



Floor Speech of Senator Chuck Grassley  
Senators McCain and Obama's tax plans – Effects on Middle Class Taxpayers  
Delivered Tuesday, Sept. 30, 2008

Beginning in the third week of July, I've come to the floor to compare the tax plans of Senators McCain and Obama, our two Presidential candidates. I've talked about the relationship between party control and the likelihood of a tax hike or tax cut. I've used this chart. It's the tax hike thermometer chart. I talked about the 1992 campaign promise of a middle class tax cut. I contrasted the promised tax cut with the 1993 tax legislation that contained a "world record" tax increase.

I've used this chart, which depicts 16 years of tax hike amnesia and Rip van Winkle. In our first week back after the August recess, I returned to these topics. I discussed the effects of the proposed 17% to 33% increases in the top two rates. I focused on small business activity. Last week, I discussed the impact of Senator McCain's and Obama's tax plans on seniors. Earlier this week, I discussed the fiscal effects of Senator McCain's and Senator Obama's plans.

Today, I'd like to focus on how both tax plans would affect the middle class. The press and candidates have focused a lot of attention on the middle class. We've heard a lot about the middle class squeeze. We've heard about stagnation of middle class income. My discussion today will focus on tax policy. But, to get a handle on what is or is not middle class tax relief, we need to see if we can define the term middle class.

Today, I think we need to get answers to several questions as we try to get to the bottom line of where Senators McCain and Obama are on middle class tax relief. The first question would be: what is the definition of middle class? To get at this question, we need to see what the two candidates say about who is in the middle class and how their plans define the middle class.

The second question would be: where are Senators McCain and Obama on current law middle class tax relief that is set to expire? I'm referring to the family tax relief provisions that expire in 2011 and the alternative minimum tax ("AMT") patch. To get at this question, we need to look at where each candidate's record has been on the bipartisan tax relief. We also need to look at what they plan to do with these expiring tax relief provisions.

The third broad question is: where would Senator McCain and Senator Obama further reduce or hike taxes on middle class families? To get an answer to this question, we'll take a look at each of the candidate's new proposals on middle class tax issues.

Let's start with the first question: who is the middle class? If you turn to FactCheck.Org, you'll find the definition is not simple. According to FactCheck.Org, there is no clear definition of middle class. Here's what they say:

“‘Middle class’ means different things to different people – and politicians. There is no standard definition, and, in fact, an overwhelming majority of Americans say they are ‘middle class’ or ‘upper-middle class’ or ‘working class’ in public opinion polls. Hardly anybody considers themselves ‘lower class’ or ‘upper class’ in America.”

I ask unanimous consent to insert in the record a copy of the question and answer on the definition of middle class from FactCheck.Org.

I have a chart that breaks down the answers to a Pew Research Center poll. Among other things, the poll asked whether folks thought of themselves as upper class, upper-middle class, middle class, lower middle class, and lower class.

According to the poll, 53 percent of Americans consider themselves middle class. Nineteen percent consider themselves upper middle class and another 19 percent consider themselves lower middle class. So, about 92 percent of Americans consider themselves something other than upper class or lower class. Since we are examining Senator McCain's and Senator Obama's tax plans, it's fair to ask about their definitions of middle class.

On August 16, 2008, Senator McCain appeared on Pastor Rick Warren's forum at the Saddleback Church in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Pastor Warren asked Senator McCain to draw a line, in tax relief dollar terms, between the middle class and the rich. Senator McCain's answer reflects the ambiguity of the FactCheck.Org definition. Here's what Senator McCain said in trying to define the rich:

“I think the rich should be defined by a home, a good job, an education and the ability to hand our children a more prosperous and safer world than the one we inherited. So, if you are just talking about income, {jokingly with a laugh} how about \$5 million? No, but seriously, I don't think you can. I don't think seriously that the point is I'm trying to make, seriously, and I'm sure that comment will be distorted but the point is ... that we want to keep people's taxes low, and increase revenues .... So, it doesn't really matter what my definition of rich is because I don't want to raise anyone's taxes. I really don't.”

How does Senator Obama define the middle class? In an interview with Fox News Bill Hemmer, Senator Obama answered this question this way:

“You know, what I would say is, if you are making more than \$250,000, then you're more than middle class. You're doing better. If you are making less than \$250,000, then you are

definitely somewhere in the middle class. And if you're making \$150,000 or less, then I think most Americans would agree you're middle class.

So that's why the fact that you are making less than \$250,000, you will not see your taxes go up under an Obama administration. And you will get tax cuts and more money in your pocket if you make less than \$150,000."

I ask unanimous consent to place in the record an article on Senator Obama's interview with Fox News.

