

growing. There are more people moving into that middle class in Mexico, and that is in large part because of the trade relationship between the United States and Mexico and the elimination of tariff and non-tariff barriers that are taking place within the region with things like passage of the Central American Free Trade Agreement.

Mr. Speaker, as you look at the challenges that we have here at home, it really sickens me that people mischaracterize the positive things that have taken place. I do not diminish the problems that we have in any way. I do not diminish them at all. But I will say that we do have a lot that needs to be done, but we also have a lot of great things that have been done. It is imperative that, as we deal with these challenges that are out there, that we do not in fact eliminate the very positive steps that have been taken to see us have the success that we are enjoying in the global war on terror, see us enjoy the kind of prosperity that is enjoyed across the United States of America.

With that, Mr. Speaker, let me say that I look forward anxiously to our passage of the Deficit Reduction Act next week, and I hope the Democrats will join with us in that goal.

30-SOMETHING WORKING GROUP

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DENT). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MEEK) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, we want to thank the democratic leadership for allowing us to be here and for this hour, and we want to continue talking about the issues that we were talking about in the hour before the last one, the issues that are facing Americans. As you know, within our working group we talk about what we are doing and what the other side is doing or not doing and how we want to put this country and build a partnership, put it on a new direction. The only way we will be able to do that is making sure that we are able to get some of the ideas on this side of the aisle to the forefront, make sure that we work in a bipartisan way.

Mr. Speaker, with all due respect, I must say that that is not happening right now on a lot of the major issues, issues that are facing everyday Americans, issues as it relates to the budget that is coming to this floor next week. I can tell you that this so-called budget was put together on the backs of everyday working Americans. Some may say that it was in light of making sure that we can respond to Hurricane Katrina and the gulf coast, but cutting the very assistance that these individuals need is almost like saying I am going to take \$5 out of this pocket and then I am going to try to put it, the same \$5 I took out of your pocket, and put it in your left pocket and we are done. That is not good enough.

I think it is very, very important to also be mindful of the fact: If the job is so good here in Congress, if we are doing everything that we are supposed to do as it relates to the American people and they feel so good about the economy, they feel so good about security, they feel so good about health care, they feel so good about the environment, then why do American people, poll after poll polls this Congress at a 35 percent approval rating? Thirty-five percent.

I mean, if I was to call down to my district and they were to take a poll on how they felt about me and it was 35 percent, that means that I need to start doing something right for me to be reelected to this Congress.

So when we start, our friends on the opposite side of the side come in and say, well, we are doing a great job and I do not know what the problem, and folks are saying that we are not, and I hope our friends on the other side starts to join us. I can tell you right now, I do not want to join anything where the American people feel that you are doing a great job by 35 percent. That is not a team I want to be on.

If I am going to go join a team or be a part of something, I am going to be a part of a winning team. I am going to be a part of a team that is going to make sure that we stand up on behalf of everyday Americans, that makes sure that we do not have States out there with over \$85 billion in deficits, deficits that they have to clear up, they have to balance, unlike this Congress.

Mr. Speaker, I want to remind the Members, last night I brought this chart out and I just want to remind once again, because I want to make sure that Members understand, American people understand, Mr. Speaker, this is not the doing of the Democrats. This is the doing of the Republican majority. Forty-two Presidents. Forty-two. And this is from the U.S. Department of Treasury. This is not the Kendrick Meek Report. U.S. Department of Treasury of the United States of America, in case anyone gets confused. Forty-two Presidents, all the way from the Whig Party before we had Republicans and Democrats. Since 1776 to the year 2000, Democrats and Republicans, Whig Party and other parties alike, 42 Presidents only borrowed \$1.01 trillion from foreign nations, from foreign countries. One, one President with the majority here in this House, Republican majority and in the Senate, has trumped 42 Presidents, 42 Presidents, \$1.05 trillion and counting.

□ 1315

So we bring to the floor the issues at hand. These issues are real, and it is the reality of America right now. And so when our friends on the other side start saying, I do not know what is going on, I have a job, I think everybody else does, I think everything is okay, somebody needs to go out and tell the American people that it is

okay, because they do not think it is okay.

Thirty-five percent of Americans feel that we are doing an okay job. What does that mean? That means a number of Americans feel that we are not doing the job that we are supposed to be doing, whatever that may be.

I just want to go back again, Mr. Speaker, in case a Member was walking around, had a phone call or something, did not quite understand. Forty-two Presidents, you name it, they are here, 1776 to 2000, 224 years, 224 years. In the 224 years, they did not borrow from foreign governments as much as one President and the majority Republicans here in this House have done.

The President did not do it on his own. 224 years, Mr. Speaker, World War I, World War II, Vietnam, Korea, other crises in the country, depressions, you name it. Things that my grandmother and my father told me about took place in the time of these 42 Presidents.

Under this one President, one majority, they helped us get to this number. So you know, the facts may hurt. The facts hurt. The facts hurt. The facts hurt when you sit down at the dining room table trying to figure out how you are going to get past this month dealing with the money that you are making.

Now, how are you going to get past this month? Those are hard facts. Well, the hard facts are, like it or not, it is not, you know, not the 30-something Working Group; it is not, you know, the Democrats. It is prepared and served by the majority here in this House, and the majority in the Senate and the White House; and that is a fact, Jack.

