come out of the Social Security Trust Fund?

Mr. Speaker, a historic budget. It should be supported from both sides.

SIGN DISCHARGE PETITION TO DEBATE CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

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

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, 9 out of 10 Americans, 9 out of 10 Americans support campaign finance reform. Today, I rise in support of meaningful campaign finance reform which our political system needs and our constituents demand.

I salute the Blue Dogs for once again filing a discharge petition to try to overcome the resistance of the Republican leadership and force a reform bill onto the House floor.

The simple fact is the cost of running for Federal office today is so great that candidates are forced to devote way too much of their time fund-raising rather than dealing with issues of importance to their constituents.

Mr. Speaker, last year 196 Members signed a discharge petition that led to bringing the Shays-Meehan bipartisan campaign finance bill to the House floor. Without that petition process, the House Republican leadership would never have let that debate occur.

Today, I urge all Members, from both sides, to join me in signing this petition so that a real debate can finally take place on this floor.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 68, CONCURRENT RESOLUTION ON THE BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2000

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 137 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 137

Resolved, That upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider a conference report to accompany the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 68) establishing the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2000 and setting forth appropriate budgetary levels for each of the fiscal years 2001 through 2009. All points of order against the conference report and against its consideration are waived. The conference report shall be considered as read. The conference report shall be debatable for one hour equally divided and controlled by chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Budget.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GIBBONS). The gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LINDER) is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, for purposes of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. SLAUGHTER), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purposes of debate only.

Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 137 is a conventional rule providing for consideration of the conference report for H. Con. Res. 68, the budget resolution for fiscal year 2000.

H. Res. 137 waives all points of order against the conference report to accompany H. Con. Res. 68 and against its consideration. The rule provides that the conference report is considered as read. The rule further provides for 1 hour of general debate on the conference report, equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Budget.

Mr. Speaker, the deadline for passing the budget is this week, and I am pleased the House will pass the budget resolution on time. In fact, when the budget resolution is adopted by the House and Senate by Thursday, it will be only the second time in 25 years that the U.S. Congress has met the statutory deadline. As we promised, this Congress has quietly been a workhorse, going about its legislative work in a businesslike manner that we planned at the beginning of the new year.

I am not only pleased we have completed this budget resolution in a timely manner, but I am delighted this budget reaffirms our support for less government and more freedom for the American people. Like the first debate on the budget, I expect today's debate will also center upon the differences between the parties and the role of the Federal Government, and I welcome that debate.

Mr. Speaker, the conference report is very similar to the budget passed by the House in March. Our budget saves Social Security by ensuring that 100 percent of the money from payroll taxes destined for the Social Security Trust Fund remains in the trust fund. That is $1.8 trillion over the next decade for retirement security. Our budget strengthens Social Security and ensures that big spenders can no longer raid the fund to pay for their big government spending programs.

Mr. Speaker, after saving Social Security and Medicare, the real question is what do we do with the remainder of the surplus. The Congress says give it back. When previous Congresses could not figure out how to run the government, they turned to the American people for more taxes. Now that we have a surplus, the big spenders do not want to give the people a refund. They want to spend it on new, wasteful, bureaucratic programs.

A few months ago, we received a preview of this debate when the President stated, ''We could give it all back to you and hope you spend it right.'' But the President then preceded to explain that he really should not give back the surplus because Federal Government bureaucrats could make wiser choices with the American people's paychecks than they could.

That is the ideological choice we will deal with today. Our budget is designed to provide more freedom and power to the American people. The President's budget was designed to keep the taxpayers' money controlled in this town.

We simply believe that individuals make much better choices about their lives than bureaucrats do. The President's budget suggests that the government can make wiser choices with the paychecks of the American workers. Today in America, Federal tax revenues comprise a record percentage of gross domestic product. The President responded to the growing tax burden by saying, ''Fifteen years from now, if the Congress wants to give more tax relief, let them do it.''

I have talked to many of my constituents and most of them were not enthusiastic about waiting until the year 2014 to get a tax refund. Therefore, this budget reaffirms our belief that the people know best how to spend their own money and, therefore, we provide the American people with serious tax relief now.

It should be noted that despite the President's rhetoric, his budget would have cut Medicare $11.9 billion over 5 years. The Republican budget rejects the President's Medicare cuts. Even the President's own Comptroller General, David Walker, has criticized the Clinton Medicare proposal for essentially doing nothing to alter the imbalance between the program's receipts and benefits payments.

The President's cut in Medicare and his fiscal shell games would have endangered the quality of our seniors' health care. Conversely, our budget locks away all of the Social Security Trust Fund surpluses for the Nation's elderly to save, strengthen and preserve Social Security and Medicare.

This budget continues our determined effort to provide more security, more freedom and less government to the American people. The House budget is a common sense plan to provide security for the American people by preserving every penny of the Social Security surplus, return overtaxed paychecks to those who earned it, pay down the national debt, rebuild the national defense, and improve our public schools.

Mr. Speaker, for too long this Nation put too much trust in government rules and decision-making. Ronald Reagan argued that we should trust the people because, ''Whenever they are allowed to create and build, whenever they are given a personal stake in deciding economic policies and benefiting from their success, then societies become more dynamic, prosperous, progressive, and free.'' This budget resolution is written in such a way to provide that freedom to the American families and communities by returning power, money and control back to them.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the rule so that we may complete consideration of this historic budget resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LINDER) for yielding me the customary time, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Ms. SLAUGHTER asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, the budget resolution was presented to the Committee on Rules past the stroke of midnight last night and can only be fully considered by my colleagues who have a graduate degree from the Evelyn Woods School of Speed Reading.

It makes some pretty important decisions, which one would think would keep my friends from acting like a teenager who broke curfew by sneaking into the House through the basement door. But here it is, so I rise to speak on the rule and to encourage opposition to this budget resolution offered by my friends on the other side of the aisle.

Thanks to many tough choices and some very difficult votes, some of them bipartisan but too often only from this side of the aisle, we are no longer running budget deficits and are in a position to secure the future for seniors, children and working Americans across our economy.

The budget surpluses which are now projected give us new opportunities to make more, smarter, and tougher fiscal decisions. But this budget resolution resolves to do less with more.

The conference report does nothing to make sure Social Security will be solvent for the next generation. It will not extend the solvency of Social Security by even a single day. In fact, to borrow a phrase, instead of making sure that Social Security is solvent, this budget resolution makes sure it goes broke on schedule.

The motion to instruct conferees to deal with Social Security first was ignored and the reconciliation instructions put tax cuts at the head of the line.

The budget resolution fails to protect Medicare from insolvency, even though Medicare is in danger of running short of funds in less than 10 years. This resolution calls for Medicare reforms but makes no recommendations and commits no resources for the solvency of Medicare.

This budget resolution is unrealistic in calling for new spending without saying how those bills will be paid or what programs will be cut to make room for the new spending. Its authors want us to believe that there is more for education, but, in fact, discretionary spending for education, training, employment and social services is cut by $200 million below the 1999 level. In fact, it would require deep cuts in employment and training and Head Start and the higher education programs such as Pell Grants and Work Study.

It claims to put more in health but it cuts funding for discretionary health programs by $402 million in fiscal year 2000. It claims to provide more for veterans, but in fact cuts discretionary funding for veterans by $2.3 billion over 10 years as compared to the 1999 level. And it provides less budget authority for defense over 10 years than the President has requested.

Mr. Speaker, we have finally freed ourselves from the budget deficits of the 1980s and the 1990s that threatened to strangle our economy. We are in a position to address long-term challenges to Social Security and to Medicare. But the budget resolution before us today squanders this opportunity and ignores our responsibilities.

This budget resolution proposes tax cuts which will exhaust the on-budget surplus. After 5 years, these tax cuts begin to exceed the projected on-budget surpluses, and then they will cause the greatest harm in the years between 2010 and 2014.

Before we even count the first non-Social Security surplus, this budget resolution proposes to spend it. I fear that my friends have already forgotten the lessons taught by the bad habits of the 1980s and the big debts of the 1990s.

We should strike while the surplus iron is hot and make good on our promises that we would save Social Security and Medicare, which are more than words and represent more than entries on a balance sheet to the people who depend on them for the quality of their life.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from California (Mr. DREIER), the chairman of the Committee on Rules.

(Mr. DREIER asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend for yielding me this time, and I compliment him on his management and filing of this rule, which took place just a few hours ago, in fact, in the middle of the night, so that we can move ahead with this very important measure.

We are making history here. I strongly support both the rule and this conference report. For the first time ever we are locking away Social Security money in a safe deposit box which will finally end Washington's pattern of raiding the Social Security fund. It is very important for us to recognize that that is something that is being done in this package with this budget that the other side is not doing.

Compare this to President Clinton's budget, which actually spends $341 billion of the Social Security surplus over the next decade.

Our budget that we are going to be voting on here devotes $100 billion more than the President's budget to save, strengthen and preserve both Social Security and Medicare, while the President's budget actually cuts $11.9 billion in Medicare.

We maintain the spending discipline that brought us the balanced budget back in 1997, while, unfortunately, the President's budget exceeds the caps by $30 billion.

After locking away funds for Social Security and Medicare, we return the rest of the surplus to working Americans in tax relief. The President's budget raises taxes by $172 billion. In fact, the President has said that Congress should not even consider providing any kind of tax relief to working families for a decade and a half, 15 years.

Our budget pays down $450 billion more in public debt than the administration's budget does.

□ 1115

Mr. Speaker, by practicing fiscal responsibility we guarantee that the priorities of the American people are protected, good schools, relief from overtaxation, a solid Social Security system, and something that is of great importance today, and that is a strong, rebuilt national defense capability.

The difference in the parties' visions reminds me of the old adage ''the more things change, the more they stay the same.'' The bottom line is that, like the American people, Republicans are paying attention to the bottom line. We have chosen to stay within budget spending limits. And unfortunately, on the other hand, the President wants to return to the policies of tax and spend.

I think it is a very clear picture that is here, and I hope that my colleagues will join in strong support of not only this rule but of this very important conference report so that, as we for the second time since the 1974 Budget Act has been put into place, so that we can in fact get our work done, which has been a priority of this 106th Congress.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. MCDERMOTT).

(Mr. MCDERMOTT asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MCDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote against the rule and vote against this resolution.

A little history needs to be reviewed here. During the Reagan years, we drove the budget deficit to $5 trillion. Now we have a little surplus, and those same neo-Reaganites who were saying that Mr. Reagan was so wonderful in creating that deficit do not want to pay it off. Now, they say they have a lockbox.

Let me talk about that particular issue. They say they are going to save Social Security and they are going to save Medicare by putting the money in a lockbox, and that sounds like a good thing. We think of a big, strong box and very tough that we could not get the money out of it.

What they have done in this resolution that had exactly 3 hours of consideration before the House committee, and we on the Committee on the Budget never saw it, we had a meeting last

night and the chairman from the other body said all this does is deliver sacks of money to the appropriators to split up. But we will hear people say, oh, there is a lockbox. We put all this money in there to save Social Security.

What the lockbox has is a great big trapdoor that says exactly this: If the Republicans pass a Pinochet-like privatization of Social Security, then they have reformed Social Security and they can then use the money in the lockbox for whatever they want; namely, a tax cut. The money does not have to go into the Social Security plan. It says, if they reform it, they can use the money for something else.

The same way is true for Medicare. If they reform it; that is, give every senior citizen a voucher, take away their guaranteed benefits in Medicare, if they pass that reform out of here, then they can use the money for the tax cut. So this lockbox is about as phony a proposal as I have seen in 30 years.

I know this year the Republicans are committed to passing this resolution, because last year they did not do anything. They did not even have a conference committee meeting. So this year they said, by God, we are getting something out of here by the 15th of April even if we do not have a single thing.

What they passed out was blank pieces of paper and sent to us, this is the budget. This is how we are going to spend $1.8 trillion of their money. We will not give them one single specific. We will promise them that we are going to increase the National Institutes of Health budget. We will promise them we are going to increase this. We will promise them that. But no specifics, no public hearings, no opportunity for anybody to come before the Committee on the Budget and say what this budget did or did not do or promises. They simply wrote it in a back room yesterday.

