

“This Memorial is dedicated to over 4,800 Americans of Japanese ancestry who were confined at the Pinedale Assembly Center. This was an early phase of a mass incarceration of over 120,000 Japanese Americans. They were detained without charges, trial or establishment of guilt. May such injustices and suffering never recur.”

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

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

THE COUNTDOWN CREW

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. DAVIS) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, we return again for the fifth consecutive leadership hour with the Countdown Crew.

I would like to welcome all of you here tonight who are watching from home. We have been surprised at the tremendous amount of response that we have received talking about the reality of tax policy, of small business policy and the impact that it has on the lives of ordinary citizens in this Nation.

In fact, the feedback has gotten so great that we have received hundreds and hundreds of calls, e-mails from around the country.

What we would like to do is invite you to become part of the Countdown Crew, as we are only 1,416 days from one of the largest tax increases in American history. We have a Web site. We would encourage you to e-mail with questions, with comments, your perspective on ways to make life better for working families to create jobs and to strengthen small business, which creates 88 percent of the jobs in the United States.

If you look behind me, our e-mail address is here. It is countdowncrew@mail.house.gov. And we would invite your comments and your feedback, and also invite you to share your stories of why the tax cuts of the last several years have made a difference for you, why a more relaxed and more structured regulatory process that focuses on sound science versus on politics allows businesses to work to create jobs, to create opportunity to create a future for our children and our grandchildren.

And there is a reason for this. In the election on November 7, so much of the emotion and so much of the focus had to do with issues related to the national security policy in the Middle East. But one thing that was forgotten in that time was something else that was voted for by the American people.

All of the tax cuts that have created 7 million jobs, that have created record revenues to the U.S. Treasury actually are on time lines. And they have to be extended by the House, and they sunset at the end of 2010. And without a President to advocate those policies, without a House of Representatives and a Senate that is going to pass those policies, all of the tax cuts that have created millions of jobs, that have created these record revenues in time of war are going to end. And that means that in 1,416 days, the average working family in the United States of America will experience a tax increase of \$2,098. And that translates across every sector of America.

And the one thing I think that often gets lost, and I will speak as a former small business owner myself, is the fact that small businesses create 88 percent of all new jobs. Those are companies with under 500 employees. These are companies that pay health benefits, that do research and development, that open new doors.

The tax revenues that are generated from those businesses and those employees are what fund the infrastructure of our communities. They pay for our teachers; they pay for our public safety. They contribute to our national defense.

And one saying, I think, that is important for all of us to remember is, the focus that we need to have is not to raise taxes but it is to create taxpayers. And the way that we can create taxpayers is give those who create the jobs more resources to invest in the economy, allow working families to keep more of what they own so they can save it and build a nest egg for the future that will ultimately lead to the growth that we have experienced.

We have got several distinguished gentlemen tonight. Before the gentleman from Oklahoma begins, I would like to recognize the leadership of Congressman BILL SHUSTER from Pennsylvania who has been the principal architect of the Countdown Crew.

Remember, if you would like to contact us, that is countdowncrew@mail.house.gov if you have a question for any of the Members participating tonight or would like to share your own story of how being allowed to keep more your own money, more of your own resources has helped to create a future for you.

But before I share some stories about some friends back in Kentucky who started and created jobs that are affecting not only our region and our economy, but also the defense of this Nation, I would like to recognize Congressman SULLIVAN, the gentleman from Oklahoma, to share his perspective on this.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Thank you, Congressman DAVIS. And I want to thank you for doing this tonight.

I also want to thank Congressman BILL SHUSTER from Pennsylvania for the Countdown Crew. Tax relief is very important to the American people, the

American families, American business. And we are about ready to embark on the largest tax increase in the history of this country, and it is going to be very detrimental to our economy.

And I can remember when I got to Congress just a short time ago, almost 5 years ago. Congressman SHUSTER came in a little bit before me. And since that time, with some of the tax relief measures that have been put in place, we have seen just 167,000 jobs were created in December alone. Payroll, nonfarm payroll employment increased.

Since August 2003, more than 7.2 million jobs have been created. Workers are finding jobs faster.

I remember when I came to Congress back in 2002, one of the votes that I had to make, along with others, was to extend unemployment benefits. And we don't have to do that now, in large part, because of the tax relief measures that have been put in place.

A lot of people think that we need to keep taxing and taxing and taxing our way to prosperity. And that is wrong.

And my friends on the left, the liberals on the left, think that this money belongs to them, it belongs here in Washington with the politicians. And that is not where it belongs.

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It belongs to the people who earn the money in the first place, working families, small business people. And how does that apply to somebody, let us say, that lives in Oklahoma, a small businessman or woman? Well, I will tell you how it applies to them. When I go around my district, one of the biggest things I hear about are complaints from small- to medium-sized business people, and small- to medium-sized business people employ 85 percent of the people in our economy. They either work for, own, or operate small- to medium-sized businesses. And if we allow a small business to keep more of their money, what are they going to do with it? Well, they are going to hire more people to work. It is going to create jobs, which it has done. They are going to buy equipment to expand their business, and that money is going to bounce around the economy, that dynamic economic effect of that money bouncing around the economy, and it is going to find its way back to Washington anyway, but we get to do things with it before it does.

One of the things too, Congressman DAVIS, that I hear about a lot is small business people are really complaining right now about providing health insurance for their employees. Either they have to go to their employees and say, hey, I can't cover you anymore or they have to lessen the benefit to the employee or they have to make the employee pay more of their health care cost. Now, if we provide tax relief to them, they are able to use that money to provide health insurance for their employees. The Democrats, if they allow this tax increase to take place,

we are going to have more uninsured people in this country.

Tax relief has been used many, many times. I remember last week or the week before that, Congressman SHUSTER talked about how tax relief was used when John F. Kennedy was President, a member of the other side of the aisle. And it works. He used tax relief, reducing all marginal rates. Also Ronald Reagan proposed tax relief, and it was wildly successful. We had a roaring economy. Tax relief is used by other countries in economic slow times to get out of that. It is one of the economic tools that are used.

