the path to reform and prosperity than by eliminating the marriage tax penalty.

Ladies and Gentleman, we are on the verge of running a surplus. It's basic math.

It means Americans are already paying more than is needed for government to do the job we expect of it.

What better way to give back than to begin with mom and dad and the American family—the backbone of our society.

We ask that President Clinton join with Congress and make elimination of the marriage tax penalty a bipartisan priority.

Of all the challenges married couples face in providing home and hearth to America's children, the U.S. tax code should not be one of them.

Let's eliminate The Marriage Tax Penalty and do it now.

Madam Speaker, I include for the RECORD a copy of a newspaper article dealing with the Tax Code and handling the budget surplus.

[From the Chicago Tribune, Jan. 31, 1999]

HOW TO HANDLE THE BUDGET SURPLUS

WASHINGTON.—Four years ago when I was first elected to Congress, I ran on the need for fiscal restraint in Washington, D.C., and a return of power to people back home. We fought for our belief that we could balance the budget and provide a tax relief for America's working families. For months we were told by Washington insiders and the media that it couldn't be done. Well, we proved them wrong, and we did it ahead of schedule.

Today Congress has a great opportunity as well as a significant challenge before it. A massive surplus of extra tax revenue is projected as a result of a balanced budget. The challenge lies in what Congress chooses to do with the budget surplus.

Saving Social Security is the first priority for the surplus. It's a bipartisan consensus. Last fall, House Republicans showed tremendous responsibility and leadership by passing a plan that earmarked 90 percent of the surplus for Social Security. President Clinton used this month's State of the Union message to call for setting aside a minimum of 62 percent of the surplus ($2.7 trillion over 15 years) for Social Security.

Although we were prepared to set aside much more to save Social Security, Republicans agree to the president's request to set aside 62 percent of the surplus for Social Security. But the question remains of what to do with the rest. President Clinton proposes to spend it on big, new, expensive programs; Republicans want to give this back as tax relief.

Those who oppose tax cuts will fight tooth and nail against lowering today's tax burden. According to the U.S. Treasury, the total income tax take from individuals and families has increased 63 percent since 1992. In fact, according to the Tax Foundation, if you add up the local, state and federal tax burden, taxes are almost 40 percent of the average family's income. Wouldn't most people agree that today's tax burden is too high?

We can save Social Security and cut taxes at the same time. Some say we can't—they were the same ones who opposed balancing the budget and cutting taxes. We proved them wrong. For example, using only 25 percent of the surplus (allowing for an additional 13 percent of the surplus to be dedicated to shoring up Social Security or paying down the national debt) we could enact a 10 percent across-the-board tax cut for all American taxpayers while still eliminating the unfair marriage tax penalty and relieving family farms and family businesses of the inheritance or ''death'' tax.

The president's step gives us a window of opportunity to save Social Security. We commend the president for his new-found willingness to work with us to save Social Security, secure retirement savings, provide sorely needed tax relief and equip the next generation to compete in a global economy. But now that we have agreed on the first step in saving Social Security, we need to focus on the details. It is irresponsible to spend the people's surplus on new, big government programs. We must give this money back to the American people. Saving Social Security, paying down our national debt and offering real and substantial tax relief to all working Americans are three strong ways to spur our economy and lead the way into the next century.

—*U.S. Rep. Jerry Weller (R–Ill.).*

2000 CENSUS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 19, 1999, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MILLER) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Madam Speaker, a previous Speaker talked about his concerns that the Medicare Commission is going to be unsuccessful today, and that is very unfortunate. I think that Senator BREAUX, a Democrat from Louisiana, and Senator KERREY, a Democrat from Nebraska, and other Members are advocating a way to save the Medicare program for the future. Ten of the 16 Members, according to the newspaper, will support a Premium Support plan, which is a way to really modernize Medicare and bring it into the 21st century. It is disappointing that they are not going to be able to get this supermajority, but we need to continue to try, because Medicare is too important a program to let fail as it is moving towards bankruptcy.