I do not care. You can go and use big words, you can go around, read reports that someone gave you that kind of paint the pot black with the fact that a lot of people out there use a lot of numbers, charts and graphs; but the bottom line is we are borrowing our country away to foreign nations.

Then we want to call a budget up on the backs of the very people that we say that we are trying to help

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. And the money we are borrowing, this is the ultimate irony of the whole deal, and this is why we say that I did not hear our friend, the gentleman from California (Mr. DREIER), when he was down here take responsibility for that. It was conspicuously absent from the argument.

The most ironic piece of this whole ordeal is that that money that we are borrowing from China and Saudi Arabia and Japan is going to fund \$16 billion in subsidies to the oil companies. That money that we are borrowing from China is going to subsidize the pharmaceutical industry to the tune of \$100 billion.

So the MO of the Republican majority is to go borrow money from the Chinese and take that money and give it to corporate America, and then go to corporate America and shake them

down, go out to shakedown street on K Street, shake down corporate America for campaign contributions to run the election, and the group that is absent here, the American people.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Our good friend, the gentleman from California (Mr. DREIER), was defending the Republican leadership's position here that they are committed to cutting the deficit, and that that is, you know, a major reason why next week they are going to rain down these horrendous terrible cuts in the budget on the people who are the most in need.

I was not very good at math when I was younger. But you know, the most simplistic mathematical calculation would tell you that if they are going to cut \$50 billion out of the budget next week, yet still provide \$70 billion worth of tax cuts, than I guess I just wonder how they are going to reduce the deficit when you are still adding \$20 billion to it.

I mean, and then that is to say nothing of the fact that when you cut the budget, you are doing nothing to reduce the deficit. That is just what is so mind-boggling.

I think if we can, I would like to translate, because words like deficit and reconciliation and big Washington-speak words like that are sometimes hard for regular folks in our districts to understand, so let us talk about what this reconciliation budget-cut document that we are going to take up next week, what it really means for people.

In the Agriculture Committee, they voted to cut \$844 million from the food stamp program, which would kick 300,000 families out of the program and leave 40,000 children ineligible for free school lunches. Now, that is not whining. That means a little boy or little girl is going to have a grumbly tummy day after day.

Do you know what it feels like? I know what it feels like to not have anything in my tummy. I do not have anything in my tummy right now. But I have the ability to go out and buy a sandwich. People who get free and reduced school lunches do not have that luxury.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. These are children. It goes beyond empty tummies. It goes down to kids prepared and ready to learn regardless of their economic background. It is not their fault. It is not their fault that they are in a poor household and they are eligible, eligible because the Federal Government has found, and an education committee and all of these folks came about during a time here in this Congress and said, you know, kids that are coming to school hungry, we cannot actually teach them in the way that we want to. They are thinking about food. We need them thinking about preparing themselves to become the next workforce here in America.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. The next entrepreneur, the next business person, the next person that is going to go out and

create wealth. And that is the whole thing with the Democrats. We are trying to convince the Republican Party that together America can do better for all of us.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Where is their moral outrage? Where are their morals? That is what I want to know. I am a mom. I have three little kids. The gentleman from Florida (Mr. MEEK) has two young children.

Can you imagine a circumstance where you would allow your children to go hungry if you could do something about it? Our role here as Members of Congress, we are supposed to look out for the people who cannot look out for themselves. That is what government is for.

Children are our most vulnerable citizens. Laws are written and government exists so that we can take care of kids because they cannot make their parents earn enough money to be able to pay for their breakfast and their lunch. That is where we come in. That is where government fills in for the individuals, society.

It is not fathomable to me. When I gave birth to my children, my life transformed overnight. Overnight. In a matter of hours. And my whole life became not about me any more, or my day-to-day needs; but about their day-to-day needs. That is why we are here, because we are supposed to be taking care of the needs of people who cannot do it for themselves.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. I think there is a tremendous, huge magnificent moral component to this that our friends who in many instances invoke their religion to pass legislation tend to forget when it is dealing with the poor in our society. They forget their religion. But there is also an economic argument here.

We talked in the last hour about the Chinese producing 600,000 engineers. And the country of India, producing 350,000 engineers, and the United States only producing 70,000 engineers. The reason the Democrats are fighting for the free and reduced lunch program and student loans and increased funding for Pell grants and Medicaid is because we need healthy educated kids so that they can go to college and become engineers and create wealth so that we can keep this great democracy alive.

This is not just a moral argument. It is. But it is not just a moral argument. This is an economic argument. Who do we suppose is going to come up with the next alternative energy source? Who do we suppose is going to come up with the next great invention that is going to lead to more manufacturing in the United States of America, if we are not educating everybody?

In our cities, my friends, when we have 75 percent of our kids who live in our cities living in poverty, they are never going to be on the economic playing field for us. And we need 11 on both sides of the ball, my good friend. We need linebackers and cornerbacks and strong safeties and linemen. We

need quarterbacks and running backs and tight ends. And when they only educate half, you are losing, you are walking onto the field with only half a team.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. I can tell the gentleman that when we start talking about what is happening here, and I think the problem here within the Beltway, the fact that we are here on this floor, or there is a report in the newspaper, whichever newspaper it may be, they do not know what they are talking about, because the majority sees everything in their world, everything is fine.

I am going to tell you the reason why we are here, Mr. Speaker, is Republicans permitted Democrats to offer only 4 percent of the amendments submitted to major legislation in the 108th Congress. And when this Congress is over, and we get the statistics on that, we will probably find the same. On prescription drugs, the energy bill and the tax bill, only 4 percent. So much for bipartisanship.

