Mr. Speaker, I am here this evening to support

the Blue Dog Coalition, and ask for a realistic and responsible budget

as we move forward.

I believe that for so long, we have been out of touch, and I believe

that the debt that has been created by this administration has been

overwhelming. And I know that more people in America need to understand

what really has happened and how there has been wasteful spending, not

accountability, difficulties that have just been swept away and we need

to stop and look at it.

So I am pleased as a new Member of Congress from Ohio to be a member

of the Blue Dog Coalition. I believe that, as we take a closer look at

what is going on with this budget that has been submitted to us, that

we realize that there are not only numbers that don't add up, but there

are assumptions that are made that really would go against any

principle of gap accounting and any type of realistic obligations that

we have to the American people to explain to them.

The numbers show that while real fiscal responsibility is so sorely

needed, this is not what we have in this budget. And it becomes

important that we have people like the Blue Dogs who have, and I have

my new sign outside my new door in the Cannon Building at 226, of which

I am very proud to be a member of the Blue Dog Coalition to show that

every man, woman, and child in this country is in debt $29,000 as of

today. And that number may be realistically much lower than what it

actually is.

The numbers also show that we need accountability. In 2004 alone, the

Federal Government spent $25 billion that cannot be accounted for. I

have heard other rumors and other stories of money that just

disappeared.

This is not fair. It is not fair to the people, the taxpayers whose

money it belongs to. It is not fair for the programs that we could be

doing for our seniors, for the education of our children, the health

care that we could provide, and to help those in middle America, the

working families to help with opportunities for them.

We were able in this new Congress, to move forward. And just

yesterday, Congressman Scott, I did a TV interview in Youngstown, Ohio.

And the person interviewing me asked why did we prohibit the other side

from being able to amend and change in our first 100 hours. And I said,

quite frankly, that I thought we needed to do that in order to be able

to get the issues taken care of that we did. And it was with this kind

of responsibility that we moved forward, and that I believe now we can

work together and accomplish what needs to be accomplished, but

certainly looking at the realism of what is going on with our national

debt.

We need to work together, not a Democrat or a Republican, but rather

an American initiative, to make sure that every dollar we spend, every

decision we make is for the betterment of our country.

I thank you for that observation.

I truly believe this is what the American people said in this

November's election. They said: We need accountability. We need people

to be responsible. And that is why the election turned the way it did.

And I believe now that it is important for us to pursue every

opportunity to make sure that we have fiscal responsibility, to make

sure that we are doing the right things for the people, and keeping an

eye on our national debt.

Just last week, I received a graph in my office, and the amount of

debt that we are paying to foreign countries is huge in comparison to

what we are spending on education or health care for our seniors. That

is the thing that is most difficult to understand about this, is how we

can let the really important things go and spend all this money on

interest. I know as a businessman, I could not run my business that

way. As a person, I couldn't run my personal finances that way. And so

there is no reason to think that we should run our government that way.

Moving forward, I just think that we need to be sure that this

Congress is responsible. And one of the primary ways of doing that,

that the Blue Dogs are advocating, is PAYGO, and that is as we pay as

we go, just like you and I do in our budgets at home. If we are going

to buy a new car, we need to make a sacrifice of something else. If we

are going to go on a vacation, there needs to be something traded for

that. PAYGO, quite frankly, Mr. Scott, says that what we really have to

do is to make sure, if we are going to pay forward, that we eliminate

something that we are doing now, and then we pay as we go.