But, Madam Speaker, today I rise to talk about the upcoming 2000 Census. One year from this month the forms will go in the mail and we will begin the process of counting everyone in this great country. After wasting millions of dollars, the Census Bureau had planned for an illegal census plan to use sampling. The Supreme Court ruled this past January that they cannot use this illegal plan to only count 90 percent of the population.

Thank goodness the Supreme Court ruled when it did, because now we will at least have an actual count of the population. But sadly, the Census Bureau is going to advocate a two-number census. They are going to advocate a number, as approved by the Supreme Court, where they will count everyone, and then they want to adjust those numbers and have a second set of Clinton numbers. So we will have the Supreme Court approved numbers of actual counts and then the adjusted or manipulated numbers of the Clinton administration.

Wow, what a disaster we are going to face with this census. And the census, I think we could call it, the DNA of our democracy, because most elected officials in America are dependent on this census for drawing their lines to represent, whether it is a school board, a State legislator or a city council person. Billions of dollars are allocated by this money, based on the census.

A two-number census is bad for several reasons. First of all, it is terrible public policy; second of all, it is illegal; and, third, it is less accurate. As far as public policy, the Census Bureau has argued for years that we should only have a one-number census, and now they have flip-flopped. Due to political pressure they have flip-flopped to go to a two-number census. It will add confusion and create a lack of trust in this system.

Imagine that. I am from Bradenton, Florida. My city will have two numbers. Not just the city, every census block in the city; every census track in the city. A block may have 20 or 50 people. There will be two numbers, one by the Supreme Court approval and one that Clinton says, these are my numbers, use these. Talk about confusion. The Census Bureau was right, until they flip-flopped, and now political pressure has caused them to change.

Well, I expect the Supreme Court will rule that the second set of numbers will be illegal anyway. Reading the ruling by Supreme Court Justice O'Connor in the majority opinion in January, talking about the issues of one man, one vote issues, talking about the technical statistical issues of taking a census track where we may have 20, 40, or 50 people living and then adjusting it, it is going to be torn apart in the courts and thrown out. So, again, they are proceeding down an illegal route.

And then the statistics. I used to teach statistics for many years, and I have a lot of confidence in sampling. The problem is, when we start using statistics and sampling and adjustment for redistricting, we have to work with census block data. There are millions of census blocks in this country, and when we start drawing lines based on a block, whether it is a city block or whatever the dimensions are in an individual's area, and then those are adjusted, the accuracy is not very accurate.

When they analyzed the attempt to do this back in 1990, they said it was less accurate, and yet that is what they are advocating, and that is what is so disappointing. Well, the Republicans in Congress have been advocating some improvements to the 2000 Census plan, and I am puzzled why Democrats would oppose ideas to improve the plan. It is just puzzling why they do not want to improve it.

☐ 1000

For example, one proposal made is the Census Bureau is only going to publish the forms in five languages. They say that accounts for 99 percent of the people. There are a lot of different languages out there representing a lot of other people living in this country that are going to have a hard time completing the form.

We had a hearing in Miami. There are over 100,000 Haitians living in the Dade County area in Miami. They do not publish the form in Creole. So how are you going to count this undercounted area? How do you tell these people, ''Tough, you cannot get counted, or else if you call in we will find a translator for you?''

What is wrong in publishing the form in Creole? They will publish the instructions in Creole, but they refuse to publish the seven-question short form in Creole. And that is true of all the other languages. They do not even do it for Braille. If you cannot see, what do you have to do? You have to call the Census Bureau and discuss it with someone on the telephone. Why will they not listen to some ideas to improve it?

Another one that local officials should support is to give them a chance to check the numbers before they become final. They did it in 1990. It is not a new idea. But they are afraid for people to check their work. They make mistakes. We all make mistakes. Why not allow local officials, mayors, city managers, county commissioners, what have you, to check the numbers before they become official?

Conducting the census is hard work, and we need to concentrate our efforts into doing the best census possible to eliminate the undercount and get everyone counted.