I mean, I have never been to anything quite as ridiculous as this conference committee that I was at yesterday, where we sat looking at nothing and saying they are going to pass it in the middle of the night, which is what they did.

Vote ''no.''

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I will put the gentleman from Washington (Mr. MCDERMOTT) down as ''undecided,'' and I reserve the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GIBBONS). The Chair will announce that the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LINDER) has 22½ minutes remaining, and the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. SLAUGHTER) has 23 minutes remaining.

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Mrs. CLAYTON).

Mrs. CLAYTON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding the time.

Mr. Speaker, last year the Republicans failed to pass a budget resolution for the first time since modern day budgets have been enacted. But that legacy should not be reversed by now stuffing a conference agreement down the throats of the American people. That legacy should not be reversed by hurting those who need our help.

The conference agreement before us fails to protect Social Security. It does not extend the Social Security Trust Fund by one day. The conference agreement does nothing to protect Medicare. The agreement contains large tax breaks that could cost close to $2 trillion over 15 years and would primarily benefit the wealthiest Americans. And, under the agreement, non-defense discretionary spending declines drastically.

Mr. Speaker, we should not repeat the failures of the last Congress. We should pass a budget resolution for fiscal year 2000 but we should pass one that has been carefully studied and deliberated as well as considered by both sides of the House.

The agreement before us has been hastily put together. I doubt that any Member, Republican or Democrat, knows what is in it. The agreement before us hurts ordinary American citizens.

I urge my colleagues to vote against this patched together, last minute desperate attempt to put something on the floor, hastily put together with no consideration of due process or the American people. I urge my colleagues to vote against it.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Staten Island, New York (Mr. FOSSELLA).

(Mr. FOSSELLA asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. FOSSELLA. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Georgia for yielding.

I think what this day really reflects is what the American people expect and deserve, and that is straight talk from the folks here in Washington. I think what the people back home in Staten Island and Brooklyn appreciate is when we are honest with them. For too many years, the people in Washington have not been honest with the people I represent, and that is true across the country.

Now, to me, the most important things in their minds these days are the state of Social Security and Medicare, among others, education, tax cuts. When we talk about Social Security and Medicare, look what the Republican Congress has delivered: Straight talk and fiscal responsibility, locking away the entire Social Security surplus for the Nation's elderly, almost $1.8 trillion over 10 years to save, to strengthen, and to preserve Social Security and Medicare, money that should go for these essential programs and not on what others around here would like to do, spend on their favorite wasteful Government programs or, in other words, a little slush fund.

The other thing we talk about and I think is right for the country, right for economic growth, is needed tax relief. Go back home wherever we are across this country and talk straight with the people we represent. Ask them if they do not think they are paying enough in taxes. Ask them if they think they are paying too much in taxes.

Tomorrow is tax day. There are a lot of people right now scrambling to fill out their tax forms. A lot of them have to write a check and pay Uncle Sam. They are working hard every single day, and at the end of the year they are writing a check to Uncle Sam.

If we believe fundamentally in the notions of freedom and liberty and creating opportunity for the American people to spend and to save and to produce and to create and to innovate, then we should give more of their money back. And that is what this budget resolution seeks to do.

Aside from that, we are maintaining the fiscal caps as this Congress voted just a couple of years ago to do; and that is to maintain fiscal responsibility, discipline. Every responsible family in this country has to do this every week, put aside some money for the education, put aside money for the car, pay the mortgage, and establishing priorities. That is what this resolution does as well, establishes priorities, Social Security, Medicare, education, veterans' benefits, tax cuts, and so many others, but at the same time saying, in Congress we are not going to have a party at the taxpayers' expense.

Send the money back home where it belongs. Protect our Nation's elderly. Invest in our children. Invest in our future and do the right thing. I urge a ''yes'' vote on this resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. For purposes of clarification, does the gentleman from Texas (Mr. FROST) ask to control the time of the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. SLAUGHTER)?

Mr. FROST. That is correct, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. FROST) will control the time.

There was no objection.

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Oregon (Ms. HOOLEY).

Ms. HOOLEY of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition of the rule today, and really for two reasons; and there are probably tons of other reasons, but two reasons.

First of all, this was done in the middle of the night, this conference report. Nobody has had a chance to really look at this, and to vote on an issue of this importance without having a chance to know what is in it I think is a wrong way to do this. If we want to meet our deadline, we can still meet that deadline tomorrow, but we have today to look at this.

I called this earlier a bait-and-switch budget because that is what I think it is. For example, the other reason that my colleagues should oppose this rule is there are claims that Social Security and Medicare are saved, and yet

this is riddled with provisions that we could drive a Mack truck through. There are all kinds of sunset provisions. There are exceptions to these protections. It does not do anything to add one day to the life of Social Security or Medicare. Not one single day does it extend that solvency.

I think we have to stop these railroaded through tactics. Let us have time to look at it, make sure we know what it says. And then if we are going to be serious about saving Social Security and Medicare, let us make sure we do that and we add days to the solvency.

Please oppose this rule, give us a chance to look at it. I do not think we could continue to irresponsibly move legislation through the House of Representatives in this manner.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I ask the time remaining on each side?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LINDER) has 19½ minutes remaining. The gentleman from Texas (Mr. FROST) also has 19½ minutes remaining.

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPRATT), the ranking member of the Committee on the Budget.

(Mr. SPRATT asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, this is not just a railroad. This is a high-speed train. This is one of those bullet trains. In France they call it the TGV.

Yesterday, at 6 o'clock, we had our first conference meeting, if we want to call it that. It was really a photo-op session, cameo session. We were handed a document with two columns, Democratic position, Republican position, points and places where these two resolutions differ.

There was no third column, the resolution by the conferees, just the House position and the Senate position. There was no debate, no discussion, no motions, no amendments, nothing. They handed us this document. Not even the conference report itself. Not even the latest draft of it. Though I am sure everyone knows the procedure here. It was in the word processor. Not even the latest rough draft of the conference report, even though only a few issues remained in contention between the Senate Republicans and the House Republicans at that point.

At 1:30 last night, I stayed here until about 10:30 or 11:00, at 1:30 the House Committee on Rules reported this resolution under the cloak of darkness. When I came to the floor this morning for this debate and asked for a copy of the conference report, it was not to be had. Our staff have been able to get a copy, and they are working on it right now trying to get a bullet analysis of it so that we can hand it out to our Members.

We are talking about $1.8 trillion. We are talking about the document that frames our priorities this year and, to some extent, for the next 5 or 10 years.

Now, yesterday at our conference report and today on the House floor we will hear the Republican Members congratulate themselves because for the first time in a long time the budget resolution is being adopted on time, April 15; last year we did not have one at all; this year we are doing it right, we are doing it on time. But I beg to disagree.

This looks like we are making the trains run on time but, in truth, down the track a train wreck awaits us.

□ 1130

This budget resolution is totally unrealistic. It is not a document for the budget for FY 2000. It is a political statement.

Let me give my colleagues a classic example of sort of just stiff-arming not just the Democratic side of the House but the whole House. Just a day ago, we had the appointment of the conferees, the impaneling of the conference, and we offered a motion to instruct the conferees, that they get their priorities straight, that we do first Social Security, next Medicare and then tax cuts, in that sequence, because that is the right sequence of priorities. First save Social Security, then shore up Medicare, then with what is left before we drain the budget dry of resources, then we can do tax cuts. Three hundred eighty Members voted for it. The chairman of this committee, the House Budget Committee, came over here on the floor and said he would accept the amendment.

What happened the next day? The next day we changed the date for the reconciliation bill to include the tax cuts to be July 12. The only reason it is July 12 is, we all know, this budget resolution is a placeholder. We are simply waiting and hoping the CBO will have a July surprise for us, a plus-up in revenues so we can come out here and redo what we have tried to do here. I do not think this budget leads us anywhere. This is not an occasion to celebrate the budget process, unfortunately, even though it marks on this occasion its 25th anniversary. This is just a tread water maneuver. It would take us backward on our efforts to balance the budget if we passed it. This rule and this budget both should be voted down.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to this rule, which determines how we will debate the conference report on H. Con. Res. 68, the Budget Resolution for FY 2000.

This rule, which was reported very late last night, is an overly restrictive closed rule that allows only one hour of debate on this report. It is preposterous to give each side here, fighting for the budget of the United States, only one-half hour to debate. This is perhaps the most important debate that we will have this year.

Having said that, I am urging my colleagues to reject this conference report, and to come back to the table and work together, in a bipartisan manner, to pass a budget that works for America—a budget that is responsible to our constituents, and our posterity.

We should be passing a budget that protects the Social Security and Medicare Trust funds by putting money back into those accounts. It should be a budget that will maintain our current Social Security and Medicare benefits, and extend their lives until decades from now, so that all Americans will be able to take advantage of them. This is especially true for women, because due to their longer life expectancy, they must rely on Social Security and Medicare longer than must most men.

The conference report that we approve this morning should contain the proper resources to modernize, and some would say revitalize, our public schools. This report does just the opposite; in fact, it reduces our domestic spending on programs that protect the interest of our children. This budget jeopardizes the well being of successful programs by taking 425 million dollars from WIC, and 501 million dollars from Head Start. Nevertheless, in this budget most of that money—800 million dollars of it—goes instead to tax cuts for the wealthy.

We should send this conference report back, until it contains within it a budget that will protect America's families. It should be a budget that fully funds the Summer Youth Employment Program, which is cut in this report by over 90 million dollars. It could be a budget that saves the Community Development Block Grant Program the indignity of a 50 million-dollar cut.

We want to approve a budget report that will address the needs of our veterans. We could have and should have passed the Spratt amendment, which would have added an additional nine billion dollars for veterans programs. We should be voting to pass a budget that fully funds LIHEAP, which provides for necessary heating and cooling for low-income families in times of extreme weather. LIHEAP literally saved lives in my district last summer, and I intend to do what I can to ensure that it is fully funded every year that I serve in Congress.

I had hoped that during conference, that we would have seen drastic improvements in this resolution, improvements that could have been done in a bipartisan and responsible manner. I had hoped that my colleagues across the aisle could be more persuaded by the dedication of Congressmen SPRATT and MCDERMOTT. I desperately wanted to take home to my district a budget that respected our children, our families, our veterans, and our elderly—and I still hope to do so. And yet we stand here today, with this report to show for it, and with only one half hour of debate to make our case for the American people. It is a shame.

Therefore, I urge my colleagues to vote against this rule, and to require, at the very least, extended time to debate this conference report. With that extended time, I hope that we can work towards a fiscally responsible budget for the American people.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I urge a ''yes'' vote on the rule and the budget.

Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, I yield back the

balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The previous question was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. NETHERCUTT). The question is on the resolution.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Evidently a quorum is not present.