We have to realize too that Washington is getting too big. Government is too big. It is unaccountable. There is runaway spending here in Washington. There is no accountability, no light of day on the budgetary process. People talk about the budget like it is a complicated thing here in Washington. Well, heck, a chimpanzee could do the budget here in Washington. You get what you spent last year; you try to get more money. You want \$10 million, you ask for \$1 billion and you get \$10 million more, and you spend that and that goes to your baseline for the next year.

Instead of throwing money at all these supposed problems around here, we need to find the problems first and scrutinize the spending here in Washington, D.C. And we certainly don't need to free up more money for the politicians in Washington, D.C. to spend by allowing massive tax increases to occur.

So I really commend you for doing this countdown, the Countdown Crew. I want to commend Congressman SHUSTER for all he has done, Congressman DAVIS, JACK KINGSTON from Georgia. This is very important. And when I go around my district, even in Oklahoma, we are hearing a lot of things about what you guys are doing on this Countdown Crew. People do not want to see these tax increases occur. I talked to someone the other day that said, I am afraid that our child tax credit will go away, from \$1,000 to \$600. That will be critical. I have four kids. It is going to affect me. It is going to affect a lot of people. And that is what we are dealing with, people. And we want them to keep the money that they worked so hard to earn in their pockets, not here in Washington.

And, again, I want to thank you for having me here.

Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky. Thank you very much, Congressman SULLIVAN.

I think it is so important what he highlighted here when he mentioned four children. My wife Pat and I have six children. For families what this translates into, just the loss of the child tax credit alone for a family of four is \$2,000. That could be a semester of college tuition. It could be an investment in savings. There is an opportunity cost that comes with that that has real effects. And when that money is in the economy, it is creating jobs.

And I would like to take a moment and share one small business story that is close to home about an environment that creates opportunity. You may have heard me say this before: The role of government is not to create jobs. Government doesn't create jobs by itself. What government does should be to create a framework that empowers people to create jobs, to create opportunity, and to protect that opportunity we pass to future generations.

We have seen tremendous change that has taken place in our region, the Fourth District of Kentucky. And specifically in the northern part of that district, right across the river from Cincinnati or, as we like to say, the greater northern Kentucky area, we are seeing economic explosions in great numbers in a variety of industries. In particular, a group of far-seeing businessmen wanted to change the view of our community, joined with community leaders. And they worked with Northern Kentucky University, first with President Jim Votruba, and talked about the need for bringing high-technology jobs and creating a climate for high-technology jobs. Dr. Votruba recruited an information technology professional named Bob Farrel, who is an entrepreneur, a great success in the business world, but also a teacher and a mentor. They collaborated in turn with the chamber of commerce, with local government, with State government, and created a zone in downtown Covington, Kentucky, on Madison Street, called the Madison E Zone. And into that came some friends of mine to build on the foundation that was given to them, those boundaries in which they could create opportunity.

Three men, Kevin Moore, Norm Desmairis, and Greg Harmeyer, I know all three of them. I have watched what they have done professionally with their business. I have watched how they have grown from a very small company to create many, many jobs; how they left one facility and had to move down the street to an even larger facility. And they are the true ideal of the American entrepreneur, a small business person who starts with a vision, pursues that vision, and wants to bring about change. And what Kevin and Norm and Greg have all done with their business that is remarkable in information technology is they have provided needed services in the preservation of knowledge and improving the efficiency of systems, helping the employees of other job-creating companies to be more effective and more competitive in this global economy. And where it comes home full circle is the idea of working with the university in conjunction with the Department of Defense and the Department of the Air Force to help preserve knowledge and help strengthen the information technology systems of our Armed Forces, of our national security establishment.

What is exciting about this is tier one with Greg and Norm and Kevin represent hundreds of small businesses

that are creating thousands and thousands of jobs around the country. And what they shared with me, and Kevin shared with me tonight, is that these tax increases are going to hurt their ability to provide for health care, as Congressman SULLIVAN pointed out. It is going to hurt their ability to make needed investments in equipment. It is going to hurt their ability to compete effectively. And I believe it is better to let them keep more of what they have earned because that is going to be recycled into the economy to create more jobs.

And the model we are following, as Solomon said in the Bible, there is nothing new under the sun, was the same model that birthed Silicon Valley. There were intellectual partnerships and entrepreneurial partnerships with Stanford University that led to the greatest explosion of technology and research in the history of modern man. It changed the life of virtually every citizen in this Nation, provided us with technologies and tools and improved a way of life that had never been known before. And now we stand with an opportunity to build that type of a future right in Kentucky. As my colleague, Congressman HAL ROGERS down in the Fifth District, likes to say, representing eastern Kentucky, we may not have Silicon Valley but if we have the right economic policy and the right focus on research and the right focus on developing our young people and especially the right focus on creating an environment to stimulate small business, we may not have Silicon Valley but we can have Silicon Hollow. We can make a difference that provides not only for the next generation that follows us but to keep this Nation competitive in the long run.

And we stand at a crossroads right now. As we mentioned before, in 1,419 days, the average working family in this country is going to see a tax increase of \$2,098. Money that has created 7 million jobs will be taken out of the economy. And what we need to do is look at policies that are proactive, that make a difference.

One colleague who is here with us tonight who also came out of the small business world, who has been in Congress for a long time, who understands both the political side, but most important to me is that he has created jobs, has made a payroll, and he has helped other people deal with these benefits and understand this importance, and that is my friend Congressman JACK KINGSTON from Savannah, Georgia, and I would like him to share some of his perspective.

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

First of all, I want the record to show that Mr. SULLIVAN has four kids and you commented that you have six kids. Are you saying that he does not have a commitment? Is that what is going on here? The rest of us are getting by with one or two kids. Actually, I have

four. But I wanted to say you two families are doing your share for the economy.

Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky. I would have to say, Congressman KINGSTON, that based on these tax increases that are coming and these regressive policies that will begin to take effect in 1,419 days, I would say that my six children will become my retirement plan.

Mr. KINGSTON. Well, I will tell you what. Also, you and I know people across America will lose that family tax deduction for the children, which is very important.

