

forth appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2014 through 2022:

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Chair, over the last two days, we have debated very different visions and choices for addressing the budgetary challenges facing our Nation. We do not have a difference on the question of whether or not we should reduce our long-term deficits and the debt. We must. We have a difference over how to do it.

Unfortunately, the Republican plan makes all the wrong choices. It abandons the economic recovery and ends the Medicare guarantee to seniors, while providing a whopping average tax break of almost \$400,000 for people making over \$1 million a year. This Republican plan will weaken economic growth. It rewards corporations that ship American jobs overseas, while slashing investments in education, in science and research, and infrastructure that help America grow our economy right here at home. In short, it is a path to greater prosperity, if you're already wealthy. But it leaves seniors, working Americans, and future generations behind.

During the course of this debate, we will have the opportunity to consider several alternatives to the Republican budget, offered by Democrats. Every single one of these alternatives is far superior to the Republican plan, because they embody a more sensible, fair approach to our fiscal challenges.

To be clear, the only Democratic alternative that I fully and wholly support is the one I will offer. I have concerns with certain aspects of the other Democratic plans. I believe some of them rely too heavily on raising revenues and spend more than I think is necessary, and some of them make cuts to defense that I believe are too deep. Nevertheless, they provide important alternative approaches to reducing the deficit.

Another proposal was offered by Mr. COOPER and Mr. LATOURETTE. I commend these Members for offering an alternative budget. However, claims that their proposal embodied

the recommendations of the Simpson-Bowles Commission are simply untrue. Most importantly, their proposal calls for significantly less revenue than Simpson-Bowles. It does this by changing the baseline used as the starting point for the revenue increase. The Simpson-Bowles baseline assumed the revenue generated by allowing the top tax rate to rise to 39 percent—as it is scheduled to do under current law. The Cooper-LaTourette proposal failed to account for that revenue. The difference is substantial—approximately \$1 trillion in revenue. I believe in truth-in-advertising, and Cooper-LaTourette is very different from Simpson-Bowles. It moves the goal posts. As a result, the Cooper-LaTourette proposal has a significantly higher ratio of spending cuts to revenue increases compared to the deficit reduction in the Simpson-Bowles package. The Cooper-LaTourette plan also differs from Simpson-Bowles in other respects, such as by making deeper cuts in spending for discretionary programs. And it cuts nondefense discretionary funding by \$350 billion more than required by the Budget Control Act over ten years—which is also inconsistent with Simpson-Bowles.

I continue to believe the original Simpson-Bowles proposal offers an important framework for achieving a bipartisan deficit reduction plan. I would also point out that both the President's budget and the Democratic alternative I have offered share many of the same principles as Simpson-Bowles. Indeed, Alan Simpson and Erskine Bowles said the following about the President's budget:

In the framework he announced in April and what he submitted to the Select Committee in September, the President embraced many of the goals and principles outlined by the Fiscal Commission and incorporated some of the policies we proposed. We are pleased that the President's latest budget continues to focus on deficit reduction and are also encouraged to see real, specific policies for limiting tax expenditures, slowing health care cost growth, and reducing spending throughout the government.

While they went on to urge the President to go further, they recognized that his budget was a step in the right direction. The Democratic alternative budget mirrors the overall framework of the President's budget, and actually reduces the deficit more than the President's plan.

RECOGNIZING HMONG HERITAGE
MONTH

HON. SEAN P. DUFFY

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 30, 2012

Mr. DUFFY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the important role of the Hmong community in Wisconsin's 7th Congressional District.

This month marks 36 years since the first Hmong family arrived in Marathon County, Wisconsin and, currently, the Hmong account for a major percentage of our area's population. For the past 8 years, our local community has come together annually for Hmong Heritage Month, during which we celebrate the contributions of this important group and educate our residents about Hmong history and culture.

During the Vietnam War, the Hmong stood shoulder to shoulder with U.S. troops in the fight against Communism. Today, we stand shoulder to shoulder with the Hmong in our schools, our churches, and our businesses.

The Hmong have an old saying, "To be with a family is to be happy. To be without a family is to be lost." I truly believe the Hmong are a vital part of our American family, and their contributions to our society make us stronger.

I am proud to represent this community in the United States Congress and I wish them well as we celebrate Hmong Heritage Month.