To shift the debate, for example, in the summer, the Republicans brought the consideration of amendments that drastically shaped three important measures before Congress. When you start looking at the issue of CAFTA, medical malpractice, and the Chinese trade, these amendments were not even allowed to be heard on the floor, or were limited and restricted. We are talking about bipartisanship. We talked about the Katrina Commission in the hour before last.

They do not want an independent commission like the 9/11 commission that the country was pleased with because it was bipartisan, and it was out of the reach of this Congress. They know the reason why we passed the 9/11 bill is because we had an independent 9/11 Commission that was able to have equal subpoena power, getting the facts.

Guess what? Democrats, Republicans, Independents, those who do not even vote in this country applauded it, the work that that entity, the 9/11 Commission, brought about. So to say that we have a partisan commission here in the House of Representatives does not serve the American people in the way that they should be served. We talked about that for months.

Right now I want to yield to you, because we do have a special guest here with us, and a great Member of this House. I want to you introduce him.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. I would like to introduce one of my mentors in Congress, the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. LARSON), an outstanding leader on a variety of issues, a recent Member of the Ways and Means Committee, a former quarterback at East Hartford High School.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, let me thank the gentlemen from Ohio (Mr. RYAN) for yielding me time and the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ) and her colleague, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MEEK) as well.

Mr. Speaker, you know, constituents back in my district have written us. And they have talked about listening to your voices, because truly you have struck a cord with America. More often than not, we go home and we hear from people, why are the Democrats not speaking out, or we do not seem to hear the Democratic message.

Well, frankly, in a one-party town, where the Presidency and all of the attendant agencies are controlled by the Republicans, where the House has been in control by the Republicans for more than a decade and where they control the Senate and are now putting a further ideological grip on the Supreme Court, it is in fact a one-party town.

As the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MEEK) pointed out, when Democrats even try to get an amendment put to the floor, the heavy-handed Republican majority makes sure that no issues of consequence are voted on in this Chamber.

Time and time again, the Democratic message is squelched. You have used the analogy, I have heard throughout, of football. And sometimes when people ask about the Democratic message, the best offense is a good defense.

□ 1330

What stands between this ownership society juggernaut of privatization that they want to foist on the American public is the gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI) and the Democratic party. However underfinanced, however squashed by the heavy-handed Republican majority, we continue to speak out in our only venue that we can, the public venue; and that is why people from my district have applauded the efforts that all of you have made.

You know, Roosevelt said it best of our colleagues, They are frozen in the ice of their own indifference. It is that indifference that troubles the American people. You have pointed out how we are basically prevented from working in a bipartisan fashion. But what is even more disturbing is when you reach out to this administration, whether you are mothers and fathers waiting outside in Crawford, Texas, and you find there is indifference to your sons and daughters who have given up their lives, or whether you are on the rooftops of New Orleans and there is indifference to your pleas for help, or whether you have to go to Canada to get prescription drugs because there is indifference to the kind of need that you have, indifference to the kind of energy needs that you will have this winter, it is that indifference that has consumed this body.

But because of voices like yours, and I commend each and every one of you, the American public is listening, and there will be a change in the ballot box come 2006 because this message is going to be heard.

Yes, we are on the defensive because we have to deal with this enormous juggernaut in Orwellian fashion that continues to perpetrate its message, a

false message, a message of false hope and false opportunity, and the only push-back that they are getting are from the voices of Democrats like yourself.

I commend each and every one of you, and I thank you for your continued efforts on this floor.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ).

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. LARSON). He is incredibly eloquent, and I tremor following that eloquence.

I want to just follow up with some specifics, because our good friend from California (Mr. DREIER) was here earlier challenging our description of our inability to make an impact and offer our ideas here. He described this mythological bipartisan process. Well, let us counter some of the facts he threw out there.

There have been 85 pieces of legislation that have had rules applied to them. For those who are listening that do not know what that means, we have restrictions placed on our ability as Members to offer amendments and offer our own ideas and help shape legislation every time, almost every time a bill is introduced on the floor. There have been 85 such bills that have been introduced.

Of those, 38 of them have had restrictive rules, meaning the Committee on Rules decides which, if any, amendments we are going to be allowed to offer. Fifteen of those rules, 15 individual pieces of legislation, have been entirely closed, meaning no Member is allowed to offer any amendments whatsoever. Three additional closed rules were added into an entirely separate bill. Of the 85 pieces of legislation that have come on this floor that have had rules apply to them, there has only been one substantive bill that had an open rule, meaning any Member can offer, meaning any Member elected in our own right, each by the same 633,000 people that we all represent, only one substantive bill has had an open rule where we can offer any amendment and any idea that we would like to offer.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, it is also the gentlewoman from Florida's (Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ) voice that stood out almost singularly when again the heavy-handed control of this Republican-dominated majority tried to foist the Terry Schiavo incident upon us. I thank the gentlewoman for your strong voice at that time. It was resounding all across this Nation. It was picked up by the Hartford Current editorial board, to name just a few of the people it has impacted.

The gentlewoman is right. It is not only specifically we can cite but it is the anecdotes that we can understand. I waited in the Rules Committee until 4 o'clock in the morning to try to get a bill that would provide for the Secretary of Health and Human Services

to be able to do the same thing that every other nation does for its seniors, and that is to negotiate directly with the pharmaceutical companies.