But I wanted to get into the perspective of a business person, but the way I explain tax increases to school kids, it seems that maybe it should apply to some of these bureaucrats here in Washington, D.C. But yesterday I was speaking to a group called the People to People Exchange, a student ambassador program. And I asked for a volunteer. A young lady who had a job, a young girl who was, I guess, in about the ninth grade named Tracy, she works at Holton's Restaurant in Midway, Georgia. Tracy makes \$5.50 an hour. So I got her up in front of the class, and this was an extracurricular thing. They were actually meeting on a Sunday afternoon. And I said, Okay, Tracy, so you work for 2 hours, \$5.50 an hour. After those 2 hours, you bring home \$11. And she looked at me like, You really are stupid in Washington, you know I don't do that.

I said, How much do you bring home? She said, Well, it is about nine something.

So I said, Okay. Let us just say for 2 hours' work you bring home \$9 and you send \$2 to me in Washington. Now, what do I do with that tax money?

And, of course, these students know you pay for schools, you pay for roads, you pay for our military. And, Mr. DAVIS, you know Midway. You probably have eaten at Holton's Restaurant. It is right down from Fort Stewart, where you were stationed. Have you eaten there?

Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky. I have been in Midway many times going between Fort Rutger and the Hunter Army Airfield.

Mr. KINGSTON. Well, they have a good fish and shrimp platter that is waiting just for you. It has got your name on it.

Anyway, I said to Tracy, Okay, for the \$2 that we get from you that goes to the soldiers at Fort Stewart, goes to the schools, to the building, to the teachers, goes to the roads, goes to the police officers, you are okay with those things because we all agree we need them?

And she says, Yes, sir.

And I said, Okay. Now, if you know I could do it for \$1.50, would you want that extra 50 cents or would you let me have it? Because, you know, if I had that extra 50 cents from you, I could spend money. I could go out and maybe improve some health care and take care of some farm programs. And who

knows? I might even get a little bit more of the Federal Government dollars down to our part of the State.

She didn't like that idea. She felt like she could manage her 50 cents better than we could in Washington, D.C. And I serve on the Appropriations Committee, and I have to say for a high school girl, she is certainly accurate. She can manage her money better than we can manage her money. And yet we have this attitude in Washington that if something is going to happen, government has to be the one to initiate it. So we want the whole \$2.

And the interesting thing that you have already underscored night after night is that if we let her keep that extra 50 cents, taking less of her \$2 in taxes, what is she going to do? She and all the other millions of Tracys and millions of other people like the six Davis kids who will one day be working, they would go out and they might buy more hamburgers, more shoes, more clothes, more tires, more dryers, more washing machines, go out to eat more. And when they do, small businesses react by expanding. They increase their inventory. Then they have to have more people to sell their inventory; so they hire more people. Less people are on welfare. More people are paying taxes. And so the money comes into Washington, D.C. Small businesses win. People who are working win. And the government, at the end of the day, gets more revenue. That has been the case now with George Bush, Ronald Reagan, and John F. Kennedy.

Tax cuts, giving the people the right to keep more of their own hard-earned money actually brings in more revenue. Therefore, to let these tax breaks end and increase taxes on small businesses and on families across America is an absurd policy. And we have got to get folks motivated to realize that this is something that is going to happen unless people back home start raising Cain about it.

So I am glad you are doing what you are doing. And I wanted to yield back because I know we have some other speakers here, but I thank you for your leadership on it.

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Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky. I appreciate that, Congressman KINGSTON. It just highlights all the more what you point out, that in 1,419 days, that every working family in America is going to have a \$2,000 tax increase. We think about where that money could go and what it is doing in the economy.

Just for those who might be joining us tonight, we are the Countdown Crew. We meet the first night of every vote and talk about issues that make a difference to creating jobs, that make a difference to our pocketbook, for working families, for small business owners that create the preponderance of our jobs.

We would like for you to join with us, to communicate your stories, to share your experiences. You can contact us

at countdowncrew@mail.house.gov. We are standing by to hear those stories right now. And I just want to thank again BILL SHUSTER's vision to want to execute this program.

As we get ever nearer to those tax increases, we have had Members that are coming to the floor that haven't been politicians their whole life, that have had what I would like to say are real jobs, who have been out there, who know what it is like to have to make a profit.

I know what it is like to make that decision to go without a paycheck to make sure that employee health benefits are paid. And I am not saying that to impress anybody, simply to point out to you, that is a common decision that many small business owners face, making sure that our employees are taken care of. And when taxes are raised, that takes away even more of that flexibility to meet employee and family needs, but also it takes dollars out of the economy or dollars out of the potential of those businesses to create jobs.

One Member who is joining us here tonight who I think has lived a great success story in small business with her husband is Congresswoman THELMA DRAKE from Peninsula, Virginia. She represents the Norfolk area.

The thing that is very exciting about her story that is very consistent with other small business owners who have gotten to taste that piece of the American Dream and all the families that have worked with them or have been benefited by them, is her story coming up as a Realtor, seeing many, many facets of the economy and the impact of these income tax policies, of regressive policies against small business, and yet at the same time the positive impact by allowing people to keep more of what they earn. It has created record revenues, as Congressman KINGSTON mentioned.

Among all the doom and gloom stories, one thing that I would share is that many times when we talk about our global economy, there is a great fear of competing on that global stage. If we compete on a level playing field, the American worker, the American entrepreneurial and creative genius is going to win. But when we talk about competing with countries like China, an emerging superpower, one thing that I would point out is that just in less than 3 years, the U.S. has added to its economy, the increase in our economic output has been \$2.2 trillion. That is bigger than the entire economy of China.

Folks, if we create taxpayers instead of raising taxes, that growth will continue and our children and grandchildren will have the opportunity to compete.

I would like to recognize the gentlewoman from Virginia to share her perspective on this.

Mrs. DRAKE. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the gentleman for that and thank him for his commitment to

telling America how important it is that we keep our tax cuts that are in place and the very positive results that have taken place from the tax cuts of 2001 and 2003. Those are real savings that are helping Americans today. At the end of 2006, that tax relief that Americans got to keep in their pockets was valued at \$1.1 trillion. That is a lot of money for families, for small businesses.

You mentioned my experience as a Realtor. I want to tell you, when I was new in the real estate business, I couldn't figure out how to put more time in the day, how do I do all the things that I needed to do. It took me just a while to realize there is no more time in the day, and there are only seven days in the week, and the only answer for me was to hire other people to do the things that I didn't have the time to do.

