

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, the Republican fiscal mismanagement is so bad and their budget proposal so dreadful that even the Republican caucus is having difficulty swallowing it. Main Street Republicans don't agree with K Street Republicans who don't agree with Wall Street Republicans, and they are all hopelessly out of touch with the streets where most Americans live.

It is irresponsible to claim that this is the only way to pay for our Hurricane Katrina assistance, while the Republican leadership works on extending \$70 billion in tax cuts for those least in need. In reality, we can save the budget without breaking the bank and making harmful cuts to the most vulnerable Americans. The first step is to halt plans to provide an additional \$70 billion in tax cuts for those least in need while cutting \$11.9 billion from Medicare and \$14.3 billion from student loan programs. Even with these spending cuts, the proposal will still increase the national debt by more than \$100 billion over the next 5 years.

We can do better for America's future than cutting off assistance to society's most vulnerable. The budget is a reflection of our priorities and future path. We must provide the investment in education that will prepare our students for the high-tech and global world we live in. We need to create a health care system that is fair and affordable, and doesn't burden businesses in the global marketplace. We must stop shortchanging our infrastructure needs and put in place a world-class transportation system that moves people and freight seamlessly. In the long-run we are losing money by waiting in traffic-filled commutes, delayed movement of freight, and expensive patchwork repairs to inadequate systems.

There is much talk of scandal here in Washington, D.C., but the true scandal is how tragically out-of-touch my Republican colleagues are from the needs and desires of the average American.