

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS
SET TO PASS THE PRESIDENT'S
ECONOMIC PLAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ISSA). Pursuant to the order of the House of January 7, 2003, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. WELLER) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. WELLER. Mr. Speaker, I want to take a moment as I begin my remarks and talk about an issue that is so important. I first begin by commending President Bush for his strong leadership on the economy. While so much of our Nation's attention, in fact attention around the globe, has been focused on President Bush's successful leadership as well as the successful efforts of our American men and women to liberate the oppressed people of Iraq from the brutality of Saddam Hussein, President Bush and House Republicans have been working to get this economy moving again. It is so important that we focus attention today on the economy. Today we are going to have action in the House Committee on Ways and Means to create jobs and give Americans the opportunity to go back to work.

Let me tell you why it is important to the people of Illinois. In Illinois we have 6.6 percent unemployment. Unfortunately in the district that I represent, an agricultural-industrial district in the south suburbs of Chicago, our unemployment is actually higher. Grundy County, the county that is my home county, has almost 12 percent unemployment; LaSalle has 9.8 percent unemployment; Will County has 7.9 percent unemployment; Bureau, 8.7; Kankakee, 8.5 percent. Clearly we need to get the economy moving again because it affects folks back home. The philosophy of what we are going to pursue today is following the direction the President laid out for us earlier as we work to get this economy moving again, creating jobs, giving those who are unemployed the opportunity to get a good-paying job and go back to work. Our strategy is to put extra money in the pocketbooks of workers so they can meet their families' needs and raise their take-home pay by cutting their individual taxes. We want to give business the incentive to invest in the creation of jobs.

Economists have analyzed the plan that is before us today and they project that the plan that we will be debating and passing out of the Committee on Ways and Means and hopefully out of the House this week with bipartisan support will create 1 million jobs over the next 16 months. Two-thirds of this package benefits individual taxpayers. In fact, if you pay Federal income taxes, you benefit. We double the child tax credit, from \$600 to \$1,000. That benefits 1.1 million families with children in Illinois. We eliminate effective immediately the marriage tax penalty. We make effective immediately the Bush individual rate reductions and expand the lowest tax bracket for low-in-

come Americans so more low-income Americans will have their taxes lowered in that new 10 percent tax bracket created for low-income Americans. I note that we also provide additional alternative minimum tax relief, one of the consequences of a bad policy we are still living with from the 1980s. The bottom line is two-thirds of this package benefits average taxpayers, putting extra money in the pocketbooks of workers for their families' needs.

We also jump-start the economy by providing incentives for business to invest, providing for what some people call bonus depreciation, that others like myself call accelerated depreciation, but allowing business to deduct at least 50 percent or more this year of the cost of buying a company car, an office computer, telecommunications or machine tool equipment, or if they are making their office or business more secure, investing in security and equipment, they would be able to recover the cost of that much more quickly. When you think about it, when you encourage a business to buy a company car, there is an autoworker in Chicago or the south suburbs whose job is created. We also allow companies losing money this year to go back and recover some revenue and capital from previous years so they have capital to invest in the creation of jobs.

And due to the President's leadership, we work to provide assistance and relief for those who invest for their retirement. Today, 84 million taxpayers are stockholders. That is over half of American households. Many are senior citizens who have saved for their retirement. Today they are taxed twice on their dividends from their stock holdings. That is not right. It is not fair. I realize my Democratic friends think that is okay because they want to keep the money here in Washington and they think they can spend it better than these stockholders can. The President says we should eliminate that double taxation. We make a big step with the proposal before us today by equalizing the tax treatment between capital gains and stock dividends. Those in the 10 and 15 percent bracket will only pay a 5 percent tax rate. Those in the higher brackets will pay 15. This is a good plan. It puts extra money in the pocketbooks of consumers as well as encourages businesses to invest.

I want to draw attention to one issue which I have been so involved in, which is a key part of the plan that is going to be debated and passed out of the Committee on Ways and Means today, and that is the issue of the marriage tax penalty. There are 42 million married working couples, like Jose and Magdalena Castillo of Joliet, Illinois, two laborers, and, of course, their children Eduardo and Carolina. They live in Joliet, Illinois. They work hard for their living. They benefit from this plan today. When we worked 2 years ago to pass legislation to eliminate the marriage tax penalty because of the

rules in the other body, we had to phase it in. Today we are going to pass legislation to make marriage tax penalty relief effective this year. It is wrong to tax marriage. We benefit the Castillo family by eliminating the marriage tax penalty this year. When you think about it, that is \$1,400 they can spend in Joliet, Illinois.

ANOTHER VIEW OF THE
PRESIDENT'S ECONOMIC PLAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 7, 2003, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, recently President Bush traveled to my home State of Ohio to sell his tax cuts. He went to a manufacturing company of I believe the largest Republican contributor in Ohio to extol the value of his tax cuts. He met with the executives of that company who will enjoy large tax cuts. He did not talk specifically about what individual workers who make 20 and 30 and 40 and \$50,000 a year will get, but understand as the President came to Ohio and talked about this tax cut, his 500-plus-billion-dollar tax cut, that half of that tax cut will go to people whose average income is \$968,000 a year. So half of that tax cut will go to people who on the average make about \$1 million a year.

The President now has shifted from talking about the tax cut because that has fallen on deaf ears, even on the ears of a Republican Senator in Ohio who has said "no" to this tax cut, thinking it throws the budget way out of balance, thinking that the tax cuts go far too much to the wealthiest citizens and not enough to middle-income Americans. The President now has shifted his talk to talk about jobs, saying that the Bush economic plan is not so much about tax cuts but is about job creation. What he does not say is since he took office, we have lost 2.6 million jobs in this country, most of them manufacturing jobs. We have lost manufacturing jobs literally every single month of the Bush presidency, something that has never happened since we have been keeping records on those kinds of things. There has been negative economic growth and negative economic job activity since the President has taken office. That has not happened in the last 50 years. At the same time the President's similar kind of tax cut which passed his first year in office is not paying the kind of benefits that he hoped. He 2 years ago asked Congress, asked the American people for a similar economic package to the one he asks for today. Yet today he is asking for it again even though we have lost 2.6 million jobs and we have lost manufacturing jobs in this country every single month since the President took office. The President wants to give tax cuts to the wealthiest citizens in this country, leaving a few hundred dollars for people making 40 or 50 or 60