The Sergeant at Arms will notify absent Members.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 221, nays 205, not voting 7, as follows:

[Roll No. 84]

YEAS—221

Aderholt
Archer
Armey
Bachus
Baker
Ballenger
Barr
Barrett (NE)
Bartlett
Barton
Bass
Bateman
Bereuter
Biggert
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bliley
Blunt
Boehlert
Boehner
Bonilla
Bono
Brady (TX)
Bryant
Burr
Burton
Buyer
Callahan
Calvert
Camp
Campbell
Canady
Cannon
Castle
Chabot
Chambliss
Chenoweth
Coble
Coburn
Collins
Combest
Cook
Cooksey
Cox
Crane
Cubin
Cunningham
Davis (VA)
Deal
DeLay
DeMint
Diaz-Balart
Dickey
Doolittle
Dreier
Duncan
Ehlers
Ehrlich
Emerson
English
Everett
Ewing
Fletcher
Foley
Forbes
Fossella
Fowler
Franks (NJ)
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
Ganske
Gekas
Gibbons
Gilchrest
Gillmor
Gilman
Goodlatte
Goodling
Goss
Graham
Granger
Green (WI)
Greenwood
Gutknecht
Hall (TX)
Hansen
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Hayworth
Hefley
Herger
Hill (MT)
Hilleary
Hobson
Hoekstra
Horn
Hostettler
Houghton
Hulshof
Hunter
Hutchinson
Hyde
Isakson
Istook
Jenkins
John
Johnson (CT)
Johnson, Sam
Jones (NC)
Kasich
Kelly
King (NY)
Kingston
Knollenberg
Kolbe
Kuykendall
Largent
Latham
LaTourette
Lazio
Leach
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
LoBiondo
Lucas (OK)
Manzullo
McCollum
McCrery
McHugh
McInnis
McIntosh
McKeon
Metcalf
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller, Gary
Moran (KS)
Morella
Myrick
Nethercutt
Ney
Northup
Norwood
Nussle
Ose
Oxley
Packard
Paul
Pease
Peterson (PA)
Petri
Pickering
Pitts
Pombo
Porter
Portman
Pryce (OH)
Quinn
Radanovich
Ramstad
Regula
Reynolds
Riley
Rogan
Rogers
Rohrabacher
Ros-Lehtinen
Roukema
Royce
Ryan (WI)
Ryun (KS)
Salmon
Sanford
Saxton
Schaffer
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shadegg
Shaw
Shays
Sherwood
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Skeen
Smith (MI)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Souder
Spence
Stearns
Stump
Sununu
Sweeney
Talent
Tancredo
Tauzin
Taylor (NC)
Terry
Thomas
Thornberry
Thune
Tiahrt
Toomey
Traficant
Upton
Walden
Walsh
Wamp
Watkins
Watts (OK)
Weldon (FL)
Weldon (PA)
Weller
Whitfield
Wicker
Wilson
Wolf
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NAYS—205

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Allen
Andrews
Baird
Baldacci
Baldwin
Barcia
Barrett (WI)
Becerra
Bentsen
Berkley
Berman
Berry
Bishop
Blagojevich
Blumenauer
Bonior
Borski
Boswell
Boucher
Boyd
Brady (PA)
Brown (CA)
Brown (FL)
Brown (OH)
Capps
Capuano
Cardin
Carson
Clay
Clayton
Clement
Clyburn
Condit
Conyers
Costello
Coyne
Cramer
Crowley
Cummings
Danner
Davis (FL)
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
Deutsch
Dicks
Dingell
Dixon
Doggett
Dooley
Doyle
Edwards
Engel
Eshoo
Etheridge
Evans
Farr
Fattah
Filner
Ford
Frank (MA)
Frost
Gejdenson
Gephardt
Gonzalez
Goode
Gordon
Green (TX)
Gutierrez
Hall (OH)
Hill (IN)
Hilliard
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hoeffel
Holden
Holt
Hooley
Hoyer
Inslee
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jefferson
Johnson, E. B.
Jones (OH)
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilpatrick
Kind (WI)
Kleczka
Klink
Kucinich
LaFalce
Lampson
Larson
Lee
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lipinski
Lofgren
Lowey
Lucas (KY)
Luther
Maloney (CT)
Maloney (NY)
Markey
Martinez
Mascara
Matsui
McCarthy (MO)
McCarthy (NY)
McDermott
McGovern
McIntyre
McKinney
McNulty
Meehan
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Menendez
Millender-McDonald
Miller, George
Minge
Mink
Moakley
Mollohan
Moore
Moran (VA)
Murtha
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Oberstar
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Owens
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Payne
Pelosi
Peterson (MN)
Phelps
Pomeroy
Price (NC)
Rahall
Rangel
Reyes
Rivers
Rodriguez
Roemer
Rothman
Roybal-Allard
Rush
Sabo
Sanchez
Sanders
Sandlin
Sawyer
Schakowsky
Scott
Serrano
Sherman
Shows
Sisisky
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Snyder
Spratt
Stabenow
Stark
Stenholm
Strickland
Stupak
Tanner
Tauscher
Taylor (MS)
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thurman
Tierney
Towns
Turner
Udall (CO)
Udall (NM)
Velazquez
Vento
Visclosky
Waters
Watt (NC)
Waxman
Weiner
Wexler
Weygand
Wise
Woolsey
Wu
Wynn

NOT VOTING—7

Davis (IL)
Dunn
Hastings (FL)
LaHood
Lantos
Pickett
Scarborough

☐ 1152

Mr. NADLER changed his vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

Mr. DAVIS of Virginia changed his vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

So the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Mr. KASICH. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 137, I call up the conference report on the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 68) establishing the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2000 and setting forth appropriate budgetary levels for each of the fiscal years 2001 through 2009.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. NETHERCUTT). Pursuant to House Resolution 137, the conference report is considered as having been read.

(For conference report and statement, see proceedings of the House of Tuesday, April 13, 1999, at page H1936.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KASICH) will be recognized for 30 minutes and the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPRATT) will be recognized for 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KASICH).

Mr. KASICH. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, today we offer the first budget of the next century and a new agenda, beginning of a new agenda, for the new millennium. We are going to offer a conference report here today; we have offered it. We are going to vote on a conference report here today that represents a work product that we have not seen before on this House floor in my lifetime. It has been our experience to operate in a period where we were rolling up the red ink, adding to the national debt, but more important, continuing to suck power and money and influence from everyday Americans and taking that power, money and influence and vesting it in the central government here in Washington.

Mr. Speaker, we are on the verge of being able to pass into law a tremendous transfer of money, power and influence from this city back into the hands of everyday Americans so that we can run America from the bottom up, from our families and communities to the top, and included in this proposal is the notion that we would take every single penny from the payroll taxes that this Federal Government collects from the American people and to lock up $1.8 trillion, all the money that is collected by the Federal Government out of payroll taxes, and to put it in a safe place, into a locked box where we can ultimately use that money as part of a transition program to transform the retirement programs for our senior citizens and at the same time to also guarantee that baby boomers and their children will also have access to the same security that our parents have. In fact, the $1.8 trillion that we lock up gives us a leverage to be used to transform both Social Security and Medicare so that three generations of Americans can be protected.

☐ 1200

We know ultimately that in order to protect and save the programs of Social Security and Medicare for the baby boomers and their children, it will mean, in my judgment it will mean, that we will all have greater

control as individuals in terms of being able to invest some of our payroll taxes in the American economy that will allow us, just like Federal employees, to earn a higher rate of return on our money than we are currently getting, which will allow the baby boomers to earn enough money to have something when they retire and at the same time ultimately greater additional choice in health care for our senior citizens based on the model of Federal employees.

Frankly, the $1.8 trillion will be reserved, it will not be spent, until that great day comes when we can reach agreement between the legislative and executive branches of the government so that, in fact, we can transform these programs. Before that great day comes, that $1.8 trillion will be used to pay down some of the national debt, something that many Americans want to see happen.

In fact, last year we paid down about $50 billion of the national publicly held debt. This year we would anticipate somewhere in the neighborhood of $125 billion of the publicly held debt being reduced; holding those dollars either to pay down debt or to be used to transform these retirement programs for three generations of Americans.

At the same time, we anticipate additional surpluses to the tune of over $800 billion. We intend to take about $780 billion of that surplus and rather than using that money to create more Federal programs we intend to use that money to return that overcharge to the American taxpayers. So over the course of the next 10 years, we can enact the largest tax cut in modern American history.

We think that is positive for one simple reason. When government has less and people have more, people are empowered. When people have more and government has less, that is really the quotient, the formula, that our Founding Fathers created when they established this great country; the power should flow from the people to the government and that the people ultimately have the right to have the power vested in them.

To be able to transfer $780 billion in revenues from the Federal Government back to the people is, frankly, all about restoring power to the people so that we can run this great country of ours from the bottom up.

At the same time, Mr. Speaker, we also intend to maintain the budget agreement, the bipartisan budget agreement, that was concluded in 1997 and to maintain the discipline of that agreement, which has contributed to this strong economy.

So we have not just a twofer here today but a threefer: One, maintain the fiscal responsibility that we created in 1997; secondly, reserve the surpluses from the payroll taxes in this country to be used ultimately to transform Social Security and Medicare for three generations of Americans, in the meantime use it to pay down some of the national public debt; finally, to restore a great amount of power to the American people in the neighborhood of $780 billion.

I think it is a great package. I think it is something we all ought to embrace, whether we are Republicans or Democrats, and we ought to march into the next century, into the next millennium, with our heads held high and with an optimism that tells us that we can meet some of the great challenges that the baby boomers are going to experience in their retirement years and, in fact, we can guarantee not only security for our parents but that the baby boomers and their children will have the same opportunity at the American dream.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 3½ minutes.

Mr. Speaker, this year we mark the 25th anniversary of the congressional budget process and there is a lot to be proud of here because the budget process has helped us get to where we are, to the best fiscal position we have been in in 25 to 50 years, but this is not a very auspicious way to market because the budget before us is not realistic. It has been hastily prepared, hastily presented.

We have been able to cobble together what it meant in the last couple of hours when we received a copy of it this morning, but let me say what it means. First of all, take discretionary spending because we will be dealing with that shortly as the appropriations come. It has been capped for the last 10 years. We have to adjust a cap of $6.5 billion reduction this year and then over the next 10 years, between now and 2009, this budget would lower discretionary spending by $16 billion.

Last year we spent $299 billion. In 2009, if we follow the pattern of this budget, we will spend $284 billion, a $16 billion reduction. Once we take the total of inflation off that amount of money, that means we will have one-third less to spend for discretionary programs.

While this budget is not very specific, it uses big numbers and very few details, there are some harsh realities in it. Veterans, for example, we have the swell in the World War II population pressing greater demands than ever on the Veterans Administration. They plus it up next year and reduce it in every year thereafter.

We create a crop insurance program, badly needed, only to unfund it 5 years from now because the money is not there. It has to make way for a tax cut.

The Republicans touted the fact that they were going to plus up NIH because we are on the cusp of major breakthroughs in biomedical research. What do they do with the health function, function 550, in this budget? They slice it by $25 billion over the next 10 years. NIH takes up 52 percent of that function. Anybody who thinks that NIH is going to be plussed up if we pass this budget really does need medical help.

Science and space research, $9 billion reduction, below a hard freeze. I am not talking about current services; $9 billion below a hard freeze. Law enforcement, when we are making gains in crime, cut $14.5 billion below a hard freeze.

The harsh message comes as to Social Security. Two days ago, 480 Members of this body said let us do Social Security first, then Medicare, then we will take up tax cuts.

We are not opposed to tax cuts. They are in our budget, but we said there is a proper priority, a proper sequence here. Let us do tax cuts after we have saved Social Security. Let us not drain the budget of resources that we might need for these two critical programs.

What do they do? In this resolution, they take the date on which the tax cut bill is to come to the floor of the House, which originally was no later than September the 30th, and move it up. They do not even follow the sequence, the priorities, that we set by an overwhelming vote just 2 days ago on the House floor.

This is not a good budget. This is another riverboat gamble with the budget and that is no way to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the budget process.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. NETHERCUTT). Without objection, the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. SHAYS) will now control the time of the majority.

There was no objection.

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. MCDERMOTT).

(Mr. MCDERMOTT asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MCDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, this budget resolution is what I would call a magician's budget. It has a lockbox in it. We always think of a lockbox, when one sees a magician he puts the box on the table and then the pretty lady climbs inside and then he saws her in half and somehow nothing ever happens to the lady, and you say to yourself those magicians, they are amazing. Know why? Because it has a false bottom in it; it has a trick in the bottom.

This budget, I challenge anybody to find a copy of this thing. One can go out there in the Speaker's hall and there are not even printed copies of this thing. So 425 Members are going to vote on this thing and they have never even looked at it, believing there is a lockbox.

Now that lockbox works for one year, and the language in it says that we can open the lockbox if there has been any legislation passed that enhances retirement security. If that has happened, then we can take the money out of the box and give it away for tax breaks.

Now, what does ''enhances retirement security'' mean? Well, the only bills that I have heard discussed around here come out of Chile. That is, give everybody a little book and let

them have their own Social Security. Wipe out Social Security and give everybody their own account.

Now, if we call that saving Social Security, well, I guess it fits the definition of enhances retirement security. Everybody will have their little book and they can be out there in the Dow and if the Dow is at 10000 when they retire, great; if it is at 4000, well, that is just the breaks.

My colleagues are writing in here the capacity to pass any legislation that the budget chairman describes as enhancing retirement security. If that happens, we open the bottom of the box, all the money comes out and here comes the tax break. Exactly the same language is used with Medicare, anything that strengthens the Medicare program.

