

a national school board running our public schools.

We need the local school boards to run those schools with the parents, with the teachers, with the administrators, and with the students working together.

Some will say there is a lot of money in President Bush's education plan. There is an 11-percent increase in education funding at the Federal level. Look how it is applied. This plan provides the local schools, local districts, and States more freedom in administering the Federal dollars. They are going to have more choices. They are going to combine dozens and dozens of Federal education programs into only five and allow the States and the local communities to spend the money as they see fit in the categories that they see as best.

President Bush said last night: Leave no child behind. I think this is the best opportunity we have had in many years to make that come true. Passing year after year a child who can't read or write doesn't do any good. It puts them at a tremendous disadvantage when they come out into society. It is not necessary. Our schools and teachers should be about kids. If they can't compete, then parents ought to have the opportunity to say, well, I am going to go over here to this school or this school. That is what rich folks do. They send their kids to some private school, if they want to. They borrow money to do it because they don't like the public school.

I am a former public school teacher. I am a strong advocate of public schools. They ought to be competitive and good. And if they are not and won't improve, then parents ought to have the right to choose another school.

The Bush plan provides schools with more freedom in administering these Federal dollars. But it also holds States accountable for improving student achievement, which will be demonstrated through assessments in reading and math. The plan provides reading programs which will be available to States to provide research-based reading programs in the early elementary grades and low-income preschools.

Some think we are going to put all of this taxpayer money on the public debt and not do anything else and that we are going to cut these programs. We are not. That is the beauty of the budget. It is one of the best, if not the best, budgets I have seen since I have been in Washington. It preserves and protects Social Security. It locks away every penny—\$2.6 trillion goes right into the lockbox for Social Security. We cannot touch it for anything else. There will be no more Government greedy hands in there borrowing the money and using it for something else.

In addition, the President talks about making those dollars in Social Security go further.

With Medicare, it is the same thing. It spends every dime for Medicare. That is what it is gathered for and col-

lected for, and that is what it should be spent for. It passes it on.

I have spent a year looking at the prescription drug issue. It can be done without hurting the program's solvency. We can provide help for our senior citizens who need prescription drugs. They deserve it and are going to get that help under this budget.

Finally, faith-based initiatives are somewhat of a controversial matter. It is not controversial to me. I think the President made it very clear last night. Faith-based proposals can get the job done. There are so many people out there working in various charitable organizations, whether they be religious or not. They are trying to do a job. We are not picking sides. The President is simply saying why not help all of these good-hearted Americans who are working and doing a wonderful job to restore and heal the lives of men and women in need? They can do it better than any Federal Government program. They can do it better than any bureaucrat in Washington, and they are doing it OK. God bless them. If you have ever been out to see what they do, your heart goes out to them. In spite of everything, they are out there day in and day out begging for more money. We need a chance to provide the dollars to these folks who can get people back on track and be productive again.

Billy Graham once said that our basic problems today are not social problems; it is not a lack of education. The problems are the problems of the human heart, a heart that is not right to God. These organizations recognize that God has the power to change lives and heal wounds and instill an inner drive in people so they have tools to change destructive behavior.

Faith-based organizations provide needed community services. This is a nation under God. We are not supposed to take God out of our Government. We are just not supposed to have a state-sponsored church. Sometimes we forget that. Why not help these people? President Bush does. He took it head on. He knew he was going to get hit for it. But he is doing it anyway. That is leadership. Faith-based organizations are very effective, and they are going to get help. That is why I support President Bush's plan.

Let me close with this point: Under this budget, we pay back \$2 trillion of the national debt over the next 10 years. We provide \$1.6 trillion to go back into the pockets of the people from whom we took it. And we do all of these things that I mentioned. I haven't even gotten started with the things I could have added to the list. That is a good budget.

I tell you, ladies and gentlemen, that is leadership. When you step up to the plate and take on something such as that, that is leadership. President Bush deserves a lot of credit for coming up here last night and laying that out in a concise and clear way and not being afraid to take on these tough challenges.

I sincerely hope my colleagues will act quickly to pass this budget so the country will be the beneficiary of it.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee is recognized.