What that meant for me in my little real estate business was I became an employer. All of a sudden I was paying payroll taxes on employees, as well as paying double for myself as a self-employed individual in the real estate industry. At the end of each year, when I would look at a really good year and sell a lot of real estate, I would say, I am really not making any money for as hard as I am working because so much is going to the Federal Treasury in the way of taxes. So I appreciate that in 2001, when the tax cuts were put into place that we reduced those income tax rates to Americans.

I think a lot of people don't realize that today we have a 10 percent tax rate for our lowest payers, down from 15 percent. That is slated to expire in 2011 if we don't act then and keep that in place. Our other rates dropped by 3 to 4 points, not the full 5 points for our lowest-income Americans.

I have heard you talking in here tonight about your children. I have two children and I have four grandchildren. When I was ran for office, because it was something I felt I needed to do, but not something that had always been a goal of mine, the way I made myself do that every day is I took a picture of my granddaughter, who was then under 2 years old, taped it to the dash of my car, and every time I got in the car I said, Caity, I am doing this for you.

I stand here today now as a Member of Congress and say Caity, and the other three, because there are three more now, I am doing this for you. Because if we want to leave our children the America that we have enjoyed, we have got to make sure that our tax policy supports our economy, that it grows our revenues and it allows Americans to be the ones to decide how they are spending their money.

One of the big changes in growing revenues for our country, of course, is the capital gains tax, which has been reduced from 25 percent to 15 percent. As a Realtor, before coming to Congress, I can't tell you how many times I would hear from people, I can't sell that rental property because I can't

pay that capital gains tax. But in 2003, when that was dropped by 10 percent, that made a lot of difference for people, and people were allowed to take assets and free them up and not be looking at such an overburden of taxes in order to do that.

We have talked about it. Congressman KINGSTON has mentioned President Kennedy. I wrote a quote of his down that I thought I would share tonight with America. This is from President Kennedy. He said: "An economy hampered by restrictive tax rates will never produce enough revenue to balance our budget, just as it will never produce enough jobs or enough profits."

That is the from the 1960s. Here we are in 2007 still having the same discussion and still trying to point out to America that when you keep your own money, that you spend it, you save it, you create jobs, you create wealth for yourself.

We have heard a lot about taxing the wealthy and how we should do more of that. But what people don't realize is by allowing people to grow their own wealth, we do raise taxes on the wealthy. They have actually risen 39 percent. Our income taxes are up 8.8 percent on personal income tax, while corporate income taxes are now up 22.2 percent. What better way is there to raise revenue than allowing people to be successful and spend their own money the way they see fit?

I am dismayed by two actions that were taken by this Congress in the very early days. There is a three-fifths majority that is needed to raise taxes. However, by a simple majority vote of this body, we now have a simple majority vote that is able to waive that. America needs to watch what this body does, and they need to hold us accountable.

The other thing that this Congress did in those early hours is pass something that is called PAYGO. It sounds very good, and Virginia is actually a pay-as-you-go State. We are not allowed to have a deficit in our budget. So it sounds good to everyone, until you stop and realize what it means.

What that means is when these taxes are ready to begin expiring, that in order to keep them in place, that other taxes either have to be raised or spending cuts have to take place to offset them. That doesn't take into consideration at all the positive impact we have seen of reducing taxes. It only looks at things on the surface.

It is like the philosophy that is out there that if we are bringing in a lot of money today with tax policy, let's raise it just a little bit and we will get more. It is actually the opposite that takes place. I believe our responsibility is to grow our economy. Our responsibility is to have a tax policy that grows revenues for us and makes sure that we have the economy and the future for our children and our grandchildren.

I thank you for letting me join you today.

Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky. I thank you, Congresswoman DRAKE, for being with us this evening. I think one thing I would like to recognize is that THELMA and her husband are real people who started and ran a real business that created real jobs and a real future for many others.

If you are just joining us, we are the Countdown Crew. We are counting down 1,419 days to one of the largest tax increases in American history if Congress does not take action to make sure that the tax cuts, the benefits that have made such a difference for so many in this country by allowing people to keep more of what they earn, are extended and hopefully made permanent.

I would just like to point out if you would like to communicate with us, we are the countdowncrew@ mail.house.gov. If you have questions or would like to share your story of how being able to keep more of your own money, of your hard-earned resources has benefited you, how it has helped you build a future, we would love to hear from you.

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. DAVIS, if the gentleman will yield, I was wondering, I was listening to Mrs. DRAKE talk about something she went over. I think we need to maybe get a good explanation here in terms of Congress voting on a simple majority now. Maybe you could explain that, because under the Republicans it was required to have, was it a three-fifths majority?

Mrs. DRAKE. A three-fifths vote in order to raise taxes.

Mr. KINGSTON. That was in place for 10 or 12 years under Republican leadership. So now the Democrats on their first day changed it from three-fifths required to raise taxes on working people to what?

Mrs. DRAKE. What the rules that were changed were is that by a simple majority vote you can waive that three-fifths vote. I have not seen that written anywhere. Everyone that I have told about this back at home is shocked. Their eyes get big. I think they felt safe to think it would take a three-fifths supermajority vote to raise taxes in America, and they are very distressed to hear it. That is why I wanted to mention it tonight, because so few people know that that took place in the opening of this session in our House rules. I think that is unfair, and I think America should know it, and I think America should watch what we do.

Mr. KINGSTON. Thanks.

Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky. I appreciate you pointing that out. That was one of those surprises that I think affected a lot of people or that will affect a lot of people in the months and the years ahead. The reason for that 60 percent or three-fifths majority was to make sure that it was clearly the will of the American people to raise taxes instead of cutting spending, that people would be accountable.

In effect, what we were doing was something similar in line to the way

the Senate works, with their rules of cloture to end debate. They have to have a 60-vote supermajority. Certainly, over there that would be absolutely necessary for any type of a measure that would raise taxes or lower them. In the same vein, I think it was right for us to have that in this body, because in 1,419 days we will be raising taxes.