Now, there is another fraud in here. People are going to talk as though there is a tax break. All the people are out there finishing out their reports for their tax today. In 2000, there is no tax reduction in this budget. All the tax reduction explodes beginning in 2001 and going out to 2015. It is an absolute fraud to tell people there is a tax break for next year, but if one listens they would think it was there. It is all going to come from this phony lockbox.

There is another part of this, and that is that we are going to increase the National Institutes of Health. My colleague from South Carolina (Mr. SPRATT) already alluded to that. That is also phony. One cannot make those numbers add up.

I urge my colleagues to vote no.

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 15 seconds to respond to my colleague.

Mr. Speaker, we set aside $1.8 trillion to save and preserve Social Security. We do not spend it and we do not provide a tax cut with it. We preserve it for Social Security. If anything happens, it literally pays down debt.

I would also point out that copies were made for both the majority and minority last night and we reproduced copies for our side. I hope they did the same for theirs.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. CHAMBLISS).

(Mr. CHAMBLISS asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. Speaker, today the House will consider the conference report to the fiscal year 2000 budget resolution. I would first like to acknowledge the hard work by my colleagues on the House Committee on the Budget and their Senate counterparts in not only meeting the April 15 budget deadline but in crafting a budget that will boldly carry America into the 21st century.

This budget, the first for the new millennium, safeguards Social Security, addresses priorities such as education, defense and agriculture, and, yes, does provide historic tax relief.

I am proud to see this conference report meet the challenges of the 21st century head on by adhering to several bedrock principles, as it, first of all, locks away every single penny of the Social Security surplus to provide for the retirement security of the Nation's seniors, and I emphasize that. Every single penny of the Social Security surplus is locked away to provide for the security of our seniors.

Secondly, we maintain the spending discipline from the 1997 Balanced Budget Act.

Thirdly, we ensure sizable payments are made to reduce the national debt, a very critical issue.

Fourth, we make national defense a top priority by providing additional resources to properly train, equip and retain our men and women in uniform.

Next, we offer security for rural Americans by providing the financial resources to make real crop insurance reform possible.

Finally, we enact historic tax relief to return the surplus to its rightful owners, the American taxpayer.

Mr. Speaker, the conference report on the budget is consistent with the common sense principles of encouraging our communities and individuals to grow from the bottom up, not from Washington down. This is a budget all Americans can be proud of and I strongly urge the adoption by my colleagues.

I would like to close by saying to my friend, the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPRATT), I commend him and have enjoyed working with him through this process. He has been a strong advocate for his position. When we have disagreed, he has been a gentleman but he has been right there working, and his staff also, in a very professional manner.

To my colleague, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KASICH), our leader who has led us through this process, he has provided the energy, the innovative ideas and the wherewithal to carry us through in this balanced budget and I commend him.

□ 1215

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his compliments. When he said I have been right there, I thought he was about to say I have been right.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL).

(Mr. RANGEL asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, a great American once said that extremism in defense of liberty is no vice, and that moderation in pursuit of justice is no virtue.

Our budget chairman said something a little similar in saying that he was trying to ignore the inflammatory language of being irresponsible. He said that an irresponsible tax cut, there is no such thing as an irresponsible tax cut.

I think that separates the parties, but I really think that we have enough differences in our approaches to legislation that should not allow older people and young people as well to believe that we are concerned more about tax cuts than we are about the security of the social security fund and the security of Medicare.

I know there are some who believe that we as Democrats raise this thing every election year to frighten the older people, but would it not be great if we could avoid a train wreck by making certain that instead of talking about a lockbox that has a secret escape hatch, that we just commit ourselves that we are going to do the right thing by social security, do the right thing by Medicare, and not talk about locking a box, but talking about then doing the right thing by a tax cut?

We have begged, we have asked, we want to work with the other side on the question of a tax bill. We have passed the resolution to say delay the tax bill and give us a chance to work in a bipartisan way to have a piece of legislation on social security and Medicare that we can go back home as Republicans, Democrats, and Members of Congress, and say we are proud of what we have done.

Instead of that, they come right back and accelerate the date of the tax cut. They make that the priority, and then they say that we are trying to make it an issue. I think there is a difference between a tax cut and a lockbox with an escape hatch.

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. SMITH).

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding time to me.

Let me just point out this chart, because I would like to drive this home as best we can. What we are suggesting in this budget is that we set 100 percent of the social security surplus aside, and lockboxes are hard, and we are hoping it does not have any false bottom, but we set it aside.

Compare that with what the President is suggesting, to set only 62 percent aside. The President and the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPRATT) and his group have suggested that we add another giant IOU to the social security trust fund.

I think that is good to give that kind of commitment, but let me suggest what it really does. It says, we are demanding a future tax increase sometime after there is less money coming in from social security than is required to pay out benefits, around 2012, 2013, or if somehow we come up with the money on what we owe the trust fund, the $700 plus billion, it means we have a tax increase in 2032 when no longer is there any surplus or anything else left. So adding this giant IOU in effect mandates that we have a tax increase.

On the topic of tax increases, the President says, let us have $100 billion of tax increases. I think we have to be

very careful. Both sides have to guard against spending this surplus money.

I would quit there, only to suggest to the Democrats that we have come a long way. It is an historic budget. For the first time in 40 years we are not spending the social security surplus for other government programs.

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, I yield 90 seconds to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BENTSEN).

(Mr. BENTSEN asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BENTSEN. Mr. Speaker, let me say to my dear friends on the other side that this is, in my opinion, not a serious budget, this is a placeholder budget. In their haste to try and get something done by April 15, having failed miserably last year, they have thrown together this budget. About the only serious thing is the language from the other body chastising the South Koreans on beef and pork sales that is in this budget.

The fact is, and with respect to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. SMITH), I offered an amendment in the committee that would have extended the 1997 caps going forward, would have used all the on-budget and off-budget surplus to pay down the national debt, just like they quote Mr. Greenspan in here as saying it is a good thing to do. The committee rejected that. All the Republicans rejected that.

The other problem with this is this is a budget that is betting on the come, because they know they cannot write the appropriations bills with the numbers in here. On page 22 they state that the CBO will report an update to them in July. Normally they do it in August, but we are going to pummel the CBO to report an update, so then we can go back, bust the caps, and try and use some of the on-budget surplus, and instead of paying down debt, to use it for a tax cut.

Finally, in my opinion what is wrong with this budget is it is going to lead to more deficits and more debts in the future, because you have a $1.7 trillion tax cut over 15 years based upon 15-year pro forma projections which may or may not come true. If they do not come true, we will have already locked in the tax cuts, and we will end up with more deficit spending and adding to the national debt, not reducing it. That is worse for social security.

Finally, the only thing they save is what is owed to social security. They have unrealistic cuts that they know are not going to be made. This is a sham budget. Again, when their side is ready to get serious, we are ready to work with them.

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to my colleague, the gentleman from Montana (Mr. RICK HILL).

Mr. HILL of Montana. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding time to me.

Mr. Speaker, it is instructive, I think, to compare this budget to the President's budget. After all, Congress is going to be negotiating at the conclusion of this process with the President. Budgets are about more than numbers, they are about priorities.

This budget sets aside, as everyone has said, 100 percent of social security for social security. The President proposes to spend $341 billion of social security on other programs.

This budget proposes to maintain the discipline, the discipline that got us a balanced budget in the first place. The President's budget proposes to walk away from that by breaking the spending caps.

This budget lives up to our commitment to veterans health care. The President's budget flatlined veterans health care between $1.5 billion and $2 billion below what is necessary to live up to our commitment to veterans. Remember, Mr. Speaker, the men and women who are fighting in Kosovo today are going to be our veterans tomorrow. It is our obligation to stand up for them.

The President in his State of the Union said he wanted to help rule America by reforming crop insurance. Then he put nothing in his budget to do it. This Republican budget sets aside an additional $1.5 billion to reform crop insurance and help rural America.

The Republican budget proposes to reduce the taxes on the American people. It is their money. The President proposes another $172 billion tax increase.

Lastly, the Republicans reject the President's proposal to cut Medicare further. The President proposed to cut Medicare an additional $11.9 billion. The President's budget is the wrong priorities. The Republican budget is the right priorities. I hope our colleagues will vote for it.

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Mrs. CLAYTON).

Mrs. CLAYTON. Mr. Speaker, this resolution before us not only is a sham, but the gentleman is right, it is the wrong priorities.

The wrong priorities means we do not put safeguards for social security, safeguards for Medicare, and certainly the wrong priority is that we give a huge tax cut before we even attempt to safeguard or reform social security and Medicare. To do that, they must cut discretionary funds, those funds that make for the common quality of life in our communities.

Veterans they cut by $2.3 million, agriculture they cut. Yes, they have the crop insurance, but what do they do immediately after, they cut the whole program, including that, by $4.9 billion. The environment is cut by $10 million. Health and research is cut by $25.3 million.

The priority is what? To give the tax cut first, to make sure that the wealthiest of Americans are taken care of first. Surely we want a tax cut, but it should be reasonable. Surely we want a reasonable budget.

This is not a reasonable budget, this is a sham. It does not protect children, it does not protect agriculture, and it certainly does not protect our seniors in terms of their retirement or their health care.

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to my colleague, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. PETE HOEKSTRA).

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding time to me.

Mr. Speaker, I think that this is a very good budget proposal. What this budget enables us to do is to build on the success that we have created over the last number of years.

What does this budget do? Number one, it locks away the entire social security trust fund surpluses. That is almost $1.8 trillion over the next 10 years to save, strengthen, and preserve social security, and as necessary, to do the same things for Medicare. It locks away the entire social security trust fund. This budget saves social security receipts in excess of benefit payments so that we can strengthen and save both social security and Medicare.

Secondly, it forces us to maintain the spending discipline of the 1997 Balanced Budget Act by holding to the discretionary spending caps that we agreed to with the President in 1997. It pays down about $1.8 trillion in debt that is held by the public.

In regard to what the President's budget does, this budget pays down over $450 billion more than what the President pays down in public debt. It ensures that we properly fund our need for defense by spending $290 billion in fiscal year 2000.

In addition, we provide for $66 billion for education, training, employment, and social services. This is $3 billion more than what was in the House resolution, so we continue our commitment to education.

What we are going to do in the area of education is reform the program so not only do we spend more money on education, but we ensure that more money is spent at the local level under local control, where decisions are made by parents, local teachers, and local administrators to make sure that we get maximum flexibility and impact for those dollars.

This is a good budget. I encourage my colleagues to support it.

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. FORD).

Mr. FORD. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding time to me.

Mr. Speaker, to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPRATT) and to the leaders on both sides, John Maynard Keynes, that noted economist, once said that the difficulty lies not in generating new ideas, but escaping from the old ones. We cannot seem to get away from, in this Congress, wanting to do all things for all people.

All the language and all the rhetoric that has been used today, all of it sounds great, $800 billion in tax cuts over 10 years, $1.7 trillion over 15 years,

a lockbox for social security funding. The only problem, Mr. Speaker, is that it does not all add up. We want to do all of these wonderful and great things, but the party that touted fiscal responsibility for so many years has now assumed the role that they accuse liberal Democrats of assuming for the last 15 to 20 years.

I know they have good people on their side that can add, subtract, multiply, and divide. It is only my hope and certainly that of my colleagues on this side that those folks who cannot add and subtract come to the forefront, add this budget up, realize that it does not add up, and do what is right.

Let us save social security and Medicare first and then bring about those tax cuts. If we win the lottery, we should not spend all our money at the casinos, we should take care of the debts and obligations first, and then take care of the things we want to do. We ought to do the same thing in this Congress. The people expect no less.

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to my colleague, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. RYAN).

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding time to me.

Mr. Speaker, I listen to the inflammatory rhetoric we are hearing on the House Floor today, and I think that we are looking at two different budgets. It is very important to note that when you are budgeting, what you are doing is outlining priorities. What was our first priority in putting this budget together?

When I travel around the First District of Wisconsin, talking to our Nation's seniors who are currently on social security, talking to workers who are about to go on social security, talking to the baby boom generation who are about to enjoy social security within the next 15 years, they want to know that it is going to be there, that the rug will not be pulled out from underneath them. That is our historic commitment that we are pledging in this budget.

Our first, preeminent decision is this: We are going to stop the raid on social security.

