

In a great bipartisan moment, the NDAA received overwhelming support to authorize almost \$700 billion in defense spending and set priorities for our military, including the largest pay raise for our troops in 8 years. The conference report kept funding important to Georgia's 12th District, included in the earlier versions of the FY18 NDAA, such as \$8 billion in funding for cyber operations and over \$85 million in new military construction to prepare for our cyber warriors at Fort Gordon, like new family housing and a new gate.

Ensuring that our soldiers, sailors, and airmen are equipped with the facilities and resources they need to fight the battles of today and tomorrow is crucial to our Nation's safety and security.

Days after celebrating one of the most important days of the year honoring our veterans, I am happy to say that, with the passage of H.R. 2810, we have provided for the common defense, supported our servicemembers, and worked to close the critical readiness gap.

TAX PLAN AND EDUCATION

(Mr. LOWENTHAL asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Mr. Speaker, my Republican colleagues tell me that this tax plan will grow the economy and make American workers more competitive, but, in reality, the plan would bankrupt our future. It threatens provisions that directly support our schools and our students. By eliminating the State and local tax deductions, it penalizes States and school districts that have chosen to invest in our young people.

In my home State of California, that threatens over \$750 in State funding per public school student each and every year. For Americans with student loan debt, this plan eliminates the student loan interest deduction.

In my district, over 21,000 people claim this deduction each year. As a former college professor, I know the sacrifices that many of our students have to make to pursue an education. This tax plan asks them to pay even more.

These priorities are out of sync. This is not tax reform that puts middle class families first. We can do better.

NEED A TAX CODE FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

(Mrs. HANDEL asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. HANDEL. Mr. Speaker, the last time we had real tax reform in this country was 1986.

To achieve economic growth in the 21st century, we need a Tax Code designed for the 21st century. The status quo is simply not getting it done. It is not good enough.

The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act is a bold, transformative step that simplifies our Tax Code and reduces the tax burden on working Americans and middle-income families. This bill reduces the Federal tax rate for the majority of low- and middle-income Americans while doubling the standard deduction. More than 65 percent of filers in Georgia's Sixth Congressional District use that standard deduction.

What does it mean?

It means that a married couple will be able to pay not a dime of tax on their first \$24,000 of income every year.

The bill will also fuel economic growth and job creation. Small businesses will be at the lowest tax rate since World War II. The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act contains real tangible benefits for the majority of American taxpayers. I support this bill enthusiastically and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

NOT A TAX BILL FOR OUR TIME

(Ms. JACKSON LEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, this tax bill is not about the future. It is about our past. Millions of Americans, middle class families, will have increased taxes under this tax scam.

In fact, in the State of Texas, 230,000-plus Texans will pay an average of over \$6,000 more in taxes. That is a tax scam.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, this is not a futuristic tax bill. This is not a tax bill for our times. This is a tax bill that implodes higher education. For instance, it does not allow the deduction of student loans or interest payments on those loans or tuition or expenses, eliminating the opportunity for educational growth.

It eliminates the tax credit for research and innovation; again, stymieing the growth of the United States as it relates to research and innovation. Then to the large universities, the endowments that are used to help our students to build complexes to educate the best and the brightest are eliminated.

This is a tax scam. It is a tax scam on higher education. It is a tax scam on hardworking middle class Americans. It deserves a resounding "no" vote because we don't want to go back. We want to go toward the future.

PASSING TAX CUTS

(Mr. BLUM asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BLUM. Mr. Speaker, the only time I hear some of my colleagues express their concern about the deficit is when this body is considering policies to let hardworking American families keep more of their hard-earned money.

This is not the government's money. It is the people's money. They earned

it. If tax revenues to the government are a concern, then certainly we should pass tax cuts.

After President Kennedy cut tax rates, revenues to the government increased from \$95 billion to \$280 billion. After President Reagan cut tax rates, revenues to the government increased from \$600 billion to \$1.35 trillion.

Furthermore, annual GDP growth rates increased into the 4 to 5 percent range following these tax cuts. We are going to witness this increase in economic growth again under President Trump with a tax bill this House will consider later this week.

As Ronald Reagan said: "We don't have a trillion-dollar debt because we haven't taxed enough. We have a trillion-dollar debt because we spend too much."

TAXES AND A BETTER DEAL

(Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the Republican tax reform bill coming to the floor this week raises serious questions about the impact that this legislation will have on middle class families, our ability to invest in our transportation infrastructure, and students' ability to attend college.

My hometown, Dallas, Texas, and every municipality in the region has written objections to how they are affected. For one, the GOP tax plan eliminates many tax deductions that are favorable to middle class Americans, such as the medical expense deduction and State and local income and sales tax deductions. These important deductions help middle class families lower their tax liability and put more money in their pockets for everyday needs of hardworking Americans.

The plan also looks to an estimated \$2.6 trillion stockpiled overseas for U.S. corporations. The plan seeks to allow repatriation of these funds for as little as 5 percent tax on brick-and-mortar assets, or 12 percent on cash kept overseas.

This was one of the same methods being considered to fund the major infrastructure bill that we are still waiting for, which raises concerns about how we will pay for our crumbling infrastructure.

Finally, the GOP tax plan also seeks to eliminate the student loan tax deduction. This is a troubling change to existing law, as it places an even heavier burden on our future generations and others seeking a college education. Every college and university in my region has complained.

All of these changes are proposed to the tune of an added \$1.7 trillion dollars to our deficit.

Mr. Speaker, I share the view with many of my colleagues that we are due for a major reform of our tax code. However, we must not do so at the expense of millions of middle and lower class Americans are already struggling to get by.