The one thing that we all believe in the Countdown Crew is that the goal of the government should not be to create new taxes, but to create taxpayers. We want to cut taxes, allow people to keep more of what they earn. And that is why we have had 7 million new jobs created and record revenues into the Federal Treasury, because the economy is working. Even in a time of war, it continues to grow, and it is incredible that we are able to compete so effectively in a global economy. We need to allow people to keep their resources to build that future for their children and grandchildren.

With that, I would like to recognize another real person who helped run a real business creating jobs out in the economy before he came to Congress, and that is our leader of the Countdown Crew, Congressman BILL SHUSTER from Pennsylvania.

Mr. SHUSTER. I thank the gentleman from Kentucky. I appreciate your leadership down there on the floor, and I appreciate everybody that has been here tonight. As always, with those of us down here on the Countdown Crew, we all come from business backgrounds, most of us, if not all of us, small business backgrounds. I ran a business that employed between 30 and 40 people. And many, many Americans, small business owners, know just how difficult it is to meet payroll every month, to pay your bills.

There are many people here in Congress that talk about the escalating costs of health care and how difficult it is. But there aren't that many, there are few that are in Congress that have experienced that, like Mr. DAVIS has, I know Mr. KINGSTON or THELMA DRAKE or myself. We saw it happen year after year, and it is something that we are all concerned about. It is something that we all want to make sure we find an answer to, seeing that health care costs don't continue to climb.

But the answer is not to raise taxes. That works just the opposite. And I am very, very concerned that the American people are not aware, that was one of the reasons that getting together with Mr. DAVIS and Mr. KINGSTON and Mrs. DRAKE and others, we came up with this idea to talk about the countdown to the tax increase, because we are concerned about it, and because the Democrat majority does not have to do anything.

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They have to run out the clock, and if they run out the clock on 1419 days, there is going to be the largest tax increase in American history, over \$200

billion. That does not occur all at one shot. It is going to occur over the next 4 years.

In 2008, there are certain tax cuts will expire; in 2009, 2010; and then January 1, 2011, all the tax cuts put in place will have expired, and we will see our taxes go up considerably.

If you are at home thinking about what your tax liability is going to be in the future, you need to realize that the Democrat majority, as Mrs. DRAKE and Mr. KINGSTON pointed out and discussed about the difference between the three-fifths and the simple majority, the Democrats changed those rules in the very first days of the Congress so that they can raise your taxes.

The chairman of the Ways and Means Committee, the gentleman from New York, said before the election that he did not know of any of the Bush tax cuts that he thought were worthy of continuing or extending.

So they have made it quite clear from their leadership, to the fact they changed the rules, that they intend to raise taxes. Why they keep talking about the deficits and deficit spending, and that is the answer to it, well, I believe just the opposite. It is not the answer to it.

If you look at the revenues in 2006 to the Federal Government, they increased by 9.7 percent in 2006. The deficit is down 50 percent of where we projected it to be in 2005. The 2006 deficit is down 50 percent as to where we project it to be, and why is that? That is because the revenues are coming into the Federal Government in significant numbers.

In 2005, there was an over 14 percent increase in revenues. That is because the economy is growing. That is because the Republican majority tried to hold the line on spending. We did not do enough. We need to do more, but the worst thing to do is to put a halt, put a hurdle on this economy, put a bump in the road to stop this economy from growing.

As many have said tonight, talked about the facts, the numbers, in December alone, there were 167,000 jobs created in this country; in January, 111,000 jobs. To date, over the last 4 years, there have been 7.3 million jobs created in America, and those are due to allowing the American people and small businesses to keep more of their hard-earned dollars in their own pockets so that they can go out and buy new things, whether it is a washer and dryer or whether it is a downpayment on a new car or saving money for college, putting that money away, \$2,000 at a clip; and that is what the average American with a family of four and making between \$40,000 and \$50,000 a year, if these tax cuts are not extended, they are going to be hit with about a \$2,000, \$2,200 tax increase. If you take that money, \$2,000 a year, and put it in a bank account at 5 percent interest over 10 years that grows to \$30,000. That is a nice downpayment on a house. That is a nice downpayment

on your kid's education. It is your money. It should not be sent to Washington. We want to keep it out there in the families of America and the small business of America.

As I said more of those numbers, we are at 4.6 percent unemployment, and it is the lowest rate on average over the last 4 decades. Cutting taxes drive this economy in a positive way. And others have said here tonight, and just to remind people that we are not the first to use tax cuts to move this economy forward, Ronald Reagan did it in the 1980s, and this economy grew by leaps and bounds. And President John F. Kennedy did it in the 1960s, cut taxes to spur this economy on, and that is what we need to do.

As I said, there are millions of Americans out there today that are depending on these tax rates to stay low. There are millions of small businesses which are the backbone of this economy that are counting on us keeping these tax cuts in place. There are millions of small businesses and farmers in this country hoping that we will extend the death tax so that they can plan for their future, so they can do the financial planning necessary because the alternative is it will expire at the end of 2010. The alternative is, if you cannot plan properly for expansion, for the future, you certainly do not want to die so that your family gets that tax, the tax break that we put in place.

So this is extremely important, as I said, to Americans across the spectrum, across this Nation from Arizona to Pennsylvania to Washington to Florida. I know millions of Americans, actually 10.6 Americans, low-income Americans, that are not paying taxes at all today because of the tax cuts we put into place in 2001 and 2003.

As we have been talking about for the last month this countdown to the tax increase, 1,419, dies, if Mr. DAVIS will put that chart back up, not the chart but our e-mail address. We have the CountdownCrew@mail.house.gov. We would love to hear from across this country how Americans have utilized these tax cuts, whether it is the child tax credit, whether it is the accelerated depreciation or any of the decreases in the marginal income tax rates. If you have utilized the Tax Code in a positive way, we want to hear about that. We want to be able to talk about that on the House floor.

One story that I have, back in central Pennsylvania, Dr. Greg Pyle is the president of Oil Surgery Associates. His practices are in Bedford County and Blair County, Pennsylvania, which are in the Ninth Congressional District of Pennsylvania. He has seen steady growth over the past 10 years, some of the most impressive growth being in small Bedford County. It is about 45,000. According to Dr. Pyle, medical practices usually plateau financially from 5 to 8 years. However, Dr. Pyle's medical partnership, which has been in business for 12 years, has seen some of

its greatest growth just in the past couple of years. He attributes that directly to the reduction in taxes and that people have more money in their pocket that they can come in and utilize his services that he provides to them in central Pennsylvania.

