

should not come first. The Republican Party should not come over the interests of the country. All we are saying is that the Republican majority has had control of this Chamber since 1994. They control the Senate, and they control the White House. They pull all the levers of government. Whether it is emergency management, failure; poverty rates, up; tuition rates, doubled; health care costs, up 15 to 20 percent a year. The Republicans take public tax dollars and give it away in corporate welfare. Mr. Speaker, \$16 billion in public tax money went to the oil companies and the energy companies and subsidies, and \$700 billion in the medicare prescription drug bill.

Now, the Democratic Party wants to lead, and we want to lead and put the interests of the country before what is necessarily best for the Democratic Party. And here is a great example:

In 1993, when we were running huge deficits, the Democratic-controlled House, the Democratic-controlled Senate, and President Clinton passed a balanced budget bill that led, without one Republican vote, that led to the greatest economic expansion in the history of the United States of America. And it was not popular and it was not fun, and many Democrats lost their seats over it. But you know what? You have got to balance your budget. And someone, more than one person was a statesman to make that decision. You put the interests of the country before your own personal political interests and that of your party. That is what we want to do. That is what the Democrats want to do. We want to take this country into another direction and change what is going on here.

Let me tell you what we will do when we are in charge. One is, we will redo the prescription drug bill. We will go and we will allow for reimportation of prescription drugs from Canada that will drive down the costs which will save the taxpayer billions of dollars over the next few years. We will go back and we will put in the medicare prescription drug bill a provision that allows the Secretary of Health and Human Services to negotiate on behalf of the medicare recipients and on behalf of the taxpayer to Merck and Pfizer, and they will negotiate down the cost of drugs. Some people project that savings could be 20 to 30 percent. Twenty to 30 percent of \$700 billion is 140 to \$210 billion. We would take those savings and we would invest it into the American people.

We would also take the \$16 billion that we have given to oil companies and we will add that into the mix. Now, notice I did not say one time we want to raise taxes. We will take that money and we will invest it into programs that will lead to economic growth.

One, we will have a plan that will create a million engineers and scientists in the next 10 years. We are getting our clock cleaned by China and India. Last year China graduated 600,000 engineers, India graduated

350,000, the U.S. graduated 70,000. Half the foreign-born will eventually move back to their home country. The Democrats have a proposal to take those savings and invest it into education. We will reduce the cost of college tuition by investing that money. We will make sure that there is a clinic and a nurse in every single school in the country so that our kids are healthy, because if we do not have healthy students, we cannot have educated students, and if we do not have educated students, we cannot have a strong economy, and that is the bottom line.

The Democrats will invest in magnetic levitation trains, the hottest train technology going right now. There is only one in the world. It is in Shanghai. I was on it when I was over in China. Mr. Speaker, 270 miles an hour we are going down the pike, and I am holding a cup of coffee and it did not spill. It is the latest train technology, it is a jobs program, it is good for the environment, and it reduces our dependence on foreign oil.

The Democrats will take the savings from that money and we will invest it into preventive health care. We will make sure that we are doing for the American people what we are doing for the Iraqis, and that is allow them to go to a clinic when they have a cold instead of walking into an emergency room with pneumonia.

Mr. Speaker, we want to spend less money in the end, but it means putting it up front first for prevention. And we will start an Apollo program for an alternative energy source, so that these engineers and scientists that we create will be able to eventually reduce our dependence on foreign oil so that not one more American life has to be lost defending our right to go and get oil so that we can drive SUVs.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman is so right. As we close out, I just want to reiterate that this is about competence. It is about who do you trust. It is going to be next year asking the American people to give us the opportunity to take this country in a new direction, to end the culture of corruption, to end the cronyism, to invest the kind of resources that we need to make sure that the middle class can be thriving and vibrant, and to make sure that we have a disaster response system in place that is responsive, that meets the needs of people, and that does not leave them twisting in the wind as my constituents are right now, who are without gas and without water, where a hospital in my own district is not able to continue to take care of people because their employees do not have enough gas to get to work. Those are basic needs.

We want to thank the Democratic leader for giving us an opportunity to come on this floor tonight and for creating the 30-something Working Group. I know Mr. RYAN wants to give people the Web site where they can contact us.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MEEK) who is down in Florida with his constituents. Send us an e-mail to 30somethingdems@mail.house.gov. Send us an e-mail, let us know your thoughts. We want to take this country in a new direction, change the way we are going, and put the country before the party.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, I want to let my constituents know that I am coming home tonight and looking forward to having the opportunity of helping them to get through the aftermath of Hurricane Wilma.

PROGRESS IN THE WAR ON TERROR

(Ms. FOXX asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I am proud of the great deal of progress being made on our global war on terror. While there is no quick path to victory, it is absolutely necessary for us to maintain our resolve. Terrorists have long waged war against the United States, well before the September 11 attacks. Americans were bombed in Lebanon in 1983, at the World Trade Center in 1993, at Khobar Towers in Saudi Arabia in 1996, at the American embassies in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998, and on board the USS *Cole* in 2000.

Over the years, these terrorists have attacked and attacked and attacked, thinking they could kill innocent Americans without paying a price. I am proud of President Bush and our troops for standing up to these murderers and showing them we will not sit back and tolerate this behavior.

Conditions in the Middle East are improving. Despite the terrorists' plans to disrupt democracy in Iraq, millions of Iraqi people embraced democracy by turning out to vote for a new Constitution. In addition, the Iraqi security forces are taking a much more prominent role in defending their country.

Mr. Speaker, I hope that Americans will continue to support our troops. They are doing the right thing because they are making the world a safer place.

A NEW DIRECTION FOR U.S. IMMIGRATION POLICY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. FOXX). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. POE. Madam Speaker, a nation that cannot defend its borders against an illegal invasion is a nation without national sovereignty.

Madam Speaker, rhetoric rules the day when it comes to immigration. A lot of people with self-promoting agendas do a lot of talking. They have hidden motives that range from political