□ 1230

For the first time in over 30 years, we are not going to take a dime out of Social Security taxes to spend on other government programs. That is our driving reform in this budget, which drives other reforms.

If my colleagues take a look at this chart beside me, they will notice that our budget sets aside 100 percent of the Social Security surplus. All the money coming from Social Security taxes will be dedicated towards Social Security.

However, the President is only setting aside 62 percent of the Social Security surplus for Social Security. The other 38 percent is going to other spending.

We want a lockbox provision that will work. We want a lockbox provision that will set aside all Social Security surpluses now and into the future. The problem is the President does not want this legislation because he is raiding Social Security by $341 billion over the next 10 years. If he is truly interested in saving Social Security, he will say ''no'' to future raids on Social Security.

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 30 seconds.

Let me say there was an alternative budget on the floor, the House Democrats' budget. We would have put up $502.5 billion more for nondefense and defense discretionary programs, $165 billion in targeted tax cuts, high surpluses, and therefore lower debt than the Republicans in every year. In fact, we would have had $151 billion more in national debt reduction than they have.

There was an alternative, and 100 percent of our Social Security money went back to Social Security. So they keep raising a red herring, a straw man. There was an alternative that was rejected, and it was a better bill.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO).

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, this budget represents a serious failure for American families. It fails to extend the solvency of the Medicare Trust Fund by even one day. It fails to strengthen Social Security so it will be there for the next generation.

There is in fact less money for education in this budget. Over the next 3 years, that education budget falls below the 1999 level. So let us be truthful about education. It fails to do anything to expand child care for our Nation's poorest families.

Right now, of the 10 million children and working families with incomes below 200 percent of the poverty line, only 10 percent of eligible families have access to child care programs. The average family spends about 7 percent of its income on child care. But child care consumes about one-quarter of the income of low-income working families who pay for their care. These are the families who can afford it the least.

The waiting lists are growing. In my own State of Connecticut, we have tremendous waiting lists. People are unable to get the assistance that they need in order to afford child care.

The Senate budget resolution attempted to close that trap. They provided $10 billion for Child Care Development Block Grant. But the Republican leadership stripped that provision from the resolution.

Mr. Speaker, America's working families cannot wait for some other time to deal with child care. They need the help now. Parents who are trying to get to work, to build a better life for their families, particularly those who are attempting to move off of the welfare rolls, they find the lack of affordable child care is often an insurmountable barrier.

No parent can concentrate on their job if they are worried about who is taking care of their child. We owe it to working people, people who want to work, to make sure that they have a safe and affordable place so that their children can have care.

Putting this off to deal with it at another time is unacceptable. American families and American children deserve better. Let us defeat this conference report.

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire about the time remaining on each side.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. NETHERCUTT). The gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. SHAYS) has 14¼ minutes remaining. The gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPRATT) has 15 minutes remaining.

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from New Hampshire (Mr. SUNUNU).

(Mr. SUNUNU asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SUNUNU. Mr. Speaker, the budget resolution is about priorities. It is a broad blueprint of our spending priorities for the next year and the next 5 years. In fact, this particular resolution sets the tone for the next century. It will be the first budget blueprint for the next millennium.

Our priorities are clear. First and foremost, we set aside all of the Social Security surplus for Social Security, the first time in our country's history that we will do that, making good on the commitment to take Social Security off budget.

Second, we keep to the spending commitments of the 1997 Balanced Budget Act, a bipartisan agreement, to control the size and scope of the Federal Government, keeping to our commitments not just to our constituents, but to the entire country.

Finally, we state that, for those surpluses above the Social Security surplus, we ought to give that money back to American workers that are working harder, longer, earning more, being more productive. That is the biggest reason we have such a high level of revenues right now. The product of that hard work ought to go back to working Americans.

Those are the right priorities for this country: strengthening Social Security, keeping to our spending commitments, and lowering taxes.

The President's budget, instead, would spend 38 percent of the Social Security surplus. It breaks the budget caps. It raises taxes $100 billion. That is the wrong direction, as made so clear when we voted on this floor on the President's budget. He received only 2 votes for his spending priorities.

These are the right priorities. It sets aside more for Social Security, pays down more debt, and does more to strengthen this country's economy.

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY).

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. Speaker, we all understand in Washington that sometimes you are the beaver and sometimes you are the cherry tree. Even so,

it is outrageous that the Republican majority has chosen to treat Medicare as a cherry tree, to be cut down while the Republican beaver gets fatter on tax cuts.

Mr. Speaker, there is no other issue other than the war in Kosovo of greater public policy concern than extending the solvency of Social Security and addressing our senior health crisis while preserving Medicare.

This budget flinches in the face of those challenges. Instead, it takes resources that we desperately need to devote to those problems and commits them instead to an exploding tax cut that threatens the return of a structural deficit.

It is an insult to the seniors of this country that the Republicans are talking about tax cuts while at the same time they are not setting aside one penny to extend the solvency of the Medicare Trust Fund or the solvency of Social Security.

There is a health care hurricane on the horizon in our country, Mr. Speaker. The highest growing part of our population is over 85. The Republicans do nothing about the Medicare crisis about to hit. Vote ''no'' on the Republican budget.

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 15 seconds to point out that the President cut $11.5 billion from Medicare. He cut it. I would also point out to my colleague that we reserve $1.8 trillion for Social Security. We do not spend it, and we do not provide it in tax cuts. It is reserved for Social Security.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 15 seconds to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. RYAN).

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I think it is very important to note that, when we are looking at this, this inflammatory language on Medicare, we are actually keeping the Medicare Trust Fund growing. The President proposed a budget that actually cut Medicare. We are dedicating $1.8 trillion, all from taxes dedicated to Medicare and Social Security, for Medicare and Social Security.

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentlewoman from Oregon (Ms. HOOLEY).

Ms. HOOLEY of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, when one offers with one hand and takes away with the other hand, that is called bait and switch. If one were an advertiser in the public sector, one would be fined for what is going on in Congress today.

This Congress is trying to tell the American public that all is well with the veterans. Yet, the Republican budget cuts veterans over 10 years by $2.3 billion. They are trying to tell us that crop insurance is okay at a time when farmers are out there in deep trouble. They are saying it is okay, we are going to take care of you. Yet, there are cuts of $4.9 billion. Health care, medical research, oh, yeah, we are increasing the budget. But guess what, it is being cut by $25 billion. Bait and switch.

Worst of all to me, this Congress is telling Americans that because we add money to one part of the education budget, that we are increasing the education budget. The problem is they are taking it away from another part of the budget. Again, bait and switch.

We are hearing the argument that Social Security and Medicare are first in the budget, Mr. Speaker. Bait and switch. Tax cuts are first here, nothing else.

I support a tax cut that we can afford. But first we must extend the life of Social Security and Medicare. This budget has loopholes the size of the Capitol dome. To protect Social Security, we should make sure that we extend the life of Social Security. Do not deceive the American people with bait and switch sound bites when my colleagues do not have the information to back it up.

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. GARY MILLER), one of many from California, and a very fine Member.

Mr. GARY MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the conference report on the budget. When we compare this to where we started with the President's budget, we have come leagues from where we started.

I have listened to some of the rhetoric, and obviously many have been beamed up who really look at the facts and figures. We do protect Social Security. The President wanted to spend Social Security money on his programs. We provide for Medicare in this budget. The President did nothing for Medicare. In fact, he stifled reforms.

We provide for tax relief. The President wanted to raise taxes. We are keeping the budget caps. The President wants to break budget caps to spend more money.

In the past year, all we have heard is the rhetoric from the other side of the aisle about saving Social Security, yet they have done nothing to do that. Where is the rhetoric now? Where is the reform? Or was it just politics as partisans present it.

This side of the aisle and the budget we have before us saves 100 percent of Social Security money, $137 billion this year alone aside for Social Security over 10 years. It sets aside $1.8 trillion. The President's budget saves 62 percent, spent $58 billion this year alone, and over 10 years only set $1.3 trillion aside.

Medicare has been provided for in this budget. My colleagues talk about chopping the cherry tree down. The President chopped down $11.9 billion over 5 years out of Medicare.

We cut through this process $778 billion in taxes on the American people over 10 years. The President wanted to raise taxes by $172 billion over 10 years.

This is what the Congressional Research Service has to say about the Senate and House budget resolution before us. I will quote them, ''The committee report calls for maintaining the discretionary spending caps, cutting taxes, increasing spending for defense and education.'' I will quote again, ''increasing spending for defense and education, and restricting the uses of Social Security surpluses.''

We have come a long way from where we started, and I wish this could be a bipartisan support. I encourage an ''aye'' vote. 038

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 30 seconds.

On defense, I would remind the gentleman that their budget over 10 years is $198 billion below the President's budget. We came to the House floor and said, my colleagues did not provide for the military pay increase. Despite the fact they were on notice, this budget does not provide for the selected pay grade increase of 5.5 percent. This budget does not provide for the repeal of redux. It zaps it.

They were put on notice. They still ignored it. They also did not give anything for the veterans except for 1 year.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Mr. FILNER) because he is a member of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, this conference agreement on the Republican resolution is a slap in the face to our Nation's veterans, those who have given us our country's freedom. It slashes health care funding every year after the year 2000.

We do have a 1-year increase of $1.6 billion, but that is it, only 50 percent of what the veterans' organizations in this country said was absolutely minimal, for what was necessary for the veterans' health care system. They recommended a $3 billion increase for every year. My colleagues gave them $1.6 billion for the first year and then started cutting them every year after that. Over 10 years, the conference agreement cuts veterans funding by $2.3 billion below a 1999 level.

We will see hospitals in danger of closing. We will see veterans with hepatitis C not receive treatment. We will see long-term care decreased. Research will be severely underfunded. Buildings will deteriorate. The chairman of our committee, a Republican chairman, said that if we have a straight line budget, we will compromise access to quality of care. Vote ''no'' on the slap in the face of the Veterans Administration.

□ 1245

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. CHAMBLISS).

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. Speaker, I would call to the gentleman's attention the fact that the President's budget called for an increase in veterans' benefits of $26 million. In the House-passed budget we provided for $1.1 billion of increase for veterans' health care benefits alone. The conference report increased that amount by an additional $700 billion directly applied to veterans' health care benefits.

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 30 seconds.

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. SPRATT. I yield to the gentleman from California.

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman is talking about the President's budget. That was a suggestion that is long past. This is the Republicans' budget now. Stop talking about the President's budget. The Republican budget has underfunded over 10 years veterans' health care by almost $2.5 billion.

The Republicans increase it the first year, I will give them that, but they have put it on a freeze for the next decade. They are harming the health of our Nation's veterans.

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, I might also say that the veterans are funded on average at $19.4 million, which is $100 million over and above this year for the next 5 years. The Republicans fund the increase for 1 year but it falls off after that.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. MINGE).

Mr. MINGE. Mr. Speaker, I would like to just quickly address two points in connection with the budget that is under consideration this morning.

The first is agriculture. I am very concerned. We have had hearings, we have had a great deal of criticism of the Clinton administration for reducing the Farm Service Agency personnel in the field offices, 750 people cut. This is really unacceptable, but I am very concerned that the Republican budget has yet a further cut in discretionary appropriations for the Department of Agriculture. It will be very difficult to not only restore these 750 people with this type of a cut but I fear it will lead to even greater cuts which, on a bipartisan basis, we recognize is really unacceptable.

So I rise to urge the Republicans to change the budget, to allow for at least constant funding for agriculture so we do not face further unacceptable cuts in the Farm Service Agency.

Finally, I would like to just briefly call attention to the fact that the expected surplus on the on-budget is not going to be used to pay down on the debt. None of it. I feel it is absolutely imperative that in these good times we agree on a bipartisan basis that at least half of the on-budget surplus be devoted to reducing the Nation's debt. We owe this to our children. When we have good times, it is time to fix the roof. When it is raining, it will be much more difficult to reduce the debt.

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. CHAMBLISS).

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. Speaker, I remind the gentleman that, as he well knows, in our budget resolution that we are going to vote on today there is no reduction in employees in the Farm Service Agency.

We are not going to micromanage what the Agriculture Department does in their budget. The House Committee on Agriculture, of which the gentleman is a member, along with myself, and he and I work very closely on these very issues, is going to make that decision on how we manage the budget that is handed to us with the Department of Agriculture.

