

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION ON THE BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2012

SPEECH OF HON. DORIS O. MATSUI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2011

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H. Con. Res. 34) establishing the budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2012 and setting forth appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2013 through 2021, with Mr. Terry in the chair.

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Chair, I rise today in strong opposition to the Republican budget plan.

The federal budget should reflect the priorities and values of our nation, but the Republican plan instead looks out for the likes of big corporations who would get enormous tax breaks. What's more, the Republicans are asking America's seniors to pay for it. In fact, the Republican budget would end Medicare as we know it. And it would devastate Medicaid. Moreover, the Republican budget hurts our economy and in particular investments in innovation.

Mr. Speaker, the Republican budget proposal will severely unravel our nation's gains in the clean energy economy. At the same time, it proposes significant tax subsidies for Big Oil. There is something not right with that picture. In fact, I believe the Republican budget is severely short-sighted. It offers our competitors, China and Germany, a free-pass to dominate an ever-growing clean energy manufacturing economy and job creation.

The Sacramento area has over 220 clean energy companies, and I can tell you that many of those small business CEOs are seeking continued investment and support from this Congress.

Mr. Chair, we should be promoting policies like the Make It in America agenda to boost America's manufacturing industry and make products here this country. In order for America to remain competitive, innovative, and a global leader, we must make responsible choices.

Unfortunately, the Ryan budget does not. I urge my colleagues to vote against this misguided Republican budget plan.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TRENT FRANKS

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 15, 2011

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. Mr. Speaker, I missed rollcall vote No. 270 for H. Con. Res. 35. If I were here, I would have voted "yea."

INTRODUCTION OF THE SUPERFUND REINVESTMENT ACT

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 15, 2011

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, today, I am pleased to introduce the "Superfund Rein-

vestment Act" along with my colleagues Rep. FRANK PALLONE and TIMOTHY BISHOP. This legislation will provide resources to communities across the country to clean up hazardous waste sites and at the same time will save taxpayers more than \$20 billion over 10 years.

The Superfund program was enacted in 1980 to provide money to clean up toxic waste sites where the responsible party was out of business or could not be identified. Before they expired in 1995, the money for Superfund cleanup came from taxes on the polluters themselves. However, Congress has never reauthorized the tax, making the burden of funding cleanups of toxic waste sites fall on the shoulders of taxpaying Americans. It is time to make public health, not protection for polluters, a priority.

This legislation will simply reinstate the Superfund taxes to their previous levels. This includes excise taxes of 9.7 cents per barrel on crude oil or refined oil products, excise taxes of \$0.22 to \$4.87 per ton on certain chemicals, and a corporate income tax of 0.12 percent on the amount of a corporation's modified alternative minimum taxable income that exceeds \$2 million. The President's FY 2012 budget, which calls for reauthorization of these taxes, estimates that these fees would raise about \$2 billion per year and \$20.8 billion over 10 years.

Superfund sites are some of the most contaminated in the nation. 70 million Americans—including 10 million children, live within four miles of a Superfund site. They are exposed to toxic waste such as arsenic, benzene, PCBs, mercury and a range of solvents, leading to health problems such as infertility, low birth weight, birth defects, leukemia and respiratory difficulties. Communities home to these sites can face restrictions on water use and recreational activities as well as economic losses as property values decline due to contaminated land.

My community of Portland, Oregon, has been struggling to clean up one of the nation's most complex Superfund sites, the Portland Harbor site on the Willamette River. I hope that this bill to reinvest in the Superfund program will provide additional resources to the Environmental Protection Agency to keep the cleanup on track.

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION ON THE BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2012

SPEECH OF

HON. MAZIE K. HIRONO

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2011

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H. Con. Res. 34) establishing the budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2012 and setting forth appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2013 through 2021:

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. Chair, I rise in strong opposition to H. Con. Res. 34, the FY 2012 Budget Resolution. Instead of having the wealthiest pay their fair share, this budget just helps the "haves" at the expense of everyone else.

The Republican majority has brought this bill to the floor for a vote today, claiming that this budget will resolve our fiscal crisis and lead our country back on the "path to prosperity." Sadly, this path to prosperity only applies to those who already have a lot and don't need more. Millionaires and billionaires will like the tax breaks that they'll get from this budget. The wealthiest Americans will get the Bush tax cuts permanently extended to the tune of \$1 trillion. Big Oil companies will get tens of billions of dollars in subsidies. Special interests that send jobs overseas will also like this budget's tax giveaways.

