

business is the job engine of America, creating two out of three new jobs in our Nation. While consumer spending has grown over the last 2 years, total business investment has declined for 8 consecutive quarters. We must reverse this trend.

Mr. Speaker, we cannot have capitalism without capital. Small business needs greater access to capital. Under the Republican jobs and growth package, 23 million small businesses in America would face a simpler, fairer Tax Code. They will benefit from a reduction in marginal income tax rates; they will face lower capital gains and dividend taxes; they can increase the amount of plant and equipment they can expense, all of which will allow them to grow their businesses and hire new workers.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 2 will indeed create new jobs and jump-start the economy. I urge all of my colleagues to support the Jobs and Growth Act and do the right thing for our economy and do the right thing for our American families.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. NORTON addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

HONORING HILL T.O.P.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. WICKER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend a group of remarkable volunteers in my district call Hill T.O.P., which stands for Tupelo Outreach Project.

Conceived by the head of the local FBI field office in Tupelo, Mississippi, Hill T.O.P.'s mission is to meet the physical, spiritual, emotional, and social needs of the people of Tupelo and Lee counties.

Since its formation in 1995, Hill T.O.P. has quickly grown into one of the preeminent youth outreach ministries in the region. Just a few weeks ago, the annual event had teenage workers and adult supervisors at 57 different sites, helping needy families with yard work, clean up, painting, and minor home repairs.

With the idea that "mission work begins at home," the organization started by FBI agent Mark Denham, truly embodies the finest principles of the Golden Rule and the biblical admonition to love thy neighbor as thyself.

Once a year, Hill T.O.P. seeks to provide what may seem simple services to dozens of elderly and less fortunate families in and around Lee County, such as painting a fence or raking a yard. To the recipients, these services would otherwise be financially or physically impossible.

This ministry is a wonderful example of the kind of commitment to community service that, I am proud to say, is evidenced throughout my home State of Mississippi. The work performed by Hill T.O.P. participants, youth and adults, demonstrates the strong volunteer spirit and Judeo-Christian values which lead so many Mississippians and Americans to become involved in activities to help friends and neighbors in need.

The organization's simple focus over the past 9 years has been on team work and serving God. This is probably one of the main reasons Hill T.O.P. continues to attract more enthusiastic volunteers each year. When Hill T.O.P. was started in 1995, Mr. Speaker, volunteers numbered 75 youths, and the group helped eight local families. This year's events included 347 volunteers working on 57 different projects. The volunteers came from different religious denominations, social backgrounds, and races, with more than 35 church youth groups being involved.

Everything Hill T.O.P. contributes to the community is the result of a massive outpouring of generosity and a volunteer spirit which is quite alive and well in our society. Professionals give of their time. Donations come from the wealthy and not-so-wealthy alike. Civic clubs and other organizations provide food, and the list goes on.

Mr. Speaker, this is an editorial about Hill T.O.P., which appeared in the April 25, 2003, edition of the Northeast Mississippi Daily Journal.

The editorial calls the efforts "an amazing pooling of the local volunteerism, inter-church cooperation, and efficient organization."

Mr. Speaker, the editorial reads as follows:

[From the Northeast Mississippi Daily Journal, Apr. 26, 2003]

AT THE HILL T.O.P.—AMAZING VOLUNTEER DAYS ACCOMPLISH GREAT THINGS

The unusual number of home repair projects visible to passersby today and Sunday in Tupelo and Lee County grows from the work of more than 400 volunteers involved in Hill T.O.P.—Tupelo Outreach Project.

The annual weekend of building, painting, cleaning, repairing, roofing and other chores places kids and adult supervisors at 57 sites. The work for people physically or financially unable to do it themselves can be as simple as raking yards and as complex as rebuilding porches or installing handicap access ramps.

The project started in one congregation. Now, it involves dozens who share a common understanding that service to others is at the heart of Christian discipleship.