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. MINGE) for a response.

Mr. MINGE. Mr. Speaker, I know that all of us have worked with the USDA, and we know that it has scores of programs. And we have heard from our constituents that they want increases in all of these programs.

I do not understand how we can both maintain the staffing level at the Farm Service Agency and still honor the request that we have for all of the other programs. I fear by making an across-the-board cut at USDA, that the Farm Service Agency, just like everything else, will be the victim of this cut. And I do not see how we can expect the administration to do any better by FSA with this type of limitation.

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. CHAMBLISS).

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. Speaker, I want to address one other issue with respect to agriculture, because this is critical.

The President talked a lot, when he came here in this very House in his State of the Union address, about crop insurance reform, something that is so desperately needed by our farmers. Yet in his budget he provided zero dollars for crop insurance reform.

In our budget that we are going to vote on today we are providing $6 billion for crop insurance reform, in addition to what we currently have, to be used over the next 5 years to truly come up with a meaningful, sustainable crop insurance reform program that is going to be of benefit to every single farmer all across this great country.

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire how much time each side has.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. NETHERCUTT). The gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. SHAYS) has 8¾ minutes remaining, and the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPRATT) has 8½ minutes remaining.

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. MINGE).

Mr. MINGE. Mr. Speaker, returning to the crop insurance subject, I certainly am pleased that the Republican budget does allow $6 billion for the first 5 years of the budget cycle, but I would point out that it is a 10-year budget and there is nothing for crop insurance in the second 5 years that we have been able to identify. And if we contrast this with the budgets that were proposed by the Democrats and by the Blue Dogs there was, indeed, more adequate and consistent funding for crop insurance.

I feel that if we have a 10-year budget here we have to judge it not just on the basis of the first 5 years, but the commitment to crop insurance for the second 5 years. If there is not money there for crop insurance for the second 5 years, we are in a very bad position.

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. CLEMENT).

Mr. CLEMENT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time, and I am going to focus my attention on the veterans.

We are going to have a major increase in the defense budget this year but not for the veterans. Why? Those are the ones who have served us so well and ably over the years and yet we are going to cut them.

The Republican budget ignores the recommendations of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, it ignores the pleas by nearly every veterans' group and it ignores the recommendations of the United States Senate. I might share with my colleagues that it has a $2.3 billion below the 1999 freeze level over a 10-year period.

After a one-time increase, our veterans will be back to facing hospital closures, cutting of medical services, reductions in employees, and new initiatives without new funding to pay for them. Veterans are only growing older and sicker each year. They cannot survive on a flat-lined budget that has been proposed, and they certainly cannot survive on a budget that actually cuts their funding.

This situation is outrageous. Our veterans have served this country in the noblest of manners. It is now our obligation and duty to take care of them. It is simply unconscionable to deny our veterans the funding that they so desperately need now and in the years to come.

I tell my colleagues where our veterans are going to get hurt: screening for hepatitis C, rising pharmaceutical costs, and we could go on and on. This is not fair. This is not right. Vote ''no''.

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 15 seconds to respond to what was just said.

I would just point out that in the budget next year, the budget that we actually spend, we add $1.1 billion more than the President, and then when we added what the Senate did, we added another $700 million.

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 30 seconds, and I ask the gentleman from Connecticut why does the Republican budget, in Function 950, not provide for the pay table reform, the 5.5 percent increase for our senior NCOs and selected junior officers? And why does it not provide for a reform of REDUC, so that those service members who have served 20 years will get 50 percent of their base pay in retirement as opposed to 40 percent?

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. SPRATT. I yield to the gentleman from Connecticut.

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, I would be happy to explain to my colleague, but

we are going to have a disagreement because we think we have provided the money in 950, the gentleman does not, and time will tell.

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume to respond that the numbers do not bear the gentleman's statement out.

And I would just like to go down the list again, looking at this budget, of the things that are literally cut. We are not talking about reductions in current services, we are not talking about reducing the rate of increase. Over 10 years, we have just heard the veterans' function, Function 700 in this budget, is cut by $2.3 billion. That is below a hard freeze, below 1999 levels, even though, as we have been told, the World War II veterans are reaching the peak demand for services on the Veterans Administration.

Agriculture, Function 350, over 10 years is cut by $4.9 billion. In that second 5-year period of time, to sustain the crop insurance program, we will need $9.4 billion. We put together a budget that provided that $9.4 billion, still provided for tax cuts, still provided for more debt reduction, and sustained the crop insurance program for the full 10-year period.

Health, research and public health, two vitally important programs, Function 550 of the budget, they are cut by a whopping $25.3 billion below a hard freeze, below 1999 levels in this budget.

The same goes on for other programs. If we take all State, local and regional government programs, which is Function 450, there is a cut of 46.4 percent.

But there is another cut in this budget, a huge cut. In fact, this budget sets a record, Mr. Speaker. Many of these cuts that are destined to happen because of this budget are not identified. They are just aggregate cuts in the authorized amount of spending.

In order to avoid specific criticism, there is an account called allowances, Function 920 of the budget. In that account, over 10 years, this budget contains $81.4 billion. In other words, that is $81.4 billion in cuts they have not even identified to any of the 20 functions in the budget. $81.4 billion is a record high for an addition to a budget. That means we have not done the work. Somebody else is going to have to do it.

But there is bad news in store for all of these other programs which are already cut below a hard freeze, below 1999 levels. Veterans, agriculture, environment and natural resources, health research, biomedical research, all of these portions of the budget are still subject to a whopping $81.4 billion reduction which has not yet been identified or allocated over the next 10 years, Mr. Speaker.

There is a different way to do it. The Republicans, whenever they want to criticize the budget, bring up the President's budget. They do not acknowledge that we had an alternative budget here on the floor. We had a Democratic alternative. We took all of the Social Security money and recommitted it to Social Security with a lock box that was built into law, not some point of order.

We are stretching everybody's credulity by calling a lock box a simple point of order, which the Committee on Rules can mow right over, and does every day of the week.

Even though we fully provided for Social Security, and the actuaries said we had extended its life until past 2050, we also provided $502.5 billion more for defense and nondefense discretionary programs than the Republicans provided. We targeted tax cuts, gross tax cuts of $165 billion, over the next 10 years. We generated higher surpluses and, therefore, we paid off more debt than the Republicans. Not over 10 years, but every year over 10 years; every year over the next 10 years, totaling $151 billion more in debt reduction.

We had that alternative. We could have at least put our alternative on the table in a conference and said, where can we meet in the middle, because we have got here a better product, we think. We did not have that kind of conference.

□ 1300

We did not have that kind of comparison and compromise, and what we have got here is a budget that is deficient in the process by which it has been developed and deficient in substance, as well.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2½ minutes to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. RYAN).

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I think what we are seeing here today is two visions, two visions for our country that we are presenting to the American people, the President's vision as he articulated in the well of the House of Representatives during the State of the Union address and the vision we have embodied in this budget here before us, and I would like to recap what that vision is.

First, we lock away the entire Social Security Trust Fund to save, strengthen and preserve Social Security as necessary and Medicare, as well. The other side's budget adds more IOUs in the Trust Fund and that is their answer to Social Security solvency.

We could save Social Security to the year 3000 if we just wanted to add more IOUs in the Trust Fund, and that is essentially what they are doing. We need real reform, not IOUs.

Second, we set aside more money than the President does for Social Security and Medicare by $100 billion. We create a safety deposit box to make sure that future raids on Social Security do not occur. We pay down more debt with our budget than the President does. By $450 billion, we start paying down our national debt. We maintain the spending discipline of the 1997 budget agreement. We provide additional resources to properly train, equip, and retain the men and women in our uniform, and we enact the historic tax relief for working Americans.

What we achieve is this: We stop the raid on Social Security. All Social Security dollars go to Social Security. We pay down our national debt. The President increases it. And if after we accomplish that they still overpay their income tax, we let them have their money back.

What this is coming down to is a difference in philosophy. The President embodied the philosophy as he put in his budget very well in Buffalo, New York, 2 months ago when talking about the these surpluses, where he said we could give this money back to them but we would not be sure that they would spend it right.

Well, Mr. Speaker, therein lies the difference. How they spend their money is the right way to spend their money as long as they spend their money. But what we have to achieve and the historic reforms we are achieving in this budget is for the first time in a generation we are going to stop Congress and the President from raiding Social Security, we are going to start to pay off our bills by paying down our debt. And then after that, if they still overpay their taxes, they ought to have their money back.

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of the time.

Vote for this budget and we will vote to reverse the priorities we set on this floor just 2 days ago. We said that we should save Social Security first, we should shore up Medicare for some years to come, we should do this first before we address tax cuts. We did not rule out tax cuts. We said these things came first.

Two days ago, 380 Members of the House voted for that. Today if we vote for this resolution we vote to reverse it. We will vote to put those programs at risk because the tax cuts that are proposed in this resolution will drain the budget dry of anything that can be used to fix Social Security and fix Medicare.

Even worse, if these surpluses that we see now, which are no more than economist constructs, do not obtain, if they do not materialize, then we will be spending Social Security payroll taxes because there will not be enough income taxes to fund the budget we have got right here.

So this is a reversal. This is a retreat. This goes down the path that we took years ago and have tried to reverse and correct for the last 10 years. It would be a sham and a shame if we passed a budget of this kind. And, in fact, we will not. We will pass it, of course, but this budget is not going to be the operative document that determines the budget for this year, fortunately, because it is simply not a workable instrument of policy.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, to close this debate, I yield such time as he

may consume to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KASICH), the chairman of the committee, who in 1989 started saying we need to get our country's financial house in order and end these deficits, and that is what he has done.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. NETHERCUTT). The gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KASICH) is recognized for 6 minutes.

Mr. KASICH. Mr. Speaker, I just want to say that it is one of my staff people just kind of whispered at me that this is the last budget of the century and this represents the blueprint for what we want to do as we head into the next century and a whole new millennium.

We have struggled here on Capitol Hill for some short period of time in how to deal with the issue of the surplus. And somebody yesterday argued that, well, it is amazing that when we had deficits it seemed as though we could get along better than when we had surpluses, there seems to be more debate and discussion and argument. And somebody said, well, that is not surprising because whenever somebody passes away and there are debts, nobody shows up to try to figure out how to deal with those; but when there is a lot of extra money to be passed on, everybody shows up and starts to fight for it. And I think it is really true.

But we should not look at surplus politics as anything other than the greatest news, because instead of having to keep working to dig ourselves out of a hole, we now have the opportunity to be able to use all of that hard work and the benefits that came with it, which is an expanding economy and big surpluses, to be able to really outline a path for where we need to go in the early stages of the next century.

First and foremost, we know that in the next century we do not want to pursue policies that allow government to get bigger and to have more power. I think that is the greatest bottom line statement that we make as we leave this century, and it is clearly a reflection of what everyday people across this country are saying. Because I think what people are saying in America today is they would like to have more power and more control over the future and they do not want to consistently be frustrated by those in a faraway place who seem to be able to write the rules and the regulations that frustrate them every day.

I think what Americans are saying is, let me have the bat in my hand, let me get up to the plate, let me begin to solve some of the problems that I have that I am going to face during the course of my lifetime.

So the one clear guiding star in this process is not to expand the power of people who live in a faraway place but, rather, to struggle to take power from those folks and put it back into the hands of everyday people.

I am a little mystified at the criticism of that product. I guess it is just the nature sometimes of partisan politics. We did come together in 1997 and come up with a budget agreement and I would salute my colleague from South Carolina (Mr. SPRATT) for his work in reaching a bipartisan agreement. But what we are doing here now is something that we have all laid out as a goal and a target for ourselves.

Number one, that we would stop raiding the payroll taxes of this country, that we would stop spending the money that we collect to be used for our retirement programs to be spent on the operation of Government. And, in fact, this budget does that. It locks up $1.8 trillion in payroll taxes over the next 10 years and makes that money available for a revamped, for a transformed retirement system, both for Social Security and Medicare. And it will essentially mean that every American is going to have a little bit more control in terms of planning for their retirement rather than turning that control over to people who live in a place where they do not even know what area code it is that we live in or what time zone we live in.

