment an excuse to slash spending on programs that matter most to Americans: Medicare, Social Security, Medicaid, even ultimately, it would threaten defense itself.

The balanced budget amendment that the Republicans are going to bring to the floor is a classic example of bait and switch. Republicans have the White House, the Senate, and the House of Representatives. If they wanted to actually produce a balanced budget, there is nothing stopping them from doing it now. But instead, they came forward with the omnibus bill that explodes spending and adds to the deficit even further.

So what do they do now? They are offering this proposal as a fig leaf. The balanced budget amendment that they would freeze into the Constitution would force somebody 4 years, 5 years, 8 years in the future to do what Republicans either will not, cannot, or are afraid to do today.

My senior Senator for years was Mark Hatfield, a principled Republican, and even though I am a Democrat, I was proud to help him in his last campaign when he was under some severe pressure.

Mark Hatfield was principled. He chaired the Appropriations Committee in the Senate. When the Republicans brought forth the balanced budget amendment in 1995, it failed by one vote in the Senate. That one vote, and the only Republican vote against it, was Mark Hatfield because he refused to handcuff the United States into the future and be part of a charade, because he knew as chair of the Appropriations Committee, they controlled the budget strings and they could reduce spending if they wanted. He knew the irony that some of the very people who were touting the balanced budget amendment would turn to him asking for increased spending for their pet projects.

Today, Republicans pretend themselves to be outraged over the Obama-era deficits which were incurred when we were trying to protect the economy from global collapse. All of the independent experts agree that that money was important. It was spent on infrastructure. It was spent on medical research. It was spent on providing a safety net for struggling families.

What is the excuse today for a trillion dollar deficit? I mean, after all of that hard work, the economy has stabilized. It is not growing dramatically, but it is growing. The unemployment rate is low. What is the excuse for a trillion dollar deficit and massive tax giveaways? They are feeling the heat.

Now, they are going to try and deflect responsibility for their trillion dollar deficits in a time of relative prosperity and low unemployment as a result of the hard work that the Republicans opposed.

Republicans and PAUL RYAN have made a shambles out of the Tax Code;

a mockery out of tax fairness. They are not cutting spending or raising revenues. They just want to put that off for somebody in the future and pretend all of a sudden they are fiscally responsible.

Mr. Speaker, I don't think it is going to work.

CELEBRATING ACHIEVEMENTS OF THOSE WITH DOWN SYNDROME

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. FITZPATRICK) for 5 minutes.

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, today I stand to honor and celebrate the achievements of my constituents with Down syndrome and the worldwide Down syndrome community. I also want to recognize all of their families and loved ones who witness the tremendous struggles individuals with Down syndrome face and the wonderful victories they achieve every day.

This past month, on March 21, marked World Down Syndrome Day. On this day, people with Down syndrome, and those who live and work with them throughout the world, organized and participated in activities and events to raise public awareness and create a single global voice for advocating for their rights, rights such as inclusive education, access to quality and affordable healthcare, meaningful employment, and protection of their civil rights.

On March 21, we celebrated the contributions of individuals with Down syndrome in our communities and the meaningful work of organizations and individuals who dedicate their personal and professional time to ensure individuals with Down syndrome and other disabilities achieve their optimal abilities.

Every year, this day is a time for education, increased community awareness, and giving thanks. When individuals with Down syndrome and other disabilities are included, we all benefit. Our goal as a society is to prepare today's children for tomorrow's leaders, including those with Down syndrome and other disabilities.

Enabling individuals with Down syndrome to live, work, and participate with confidence and autonomy, fully included in society alongside of their friends and peers, is our duty as a Nation. I personally have seen the hard work of constituents in ensuring individuals with Down syndrome and other disabilities have the same educational, financial, civil rights, and opportunities afforded to others, as well as access to services that help them achieve their full potential.

I am appreciative of the work of the Pennsylvania Down Syndrome Advocacy Coalition, the Montgomery County Down Syndrome Interest Group, the Bucks County Down Syndrome Interest Group, The Arc of Pennsylvania, The Arc Alliance, the National Down Syndrome Congress, and other national organizations that are collaborating on