

Mr. Speaker, the Republican leadership in this House continues to play games with the budget. This bill contains only short-term extensions of many important tax breaks because Congress refuses to face the long-term consequences of its actions. I support middle-income tax relief, but families will only be better off in the long-term if we act responsibly now.

The last 2 years have brought the largest budget deficits in our history and H.R. 1308 will add another \$146 billion. New projections from the Congressional Budget Office show that the Bush administration's policies will lead to annual budget deficits in excess of \$300 billion every year for the next 10 years. In other words, under the Bush administration, record deficits are here to stay.

We can do better for families and those in need by acting responsibly. Cutting taxes while at war is questionable at best. Tax cuts for the most privileged and comfortable while shortchanging education, healthcare, and our Nation's infrastructure is not responsible. Providing short-term extensions so the long-range cost of policies is hidden is not responsible. Continuing to put off a permanent fix of the Alternative Minimum Tax, which poses the most serious tax threat to middle-income families, is shameful. I oppose this legislation.