

**Washington, D.C.** - On the floor of the House of Representatives yesterday, US Rep. David Price (NC-04) delivered the following speech denouncing the Republican budget for failing to live up to Congress' responsibilities to the American people. He encouraged his colleagues to support a Democratic alternative which meets the needs of our communities and makes progress toward balancing the budget.

The Republican budget gives us the worst of two worlds. It takes us over the cliff fiscally, and yet it underfunds key domestic priorities.

You would like to think that if we are going into \$400-plus billion worth of additional debt, at least we are getting adequate funding for our domestic needs. But we are getting neither fiscal responsibility nor an adequate addressing of our needs for investment.

The premise of the Republican budget as submitted by the President and as presented by our Republican friends seems to be that this country is going broke because we are doing too much cancer research. We are going broke because we have too many after school programs. We are going broke because we are opening up too much affordable housing. It simply is not true. To scapegoat these sorts of domestic expenditures is deceptive and reprehensible.

There are many reasons for the fiscal mess that we are in, starting with the President's tax cuts targeting the wealthiest Americans, defense and security spending above projected levels, a sluggish and sporadic economic recovery, and the expansion of health care entitlement costs. The one item not on the list is domestic discretionary spending, which is very close to projected levels. Yet that is the item that is being squeezed in this budget as though that were the culprit in our fiscal meltdown.

I am happy to say that our Democratic alternative balances the budget sooner and addresses these pressing domestic needs.

Mr. Chairman, our Federal budget, like our household budget, is a statement about our priorities, about what we most care about.

We ought to care about our obligation to future generations, to avoid placing a debt on them. We also have an obligation articulated in James' epistle in the scriptures. "Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to him, 'Go, I wish you well, keep warm and well fed,' but does nothing about his physical needs, what good is it?"

Mr. Chairman, we must take these dual obligations seriously: An obligation to be fiscally responsible, to avoid loading a burden on future generations, and at the same time to meet the needs of our communities, to open up opportunity, to be fair, to bring home the promise of American life.

Surely there is no better indication of what we really care about and what we aspire to for this country than the Federal budget that we enact each year. It is not just abstract numbers; it reveals what kinds of stewards we wish to be.

The Democratic alternative shows us the way past the President's "worst-of-both-worlds" budget, and I urge colleagues to give this alternative open-minded consideration and support.

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