So, Senator McCain doesn't adopt a sharp line definition of middle-class. Senator Obama defines middle class as everyone below \$150,000. Senator Obama defines as a neutral area those earning between \$150,000 and \$250,000. Senator Obama defines families earning above \$250,000 as upper class.

Now that we have the stated definitions of middle class, let's take a look at where Senators McCain and Obama would change current family tax relief.

If you take a look at Senator McCain's plan, you can get a hint of where he wants to cut middle class taxes. In effect, you can get an idea of where Senator McCain believes further middle class tax relief ought to go.

Senator McCain would lower current law levels of taxation in two widely-applicable proposals. The first would double the dependent personal exemption. For a family of four, this relief would apply to taxpayers with incomes between up to \$120,000.

This new tax relief would be phased out for those families between \$50,000 and \$120,000.

I've got a chart that shows which groups of families would be affected by Senator McCain's plan.

Here's the group that would benefit from the proposal to double the dependent exemption. The families benefitting run from tax paying families, roughly \$32,000 for a family of four, running up to \$120,000. It should be noted the increased dependent exemption would be phased out for families from \$50,000 to \$120,000.

The other area of family tax relief that Senator McCain is targeting is relief from the Alternative Minimum Tax ("AMT"). During the last couple of weeks, the House and Senate have debated AMT patch extension bills. Take a look at the Congressional Record and examine the debate.

If you do, you'll see nearly all Democrats and most Republicans in both bodies describe the over-reach of the AMT as middle class family tax problem.

If the AMT patch is almost universally defined as middle class tax relief, then a fair question is who benefits from the patch? I have a chart here. It contains a Joint Committee on Taxation

analysis of the last patch that became law, the 2007 patch. You'll see from the chart that the AMT patch benefitted families between \$40,000 and \$50,000 on the low end. As we travel across the chart, we see the biggest categories of families benefitting to be in the \$75,000 to \$100,000 category and the \$100,000 to \$200,000 category. I might point out that roughly half the families benefitting, over 9 million families, earn between \$100,000 and \$200,000. On the higher end, we find about half a million families earning between \$200,000 and \$500,000 also benefitting from the AMT patch.

So, the AMT patch relief conforms to the polling data on how Americans define themselves. The AMT tax problem that the patch remedies spreads across a broad swath of the taxpaying population.

Senator McCain's second major tax relief proposal would build upon the AMT patch. Senator McCain would extend the AMT patch and enlarge it starting in 2013.

Under Senator McCain's plan we would start to reduce the reach of the AMT by expanding the patch by 5% per year on top of the increase in the exemption amount of the patch for inflation. That proposal would provide more relief to some of the 4 million families currently paying AMT.

If we step back and take a look, we see that Senator McCain would further reduce regular taxes for families between \$32,000 and \$120,000. Senator McCain would extend the AMT patch and gradually enhance it. Most of the families that would benefit from the AMT patch have incomes between \$50,000 and \$200,000. So, it looks like Senator McCain's operational definition of middle-class probably conforms to the definition that we find in public opinion polls.

Senator Obama's stated definition of middle class, in terms of further tax relief, consists of taxpayers earning under \$150,000. Let's take a look at how Senator Obama's plan operates.

Senator Obama used a different definition of middle class in contrasting his tax relief plan with Senator McCain's plan. Here's what Senator Obama's campaign said:

“According to the Tax Policy Center, the Obama plan provides three times as much tax relief for middle class families as the McCain plan.”

Behind that claim is a comparison of the Tax Policy Center analysis of Senators McCain's and Obama's plan's proposals on family's in the middle income quintile. The middle quintile refers to the middle 20% of families. According to the Tax Policy Center, that band of income runs between \$37,596 and \$66,354. I have a chart that depicts the band of income that would represent middle income. That band of income is here. As you can see, this is a much smaller group, 20 percent of the population, topping out at a bit above \$66,000 of income. That's far below the \$150,000 and \$250,000 figures Senator Obama mentioned in the Fox News interview.

On the AMT patch, Senator Obama supports “fiscally responsible” AMT reform, whatever that vague concept means. Unlike Senator McCain, Senator Obama conditions extension of the AMT patch on his notion of “fiscal responsibility.” The Tax Policy Center assumes that this means that Senator Obama would extend the AMT patch and index it for inflation.

However, this is just one think tank's interpretation of Senator Obama's statement that he supports "fiscally responsible" AMT reform. But, for the sake of comparison, at least until 2013, the two candidates seem to be targeting the same middle class family population. I've depicted that band of middle class tax relief over here on the chart.

So, when you look at how both plans operate, Senator McCain's plan targets new regular family tax relief at middle class families between \$32,000 and \$120,000. Senator Obama's targets new regular family tax relief at middle class families between \$38,000 and \$66,000. Both candidates target the same population for AMT patch extension. Senator McCain proposes additional AMT relief by expanding the AMT patch in 2013.

