

Normally, I implore my colleagues to vote a certain way, but today I urge the American people to call, write, and e-mail and tell your U.S. senator and congressman to vote “no” on this rancid meat and demand alternatives be considered.

Let's demand the road to freedom.

□ 1630

TAX CUTS ARE NOT THE ANSWER

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

Mr. DEFAZIO. If the Republicans hadn't run the economy into a ditch and if they had a credible alternative, maybe we'd listen to them.

Tax cuts, tax cuts, tax cuts—tell me about a tax cut that ever built a public school. Tell me about a tax cut that ever educated a child at a public school. Tell me about a tax cut that built a bridge. We've got tax cuts to nowhere. They just want to carry on about bridges to nowhere.

We've got 160,000 bridges in this country on the national highway system that are falling down. They're functionally obsolete or they are structurally deficient. A tax cut will not fix a single one of them. I guess maybe after they give the rich people all their money back, we can take up a collection for public schools, a collection to educate our kids. Maybe they'll be generous. Maybe they will even build us some bridges. I don't think so.

The Republicans don't have a credible alternative. Unfortunately, this bill also has too much tax cuts in it because of Republican insistence, particularly from the Senate side. We have lost so many jobs and potential jobs in this bill because of tax cuts.

Now, let's look at infrastructure spending. In this bill, \$29 billion to modernize roads and bridges, rebuild roads and bridges. That creates 835,000 jobs. \$18 billion for clean water environmental restoration projects, 375,000 jobs. That's \$47 billion—that's 6 percent of the bill, nowhere near enough—is going to create 1.2 million jobs. That means 35 percent of the jobs in this bill come out of 6 percent of the bill, and none of them come out of the tax cuts they're talking about on that side of the aisle.

Infrastructure spending was cut to make room for tax cuts. Mass transit was cut to make room for tax cuts. Two of the largest transit districts in Oregon, they're suffering the same thing as transit districts across the country. They have too many passengers so they're going to have to cut service. Americans are turning to transit to avoid high gas prices. They're turning to transit as an effective alternative and a good way to get to work, and the service is going to go away. There's no transit district in the world, not a one, that makes money, but the Republicans say, oh, we can't afford to

support those transit districts; let's give the money back to people. Well, what are they going to do? How are they going to get to work? There's a lot of people who don't have an alternative.

And then the making work paid tax cut, which is in this bill, is down to eight bucks a week per person. Now, I can just see, you know, someone of the generation that gets that \$8, there's a lot of people in my district could use eight bucks a week, they sure could, but they don't think it's going to put America back to work. They don't think it's going to turn this economy around. They don't think that's going to give us a better future. It can help them with some essentials. It can help their kids with some essentials, but they would rather see the money invested to put other people to work in good jobs and rebuild this country and give us a better future. Eight bucks a week.

I can just see, you know, 20 years from today when our kids and grandkids are still paying for the money we borrowed to give some people \$8 a week back will say, Grandpa, what did you spend that eight bucks a week on because I'm paying taxes to pay that money back. Grandpa probably won't remember where the eight bucks a week went.

The education cuts, to make room for tax cuts, which can mean some of the school districts in my State have to chop 20 days off the year, 20 days. Now, tax cuts aren't going to help those kids get their education. They're not going to keep those schools open.

School construction, remodernization, out. Had to make room for tax cuts. Now, why are we making all this room for tax cuts when none of the Republicans are supporting the bill? Because there's three Republicans in the Senate who are writing this policy. They're more powerful than the President of the United States and the Congress combined apparently because the Senate is so dysfunctional, and they're writing the bill and they want the tax cuts. They're delivering tax cuts for these guys, and they're sticking it to the American people in terms of a meaningful jobs creation stimulus package.

Veterans took a big cut. Everybody loves to come to the floor and wrap themselves in the flag and talk about how much they support our troops. You can measure it in this bill. Veterans and our servicemembers were cut in their housing and other services to make room for tax cuts.

Tax cuts are not the answer. I personally think we should start over, reject the tax cut mantle from that side of the aisle, and invest the money in rebuilding this country. If we're going to borrow the money, it should provide benefits for years to come, not a transient benefit and not a tax cut.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO NISWONGER CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL IN JOHNSON CITY, TENNESSEE

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

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Madam Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to Niswonger Children's Hospital in Johnson City, Tennessee. On March 2, 2009, the hospital will open its doors and the new home for the Children's Hospital, our region's first hospital for children. The Children's Hospital at Johnson City Medical Center has offered premier health services in approximately 20 pediatric subspecialties for the past 16 years.

Once open, Niswonger Children's Hospital will serve children from birth until 18 years of age in a four-State region, including parts of Tennessee, North Carolina, Virginia, and Kentucky. With the financial assistance of Scott and Nikki Niswonger and the people of our region, the hospital will be a place where children will feel comfortable coming to for their care.

Niswonger's patient-centered care philosophy will put families in control of their care, and I certainly commend them for their work.

Madam Speaker, when I began my medical practice some 30-plus years ago in Johnson City, we used a closet and had a one-bed neonatal intensive care unit. Today, we have a state-of-the-art intensive care unit to care for children.

When I began practice, when I graduated from medical school, almost half of the children who were born at 7 months died. Today, they have the same life expectancy as a term birth, and from the bottom of my heart, I want to thank this family for what they have done to make the health care of our region better and our children's lives better.

DON'T USE FEDERAL FUNDS TO BUY UP AT-RISK LOANS

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

Ms. KAPTUR. Madam Speaker, today the White House apparently made an announcement that they're considering a proposal to head off potentially millions of more home foreclosures by using Federal funds to buy up at-risk loans and apparently refinance them. It's one of several proposals that the White House is looking at.

I would urge the new President of the United States not to allow the Federal Government to purchase toxic assets, and I'm placing in the RECORD an article from late last fall by William Isaac, the former head of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation during the 1980s, the early part of the eighties, late seventies, when over 3,000 banks in our country were resolved without going to