There is no way on that Medicare bill that that is not a germane piece of legislation, but it was denied access to the floor because of the power of its ideas.

When the gentleman from California (Mr. DREIER) suggests that we do not have ideas, we have many ideas. The ideas are squashed by the heavy-handed Republican majority here. So, therefore, there was not a vote that had taken place that would allow the Secretary of Health and Human Services to negotiate directly with pharmaceutical companies so that our senior citizens could get the same kind of benefits and discounts, frankly, that the veterans do through the VA administration here.

But in the first 100 days the Democrats take back this Chamber, that is the kind of change the American public can expect to see; and that is why I am so proud of your efforts that you have been doing on a regular basis on this floor. Believe me, it is working. Because people are hearing all across this country. We refuse to be drowned out by the Republican majority and their Republican message machine, a network that is vast and large. And whether it is Pat Robertson's 700 Club or whether it is Rush Limbaugh or Cal Thomas or whether it is the Kato Institute or the Heritage Foundation or all the other entities that converge in synchronized and coordinated fashion to try to stifle your voice, you have stood up and spoke for America. God bless you. God bless America.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate what the gentleman just said. I did not know the gentleman was the one who tried to offer the amendment. It is good for the 30-Somethings to understand to put a face with the idea.

That idea to just negotiate down drug prices on a \$700 billion prescription drug bill, now that may save 10 percent, that may save 20 percent, some people would say that would save 30 percent. Let us say, for the sake of argument, that we could save 20 percent of a \$700 billion bill. That is \$140 billion that we would have here to either return back to the middle class in the form of middle-class tax cuts or to fully fund student loans or to fully fund the Pell grant or No Child Left Behind. \$140 billion goes a pretty long way, and that is what the Democrats want to do.

We have a Member here who is willing to sit in committee until 4:00 in the morning to try to get that provision tacked on to the bill, and you get shot down.

But we are here to say that we are fighting on behalf, and I was telling my friend, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MEEK), earlier, there is an old Irish saying, Is this a private fight or can anyone get in it? And I believe that is what the mentality of the 30-Something group. We are ready to scrap

here. We are not going to sit back and let anyone push us around and let anyone tell us that we do not have ideas. Because we do have ideas. And just because the Republican majority does not like them, just because it may be contrary to their fund-raising opportunities, that does not mean we are going to stop.

I have to go catch a plane, and I am sorry about that because I would love to sit here and continue this discussion. But let me say, in closing, that the Democratic party wants to take this country into a new direction. We want to change the way things are going in Washington right now, and that is part of what this is all about. We also want to say to the American people that when you put us in charge, we are going to put the interests of the country before the interests of our own party.

The system that we just talked about where the pharmaceutical companies are getting middle-class taxes, they come to Washington and it returns to the oil companies and to the pharmaceutical companies, that system is inherently corrupt. And that when our Republican majority friends appoint someone who is in charge of an Arabian horses outfit to run FEMA, we are going to end the cronyism, and we are going to end the incompetence and the incompetent way they govern. We want to take the country in a new direction.

I thank my friends. I thank my friends. I thank my friends.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. I want to say to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. RYAN) and the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. LARSON) as they depart, I just want to say what they are saying is right on. We do not have to be concerned with what outside people and outside groups say and do. We must be concerned about what our colleagues are doing or not doing on the other side. I think it is very important for us to remember that.

Talking about this budget is something that really needs review. And I encourage the American people, I also encourage Members to figure out what is in it and what is not in it. The cuts that are being made in the budget, well, let us just call it what it is.

Let me ask the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ), I know she has a third-party validator, the cuts that are in this budget, in the light of hurricane relief, the cuts that are being made are really to clear the way for the \$106 billion tax cut mainly for special interests and billionaires in this country on the backs of Medicare, on the backs of Medicaid, on the backs of free and reduced lunch for children.

And the reason why they were on the backs of those, and some may call it dependency, I call it making sure that the seniors can get their prescription drugs. I call it making sure that children that happen to be born into a poor community and in a poor family and a struggling family that is trying to make way to get a hot meal in the

morning, to be able to get lunch, I guess left up to the majority since there is something about this dependency thing that is going on, I guess it is okay to have 60 percent of the kids eating lunch and 40 percent of the kids looking outside of the lunchroom inside wanting lunch but they cannot have it.

I guess it is okay to have those kids then to go to the classroom for the second half of the education day in front of a teacher hungry, while the other half of the class are picking their teeth from the lunch that they are able to afford because the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ) is able to provide that for her children and I am able to provide it.

So I guess those of us that have, we are going to be okay. It is just those other folk out there making up beds, popping sheets in hotels and driving cabs around here, good luck to them.

I guess when faith-based organizations in my district and throughout this country are trying to do all they can to hold this thing together, providing after-school programs with parishioners, giving money to fill the gap that is no longer being filled because we have cut the local commitment in juvenile justice and prevention programs. When we say "prevention" we are talking about programs. We are talking about programs that help young children stay out of trouble, homework centers. All of those activities that we have put in Leave No Child Behind and will not fund those, Mr. Speaker. We will not fund those. I guess that is a dependency for after-school homework.

But guess what? We have a nice cozy jail cell if someone was to step out of line. So I think it is important for us to remember that this is very, very serious.

