

thank the gentleman from Mobile, AL (Mr. Callahan). We have agreed to pair on this. Hurricane Georges will undoubtedly hit either his congressional district or mine. We have reached the decision that the best place for us to be tomorrow with is with our families and with our constituents. The gentleman from Alabama is going to vote for it. I am going to vote against it.

Our Nation is \$5.5 trillion in debt. We owe the Social Security trust fund \$800 million. As a Nation we squander \$365 billion a year, that is \$1 billion a day, on interest on the national debt. Yet because for the first time in 30 years we are not borrowing money to make ends meet, we are deciding to find all sorts of new ways to give it away. That is wrong. It totally ignores national defense.

This year's Republican Congress will spend \$30 billion less in real dollars, in 1998 dollars, than they did in 1995 on defense. We are sending kids out in 30-year-old warships, 30-year-old helicopters, 30-year-old warplanes. The consequences of that can be dead young Americans in some future war. If we have any money left over, we need to take care of that.

We owe the Social Security trust fund \$800 million. That is a pledge that has to be fulfilled. Above all, if you have seen Private Ryan, there is an entire generation of Americans who served this country in the military who were promised free health care for life if they fulfilled their end of the obligation and now when they are too old to do anything about it, we are not fulfilling it. The defense health care is underfunded by \$600 million next year. Yet we can find time to give big contributors a tax break but not keep the promises we have already made.

For those reasons, I want to be recorded as voting "no."

#### PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. TAYLOR of Mississippi. Parliamentary inquiry, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman will state his parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. TAYLOR of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. CALLAHAN) and myself have agreed to pair tomorrow on the vote on the tax package. I would like for my statement to be included in the RECORD at that time, but I will not be here tomorrow to do so. Therefore, I am asking if it would be in order to ask at this time that that statement be included in the RECORD.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman may ask unanimous consent to do so.

Mr. TAYLOR of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that my statement be included in the RECORD at the appropriate place tomorrow.

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

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House, the Chair

postpones further consideration of H.R. 4579 until tomorrow.

#### SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 1997, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

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

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

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

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

#### SAVE SOCIAL SECURITY

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

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak out against another case of reverse Robin Hood. But this time it is stealing from our seniors to give out tax breaks in an election year. When we talk about Social Security, we are talking about one of the most important programs in the history of the United States. This program ensures that our seniors and our disabled will be taken care of. The Social Security program is the result of hard work by working families across this Nation. By dipping into the Social Security cookie jar, we jeopardize the security of seniors who count on these monthly checks during their retirement.

Let me close with a tribute today to the late Claude Pepper, one of the most important advocates for the elderly and for Social Security expansion in the United States Congress. Claude Pepper cared about seniors across this Nation and he fought to protect them so that they could enjoy their elderly years in life without being afraid of where their next check was coming from. As a Member of Congress from the State of Florida, Claude Pepper's legacy for fighting for the rights of seniors and the poor speaks for itself. He would not stand for election-year gimmicks that punished the working families who have contributed to the Social Security trust fund. In the name of decency and in the name of Claude Pepper, the leadership of this House should vote to save Social Security first. This is a mean-spirited attack on the needy. We have a responsibility to today's seniors and to tomorrow's seniors to protect this valuable program.

#### ENDING MARRIAGE TAX PENALTY

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

Mr. WELLER. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to air a few moments of thoughts regarding some issues important to this Congress and not just to the politicians that were elected to this House but to the folks back home in Illinois. I represent a very diverse district. I represent the south suburbs of Chicago and the south side of the city of Chicago, a lot of rural and bedroom communities. They often ask important questions. One of the most important questions we have this year is they know that Social Security long-term has financial problems and they know there is unfairness in the tax code. They say there is a question out there, can we save Social Security and can we eliminate the marriage tax penalty, for example, in the same effort?

We Republicans believe that you can, that you can save Social Security and you can bring greater fairness to our tax code by working to eliminate the marriage tax penalty, and we have a plan. When I think of Social Security, just like everyone, you always think of your own family and how issues affect your family. When I think of Social Security, I think of my mom and dad, Marilyn and LaVern Weller, a couple of farmers back home in Illinois who are retired and on Social Security. I also think of my Aunt Mary and my Aunt Eileen, my Uncle Jack and Uncle Bob who are also on Social Security. When I think of the marriage tax penalty, I think of my sister Pat and her husband Rich, a teacher and a farmer back in rural Sheldon, Illinois, and they like 28 million other married working couples with two incomes suffer the marriage tax penalty.

We have had a big victory today in the passage of legislation which will help save Social Security by setting aside \$1.4 trillion, twice what President Clinton suggested back in January we set aside, more than two times the \$600 billion, in fact \$1.4 trillion we are setting aside for the future efforts over the next couple of years to save Social Security. This is a big victory for people like my mom and dad and the senior citizens in Illinois.

I am often asked as well as we work to bring fairness to the tax code a pretty simple question, and, that is, is it fair, is it right that under our current tax code that almost 28 million married working couples, people like my sister Pat and her husband Rich who because they have two incomes under our tax code pay more in taxes just because they are married under our tax code? A lot of us think that is wrong. That is why addressing the marriage

tax penalty is such a priority. We have answered the call for bringing fairness to the tax code by making the centerpiece of the legislation this House is going to vote on tomorrow legislation which will eliminate for a majority of those 28 million married working couples paying the marriage tax penalty, will eliminate the marriage tax penalty.