We are going to set the stage for significant transfer of power from people who do not understand us, do not know us, who are strangers, who are the least concerned about our retirement, into our own hands so we can plan for our own families who are the most concerned about our retirement years and, at the same time, we are also going to transfer this huge overpayment that the taxpayers have made to the Federal Government.

Income tax day is tomorrow. Whenever people look at paying their income taxes, there are two, three things I think drive them crazy. One is they cannot figure out how to pay their tax. The system is too complicated. They have got to spend money to hire somebody to figure it out. We know that this system clearly needs to be made more simple and will be when we have a president that is committed to it.

But secondly, people are not only confused and angry about the current tax system, but then they are paying too much of what they earn to the Government. We have families now who are being hit by the alternative minimum tax, couples out there working trying to get ahead educating their children. They get hit by the alternative minimum tax.

Some Americans at all levels of government are paying half of what they earn to the Government. It should not be that way, 50 percent of what they earn to government. Because on top of all of that, none of us have the confidence that the Government is treating our money as preciously as we treat our own. They are convinced, and they are right, that the Government at the State level, the local government, and Federal Government are full of duplication, it is full of waste.

And we really do not treat people's money like it is our own. Frankly, human nature does not allow us to do it. Does it? But when we take the combination of a confusing tax system, too high taxes, and taxes we pay going for things that are wasteful, people are very uptight about that.

We are giving them an opportunity to get the biggest tax cut back while maintaining the fiscal discipline we laid in place in 1997, save Social Security, return power to people through a huge tax cut, and maintain fiscal discipline. It is a recipe for success in the next century.

Support the resolution.

Mr. DAVIS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to H. Con. Res. 68, the Conference Report on the Fiscal Year 2000 Budget Resolution. This resolution should be defeated because of the policies it sets forth and the procedure under which it was brought to the floor today.

Last year, for the first time since Congressional budget procedures were established in 1974, this body failed to adopt a conference report on the budget resolution. This year, the conference report was completed almost before the conferees were even appointed and the first opportunity the minority had to read the conference report was 12:30 this morning.

The budget resolution is a blueprint for our national priorities. It defines what we as a Congress believe is important and establishes the basis for the rest of our work this session. Questions of how much we are willing to spend to educate our children, to fight crime, to protect our environment, to reduce the massive national debt—these are the hard questions we should be deciding and we owe it to our constituents to have an open and rigorous debate on these issues. Instead, today we are poised to rubber-stamp a conference agreement that no one has had adequate opportunity to study and whose broad objectives set us on a dangerous path of fiscal irresponsibility.

Today, our Nation's economy is the envy of the world. We have historically low unemployment and inflation coupled with sustained moderate economic growth. The stock market is at record levels and even our economic experts are at a lost to explain how this expansion has continued for eight years with no signs of weakness. The question we face today is whether we will take advantage of this unprecedented growth to pay off past obligations and prepare for the future or simply squander this opportunity by putting tax cuts first, ahead of paying down the debt and ensuring the solvency of Social Security and Medicare.

My view, echoed in testimony by Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan, is that we should dedicate the lion's share of the budget surpluses to reducing the publicly held debt. This is the surest way to continue the cycle of economic growth and continuing surpluses. Furthermore, as we pay down the debt, interest rates will continue to decline. Consider what a two percent reduction in interest rates would mean for the average homeowner in my home town: By reducing the 30-year fixed rate mortgage from 8% to 6% on a $115,000 house in Hillsborough County, Florida, a homeowner's monthly mortgage would drop from $844 to $689. This translates into savings of $155 each month or $1,860 each year. That is more substantial and more fiscally responsible than the tax cuts proposed by this conference report. Unfortunately, the Democratic Alternative which would have locked in

greater debt reduction than this plan was rejected in Committee and on the House floor.

Mr. Speaker, the question today is not simply whether we are for or against tax cuts. The question is what priority we should place on cutting taxes compared with paying down the debt and preserving Social Security and Medicare. Personally, I support targeted tax cuts; however, I believe we must maintain fiscal discipline and prepare for the coming demographic changes of the baby boomers' retirement. Once we have address these critical issues, then we should consider tax cuts, or even more importantly, overall tax reform. Instead, today, this House is poised to squander a golden opportunity and embrace a plan which puts its greatest emphasis on tax cuts. This is not the legacy we should leave for future generations and I therefore urge my colleagues to reject this conference report.

Mr. PACKARD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Con. Res. 68, the FY 2000 Budget Conference Report.

For the first time in over a generation this country is operating with a budget surplus. The fact is, this surplus is nothing more than an overpayment to the government by the American taxpayers. I am convinced that government can do more for Americans than raise their taxes and feed the federal bureaucracy. The FY 2000 budget will offer $15 billion for tax relief in the year 2000 and over $800 billion over the next 10 years. Families can spend their money better than Washington can. This money belongs to the American people and we should give it back to them.

Mr. Speaker, our budget goes well beyond extending tax relief to American families. In fact it protects and strengthens Social Security for the next century. While the President talks about saving Social Security, the truth is his budget actually spends 42% of the Social Security Surplus. The Republican budget will lock up every penny of the Social Security Surplus over the next ten years, that's $1.8 trillion worth of retirement security for Americans. We have all paid into the Social Security trust fund with the promise that it will be there for us when we retire. Today, we have an historic opportunity to keep that promise and protect Social Security.

This FY 2000 Budget also increases spending for our military by over $288 billion. Our men and women in uniform put their lives on the line to protect our freedoms. We must provide them with the tools and training necessary to remain the greatest fighting force in the world.

Mr. Speaker, the American public has waited long enough for relief from big government spending. Let's pass this historic budget for the new millennium and keep our promises to the citizens of this country.

Mr. FOSSELLA. Mr. Speaker, the Budget Resolution is an opportunity for our nation to finally put the Social Security surplus in a lock box solely for seniors on Social Security and Medicare. The budget resolution also reflects our commitment to education, a strong national defense and much-needed tax relief.

Congress promised to balance the budget, reduce the size of government, and reduce the federal debt. This budget resolution, H. Con. Res. 68, sticks to that promise by restraining government spending and paying down the debt.

Every penny in the Social Security trust fund, 100% of it, is being set aside for retiring Americans. The President's budget, on the other hand only sets aside 62% of the surplus for seniors. Only by committing 100% of the surplus can we truly strengthen Social Security for future generations.

The budget will also give our children's schools the resources to ensure them a better education and bright future. We increase spending to improve public schools.

It will also provide billions to strengthen our national defense, equipping and training our troops for combat while honoring our veterans' sacrifices with a boost in health care funding.

Finally, this budget gives the record-setting money coming into Washington back to those who earned it—the taxpayers. For the first time in decades, we have surpluses as far as the eye can see. Every hard-working American created the current surplus and the budget gives it back to them over the next ten years.

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to the Budget Resolution for FY 2000. There are many reasons why we should oppose this Resolution, and one of the major reasons is what it does to our nation's veterans. The budget figures for veterans are completely unacceptable especially in the area of health care.

Under the Budget Resolution, the Republicans who have been criticizing for weeks the President's budget, have done no better—the VA health care system is drastically underfunded and in danger of actual collapse. This is a drastic problem which demands serious, substantial solutions.

What I think is worst about the Budget Resolution, as it affects veterans, is the disingenuous manner in which it is crafted. In FY2000, the budget outlay increases for the discretionary budget where VA health care is funded, from $19.2 to $20.9 billion—a seemingly significant increase. But if you look beyond 2000, it immediately drops to $19.1 billion, then to $19 billion, then to $18.9 billion. How can we maintain health care for our increasingly older veteran population with shrinking numbers?

We need more funds, not less, to reverse the trend of decimating psychiatric, substance abuse and other mental health problems. We need to increase long-term care to increase the options for our growing population of elderly veterans. We need to eliminate the practice of discharging veterans who are Alzheimer's patients. New health care initiatives for veterans suffering from Hepatitis C-related illnesses have been proposed, with no new dollars to pay for them. We will be unable to absorb the additional Persian Gulf War veterans who will be eligible for health care under a new law.

I have carefully studied the Independent Budget for Fiscal Year 2000, a comprehensive policy document created by veterans for veterans and endorsed by over 50 veterans' service organizations. In this budget, I sense an urgency and frustration that I've not heard before. America's veterans are telling us that they have done more than their fair share—and now they expect us to be their advocates. They are reminding us that America is safe and free only because of the generations of men and women who willingly endured the hardships and sacrifices required to preserve our liberty.

For many, many years, America's veterans have been good soldiers. They have done their duty and been conscientious, responsible citizens. Every time the Veteran's Affairs Committee was handed a reconciliation target, it met that target. Billions of veterans' dollars have been handed over in order to balance the budget and eliminate the deficit. Time and time again, America's veterans answered their nation's call. The country needed their support, and America's veterans gave all that they could give.

Well, the budget deficit has been eliminated. That battle has been won. I believe that this year, it is time for America's veterans to come first. We, as a nation, owe them that.

It is the duty of Congress to pass a responsible budget and to do so, we must lift the VA budget cap in order to provide a budget that is worthy of our veterans.

The United States and the freedom our country represents around the world have persisted and flourished because of the sacrifices of our veterans. We must remember the men and women who made those sacrifices as we vote on the budget for veterans.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to the validation of this conference report, which includes in it the details of the Budget Resolution passed just a few weeks ago by the Republicans.

At that time I spoke vigorously against the Budget Resolution because I felt it short-changed the American people. Also at that time, I spoke in favor of the Democratic Budget, offered by Ranking Member SPRATT because it was a responsible budget done right. Thereafter, when this resolution once again came before us as it was sent to conference, I supported Ranking Member SPRATT's motion to instruct the conferees to hold off on their submission of the report until we had passed legislation addressing the concerns of our party, and of most Americans—in this case, preserving and extending the life of Social Security and Medicare. I go over this litany of details not to open old wounds, but rather to demonstrate and testify to the American people that the Republicans have had multiple opportunities to save Social Security and Medicare—and each time they turned away.

As I vote to strike down this report, I do so only with the well-being of our constituents in mind. I know that we should be approving a budget that protects the Social Security and Medicare Trust Funds by putting money back into those accounts. It should be a budget that will maintain our current Social Security and Medicare benefits, and extend their lives until decades from now, so that Americans will be able to take advantage of them. This is especially true for women, because due to their longer life expectancy, they must rely on Social Security and Medicare longer than most men.

I know that we should be appropriating the proper resources to modernize, and some would say revitalize, our public schools. This budget does the opposite; in fact, it reduces our domestic spending on programs that protect the interest of our children. This budget jeopardizes the well being of successful programs by taking 425 million dollars from WIC, and 501 million dollars from Head Start. Nevertheless, in this budget most of that money—800 million dollars of it—goes instead to tax cuts for the wealthy.

I know that what we should be doing at this time is authorizing a budget that will protect America's families. It should be a budget that

fully funds the Summer Youth Employment Program, which is cut by over 90 million dollars. It could be a budget that saves the Community Development Block Grant Program the indignity of a 50-million-dollar cut.

This budget could be more, it could address the needs of our veterans. We could have and should have passed the Spratt Amendment, which would have added an additional nine billion dollars for veterans programs. We should be voting to pass a budget that fully funds LIHEAP, which provides for necessary heating and cooling for low-income families in times of extreme weather. LIHEAP literally saved lives in my district last summer, and I intend to do what I can to ensure that it is fully funded every year that I serve in Congress.

I had hoped that during Conference, that we would have seen drastic improvements in this resolution. Improvements that could have been done in a bipartisan and responsible manner. I had hoped that my colleagues across the aisle could be more persuaded by the dedication of Congressmen SPRATT and MCDERMOTT. I desperately wanted to take home to my district a budget that respected our children, our families, our veterans, and our elderly—and I still hope to do so.

Therefore, I urge my colleagues to vote against this conference report, and instead work with us to forge a new budget that will grow America into the 21st century.

Mr. STUMP. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the conference report and to express my appreciation for all the consideration given to veterans' health care funding by the conferees.

The conference report provides the entire amount recommended by the majority of the VA Committee for veterans health care—a $1.7 billion increase over the amount recommended by the President in his budget.