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I understand we are in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. That is correct.

#### DALE EARNHARDT

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to an American legend, a workingman who rose from his roots to the very top of his profession, indeed, to the top of the world, the racing world, that is. And that is why we loved him.

As all legends, he was the best at what he did. He was the greatest race car driver in the history of NASCAR and perhaps the greatest driver who ever lived.

With an uncanny feel for his car in a take-no-prisoners attitude on the track, he brought millions and millions of fans into the sport. That is why we loved him.

He was the people's champ, the last cowboy, iron head, the intimidator, but most of all and most appealing about him was that he was funny and warm. He was like us. He was human. He was accessible. And that is why we loved him.

But Dale Earnhardt was much, much more. When a young fan was dying of cancer, Dale spent 15 minutes on the phone with him and flatly rejected any attempt to publicize it. When a local pastor came around seeking donations to pave the parking lot in his church, Dale wrote out a check for the full amount on the condition that the pastor never reveal that all the money came from one person, and especially not who that person was. He routinely aided high school bands and church groups and once gave John Andretti a motor so he could qualify.

When the wife of the doctor who tended drivers injured at the track had to travel across the country, leaving his pregnant wife behind, Dale called to make sure she was all right, and then sent two men with a pickup to the mountain retreat where they lived just in case she needed a fast trip to the hospital.

His favorite charity, one that is familiar to many of us, was the Make a Wish Foundation—perhaps because he knew what true magic was all about.

Describing the tough racer with the tender heart, one NASCAR publicist said: He'd do nothing for you on the track but anything for you off it. That is why we loved him.

As we all know, Dale Earnhardt died a week from last Sunday on the final lap of the Daytona 500 doing what he did best—racing for victory. Victory alluded him but death did not. After 281 finishes in the top 5, 428 in the top 10, and 76 wins, including 9 at the world's fastest half mile in Bristol, TN, where, by the way, he was also Rookie of the

Year in 1979. Dale Earnhardt passed from living to legend. His death—like his life—transcended his sport.

To the hundreds, indeed, the thousands who knew him—and the millions who did not—he was John Wayne, Humphrey Bogart, and James Dean all rolled into one. He was a husband, a father, a mentor, and a friend. But most of all, he was like America—caring, big-hearted, open, and free. And that is why we loved him.

#### PRESIDENT BUSH'S ADDRESS TO CONGRESS AND HIS BUDGET

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I rise, just for a few minutes, to comment on the President's address last night and the budget that he has sent to the Congress. It, indeed, represents a new beginning, a new start, a cause for hope, a cause for optimism that is reflected in the benefits and the advantages for every family in Tennessee, as well as across the United States of America.

The budget does set a roadmap, a blueprint, as we look to the future, as we look to next year, the next 5 years, and the next 10 years. Very clearly, the President's budget does three things: No. 1, it funds America's priorities, as we have debated in campaigns over the last 6 to 8 months and debated on the floor of the Senate over the past couple years. It funds the largest debt reduction in not just the history of the United States but the history of the world. And it provides fair and responsible tax relief.

First and foremost, I believe it pays off historic amounts of debt. It provides absolutely the fastest and largest debt reduction ever seen in history—\$2 trillion over a 10-year period.

Secondly, it funds many programs that we are currently discussing and debating, and programs that we are putting together, investing in individual families, in children, in youth, in health care, and in education. It strengthens education. It allows the opportunity to modernize education. And as has been pointed out on the floor, it offers the largest spending increase of any Federal department—over 11 percent. It triples funding for children's reading programs.

In the field of health care—and the President mentioned it last night in his address—he looks in the direction of the uninsured. There are about 42, 43 million people uninsured. He addresses the uninsured by, on the one hand, saying, yes, we need to further invest in the National Institutes of Health, and continues that doubling, but he also mentioned 1,200 new community health centers that will be there tomorrow for people who are uninsured, who depend on those community health centers for their health care. That makes health care more accessible for all.