In fact, I have an example here of a machinist and a school teacher in Joliet, Illinois. They live in the south suburbs. They have a combined income of \$50,000. Currently under our tax code, because the standard deduction for joint filers, for married couples, is now twice what it is for a single, if you figure in their personal exemptions and then give them the standard deduction when they file jointly, that standard deduction currently is only \$6,900. If we want to be fair about it, the standard deduction for a joint filer should always be twice what it is for single filers. We do that in the tax package we are going to vote on tomorrow. The result is for this machinist and this school teacher in Joliet, Illinois, with a standard deduction now of \$8,500, twice what it is for a single person, they will see a net benefit of \$240 in higher take-home pay as a result of our efforts to eliminate the marriage tax penalty.

Now, we eliminate the marriage tax penalty for a majority of those married couples who suffer it by doubling the standard deduction. Not only is that an issue of bringing fairness to the tax code but because we double the standard deduction for married working couples, we also simplify the tax code. The reason we simplify the tax code, now as a result of doubling the standard deduction which 28 million married working couples will enjoy and benefit from, seeing an extra \$240 in higher take-home pay, that is an extra car payment, 6 million of those couples will no longer need to itemize. We are simplifying their taxes. In fact they will no longer need to use the Schedule A. All they will need now is just to use the 1040-EZ. That is simplification.

Now, the opponents, some of whom we have heard from this evening and who oppose our efforts to eliminate the marriage tax penalty for a majority of those who suffer it, they claim that somehow our effort to eliminate the marriage tax penalty somehow will hurt and take money out of the Social Security trust fund. Now, there is an important question that was asked in the House Committee on Ways and Means this past week when we acted and produced our effort to save Social Security and eliminate the marriage tax penalty. We asked the representative, the Deputy Commissioner of the Social Security Administration, are those charges true? Is as a result of the tax cut being considered by the committee and of course voted on tomorrow, on Saturday, will there be any impact on the moneys in the Social Security trust fund? Judy Chessier, who is the Deputy Commissioner of the Social

Security Administration, had a very simple answer. Frankly for someone in the bureaucracy, it was very short, sweet and to the point. She said, "No." By saying "no," that means the Social Security trust fund is not impacted.

Ladies and gentlemen, we are going to vote on a tax package tomorrow that the centerpiece eliminates the marriage tax penalty for millions, in fact the majority of those who suffer it. This package is good because it helps married couples in Illinois, helps family farmers, helps small businesspeople, helps schools in Illinois and helps parents who want to send their kids off to college.

We can save Social Security. We can eliminate the marriage tax penalty. We have a good opportunity to do that tomorrow. It deserves bipartisan support. I urge bipartisan support for the Save Social Security Act which passed today as well as the 1998 Taxpayer Relief Act. Let us save Social Security. Let us eliminate the marriage tax penalty.

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#### CUT TAXES ONLY AFTER TRULY BALANCING THE BUDGET

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

Mr. MINGE. Mr. Speaker, I share with the previous Member the commitment to finding a way to reduce taxes. Really the question is, however, not do we have a commitment to reduce taxes and believe that the bill that has been brought up or will be brought up tomorrow is a fair bill in that respect. The question is the timing.

The previous speaker I think laid out quite clearly the issue, and that is to what extent are we selling a phony package to the American people by saying to them we have a surplus and we can balance the budget and go through a tax cut, without somehow compromising our commitment to stay the course and not add to our Nation's debt and not make it more difficult to solve the Social Security problems in the future?

The simple answer is, we do not have a balanced budget. We are borrowing this year approximately \$104 billion from the Social Security trust fund. This money is going into the general fund and supporting Federal programs.

We are going to have a deficit of approximately \$70 billion this year, an on-budget deficit of \$70 billion.

What does this mean? It means that we have not adequately planned for the future. We have not adequately planned for 1998, and we are proposing a tax cut when we have not balanced the budget. I think this is tragic.

It also points up the fact that we do not yet even have a budget for the next fiscal year, and this too is tragic. Here we are, we are five months and 24 days past the deadline for having a budget

agreement in Congress, and we do not yet have one. The House and the Senate have not agreed. No budget resolution.

We do not have guidance for the Committee on Appropriations, we do not have guidance for the Committee on Ways and Means. The committees are free-lancing it. The Committee on Ways and Means has come out with a tax cut package. They do not know how it fits into a budget, because we do not have a budget. And here we are in this chamber saying to state and local government, act responsibly. Act fiscally responsibly, so when we grant you money, we know and you know that you are properly budgeting for your operations.

We say to the United Nations, act fiscally responsibly; prepare a budget. We do not have a budget.

We say to nonprofit entities and others that apply for Federal grants, have a budget. Show us your budget. We do not have a budget.

This is a very, very unfortunate situation. The leadership in this body and on the other end of the building have not even appointed conferees to agree on what a budget resolution should look like and bring it back to each chamber for a vote. We have a failure of leadership. We need to address the question of what is the Federal budget to be for 1999, and we are only six days away from the beginning of the next fiscal year. No budget.

I submit that the tax cut package, as attractive as it is and as much as we all would like to vote on it and go back home and beat our chest and say what wonderful Members of Congress we are, the tax cut package ought to be deferred in terms of its implementation until the leadership in this body has developed a budget for the next fiscal year and until we know that we have eliminated the scourge of the deficit spending that has haunted this government.

We cannot afford to add to the deficit. We cannot afford to add to the debt. I know from talking to my friends and neighbors at home that they are all for tax cuts, but they also recognize that we have to act responsibly, and they want us to make sure we balance the budget first, and they want us to make sure we stop borrowing from Social Security.

We are continuing to do that, and this is going to handicap our ability to fix the Social Security program, because all of that borrowing goes right into the U.S. Treasury and we are postponing the day of reckoning.

#### SHORTFALLS IN FUNDING FOR NATIONAL SECURITY

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

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Speaker, I talked yesterday about the problems with national security that are now becoming