Everything about the weekend is provided without cost to the people given help. Tools and materials used in the weekend are mostly donated, and they are stored in a warehouse funded by the Carpenter Foundation, a major funding source for many philanthropic enterprises in the greater Tupelo area. Many of the adult volunteers bring to the weekend a lifetime of professional skills in engineering, home-building, landscaping, administration, the arts, education, and the health sciences. All their labor and knowledge is freely given.

Behind the scenes, volunteers from many congregations pool their time and talent to

provide food for most meals and snacks for each shift of workers. Outback Steakhouse continues its amazing record of corporate generosity with donation of the Saturday night meals.

Ecumenical worship services sustain the inspiration for the weekend.

The event also has strong support from many civic clubs, Tupelo's banking community, and individuals who make donations. All in all, it is an amazing pooling of local volunteerism, inter-church cooperation, and efficient organization.

Volunteers range from kids in their second decades to seniors in their ninth decade.

Mark Denham is the volunteer director, and Bill Dickson is his chief assistant. The two accomplish in one Hill T.O.P. weekend what some would consider the feat of a lifetime.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate my friend, FBI agent Mark Denham, for his vision and leadership, and I commend the citizen volunteers of Hill T.O.P. for truly making a difference in the lives of their neighbors.

TAX CUT HURTS MIDDLE-INCOME AMERICANS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Maine (Mr. ALLEN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to discuss the proposed Republican tax cut that will be on the floor tomorrow, and I speak tonight because I know that the majority will not give us the kind of time to debate the issue tonight that the subject deserves.

I want to begin by just saying for anyone in the country trying to follow this debate, it is bound to be confusing and the question would have to arise, What is going on? I hate to say it, but I am afraid there is a good deal of deception in the arguments that are being made to promote this particular tax cut. For example, when the President spoke on April 15, he said that American workers and American businesses need every bit of their tax relief now. He said, a significant part of the benefit from his tax cut package would come within the first 2 years of the plan. He wanted to give Americans, he said, immediate tax relief.

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When we look at the facts, only 6 percent of the tax cuts in the President's package would occur in the current fiscal year which ends September 30. Only 21 percent of the tax cuts would occur by the end of fiscal year 2004.

The White House has also released a fact sheet which says that under the President's proposal to speed up tax relief 92 million American taxpayers would receive, key words, on average a tax cut of \$1,083 in 2003. Once again, the averages do not speak the truth. Eighty percent of the American taxpayers would get less than the average of \$1,000. Forty-nine percent of the American taxpayers would receive a tax cut of less than \$100.

So what is really going on here? It is very clear. If we look at what the Republican majority does and not what

they say, the goal is to reduce taxes on the wealthiest people in this country. The goal is to push the burden of funding government from the Federal level onto the States, and this is driven by an astonishing and remarkable continuing hostility to everything that the Federal Government does.

Let us look at our brothers in the States. Almost every State in this country is struggling with trying to fulfill their responsibilities. They are under pressures to raise property taxes and sales taxes because of reductions in Federal funds. We are not talking about a tax cut at the Federal level. We are talking about a tax shift. They are reducing funding for education, reducing funding for Medicaid, laying off State employees.

There is no way, furthermore, that we can call this tax cut fair by any stretch of the imagination. To take one more figure, one group of Americans will get tax cuts that total \$139 billion. That group of American taxpayers are the 183 households that earn more than \$1 million per year. Another group of Americans will get a total package of \$139 billion, but that group is 124 million American households, the bottom 89 percent of our taxpayers, but that is not the worst.

People will come to this floor and they will say we are going to let people keep more of their money. It is not their money. Every single dollar that is going to be given back in tax cuts under the Republican proposal, every single dollar will be borrowed from the American people, and we, the American people, will wind up if this tax cut passes tomorrow with an additional Federal debt of somewhere between \$550 billion on the low side to well over \$1 trillion on the upside. This is our children's money that is being taken from them to give to the wealthiest people in the country, and it is an outrage.

This will also, for obvious reasons, drive up the debt. We have people coming to this floor and saying, well, these tax cuts will stimulate economic growth and they will try to leave us with the impression that there will be even more Federal revenues coming in. It is not true. By every economic model that the Congressional Budget Office has run, there is a dramatic decline in Federal revenues. We are looking, when we add up the 2001 tax legislation, other Bush administration tax proposals, when we package it all together, we are looking at a reduction in Federal revenues over 10 years of \$4.6 trillion.