This funding level is supported by many veterans organizations and military associations, including: The American Legion, The Jewish War Veterans, Gold Star Wives, Non Commissioned Officers Association, and The Retired Officers Association.

Some Members advocated even higher funding levels.

But in an arena that is traditionally as partisan as the Budget Committee, it was the realistic recommendations of the VA Committee that ultimately became the standard for both Democratic and Republican budget proposals in the House.

I know that there is already some criticism of the conference report because the outyear spending levels for veterans don't match the levels for next year.

But I want to assure my colleagues that there is little doubt that we will provide even higher funding levels next year.

I also want to assure VA health care administrators that they can count on us to provide the necessary funding to sustain the health care services which an increasing number of veterans are seeking from the VA.

The chairman of the House Budget Committee, the gentleman from Ohio, Mr. KASICH, has given me his word that we'll take a fresh look at the funding needs next year.

Now it is time for Members to realize how difficult it will be for the Appropriations Committee to achieve this spending level for VA health care.

I hope we can all work together to protect this budget for veterans from competing spending interests favored by the Clinton-Gore Administration.

If VA continues to provide health care effectively and with greater efficiency, I have no doubt that the funding level contained in this resolution for fiscal year 2000 will be continued.

Again, I thank the chairman of the Budget Committee, the Senate Chairman, Senator DOMENICI, and all the Members of the Budget Committee who have worked so hard to address veterans' needs this year.

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to the conference agreement on House Concurrent Resolution 68, the budget resolution for next fiscal year. This conference agreement, like the budget passed earlier by this house, fails to provide adequate resources needed to maintain and improve programs established by this Congress to serve our nation's veterans, their dependents and survivors.

Many of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle pronounced the administration's proposed budget next year for veterans to be underfunded by at least $2 billion and possibly more. The chairman of our committee, the gentleman from Arizona, who strongly opposes unwarranted spending, recommended an increase of $1.9 billion over the Administration's proposed funding level. The Chairman's recommendation is a clear and unmistakable signal of the funding crisis in veterans' programs and benefits.

While this conference agreement appears at first glance to begin to address the funding crisis in veterans' programs and benefits, this budget resolution is really nothing more than a wolf in sheep's clothing. Unbelievable to our nation's veterans, this budget resolution cuts discretionary spending, which primarily provides veterans' health care, by $1.4 billion dollars in fiscal year 2001 compared to next fiscal year. Veterans across America will wonder what is put in the water in Washington. This budget resolution is a blueprint for destroying veterans' benefits and programs. This budget resolution must be rejected.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time for debate has expired.

Without objection, the previous question is ordered.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the conference report.

Pursuant to clause 10 of rule XX, the yeas and nays are ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 220, nays 208, not voting 6, as follows:

[Roll No. 85]

YEAS—220

Aderholt
Archer
Armey
Bachus
Baker
Ballenger
Barr
Barrett (NE)
Bartlett
Barton
Bass
Bateman
Bereuter
Biggert
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bliley
Blunt
Boehlert
Boehner
Bonilla
Bono
Brady (TX)
Bryant
Burr
Burton
Buyer
Callahan
Calvert
Camp
Campbell
Canady
Cannon
Castle
Chabot
Chambliss
Chenoweth
Coble
Coburn
Collins
Combest
Condit
Cook
Cooksey
Cox
Crane
Cubin
Cunningham
Davis (VA)
Deal
DeLay
DeMint
Diaz-Balart
Dickey
Doolittle
Dreier
Duncan
Dunn
Ehlers
Ehrlich
Emerson
English
Everett
Ewing
Fletcher
Foley
Forbes
Fossella
Fowler
Franks (NJ)
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
Ganske
Gekas
Gibbons
Gilchrest
Gillmor
Gilman
Goode
Goodlatte
Goodling
Goss
Graham
Granger
Green (WI)
Greenwood
Gutknecht
Hall (TX)
Hansen
Hastert
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Hayworth
Hefley
Herger
Hill (MT)
Hilleary
Hobson
Hoekstra
Horn
Hostettler
Houghton
Hulshof
Hunter
Hutchinson
Hyde
Isakson
Istook
Jenkins
Johnson (CT)
Johnson, Sam
Jones (NC)
Kasich
Kelly
King (NY)
Kingston
Knollenberg
Kolbe
Kuykendall
Largent
Latham
LaTourette
Lazio
Leach
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
LoBiondo
Lucas (OK)
Manzullo
McCollum
McCrery
McHugh
McInnis
McIntosh
McKeon
Metcalf
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller, Gary
Moran (KS)
Myrick
Nethercutt
Ney
Northup
Norwood
Nussle
Ose
Oxley
Packard
Pease
Peterson (PA)
Petri
Pickering
Pitts
Pombo
Porter
Portman
Pryce (OH)
Radanovich
Ramstad
Regula
Reynolds
Riley
Rogan
Rogers
Rohrabacher
Ros-Lehtinen
Roukema
Royce
Ryan (WI)
Ryun (KS)
Salmon
Sanford
Saxton
Scarborough
Schaffer
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shadegg
Shaw
Shays
Sherwood
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Skeen
Smith (MI)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Souder
Spence
Stearns
Stump
Sununu
Sweeney
Talent
Tancredo
Tauzin
Taylor (NC)
Terry
Thornberry
Thune
Tiahrt
Toomey
Upton
Walden
Walsh
Wamp
Watkins
Watts (OK)
Weldon (FL)
Weldon (PA)
Weller
Whitfield
Wicker
Wilson
Wolf
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NAYS—208

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Allen
Andrews
Baird
Baldacci
Baldwin
Barcia
Barrett (WI)
Becerra
Bentsen
Berkley
Berman
Berry
Bishop
Blagojevich
Blumenauer
Bonior
Borski
Boswell
Boucher
Boyd
Brady (PA)
Brown (CA)
Brown (FL)
Brown (OH)
Capps
Capuano
Cardin
Carson
Clay
Clayton
Clement
Clyburn
Conyers
Costello
Coyne
Cramer
Crowley
Cummings
Danner
Davis (FL)
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
Deutsch
Dicks
Dingell
Dixon
Doggett
Dooley
Doyle
Edwards
Engel
Eshoo
Etheridge
Evans
Farr
Fattah
Filner
Ford
Frank (MA)
Frost
Gejdenson
Gephardt
Gonzalez
Gordon
Green (TX)
Gutierrez
Hall (OH)
Hill (IN)
Hilliard
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hoeffel
Holden
Holt
Hooley
Hoyer
Inslee
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jefferson
John
Johnson, E.B.
Jones (OH)
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilpatrick
Kind (WI)
Kleczka
Klink
Kucinich
LaFalce
Lampson
Larson
Lee
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lipinski
Lofgren
Lowey
Lucas (KY)
Luther
Maloney (CT)
Maloney (NY)
Markey
Martinez
Mascara
Matsui
McCarthy (MO)
McCarthy (NY)
McDermott
McGovern
McIntyre
McKinney
McNulty
Meehan
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Menendez

Millender-McDonald	Price (NC)	Strickland
Miller, George	Quinn	Stupak
Minge	Rahall	Tanner
Mink	Rangel	Tauscher
Moakley	Reyes	Taylor (MS)
Mollohan	Rivers	Thompson (CA)
Moore	Rodriguez	Thompson (MS)
Moran (VA)	Roemer	Thurman
Morella	Rothman	Tierney
Murtha	Roybal-Allard	Towns
Nadler	Rush	Traficant
Napolitano	Sabo	Turner
Neal	Sanchez	Udall (CO)
Oberstar	Sanders	Udall (NM)
Obey	Sandlin	Velazquez
Olver	Sawyer	Vento
Ortiz	Schakowsky	Visclosky
Owens	Scott	Waters
Pallone	Serrano	Watt (NC)
Pascrell	Sherman	Waxman
Pastor	Sisisky	Weiner
Paul	Skelton	Wexler
Payne	Slaughter	Weygand
Pelosi	Smith (WA)	Wise
Peterson (MN)	Snyder	Woolsey
Phelps	Spratt	Wu
Pickett	Stabenow	Wynn
Pomeroy	Stark	
	Stenholm	

NOT VOTING—6

Davis (IL)	LaHood	Shows
Hastings (FL)	Lantos	Thomas

□ 1332

Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. WYNN and Mr. COYNE changed their vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

So the conference report was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 85, I was inadvertently detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

Stated against:

Mr. SHOWS. Mr. Speaker, during rollcall vote No. 85 on the conference report on H. Con. Res. 68, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted ''no.''

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained for rollcall votes 84 and 85. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes" on rollcall vote 84, H. Res. 137, and "yes" on rollcall 85, H. Con. Res. 68.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on the conference report on H. Con. Res. 68 just agreed to.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LATOURETTE). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Connecticut?

There was no objection.

LOCAL CENSUS QUALITY CHECK ACT

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, by the direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 138 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 138

Resolved, That upon the adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the bill (H.R. 472) to amend title 13, United States Code, to require the use of postcensus local review as part of each decennial census. The bill shall be considered as read for amendment. The amendment printed in the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution shall be considered as adopted. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill, as amended, and on any further amendment thereto to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate on the bill, as amended, equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Government Reform; (2) a further amendment printed in the Congressional Record and numbered 1 pursuant to clause 8 of rule XVIII, if offered by Representative Maloney of New York or her designee, which shall be considered as read and shall be separately debatable for one hour equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent; and (3) one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas (Mr. SESSIONS) is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. FROST), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During the consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

Mr. Speaker, H. Res. 138 is a fair structured rule providing 1 hour of debate in the House divided equally between the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Government Reform.

Mr. Speaker, upon adoption of the resolution, the amendment printed in the Committee on Rules report is considered adopted.

The rule also provides for the consideration of amendment numbered 1 printed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD if offered by the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MALONEY), or her designee, which shall be debatable for 1 hour equally divided and controlled between the proponent and the opponent.

Finally, the rule provides for one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 472, the, Local Census Quality Check Act, builds on Republican efforts and fulfills our constitutional duties by carrying out a quality census that counts every single person. Post census local review was used effectively in 1990 to add 124,000 households to the nationwide count. By using the knowledge, list management and mapping skills of local authorities, post census local review improved the accuracy of the 1990 census. This improvement will increase exponentially with the 2000 census as advancements in information technology will allow local authorities to provide better information which includes adding people to the census at the exact location where they live.

Specifically, Mr. Speaker, this bill provides for a post census local review which will allow local governments to review household counts, boundary maps and other data that the Secretary of Commerce considers appropriate in order to identify discrepancies in housing unit counts before they release the final count of the census. Additionally, the Secretary of Commerce would submit the appropriate block level maps and list of housing units to local governments for their review. The local authorities would then be given 45 days to review the census data and submit any challenges to that data. The Secretary would then investigate, correct any miscounts and notify local governments of any action or correction that was taken.

This is a commonsense piece of legislation that works. The results are not debatable. In 1990, post census review made for more accurate census counts.

Local groups across the political spectrum, including the National League of Cities, the National Association of Towns and Townships and the National Association of Developmental Organizations have endorsed this legislation because it works. It is a part of a process to count every single person in our country.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this rule and the underlying legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, appearances can be deceiving. At first blush H.R. 472, the Local Census Quality Check Act, appears to be a bill that will ensure a more accurate census count by enhancing local government participation in the 2000 census. But, Mr. Speaker, H.R. 472 is really a Trojan horse because it will, in fact, do nothing to enhance or ensure a more accurate count of Americans next year.

Let me tell our colleagues what it will do, Mr. Speaker. H.R. 472 will impose an operational field plan on the Census Bureau that will actually, according to the Director of the Census, decrease accuracy levels in the count. H.R. 472 will extend an already lengthy process by requiring a post census local review program very similar to the one conducted after the 1990 census. H.R. 472 would extend the period of the head count by nine weeks, which would effectively prevent the Census Bureau from scientifically determining how many people had been missed in the head count. If H.R. 472 were to be enacted, it would ensure that the Census Bureau would not have enough time to correct errors in the census to ensure that each and every American has been counted.

Mr. Speaker, such an outcome is totally unacceptable. H.R. 472 is unacceptable to Democrats because its real purpose is to prevent the Census Bureau from using the modern statistical methods that experts agree are the only way of conducting a census that