He talked about refundable tax credits, again, to lower that barrier which stands between many people, and having the appropriate access to an insurance policy that will be there for acute

care and chronic care and preventive care.

Thirdly, the President spoke loudly and clearly when he said now is the time we can take advantage of a surplus that has been generated by hard-working men and women and families out there, a surplus that reflects their dollars, their hard work.

Now is the time for responsible tax relief—using roughly one-fourth of the budget surplus—to provide the typical family of four paying income taxes as much as \$1,600 of tax relief, a 50-percent tax cut for that typical family of four making \$50,000.

I thought last night was a time when we had the opportunity to talk about the hopes and dreams in an optimistic way, with a new beginning for every family. I do want to underscore the privilege and opportunity I have of working on the Budget Committee of the Senate, where we will go into further detail over the next several days as this budget is laid out before us. It is a new beginning with the President of the United States.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Tennessee for talking about the President's budget plan. I, too, am very pleased that President Bush is keeping the promises he made to the American people when he was elected President of the United States. Congress is going to work with the President to make sure we have the balanced and responsible approach he has requested of Congress to work with him.

Let's talk about the balance that is in this plan. We have a \$5.6 trillion surplus. The first and foremost responsibility we have with this surplus is to protect Social Security. That is exactly what we do. We will protect Social Security by keeping all of the Social Security part of the surplus in the Social Security fund.

Secondly, we are going to spend more money for high-priority items. The President has outlined the high-priority items he considers are No. 1 issues facing America today—No. 1, No. 2, and No. 3: Public education, national defense, and prescription drug benefits for our senior citizens.

There is no question that many people believe they cannot afford the drugs they have to take to stay healthy. That is not a choice people should have to make. We want to make sure they do have the fundamental prescription drugs they need at a price they can afford. So we will have to spend more money in that area.

National security is the major responsibility of the U.S. Government. States and individuals cannot protect themselves from wars or from an incoming ballistic missile. We must do that with all of the States contributing to our country and our Federal Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marines.

So we have to make sure our men and women in the military have the

health care, the educational benefits for themselves and their children, and the pay they deserve. These are the people on the front line. These are the people stepping up to the plate to protect our freedom—our freedom to talk on the floor today, our freedom to go to a playground and have safety on that playground. These are the people on the front line doing it. We are going to treat them well.

Of course, we must have a public education system that allows every child to reach his or her full potential with a public education. We want no child in our country to be left behind. If we can get the resources to these children at the earliest levels, where they have basic reading skills in the third grade, where they have the ability to do simple basic math in the fourth grade, then we will give them the tools they need to be able to learn algebra and calculus and the more complicated math and science and reading opportunities they must be able to address. So we are going to fund those priorities at a higher level.

We are going to pay down the debt at the greatest rate we can. We cannot pay down the debt fully because people would not be able to invest in Treasuries. We want that very safe investment for our people. And we want to invest for the United States. We want our Government money to earn interest. We don't want it to sit there. We will have some debt, but all of the outside-owned debt is going to be paid down, \$2 trillion over the next 10 years.

Last, but certainly not least, we are going to give tax relief to every American. Every American who is working will get tax relief under the plan put forward last night by President Bush. We are going to simplify the tax system. We have a five-rate structure today: a 15-percent bracket, a 28-percent bracket, a 31-percent bracket, a 36-percent bracket, and a 39.6-percent bracket. We want to lower all of those rates and only have four: a 10, 15, 25, and a 33.

I thought the President said it very well last night. He thinks anyone in the 15-percent bracket should pay no more than 10 percent of his or her income to the Federal Government. As well, we don't think any American should pay more than one-third of what they make to the Federal Government, so the top bracket would be 33 percent.

What does that mean in real terms? It means that one in five taxpaying families with children will no longer pay any income tax at all. It will completely remove 6 million American families from the tax rolls. A family of four making \$35,000 would get a 100-percent Federal income tax cut—off the rolls. A family of four that makes \$50,000 would receive a 50-percent tax cut, receiving approximately \$1,600 in relief. A family of four making \$75,000 will receive a 25-percent tax cut. We are going to give real relief to every working American.