YOUNG PEOPLE WORKING FOR LIVABLE COMMUNITIES

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. MORELLA). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 19, 1999, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Madam Speaker, an important part of what makes livable communities is a broad concept of what constitutes the infrastructure that constructs them. That means both the natural environment as well as the built environment. And most important, it also means our people.

Today I would like to focus for a moment on one of the most important parts of the human infrastructure in a livable community, our young people. They are a key part in our community in Portland, Oregon, not just young people at work learning to prepare for their future careers but making real accomplishments as they go.

This week in Washington, D.C., one of my constituents, Jennifer Fletcher, from Grant High School, is being honored by Seventeen Magazine for her volunteerism. Jennifer is one of those extraordinary young people, although only 16 years of age, who has focused in on things that will make a difference in her community, I think in part inspired by a movie that was shot at her high school, ''Mr. Holland's Opus,'' a Richard Dreyfus story about how a music teacher was able to inspire a community to make investments for its future.

Jennifer has done something that would make any screen writer proud. She has founded ''Arts Alive'' in our community in response to funding cuts for arts programs at their schools. ''Arts Alive'' is dedicated to providing funding for these schools, and she has exhibited extraordinary creativity in how to go about it.

Her most recent accomplishment was to stage a benefit concert. She approached her favorite singer, Jackson Browne, to help her in the cause. She handled all the details from ticket sales, to securing a Portland concert hall, to arranging transportation and hotel accommodations for the band. And as a result of her dedication and marvelous skills, the concert was a huge success, bringing together people in the community to celebrate the arts, to be a part of a larger effort, and, by the way, raising almost $100,000.

I am proud of the difference that Ms. Fletcher has made. I applaud her future efforts. But they are just the tip of the iceberg in our community. As I look at the Oregon Youth Conservation Corps, which has put young people to work improving the environment, hiring at-risk high school young people, giving them school credit for their work but giving them real-life activities where they were shoulder to shoulder with professionals in creating recreation trails, viewing areas, restoring watershed, preventing soil erosion, promoting recycling, and participating in wetland restoration projects, real work for real kids, learning kids, earning while they went.

In David Douglas High School, I have seen young people solve very creatively a transportation problem between two of their buildings by creating their own light rail line, converting two buses, laying the track, all with volunteers and donated labor.

The Northwest Service Academy, with 150 AmeriCorps volunteers, working with over 10,000 people in the community, dealing with issues of storm water runoff, roof drain disconnect, converting hundreds of homes to different approaches to solve this problem much more cheaply than if we were just building concrete underground cisterns.

The goal of a livable community through smart growth and careful planning is to get more out of our scarce dollars, our land, and our people. By harnessing the creative power of our youth, putting them to work through education, employment, and environmental activities is one of the most creative ways that we can truly make America's communities livable.

And for all our talk about smart growth and transportation initiatives and protecting the environment, I hope that we will continue to focus on ways to harness our young people to be full partners in making our communities livable.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12 of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 11 a.m.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 6 minutes a.m.) the House stood in recess until 11 a.m.

□ 1100

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. LINDER) at 11 a.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Rev. James David Ford, D.D., offered the following prayer:

O gracious God, from whom all blessings flow, we remember in our prayer all those who turn to You with their petitions and their needs. Where there is hunger, grant nourishment; where there is sadness, grant a full measure of joy and gladness; where there is uncertainty or anxiety about the future, grant Your peace that passes all human understanding. May Your good spirit, O God, that is with us in all the moments of life grant peace and pardon and hope to us and to all Your people now and evermore. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. KLECZKA) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. KLECZKA led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Mr. Lundregan, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate had passed without amendment, a bill of the House of the following title:

H.R. 540. An act to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to prohibit transfers or discharges of residents of nursing facilities as a result of a voluntary withdrawal from participation in the Medicaid Program.

The message also announced, That pursuant to section 201(a)(2) of Public Law 93–344, the Chair, on behalf of the President pro tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives, announces the joint appointment of Mr. Dan Crippen as Director of the Congressional Budget Office,