Now there was an amendment in committee by the Democrats that said that, okay, let us talk about the tax cuts so we can expose the real reason why we are going through this exercise. Let us talk about the tax cuts for the special interests and billionaires first. Let us bring that up first and make that a part of this budget and reflect it and put it out front so everyone can see it.

But the majority did not want that to happen because it just would have been too easy for the folks back home. So say, okay, you are raising fees on students, our future workforce, by \$5,000 apiece, to the tune of \$14 billion. And then you turn around and this particular industry is receiving a \$10 billion, what you call, "incentive," we call tax cut, even though they have record profits to go out and find oil off the coast of Florida. Yeah, that is the ticket. That is. And that is actually happening.

So that is why it is important that we come to this floor every time we get the opportunity, within the frame of the rules, Mr. Speaker, to share with the Members on the majority side that

we know what they are doing, and the American people know what they are doing, and that is why the American people see this Congress on the approval end at 35 percent. We did not do the poll. That is what the American people are saying. It is not only Democrats, it is Independents, Republicans and others.

So we are here to make sure that all Americans know exactly what is going on and let the chips fall where they may and make sure everyone understands and we have transparency in this process.

□ 1345

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. What we are here going to say is that the emperor truly does have not clothes. If you remember that story, everyone in the kingdom in that story refused to acknowledge that the emperor was buck naked because they were worried about the consequences. They wanted to make sure that nothing happened to them. Well, we are not afraid. We are not afraid.

It needs to be highlighted and underscored. What they are doing to the American people needs to be brought out, and we are saying do not believe us. This is not what KENDRICK MEEK and DEBBIE WASSERMAN SCHULTZ are saying or TIM RYAN or any of the other Members that have come to this floor to share angst and concern.

We are saying look at the third party validators that we have saying the exact same thing. We are saying look at the religious leaders who are urging and who just yesterday came to the Congress to urge the congressional leadership not to put forth these drastic cuts that are going to hurt people.

This is from today's Washington Post. This is not a quotation from someone else. This is in the story on the budget cuts. It says, With so many controversial provisions, the House measure is forcing Republican leaders to scramble for support in what could be the most difficult vote of the year. Well, I would agree. This should be the most difficult vote of the year. When you are cutting people's food stamps, when you are cutting their children's ability to get free and reduced lunch, when you are cutting \$4.9 billion from child support programs that help people collect money from deadbeat dads, yeah, I would guess that is a tough vote. Lord, I would hope so.

It goes on to say, Some Republican moderates are balking at cuts to anti-poverty programs, especially in light of the \$70 billion tax cut that could come to a vote soon after the budget bill, more than wiping out that bill's deficit reduction.

Well, here it is. It is not what DEBBIE WASSERMAN SCHULTZ and KENDRICK MEEK are saying. The article describing the budget cuts, the reconciliation bill, specifically says that there is no deficit reduction in what they are doing. What they are doing is to try to preserve the tax cuts for the wealthy,

make sure that their right wing, that their right flank does not go absolutely ballistic, because that wing of the party does not care about taking care of people. They are trying to make sure they preserve what they have and what the upper echelon has.

Let us talk about because if you do not believe the Washington Post, you think it is paper that is off the mark, let us just go through what some of our religious leaders are saying. We are not talking about liberal religious leaders or progressive religious leaders. We are talking about mainstream religious leadership that came here yesterday and joined in prayer at the Capitol.

They included Reverend Dr. Bob Edgar, who is the general secretary of the National Council of Churches of the United States; Jim Wallis of Sojourners magazine; Rabbi David Saperstein of the Religious Action Center; and Eleanor Giddings Ivory of the Presbyterian Church. Let me go through a couple of things that they said in urging the Republican leadership not to do this, not to harm and cause harm to the people that this budget will affect.

Reverend Jim Wallis: "As this moral battle for the budget unfolds, I am calling on Members of Congress, some of whom make much out of their faith, to start some Bible studies before they cast votes to cut food stamps, Medicaid, child care and more that hurt the weakest in our Nation."

Rabbi David Saperstein: The budget reconciliation package with its \$50 billion in program cuts and \$70 billion tax cuts giveaway is morally unjustifiable.

Reverend Eleanor Giddings Ivory of the Presbyterian Church: I am here today to express concern for the Federal budget reconciliation packages under consideration in the House and the Senate. Our Nation is about to balance its budget on the backs of the poor. Is that a moral thing to do? Clearly the answer is, no, it is not.

Let me just tell you, I was so moved by Rabbi Saperstein's comments in their effort yesterday. He, as is the practice of many of our religious colleagues on both sides of the aisle but particularly because the Republican leadership and its Members like to use their faith so often to underscore how they have injected values into government, Rabbi Saperstein urged our colleagues and said that they ought to remember that the Bible urges us to "deal thy bread to the hungry," not "steal thy bread from the hungry." He asked us to remember Proverbs' stern warning: "Do not steal from the weak because he is weak and do not oppress the poor in the gate."

I could go on, but there have been many more than just the religious leaders that were here yesterday who have urged this Congress not to take these actions. It not only will harm people, cause grave harm for people who have already been on the brink, it will not improve anything. It does not reduce our deficit. It does not improve our economy. It only brings harm, and

I think if we are going to subscribe to anything it is the physician's oath. That should be something we live by, which is first do no harm. When we get here, we should commit to doing no harm, and it appears unfortunately as though the Republican leadership came here to do the opposite.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I think it is very evident that nowhere in this budget is it talking about cuts in tax breaks to special interests. There is nothing in here that says that we are going to make sure that we tell billionaires that we have some things that we need to do here in this government and we can no longer give them that tax break. We are not saying it to special interests, but we are saying it to those who cannot fight for themselves.