Again, we have many, many other stories, but I just want at this point to yield back to my good friend from Kentucky (Mr. DAVIS).

Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky. I thank you, Congressman SHUSTER. For those of you who are watching, if you would like to share your perspective, your view, join us via e-mail at CountdownCrew@mail.house.gov, and remember that in 1,419 days, there is a bill arriving.

I would put it to you in a question like this. If you knew or you suddenly went to the mailbox and opened the box up and there was a bill for \$2,100 and it was due immediately, that is what is coming if these tax cuts are not extended and made permanent.

Despite the fact of the economic improvement in this Nation, the Democratic Congress is committed to raise taxes. The last time they raised taxes was 25 days ago in the energy industry that has an effect on virtually every job in America, and now we are looking at a wide variety of taxes.

Facts are stubborn things. The success of Republican tax relief initiatives are undeniable. That is the reason that Congressman SHUSTER and I and the Countdown Crew like to say we want to create taxpayers, not raise taxes. We want to create taxpayers, not create new taxes because the job creators who are out there are real people, like Jack Kingston who was in the insurance industry; Thelma Drake from Virginia now who was a Realtor; Bill Shuster who worked in the automotive support industry. I worked in the manufacturing industry, and all of us saw firsthand the impact of government policies that were often well meant by folks that passed these laws, but they never worked out in that environment to understand the impact that it had on the pocketbook of working Americans.

As we stand here tonight for the seventh week since the Democrats took control of Congress, I am pleased to report one thing, though, is that the Democrats have come to the realization that some facts just cannot be ignored.

This week, the House will vote on H.R. 976, and that is the Small Business Tax Relief Act of 2007. This bipartisan legislation extends critical tax provisions for small business owners and paves the way for the House and the Senate to come to agreement on raising the minimum wage from \$5.15 cents to \$7.25.

I know you supported this measure, Mr. SHUSTER, and so did I, but we realize also how important this provision can be for young people just starting out, for working families, and I am glad that the Democrats have realized

how important some of the tax incentives are to keeping our businesses growing and creating new jobs, but we cannot stop here. We have got to make this and all the other tax relief provisions permanent that affect individual families, because real people who hold real jobs out in the real world, not here in the halls of Congress, are the ones that pay those taxes, that foot that bill like that \$2,098 bill that is going to be arriving in 2 years, in the very near future, if these tax policies are not extended, if they are not continued for the great benefit that they have brought forward.

I would like to highlight some tax provisions that need to be made permanent. First of all, the \$1,000 child tax credit reverts to \$500. For a family of four, that is \$2,000. In my case, my wife Pat and I have six children. That is \$3,000. It goes on and on, affecting people right in their pocketbook.

That \$500 difference is not \$500 that is going for a corporate jet or some rich and famous lifestyle for people who were seen in the tabloid shows on TV. That \$500 tax credit goes to real people who live in the real world. They are spending that on their children and investing that in their children's future. I believe we need to allow them to keep more of what they earned because they are going to spend it in a way that is going to benefit their children and their children's children.

Congresswoman DRAKE mentioned earlier the 10 percent tax bracket. Contrary to some of the spin in the media, the truth of the matter is that the tax burdens have been pushed upward. It is those with more that are paying more now with the structure of these cuts. Millions of people have been taken off the tax rolls, and in fact, the 10 percent bracket was created specifically as a transition for lower-income earners so their tax burden would not be that high, that they would be able to keep more of what they earn to be sure they meet their basic necessities. That 10 percent bracket will disappear when those tax cuts expire in 2010 without action from Congress and from the Senate and from the President of the United States.

I would mention in a light moment that Kentucky is the home of Kentucky Fried Chicken. We were meeting with KFC franchisees from all around the country that came into Washington last week to give their small business ownership perspective, what they do in the food service industry, and they talked unceasingly about the benefits of tax policies that help working families, that help them as small business owners that made sure that they could keep the dollars in their community, creating jobs in their community instead of sending it to bureaucrats in Washington, D.C.

One thing that they brought up that was very important and really affects any capital-intensive business that they wished for was the continuation of the 15-year accelerated depreciation

for improvements on new construction of restaurant buildings. Under old law, we are looking at a 30-year depreciation schedule, and when you think about the food service industry, as competitive as it is with new fads and themes to be able to meet the needs of the consumer, 30 years is quite a long time, and I can think of a difference in my lifetime.

These business owners, these men and women who were creating thousands and thousands of jobs around the United States, asked to not have their tax burden eliminated, but simply to have it structured in such a way that they could compete more effectively.

They understand the importance of creating taxpayers versus taxes because those dollars, creating jobs, will come back into the economy, and as we have seen with record revenues to the Federal Government, by cutting taxes we have improved revenue.

The Republican-led Congress had acted and extended these important tax relief provisions to 2007, but we need to make them permanent.

I would like to defer now to my colleague from Pennsylvania to share some more of his perspective on this issue.

Mr. SHUSTER. I appreciate that. You made a very important point about the minimum wage. I think you and I both voted at the end of the last Congress to increase the minimum wage, but it failed in the Senate. It was not able to get through in the Senate.

What is happening here today is that our friends on the other side, they stand up on the House floor and claim that they have raised the minimum wage when, in fact, all they have done is pass it in the House. It is not law yet. It takes both bodies to pass it.

Thank goodness for the United States Senate. They are putting back in those tax cuts for small business. They are absolutely critical for small businesses.

Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky. Just as an aside, if the gentleman would yield, I am becoming a much bigger fan of the policies and rules of the U.S. Senate since November 8.

Mr. SHUSTER. I agree with you on that.

There is a small amusement park in my district, Lakelawn Park, and I was talking to the general manager of Lakelawn Park, and he told me the increase in the minimum wage is going to cost him between \$130,000 to \$150,000 to the bottom line, and what they employ are mainly high school kids in the summertime to run those rides. He said that kids starting out at minimum wage, if they had been there for a period of time they certainly make more than that.