This plan is a disaster for our States, for working Americans. It is a violation of the fundamental premise that we will work together in this country to build a better and stronger America. This plan, this Republican tax cut plan, is a disaster for the country.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GINGREY). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana

(Mr. PENCE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. PENCE addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. SOUDER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. SOUDER addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Ms. CARSON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. CARSON of Indiana addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

PRESCRIPTION DRUG PLAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. GUTKNECHT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GUTKNECHT. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to talk about an issue that I have talked about on this House floor before, and that is the high cost of prescription drugs here in the United States compared to the rest of the industrialized world, but before I do I want to just come back to something my colleague just was talking about in terms of the tax relief.

I am going to support the tax relief package because I understand that there are only three things people can do with their money. One is they can spend it. Two, they can save it, or three, they can send it to the government in the form of taxes. They can only spend it, save it or pay taxes. That is the only three things people can do, and we know that when the economy is soft, at least most of us believe, that if we allow people to keep their own money, that will grow the economy faster than having them send it into the Federal Government.

I want to talk about something else tonight because cutting taxes is not the only way that we can help the economy, and on this first chart I say if we want to allow Americans to keep and spend over \$600 billion during the next 10 years, here is a good place to start.

We have got the picture of some prescription drug containers. That is right, according to the Congressional Budget Office, the CBO, American seniors will spend over \$1.8 trillion on prescription drugs over the next 10 years. A conservative estimate would be that we could save 35 percent by allowing free markets to work. Thirty-five percent of \$1.8 trillion equates to \$630 billion. Now, if my colleagues doubt that, just look at this chart, and this chart is available on my Web site at gil.house.gov, and just check the number for yourself, but let me pull out a few of these.

A common drug we all know about is Cipro. It is made by a German company named Bayer. They also make aspirin. Cipro in the United States, it sells for \$87.99. This is according to the Life Extension Foundation, but on average, last year, Cipro sold in the United States, a 30-day supply, for about \$87.99. The average price in Canada for those same drugs, \$53.55 and in Europe, \$40.75, less than half the price in Europe for the same drug.

Let us look at GLUCOPHAGE, a very commonly prescribed drug for diabetes, in many respects a miracle drug. In the United States, average price for 30-day supply, \$124.65. That same drug sells in Canada for \$26.47, and in Europe the average price is \$22.

We go on down the list, we look at drugs like Premarin, Premarin in the United States, \$55; in Europe, \$8.95. Zocor, very commonly prescribed drug, today \$123 in the United States; \$28 in Europe. Do the arithmetic. I think we are being very conservative.

At the bottom of this chart I have something from one of my favorite Presidents, President Ronald Reagan. He said, "Markets are more powerful than armies."

Tax cuts are great, but if we want to help seniors lower prescription drug prices and allow Americans to keep and spend \$630 billion of their money, let us open markets now. Americans deserve world class drugs at world market prices.

I was in Germany not too long ago, and we actually bought some drugs. This is a very commonly prescribed, a very effective drug against women's breast cancer. This drug was bought at the Munich airport pharmacy for \$59.05 American. This same box of drugs bought here in Washington, D.C., sells for \$366. What makes matters worse, this drug was developed, almost all of the research expenses were paid for by the American taxpayers. I think Americans ought to pay their fair share for the price of research and development for all of these miracle drugs. I think most Americans believe that, but we should not be required to subsidize the starving Swiss.

The time has come to open up markets, to give Americans access to world class drugs at world class prices. We can do that in the next several weeks. I need my colleagues' help. Let us all work together to make certain that Americans have access to those drugs at prices that they can afford.

BILL OF RIGHTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Hawaii (Mr. CASE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CASE. Mr. Speaker, our Federal budget and taxes are heavy on all of our minds tonight, but I stand today in defense of that most basic expression of our fundamental freedoms, our Bill of Rights, and I rise in doing so with incredible pride in my State of Hawaii,