We are saying it to not only students, but we are saying to parents that if the majority side have their way, they need to go out and meet with their college fund adviser because you will be paying more for higher education so that your children will be able to be a part of this workforce or what is left of it and has not gone to China and other countries.

I think it is also important to understand that child support, like Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ said, has been cut in this budget, and now over on the Ways and Means on the committee side is \$8 billion as it relates to the cuts over 5 years. The cuts come where? Human services, child support and foster care.

So I want to warn States, including my State in Florida, I want to warn you, you are going to have to deal with enforcement of making sure that single moms are able to get money from dead-beat dads or vice versa. You are going to be responsible as it relates to kids that are orphans to find some sort of shelter when they have to go into a foster home environment because the Federal Government, we are not partners with you anymore because we are trying to clear the way so that we can keep our promise to billionaires and special interests here in Washington, D.C.

I want to also put the States on warning, every State, red, blue or purple, I am giving you forewarning that you are going to see the largest what we call devolution of taxation in the history of this country, where we back out of the responsibility of being a part of making sure that we have vibrant communities and making sure that we treat people like they are supposed to be treated because you are going to have to make the cuts because you have to balance. You have to balance your budget.

So what we hand down with the philosophy that if you are middle income in this country, if you are not a billionaire or a millionaire, good luck. Good luck on health care because we do not have health care, real health care here in the United States.

There is story after story about small businesses telling folks to go

sign up for Medicaid because they cannot afford to give them real health care. Sign up for Medicaid.

But guess what, I want to say this to the small businesses. There is a \$10 billion cut in this budget. So, guess what, that option is no longer going to be there if the Republican majority has their way. If they continue to have their way, it is okay for them to go into what is left of a poverty, if you want to call it, health care program out there for people that need health care to be able to make sure that they provide tax cuts, not for you, small business person, not for you, company of 100 or 200 people or company of 500 people, not for you, Republican, Democrat or Independent, but for the individuals that have the ear apparently of the majority at this particular time.

We know that this is the people's House, and I have said it before and I will say it again. It is supposed to be the people's House and we are the only body here in Congress, the Senate you can be appointed if it is in midterm, but only in the House of Representatives is it that you have to be elected. That is in every State, and no one can touch that. If a Member was to say I resign today or I am moving on to something or I am appointed to this position, you do not see someone here tomorrow. There is a special election set, and the local people in that district will vote to replace that individual that left Congress. So I think you could not get closer to the people of the United States than we should be here in the Congress, and I will tell you this, that I am very, very concerned about what is being done here in Washington, D.C., right now.

I am going to just show this quick chart because I showed it at the beginning, but I just want to keep reminding folks. Folks feel that, oh, they are alarmists. Some people walking around here in the Capitol, they are saying something and what is the problem. What is the problem? There is no problem. What are you talking about? Things are great. You know, I had lunch today, did you?

But when it comes down to security and financial security, 42 Presidents, and I am going to say it again and I am going to keep saying it, 42 Presidents, \$1.0 trillion loaned from foreign holdings, and this is from the U.S. Department of Treasury that we have gone to other countries to borrow money, World War I, World War II, you name it, Depression, all 42 Presidents, one President \$1.05 trillion in 4 years.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. That is combined.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. All of these Presidents combined could not do as much as this administration has done as it relates to borrowing from foreign countries to support mainly tax cuts that we cannot afford for billionaires and millionaires and special interests. I could see if it was something where there was billions of dollars going into U.S. cities and to rural America to

build economic development, to be able to help farmers that are trying to compete with foreign countries, thanks to us, okay, or thanks to the majority.

I can see if we were going into schools and saying that we are going to be the leaders of the world in educating engineers, that we are going to have science and math and we are going to lead the world in education. I could see that.

I can see if we had real homeland security where our border would be protected and that we would have the enforcement officers out there with the tools that they need to make sure it is protected and have a process to be able to deal with the issue of illegal immigrations and even if they are in this country, I can see if those dollars went towards that.

I can see if we said we want to deal with energy with those dollars, Mr. Speaker, to be able to say that we want to pull back on our dependency on oil and that we will use alternative energy sources. I can see that.

But I do not see people coming to the floor and saying, well, on behalf of the economy, billionaires need another tax break, millionaires need another tax break, this special interest group with record profits, unprecedented history of these oil companies, that we need to give them additional billions of dollars in taxpayers' money to go out and do what they should be doing with their profits anyway. You get a small business that makes a profit, some of that goes towards a security fund and some of that goes towards what? Growing their business. No, no, no, not in this majority, no, no. You get the profit and then you come over here to the Congress and you get the taxpayer money to go out and do the things that you should be doing in the first place.

It does not make sense, Mr. Speaker, and I do not care who says different. I do not care if the chairman of the basket weaving committee was to come to this floor and say what is the problem. What is the problem? We have enough baskets. What are you complaining about. Well, there is a lot to complain about, and there is a lot to let the Members know and the American people know that we are willing to lead in the area of individuals who are not leading in right now on the majority side as it relates to energy, as it relates to making sure that we have a health care plan here, making sure prescription drugs are affordable for Americans, making sure that our men and women in Iraq have what they need.