□ 2045

But without any kind of tax decrease or other kind of tax benefit, that is going to cost them \$130,000. It is going to cause him to hire less kids to work in the summer because he is not going

to be able to afford that kind of hit to his bottom line. So we passed it here in the House, we know, and unfortunately the national news media, unlike in 1995 when the Republicans took control, I remember it well. The first 100 days, every time the Republicans would pass something the national news media was quick to point out, Well, they haven't done anything yet, they just passed the House.

And that is all that happened here in the first 100 hours, is we passed the House. Minimum wage has not gone up. It will go up with probably a lot of Republican votes if the Senate comes through with the tax measures that they proposed. And I know the House, Johnny-come-lately to the tax cut for small businesses, we are going to hopefully pass something here this week to offer some of those tax cuts, but not near enough what small businesses need. Our small business owners are out there every day creating jobs, meeting payrolls, working long hours, and giving back to the community.

The community I come from, when you look at who are the people that are contributing to the charities and the different civic organizations, it is the small business owner, giving back to its community to make it a better place to live. So I think it is so important that we put tax breaks in, we make the ones permanent that we passed in 2001 and 2003.

And I just have another story of a small business owner from my district, Greg Rothman with RSR Realty in Cumberland County, Pennsylvania, which is Carlisle, Pennsylvania, near Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. He has seen a massive increase in his business due to the economic policies that were put in place over the last several years. The lower tax burden has trickled down, and houses are being sold and houses are being built, more attractive for the consumers to buy throughout Pennsylvania, and especially in central Pennsylvania in Cumberland County, Pennsylvania, and employment rate is about 3.3, 3.4, 4 percent, one of the lowest in the State.

Reductions in capital gains tax have allowed many empty nesters to enter the housing market to buy homes, to improve what they are living in, or downsize into nicer places. It has helped his realty business grow. And since becoming a partner in RSR realty in 1999, Greg has seen it grow from 20 Realtors to 60, which is an increase of 40 jobs in about the past 7 or 8 years. And it is these economic policies that we have put in place that have caused this to happen; and Greg said that he has seen the highest sales volume since he has entered the industry.

And I think that is important to tell those kinds of stories. Those are real people; those are real jobs. And I want to remind people that we would like to hear those kinds of stories; we want to hear from all across America. At the countdowncrew@mail.house.gov, you can send us in that story, your success

story, and how you utilized those tax cuts that have been put in place in the early 2000s and why we need to keep them in place. So we would love to hear stories from business people, small, medium-sized, and large all around the country. We certainly would appreciate that.

At this time I will yield back to the gentleman from Kentucky.

Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky. I thank the gentleman and point out that we in the Countdown Crew can be contacted at countdowncrew@mail.house.gov. The stories that we tell are about real people who are creating real jobs and live in the real world, and they understand the real effects of the policies that are generated here in Washington, that create value, that create a future, and those that create impediment and create barriers to growth.

I think of my friend George Hammond who runs Hammond Automotive. He started in Covington, Kentucky, years ago, and he invested in his business the great benefits that have come from the tax cuts that were passed by the Republican Congress, allowing the American people to keep more of what they own, have benefited him and his employees and family. His business has grown. In fact, he opened a new outlet, a new store in Burlington, Kentucky, to reach even more people and to create even more jobs.

It is like my friend Don Salyers who runs a river transport operation in Ashland, Kentucky, giving opportunity for creating more jobs and a future for that community that is in economic transition.

This week we are going to vote for a tax incentive package that will help to keep the American economy strong by extending tax policies that we passed in prior Congresses. We owe it to our families and this Nation, to our working families, to small business owners, and ultimately to the health of the economy to allow people to keep more of what they earn. We need to do more that creates that future and creates taxpayers, instead of raising taxes.

One thing that I would like to comment on here tonight is the extension of the work opportunity tax credit. Small business owners, especially those that have to take somebody and intensively train them to bring them into that workplace, into that small business to make them into a taxpayer need incentives and opportunities. For example, we have many people who have had some challenges in life, that may have lived life on the edge, may be going through a transition in life, and we want to give them that opportunity. But the way to do that is not to mandate that. The way to do that is not simply to set aside the taxpayers' dollars with no stewardship or oversight, but is to allow the market and the economy to work by providing accountability for those small business owners on the frontline, and also the opportunity and the incentive to make an investment. And what the work op-

portunity tax credit does is it incentivizes small business owners to hire higher-risk employees, and the goal again is creating taxpayers.

What are some examples of this? Dealing with high-risk youth. My wife, Pat, and I worked with Youth on the Edge for over 20 years before I came to Congress. And the one thing that I can say is there are many young people that need a vision; they need a new start to overcome mistakes that were made earlier, some wrong assumptions they had about their environment, oftentimes the consequences of poor decisions that they made.

On first blush, a business owner could be hard pressed to want to make that investment. But what this tax credit does is gives an offset to that business owner to make that investment, to reduce the risk, to give somebody a chance. That is the kind of framework, the kind of regulation that government should give that allows the market to work, to bring out the best in people, and ultimately strengthen our economy in the long term.

You know, as I close tonight before yielding to the gentleman from Pennsylvania for his final words, our mission in the Countdown Crew is to do two things: first, it is to let the American people know that in 1,419 days, a \$2,100 bill is going to arrive in the mail to basically every taxpayer in the United States when the tax cuts that have produced so much will be repealed automatically, when they sunset. We need to allow people to keep more of what they earn. We have seen the great benefits that come to the economy from that.

The other thing that we do in the Countdown Crew is we want to highlight the positive impact of policies that allow people to control their own lives. The government doesn't create jobs; all it can do is create a framework and environment that either empowers people or restrains them and holds them back. And what we want to do is join with you and the Countdown Crew, and you can contact us at countdowncrew@mail.house.gov to get the American people's story here in the House of Representatives so that the Congress will know, and compel the Congress to act, to allow the small business owners who create the bulk of jobs in this country to keep more of what they earn, to invest it in their employees, to allow working families to keep more of what they earn and invest it in their employees; so that in 1,490 days we can continue creating opportunities rather than stopping something that has been a great benefit.