What should scare us most about this FY2012 budget is that it pays for all of these tax breaks—over \$4 trillion in tax cuts—on the backs of working and middle-class people. It asks those who are struggling the most to sacrifice even more.

The recession has increased the child poverty rate in Hawaii to its highest level in years. This reverse Robin Hood budget would drastically cut food programs for poor children, Head Start, and child care for working families. Today, my staff and I are fasting in solidarity with the 50 million people in America who don't know where their next meal is coming from. HungerFast.org is coordinating this effort with over 30,000 people, including Members of Congress, Ambassador Tony Hall, faith leaders, MoveOn and SEIU members, Moby, and others.

H. Con. Res. 34 ends Medicare as we know it. All of you under the age of 55 will not be able to enroll in the original Medicare program. In Hawaii, the under-55 population is slightly less than a million. When you are age 67—yes, that's right, Republicans are raising the Medicare enrollment age by two more years—you will receive a voucher that you will use to buy insurance from a private company. We don't know what the amount of the voucher will be or whether it will keep up with the rising costs of health care. This scheme privatizes Medicare.

You're 67 years old. Is trying to buy health insurance with your voucher what you want to be doing? Every year? And who knows if the doctor you like is even going to participate in your private insurance plan. One thing is for certain—privatizing Medicare will mean more business for the insurance companies.

The Republican plan doesn't take on the 48 million Americans already on Medicare or those that will enter the program in 10 years because the Republicans know that this voucher plan would make these seniors mad as hell. Many of you have parents on Medicare. My mom is on Medicare. Without Medicare, we would be worried sick about how our parents will pay for health care.

Before Medicare became law in 1965, half of all seniors had no health insurance. The Republican budget is not only out of step with the priorities of the nation, but it is also a step backwards when it comes to health care for those who need it the most.

This budget also takes away important health care reform benefits for seniors who are already on Medicare. It repeals the gradual elimination of the Medicare "donut hole" in prescription drug coverage. It also repeals free access to key preventive services and annual checkups. Over 48 million seniors with Medicare, including 208,500 in Hawaii, would have to pay more if they want to stay healthy by getting regular check-ups.

Another group most in need of medical care in our country—the poor—would see cuts of about \$771 billion from Medicaid over 10 years. Medicaid would be converted into a block grant program, which won't reflect the actual need for Medicaid services. Converting Medicaid into a fixed funding stream would raise the cost of nursing home care for millions of families, potentially reducing the quality of care. It would also impact seniors and disabled individuals who want home- or community-based support as opposed to expensive institutional care.

Seventeen governors, including our former colleague and now Governor of Hawaii Neil Abercrombie, have written to the Speaker in opposition to the Republican plan to block grant Medicaid. They know that this would place an unfair burden on the cost of health care on the states. Under the Republican plan, Hawaii alone would lose \$2.8 billion in federal Medicaid dollars over 10 years. This means that 29,600 seniors could lose their Medicaid coverage or see reduced benefits due to the proposed Republican cut, resulting in 161,500 children losing their Medicaid coverage.

In addition to the problematic changes that this budget makes to Medicare and Medicaid, this short-sighted budget prevents us from investing in our workforce and growing our economy. The Republican budget cuts education and job training by more than 25 percent below current levels. Pell grants, funding for low-income elementary and secondary schools, and workforce training programs would be targeted for steep cuts. The bill also makes drastic cuts to local law enforcement and first responder programs at a time when many states, including Hawaii, are dealing with severe budget deficits.

This short-sighted budget also fails to invest in infrastructure or create jobs in the transportation sector. While I'm working with my colleagues in the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee to approve a new multi-year highway and transit program, this Republican budget withdraws about \$318 billion in resources from highway, transit, and other transportation initiatives over the next 10 years. In the meantime, commuters are paying higher gas prices at the pump, seeking alternative modes of transportation, and dealing with congestion on our nation's roads, which along with our public transportation, were given a grade of "D" by the American Society of Civil Engineers.

The resolution offered by the Republicans further fails to make critical investments in research and development (R&D) in science, health, and renewable energy, undermining our global competitiveness in R&D. Hawaii's families pay higher energy costs than anyone else in the country. Under this bill, oil companies can continue to get subsidies while making record profits. Funding for development of renewable energy sources is slashed by 60 percent, ensuring that we will remain dependent on imported fossil fuels and sending a signal to the markets that clean energy jobs are not a priority.

Instead of supporting the draconian cuts proposed by this Republican plan, I will vote for the fairer and more balanced plans proposed as alternatives to H. Con. Res. 34. These alternatives address our deficit in a more responsible way by assisting our most vulnerable during a time of fragile economic recovery. I will support investments that will

create jobs and ensure that our country remains the leader in innovation and the engine driving the global economy.

