

members of the legislature to set priorities, and that is what a legislature is all about. Without that kind of discipline, it does not happen.

It is pretty simple. In the Wyoming legislature, and 48 others, when you get in the appropriations committee, of which I was a member, you say, "Look, we are spending more than we have to spend." You have to make some changes and you do that. It is not mystic; it is not magic. It is just the discipline that causes that to happen.

Some say, "Well, judges will be setting it." Not so. It is not true in the States. The States do not have judges setting budgets. That will not happen.

Some say, "Well, we have to have an outline before we can be for it. We have to know what you are going to cut." There is no way that you know what you are going to cut in 7 years or 10 years.

The first question is, Is it responsible to balance the budget? The second question is, How do you do it?

And if you really believe that it needs to be done, you do it. Raise revenues? Of course. I am not for that, but that is possible. And if you are willing to pay for it, you put a cost-benefit ratio. You can do that. If you are committed to a balanced budget, however, you will find the way.

Those who say, "We do not need the tools, we already have them," they have to do the same thing if they are going to balance the budget. They say, "We are going to balance the budget, we don't need a balanced budget amendment." You have to make the same cuts to do it either way. What is the problem with having discipline? What is the problem with going to the States and saying to the State legislatures, "We have a balanced budget to the Constitution. You have a chance to vote." People want to be involved in government.

The administration says we are already cutting the deficit; we do not need it. The fact is that most of the deficit cut in the last 2 years has been the bookkeeping deficit, and the only real change in policy that has reduced the deficit has been an increase in taxes. The fact is, we spent more last year than we spent the year before. But we raised taxes and we did reduce the deficit, and I am pleased with that. But most of it was a bookkeeping change from the S&L's and Medicaid. Some of it was an increase in taxes. We have not balanced the budget. The projection is the deficit is going back up.

We hear a lot about the cuts that are needed. The fact is, we will be spending substantially more at the end of 7 years than we spend now. It is not a question of cuts. It is a matter of reducing the growth, and that is where we are.

So a balanced budget amendment, it seems to me, is the responsible thing to do. Balancing the budget is the responsible thing to do. If I heard something in this election in 1994 in Wyoming it is, "We want responsible government;

we have too much government; it costs too much," and the balanced budget amendment is the discipline that we need to set priorities.

You have to spend within your budget in your family. You have to spend within your budget in your business and, over time, you have to spend within your budget in your Government, and this will provide the discipline to do it.

We answer the question: Is it morally and fiscally responsible to balance the budget? The answer is yes, and we ought to get on about it.

Thank you, Mr. President. I yield the remainder of my time.

Mr. GRAMS addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

#### MIDDLE-CLASS TAX RELIEF

Mr. GRAMS. Thank you, Mr. President. Mr. President, yesterday I testified before the House Ways and Means Committee on an issue of great importance to me: The Minnesotans, whom I represent in the U.S. Senate, and every overburdened American taxpayer. The issue is middle-class tax relief.

Two years ago while serving in the House, I introduced the idea of a \$500 per child tax credit in my families-first legislation, coauthored by Congressman TIM HUTCHINSON, of Arkansas.

Our arguments then were simple: Taxes were too high; the burden of tax increases fell disproportionately on the middle class; and big government was forcing more workers out of the working class and into the welfare class.

Consider the facts: Most middle-class American families pay more in Federal taxes than they spend for food, clothing, transportation, insurance, and recreation combined.

Since World War II, Federal income and payroll taxes have increased from 2 to 24 percent of the median income of a family of four. Despite this, while Congressman HUTCHINSON and I were making the case for tax relief, Congress was in the midst of passing the 1993 Clinton tax proposal—the largest tax increase in American history.

Far from providing tax relief for the middle class, the Clinton proposal actually increased their tax burden, making it more difficult for the middle class to care for themselves and for their children. The message from Washington was clear: Give us your money and we will solve all your problems.

But the American voters said "no" to this message in November and delivered one of their own. And that was "let us keep our money."

Today, the arguments for tax relief have not changed. Taxes are still too high, the tax burden still falls too heavily on the middle class. The big difference, however, is that this year—with this Congress—we can do something about it.

We promised tax relief, and now we have to deliver. And as I said in my

testimony yesterday, we have to do it for what country western singer Garth Brooks calls the "hard hat, six-pack, achin'-back, flag-wavin', fun-lovin' crowd," because these are the people who work hard every day, care for their children, pay their bills and finance the growth of big government with their hard-earned tax dollars. For years, they have watched their paychecks grow smaller while Washington grows bigger. And last November they spoke out loud and clear. They voted for change in the way things were done in Washington. They voted for less government and lower taxes. They voted for a balanced budget. And, yes, they voted for a \$500 per child tax credit.

But even now, the old barons of Washington and the long-time defenders of big government still do not get it. They do not understand that every dollar Washington spends is one less dollar that taxpayers can spend. And worst of all, they do not understand that it is not the Government's money to begin with. They just do not get it. But the people do, and that is what counts.

And so what are we going to do about it? Well, the answer is simple: Let the taxpayers keep their money. And the way to begin this process is to pass the families first \$500-per-child tax credit.

The families first tax credit means \$25 billion annually to taxpayers across America—\$500 million to Minnesota alone. And 90 percent of the benefits of the tax relief goes to families making annual incomes of \$60,000 or less.

It is the largest, fairest, most progressive way of providing tax relief for families, and it lives up to our Government and our commitment of reducing the size of the Federal Government. By cutting Government spending to pay for middle-class tax relief, families first is the strongest response that we can send to the American people that we heard their message, that we accept their mandate, and we will deliver on our promises.

Mr. President, what we do in this Congress will be judged by the middle-class Americans who voted for us last November. And, Mr. President, what we do in this Congress, in this Chamber, will determine the makeup of the next Congress. Republicans made a commitment to the taxpayers, and I urge my colleagues to uphold that commitment as we continue to fight for the middle class and as we fight for fairness.

I yield back the floor.

#### GREENVILLE MIDDLE SCHOOL—A CLASS ACT

Mr. HEFLIN. Mr. President, the newspaper USA Today recently initiated an ongoing series of articles spotlighting schools and educational programs in the country that are both innovative and successful.

The first venture to be included in the series was the Builders Club at