□ 1400

And let me just mention something for a minute, since I mentioned Iraq. The bottom line is that on the majority side and the President you start saying, okay, let us talk about Iraq. All right, we had bad intelligence, and that is a big question right now. We do not know if the Congress was given bad intelligence or not, but there is very

little that is happening on that. And thanks to the Democrats in the Senate that pushed a—

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. If the gentleman will yield before we branch off to Iraq just for a second.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. I am coming right back. I am not going into Iraq. This is an example.

That is fine that the Senate came together, three Democrats, three Republicans, who will come together with a report on the intelligence piece. Okay. Okay.

Do we have a strategy for success? Well, we do not have that answer. Do we have a strategy of when we will be able to have American men and women come back home? Well, you know, we are fighting a war against terror, a global war, and we have got to go after the terrorists. Okay. But what is our strategy? Well, we do not have one.

So we are spending billions and billions of dollars of the taxpayers' money in Iraq at this particular time. And it is not about the troops; it is about some other things that we are trying to accomplish.

What is the strategy? Well, there is no strategy, and why are you asking, by the way. Why are you asking what is the strategy?

I am on the Armed Services Committee, and folks say, do we have an exit strategy? Democrats and Republicans have asked that. And I want to say that on the minority, the majority of the minority of the members over there, in the majority, have asked that question, along with several members on the Democratic side, because we want to know exactly where we are going. Are we going to be in Iraq as long as there is a small insurgency?

So that is the issue when it comes down to oversight and governance and making sure that we do what we need to do. So I just wanted to mention that because the ideas that we have, the ideas as relates to pay-as-you-go, the ideas as relates to being energy efficient by 2010, 2012, those ideas cannot surface in this Congress because the majority has their foot on those ideas.

So when folks come to the floor and say what is the problem, I guarantee when that budget comes up next week, and there is talk on the other side of, I wish our friends on the Democratic side would join us in this budget resolution that is coming to the floor, well, I have to say this to the Republican majority: I hope that Republicans join you on it, because that seems to be a problem, Mr. Speaker.

Every time there is a major bill that comes to the floor and it is a 15-minute vote, that 15-minute vote turns into a 2-hour vote. Why does it turn into a 2-hour vote? Not because Members cannot make it from their offices to the floor. No, it boils down to whose arm can be twisted, who can be pushed into a corner, and who can be pushed into voting for an unjust budget to clear the way for special interests and for billionaires.

So, Mr. Speaker, if someone wants to impress the American people that the budget is so good, let us follow the House rules and do the vote in 15 minutes. Do the vote and do not have the Members standing here at 3 a.m. in the morning saying, well, Mr. Speaker, they said it was a 15-minute vote and we are now on 90 minutes. When are we closing the board?

I think the reason why the voting board was not closed, and probably will not be closed next week, is that as long as the majority is not getting their way, they are going to change the spirit of the rules of the House of Representatives, and that is the problem too.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. You know, I have been seriously considering coming to the Chamber next Friday in my pajamas, given the track record of controversial votes, where they make their Members, the Republican leadership makes their Members puke blood in not allowing them to decide what to do, to stand on the courage of their convictions. They keep the board open, and we watch it light up like a Christmas tree up there, red to green, green to red. It is just unbelievable.

Sometimes I think the board is malfunctioning. Maybe it is not functioning. Maybe we should get an electrician in here. Maybe we should have the electrician check the wiring behind the Republican Members' names and their lights, because they do not seem to be able to pick one and have it stay there. Every time they have to cast a controversial vote, it goes from no to yes, then yes to no; or they do not appear to be able to turn their own light on for a very long time, because they cannot decide. Is it that they cannot decide?

I just want to make sure, because it is deeply concerning to me that they would not know when they came to the floor how to vote on a bill that is going to cut food stamps, that is going to cut financial aid, that cuts access to affordable energy, that allows drilling around the entire coastline of the United States of America where it is not currently allowed. So there has to be something wrong with the wiring.

Next week, I am going to be here in my pajamas and a teddy bear with a nice cup of coffee because we are really going to have to settle in for a long night. It is not going to be a normal 15-minute or a normal 5-minute vote, because I think the wiring under that board is going to go haywire next week. They are clearly not going to get their way right away because this is going to be a gut-wrenching angst-ridden vote. Woe to the Member on their side that does not vote how the leadership wants them to.

Sometimes when we talk in trillions and billions and millions it is a hard concept for people to understand. I know it is hard for me. A trillion is such a huge number. An \$8 trillion deficit is what we are in the middle of

right now. That is a huge number. I sometimes cannot understand how big that number is. It is also hard to understand what an \$844 million cut from the food stamp program is, or the kind of cuts they are going to be passing down in this budget reconciliation document that is going to affect affordable housing.

I want to show this picture. This picture is of me standing in the apartment of one of my constituents whose roof caved in on her during Hurricane Wilma. These are the people that, on top of what they have already gone through, on top of what they have already gone through, now we are going to cut the budget that funds the very programs that exist to help them.

There are people in dire straits in south Florida after Hurricane Wilma and in the gulf coast region after Katrina. There are people who before the hurricanes hit were in dire straits. This is what the problem really looks like for people. These people cannot live in homes like this because this home was condemned. Obviously, nobody can live in the apartment in this picture, and I wish that there was only one that looked like this in south Florida. This is the plight that we are putting people through.

