

than the space shuttle, and the Aries rocket to send into space. But the alleged savings are more than offset by unintended consequences, because the industrial base that builds the rocket to put people towards the moon also builds the rockets to shoot down incoming missiles from North Korea, Iran, and other bad guys. And if you take the space component away, the defense side costs doubles, triples, maybe even more. And the Augustine report, which this administration is not following, noted this potential industrial-based problem, but NASA either refused to pay attention or chose to ignore the warning.

Regardless, the solution to escalating defense costs and to maintaining the dominance in space will be dependent upon fully funding the Constellation program. And, Mr. President, anything less than that is totally unacceptable.

ALICE IN WONDERLAND

(Mr. YARMUTH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. YARMUTH. Mr. Speaker, "Alice in Wonderland" is in American theaters now, but not even my fellow Kentuckian Johnny Depp could argue that down is up when we're talking about Federal taxes.

As you've heard this morning, even President Reagan's domestic policy adviser has said that taxes are considerably lower by every measure since President Obama became President.

This Congress has done an incredible job in lowering taxes for the American people. This year, the average refund for working families will be \$3,000, which is a 10 percent increase over last year. We are taking less and less out of the American working family's paycheck. In fact, the Federal taxes as a percentage of the national economy is at its lowest rate in nearly two generations.

No, only in a fantasy world like "Alice in Wonderland" could you claim that this Congress has not done a great job in lowering taxes for the American public, and we will continue to make sure that American families have the best standard of living we can possibly create.

DUBOIS AREA MIDDLE SCHOOL LEVEL OF EXCELLENCE

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I draw your attention today to the DuBois Area Middle School and its outstanding level of excellence. It has been awarded, for the second time, the designation of the Pennsylvania Don Eichhorn Schools: Schools to Watch program.

The National Forum sponsors this program, and schools are chosen for the honor of achieving academic excel-

lence based on the rigorous 37 criteria established by the National Forum to Accelerate Middle-Grades Reform. They must be academically excellent, developmentally responsive, and socially equitable.

The school is one of 15 in the State and only 200 nationally ever to be honored as a School to Watch. It is the first school in the State to receive a redesignation for 2010 to 2013, and it first achieved the honor in 2007.

The National Forum looks at these schools as part of the effort to identify and learn from high-performing middle schools, and to have the Schools to Watch serve as resources for other schools. There are 18 States participating in the program.

To achieve this award, high-performing schools establish norms, structures, and organizational arrangements to support and sustain their path towards excellence. They have a sense of purpose that drives every facet of practice and decisionmaking.

And I want to congratulate Principal Mike Newman and the teachers, students, personnel, and parents that are responsible for this fine school.

LET'S PUT EVERY OPTION ON THE TABLE FOR BORDER SAFETY

(Mrs. KIRKPATRICK of Arizona asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. KIRKPATRICK of Arizona. Mr. Speaker, I just returned from a trip to Arizona's border, and I thank the men and women at Customs and Border Protection for allowing me an inside look into their operations.

One the most striking things I saw is the toll that violence has taken on our border communities, and tensions are high. As the cartels become desperate to keep smuggling routes open, our border agents and their vehicles are hit with rocks, shot at, and assaulted on a nightly basis.

I am convinced that our border personnel need more equipment and manpower to prevent the violence and keep Americans safe. There is no silver bullet for fixing our border. A solution will require a comprehensive approach to security. We must put every option on the table, including the use of the National Guard.

TAX RELIEF FOR THE MIDDLE CLASS

(Mr. PERLMUTTER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, President Bush left this country with a \$1.3 trillion debt when President Obama came into office a year ago, and the economy was in free fall.

One of the things that was done over the course of the last year was to provide this country and working Americans with tax cuts across the board, \$800 billion in tax cuts, greatest tax cut for working Americans at any time in our history.

Now, the Republicans are complaining about everything under the sun, but they're not complaining about those tax cuts because they know they're real, whether it's earned income tax credits, college tax credits, accelerated depreciation for small businesses, net operating loss carryforwards all across the board. To this point, in Colorado, the average Coloradan receives \$1,096 in tax cuts this year above what they got before. That's to get this country back on track, not leave it in a financial disaster, as President Bush did.

We are moving in a new direction, and tax cuts are some of the things we're using to get this country back on track.

DON'T RETREAT FROM THE SPACE RACE

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

Mr. SCALISE. Mr. Speaker, President Obama will be speaking this week at the Kennedy Space Center. And while the President's budget cancels the Constellation program, it also jeopardizes NASA's Michoud facility, which is the premiere manufacturing facility with the unique capabilities and skilled workforce that can't just be rebuilt again once it's wound down.

The United States should not retreat from the space race. It not only threatens our national security, but it also makes us beholden to foreign countries. In fact, just last week a Japanese newspaper said, "Once the leader in space development, the United States' space exploration policies are now drifting aimlessly." And they later went on to note that the clear winner from this retreat will be Russia.

Now, we should not cede our space exploration superiority to countries like Russia or anybody else. It jeopardizes our national security. It's a bad policy. The President needs to reconsider.

TAX RELIEF FOR THE MIDDLE CLASS

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

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, last week I had the opportunity to travel around my southern Minnesota district talking to local business owners on the best ways to grow and revitalize our economy. Businesses, working families, including the Mayo Clinic centered in my district, talked about the improvements to the health care system was a good first step in moving that. They also explained to me that the policies on tax relief that you heard here help.

Now be very clear about this. If you think it's a game of he said, he said and back and forth and the pundits on TV can tell one way to think, this is a