I urge my colleagues to vote against H. Con. Res. 34.

HONORING REVEREND OBBIE L. BURNS

HON. HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 15, 2011

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I submit the following Proclamation:

Whereas, Reverend Obbie L. Burns today begins a new chapter in his life and the life of New Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church in Lithonia, Georgia; and

Whereas, Reverend Obbie L. Burns under the guidance and favor of God, will this day be installed as Pastor of the New Macedonia Baptist Church and under his leadership he will be charged to pioneer and sustain New Macedonia Baptist Church, as an instrument in our community that uplifts the spiritual, physical and mental welfare of our citizens; and

Whereas, this remarkable and tenacious man of God has given hope to the hopeless, fed the hungry and is a beacon of light to those in need; and

Whereas, Reverend Burns is a spiritual warrior, a man of compassion, a fearless leader and a servant to all, but most of all a visionary who has shared not only with his Church, but with our District and the world his passion to spread the gospel of Jesus Christ; and

Whereas, the U.S. Representative of the Fourth District of Georgia has set aside this day to honor and recognize Reverend Obbie L. Burns on his installation as Pastor;

Now therefore, I, HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, JR. do hereby proclaim April 17, 2011 as Reverend Obbie L. Burns Day in the 4th Congressional District.

Proclaimed, this 17th day of April, 2011.

HONORING MS. ISABEL AFANADOR

HON. FREDERICA S. WILSON

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 15, 2011

Ms. WILSON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable woman, Ms. Isabel Afanador. Isabel Afanador was born in Bogota, Colombia. Quite accomplished, she has two Bachelor's degrees in Social Work, from the University Externado de Colombia and Florida International University. Additionally, she earned her Masters of Social Work from Florida International University.

Upon graduation in Colombia, she was hired as the Director of Social Services of Laminas del Caribe S.A.

In 1978, Isabel Afanador made South Florida her home. One year later she began to work for the Florida Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services as a caseworker in mental health. She was later promoted to the Program Manager position, which she held from 1988 to 1994.

From 1995 to 1998 she was the Department of Children and Families District Licensing Coordinator, whose responsibility it was to en-

sure quality licensure of all residential providers and day care facilities.

In 1998, Isabel left the child welfare arena to work for the Department of Juvenile Justice, where for two years she managed an operational division responsible for intake, assessment, detention screening, and case management of the Miami-Dade district.

In August 2000, she was promoted to Chief Probation Officer for the Miami-Dade Juvenile Justice Program, and held the position of South Regional Director from 2008–2011.

Ms. Isabel Afanador has used her many talents and skills for the benefit of the community. This includes freely sharing her time serving with the Children's Trust Board, Neat Stuff board, Abriendo Puertas board, Youth Task Force board, Criminal Justice Council and a member of St. Brendan's Parish.

Mr. Speaker, I ask those present today to join me in honoring Ms. Isabel Afanador and commending her many achievements and service on behalf of the state of Florida.

HONORING STUDENT VETERAN AND COMMUNITY LEADER MATT RANDLE

HON. RAÚL M. GRIJALVA

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 15, 2011

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to recognize former United States Army Combat Medic and current University of Arizona student Matt Randle.

Over the course of his career in the Army, Matt received two Army Commendation Medals, three Army Achievement Medals and two Good Conduct Medals for his service.

Following his distinguished service to our country Matt returned to his hometown of Tucson, Arizona and enrolled at the University of Arizona. Once on the UA campus, Matt began working with UA President Robert Shelton and his staff to develop and implement an initiative for returning veterans. I am proud to say that today the University of Arizona, located in my congressional district, has one of the most progressive and impressive veteran education and service models in the country including a student run veteran's office.

Matt's leadership has also played an integral role in the prosperity of the UA Veterans club. This club has received numerous awards including the "club" and "Philanthropic Group" of the year awards for the 2009–2010 academic school year on the UA campus and the Student Veterans of America "club of the year award."

Additionally, Matt will receive the UA's 2011 Robie Award which is issued to students who show personal integrity, initiative, cooperativeness, enthusiasm, humility, well-rounded interests, active participation in student affairs, service to the university and willingness to give more than required, and show a love of God and country. Thankfully, upon graduation Matt will not be leaving Tucson; he will be attending the University of Arizona Rogers College Of Law in the fall of 2011.

Each day more veterans return home from the Middle East conflicts. Matt Randle's ambition and leadership both at the UA and nationally will certainly be of great benefit to our returning veterans.