Before we give out the Web site, I want to close by saying that we are in the middle of adding "C" after "C": with the culture of corruption, Cronyism, and the lack of confidence that the American people have in their government, and now we have the coverup Congress. That is what came to light here this week. We have repeatedly asked for investigations, that this leadership stand up and do what is right. And Leader PELOSI has tried to get them to do that, and they have unanimously rejected that.

We are going to continue to come back to this floor and stand up for the American people, and I look forward to continuing this dialogue with my colleague.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Just to add to what I was saying before the gentleman made her statements, October 7 the board was open for 40 minutes to pass the "energy bill," as relates to home heating. Special interests were able to get their profits out of that. The board was open for 40 minutes, even though it was a 5-minute vote.

November 22, 2003, broke the record here in the House of Representatives by holding the vote open. It was originally set for 15 minutes but lasted over 3 hours into the middle of the night. It was obvious on the prescription drug bill that it was a failing bill, but it took 3 hours for the majority to get their way.

The reason why there are two dates on this, July 27 and 28, is because the board was left open, the voting board was left open for an hour, well past the 15-minute voting time on CAFTA, which actually passed by 227 to 215. So when the majority says I wish the Democrats would join us, I wish that

the Republicans would join the Republicans on it, because they know exactly what is not happening.

I want to give our Web site out here. It is 30somethingdems@mail.house.gov. That is 30somethingdems@mail.house.gov. We want to make sure that everyone knows exactly what is going on here in Washington, D.C.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague from Florida, as well as the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. LARSON) and the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. RYAN), who joined us here today; and we will continue to work hard not only to bring fresh ideas to the floor but to make sure that we point out where the inequities are within our own institution.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE HONORABLE ROBERT W. NEY, MEMBER OF CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DENT) laid before the House the following communication from the Honorable ROBERT W. NEY, Member of Congress:

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, November 4, 2005.

Hon. J. DENNIS HASTERT,
Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: This is to notify you formally, pursuant to Rule VIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, that my office has been served with a grand jury subpoena, issued by the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia and directed to the "Custodian of Records," for documents and testimony.

I will make the determinations required by Rule VIII.

Sincerely,

ROBERT W. NEY,
Member of Congress.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate agreed to the following resolution:

S. RES. 300

In the Senate of the United States, November 3, 2005.

Whereas Henry Ku'ualoha Giugni was born on January 11, 1925, in Honolulu, Hawai'i;

Whereas Henry Giugni served with distinction in the United States Army, after enlisting at the age of 16 after the attacks on Pearl Harbor, and served in combat at the Battle of Guadalcanal during World War II;

Whereas Henry Giugni began his service in the Senate in 1963 as Senior Executive Assistant and Chief of Staff to Senator Daniel K. Inouye;

Whereas Henry Giugni served as Sergeant-at-Arms from 1987 until 1990;

Whereas Henry Giugni was the first person of color and first Polynesian to be appointed to be the Sergeant-at-Arms;

Whereas Henry Giugni promoted minorities and women by appointing the first minority, an African American, to lead the Sergeant-at-Arms' Service Department, and was the first to assign women to the Capitol Police plain-clothes unit;

Whereas Henry Giugni's special interest in people with disabilities resulted in a major

expansion of the Special Services Office, which now conducts tours of the U.S. Capitol for the blind, deaf, and wheelchair-bound, and publishes Senate maps and documents in Braille;

Whereas in 2003, Henry Giugni received an Honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters for the University of Hawai'i at Hilo in recognition of his extraordinary contributions to Hawai'i and the Nation;

Whereas Henry Giugni carried Hawai'i's flag while marching with Dr. Martin Luther King for civil rights in Selma, Alabama;

Whereas Henry Giugni presided over the inauguration of President George H.W. Bush, and escorted numerous foreign dignitaries, including Nelson Mandela, Margaret Thatcher, and Vaclav Havel when they visited the United States Capitol; and

Whereas on November 3, 2005, Henry Giugni passed away at the age of 80; Now therefore be it

Resolved, That the Senate has heard with profound sorrow and deep regret the announcement of the death of Henry Giugni.

Resolved, That the Secretary of the Senate communicate these resolutions to the House of Representatives and transmit an enrolled copy thereof to the family of the deceased.

Resolved, That when the Senate adjourns today, it stand adjourned as a further mark of respect to the memory of Henry Giugni.

The message also announced that pursuant to section 1928a-1928d of title 22, United States Code, as amended, the Chair on behalf of the Vice President, appoints the following Senators to the Senate Delegation to the Nato Parliamentary Assembly in Copenhagen, Denmark, November 11-14, 2005, during the One Hundred Ninth Congress:

The Senator from Mississippi (Mr. LOTT).

The Senator from Colorado (Mr. AL-LARD)

The Senator from Alabama (Mr. SESSIONS).

The Senator from Kentucky (Mr. BUNNING).

The Senator from Ohio (Mr. VOINOVICH).

The message also announced that pursuant to Public Law 107-273, the Chair, on behalf of the Majority Leader, announces the appointment of the following individual to serve as a member of the Antitrust Modernization Commission:

Makan Delrahim of the District of Columbia.

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN REPUBLICANS AND DEMOCRATS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. PEARCE) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. PEARCE. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to address the body. We are at a time right now where literally the stakes of America lie in the balance. Our future is going to be determined by our actions today.

Many people often ask me exactly what is the difference between the two approaches, and I will tell you that there are significant differences between the Republican and Democrat approach in Congress. Dennis Prager, a