With that, I will yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania to close.

Mr. SHUSTER. I appreciate that. And I think the point you made is worth repeating, because I know you and I believe this and many of our colleagues believe this, especially on this side of the aisle, that government doesn't create jobs. We can only create

an environment to give people the opportunity to create jobs, small entrepreneurs and business people across this country. And our fiscal problems in this country, our financial problems with the government, isn't that the government taxes too little. It is that we spend entirely too much. And I know the coming weeks, I know especially the new Members of Congress are going to be put to the test to stand up and be accounted for, because there are many people who say that America voted for a change in November, and they did.

But I know there is nobody in the Ninth Congressional District and nobody that I have come across as I travel this country that wanted to change from a lower tax system to higher taxes. Nobody wants to do that. And our goal is, in the Countdown Crew, to make the American people aware that the Democrats don't have to do anything; they can run out the clock, and on January 1, 2011, they will have the largest tax increase in American history, over \$200 billion. And I believe it is our duty to make sure that we are talking about it so that the American people know what the majority intends to do by changing the rules on their first couple of days of Congress from a three-fifths majority to a simple majority to raise taxes, they have made it a lot easier to raise taxes.

They put PAYGO into place which only deals with new spending, and it really does nothing to address the deficits we have today. So PAYGO really should be TAXGO, because that is what the American people are going to see.

So, again, we urge you to e-mail us at countdowncrew@mail.house.gov, because we want to hear your stories about how you have put those tax cuts into use to create jobs and make America a more prosperous place.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WALDEN of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise their remarks on the subject of my Special Order this evening.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Oregon?

There was no objection.

THE SECURE RURAL SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITY SELF-DETERMINATION ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. WALDEN) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. WALDEN of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, I want to welcome my colleagues from Oregon who are in the Chamber with me tonight. Congressman DEFAZIO and Congresswoman DARLENE HOOLEY are here with me, and I know we will be joined by other members of

the Northwest delegation to talk about a very, very important issue, the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act, H.R. 17, also known as County Payments, that in both this Congress and the last has been a strongly bipartisan issue. The DeFazio-Walden legislation, H.R. 17, a bill to reauthorize and fund the County Payments Program for 7 years to date enjoys the support of 114 cosponsors in this Congress. The exact same bill last Congress had 139 cosponsors.

As I have said in 13 of 18 one-minute floor speeches: the failure of Congress, either the last one or this one, to reauthorize the County Payments Program amounts to a breach of faith to more than 600 forested counties all across America and 4,400 school districts all across this country.

I would like to take a moment to highlight a few of the impacts of the rural forested counties and school districts in America without these funds: severe cuts in funding for jail beds; sheriffs' patrols are being cut sometimes in half; criminal prosecutions and the pursuit of meth cooks, all of that being reduced; rural school districts foregoing overdue repairs; may not be able to buy textbooks, or face significant challenges busing kids to schools. It also means libraries will close in places like Jackson County, Oregon.

I would like to draw your attention to this poster here to my left. It is from a young lady, a fifth grader named Alice from Ashland, Oregon, who utilizes one of the 15 Jackson County libraries where she lives, and they are all scheduled to close in just a couple of months, in April, if we don't reauthorize and fund the Secure County Schools legislation.

Alice has resolved to read all the "Hank the Cowdog" books, but she needs these libraries to stay open. She says: "Representative WALDEN, I live in Ashland and I go to Bellview School. I am in the fifth grade. I use our library a lot. We always use books on tape for car trips. My New Year's resolution is to read all the "Hank the Cowdog" books, and the library has them all. I need the library to stay open so I can finish my resolution. I also use a lot of books here for school reports. Please help to keep our library system open. Sincerely, Alice."

Alice is a fifth grader in Ashland, Oregon. She gets it. If Alice can get it, this Congress ought to be able to get it, and we ought to be able to keep the libraries open in Jackson County.

Many of you in this Chamber and Americans all across the land will remember the heart-wrenching service for the Kim family in southern Oregon this winter, lost in the national forest, and the mountain climbers who perished on Mount Hood just 45 minutes from my home in Hood River. Both of these counties, both of the search and rescue operations that took place used funds out of the program that Congressman DEFAZIO and others and I are

trying to reauthorize to help pay for the equipment and for the search and rescue operations, to go on Federal land using county resources to look for these people who were lost, some of whom perished.

These vital county services and rural school programs were once funded by timber receipts, but because of virtual elimination of the timber harvest on our Federal forests, Congress approved the county payments to develop forest health improvement projects on public lands and simultaneously stimulate job development in some of our rural communities.

□ 2100

This law has been a primary funding mechanism to provide rural schools with educational opportunities comparable to suburban and urban students. It has also restored programs for students in rural schools and prevented the closure of numerous isolated rural schools. It has allowed over 600 rural counties to address the severe road maintenance backlog.

Before I get into that, though, I would like to show you total Pacific Northwest timber receipts. As you can see here, it has fluctuated over the years, but it has never been as low as it is today. There were big years of timber harvest, this one up, very large; but generally it has been in this framework, and you can see, really, since the 1990s it has just gone way down.

The Federal Government has had a compact with these counties dating back to when Teddy Roosevelt was President and created the great forest reserves, setting aside huge swaths of land. Upwards to half of my district is under Federal management and control, and many of my colleagues and some of my counties it is upwards to 70, 75 percent.

The Federal Government believed in 1908 and again in 1938 that it had a responsibility to help these communities surrounded by Federal lands because these lands were not going to be on their tax base. That is what started this whole program. They used to share timber receipts. As you can see, timber harvests went down, the receipts went down.

You say, what happened to our wood products system? Well, here is what happened. See what happened on Federal forest lands. This is 1980 here, top level, about 11 billion board feet sold. Then it drops way down in the red. Where did we get the lumber? Imports. Soft wood lumber imports right there, the blue and the yellow.

So this came along, we said timber receipts are down, so we are going to replace it, 6 years ago, now almost 7. We authorized this Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act.

The country has 7,500 national forests and grasslands covering 192 million acres. That is the size of Texas, by the way. Our State of Oregon has 15 national forests. We are proud of them.