Now, let's turn to the second question. That question is how will Senators McCain and Obama deal with middle class family tax relief that will expire. The bipartisan tax cuts from 2001 and 2003 provide a very large amount of tax relief to middle-class families.

These 2001 and 2003 bipartisan tax cuts are set to expire at the end of 2010. If these tax cuts are extended, then in 2011 a married couple making \$50,000 with two children would save an average of \$2,300 on their tax bill.

Likewise, a single mom with two kids that makes \$30,000 a year would save an average of \$1,100 off her tax bill in 2011 if the 2001 and 2003 tax cuts are extended.

The 2001 and 2003 bipartisan tax relief bills provide much-needed tax relief, almost all of which is scheduled to expire at the end of 2010. Included in this bipartisan tax relief were reductions in the marginal income tax rates to just 10, 15, 25, 28, 33 and 35 percent. Prior to this relief, Americans could pay a marginal income tax rate as high as 39.6 percent.

In addition, this bipartisan tax relief suspended, in stages beginning in 2006, the personal exemption phaseout, also known as PEP, as well as the limitations on itemized deductions, also known as PEASE. PEP and PEASE result in hidden marginal income tax rate increases. PEASE was suspended as part of this tax relief because it takes deductions away from middle-income Americans for mortgage interest payments, charitable contributions, state and local tax payments, and other itemized deductions.

In addition to the tax relief described above, this bipartisan tax relief doubled the child tax credit to \$1,000, allowed this child tax credit to be used against any AMT liability, and made a large portion of this child tax credit refundable.

Also, this bipartisan tax relief permanently extended the adoption tax credit and increased this adoption credit to \$10,000 per child. This bipartisan tax relief also increased the dependant care credit to a maximum of \$6,000. In addition, it also provided tax relief from the marriage penalty.

This bipartisan tax relief also provided a number of tax-relief provisions to help make education more affordable. For example, one provision provided a deduction of up to \$4,000 for

college tuition and related expenses. In addition, another provision increased the annual limit on contributions to education IRAs from \$500 to \$2000.

I believe it's useful to look at where the candidates have been with respect to their positions on middle-class tax relief.

Senator McCain has consistently supported middle-class tax relief in his Senate career. As far as I'm aware, Senator McCain has never voted to raise taxes on middle-income families. Senator McCain helped prevent tax increases on middle-income families in 2004 by voting for the Working Families Tax Relief Act of 2004. Senator McCain's budget votes have consistently provided room for the extension of the lower income tax rates, as well as the suspension of the harmful PEP and PEASE. In addition, Senator McCain has been consistently supportive of the repeal of PEP and PEASE.

On the other hand, Senator Obama voted for the Democratic budget and the budget conference report this year that did not provide room to protect Americans in the 25, 28, 33, and 35 percent tax brackets from being hit with a tax increase.

According to the IRS, single individuals falling within the 25% bracket in 2008 start at taxable income of more than \$32,550. They earn taxable income of no more than \$78,850. Singles in the 28% bracket will earn taxable income of more than \$78,850 but less than \$164,550.

Senator Obama said in the Presidential candidates' September 26<sup>th</sup> debate that he wouldn't raise taxes a dime on people making under \$250,000, but his two budget votes in 2008 don't provide the room for him to keep that promise. In fact, he couldn't even make good on that promise to those singles making over \$32,550 in taxable income based on the Democratic budget that he voted for.

Instead, these taxpayers with over \$32,550 in taxable income would be hit with a hidden marginal tax rate increase in "PEP" and "PEASE" as well as a transparent marginal tax rate increase according to the budget that Senator Obama voted for.

I turn now to the harmful Alternative Minimum Tax, or AMT. Both parties agree that the AMT is a tax on the middle class. In addition, both parties deserve blame for the problem that is the AMT. However, the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1993 passed by the other side and signed into law by President Clinton did a lot of the damage.

In the 1993 tax bill, the exemption level was increased to \$33,750 for individuals and \$45,000 for joint returns, but this was accompanied by an additional rate increase. Importantly, as in previous bills related to the AMT, these exemption amounts were not indexed for inflation. By the way, the 1993 tax increase passed with only Democratic votes.

Once again, graduated rates were introduced, except this time they were 26 percent and 28 percent. By tinkering with the rate and exemption level of the AMT, these bills were only doing what Congress has been doing on a bipartisan basis for almost 40 years, which is to undertake a wholly inadequate approach to a problem that kept getting bigger.

Aside from this futile tinkering that had been done every few years, Congress has in other circumstances completely ignored the impact of tax legislation on taxpayers caught by the AMT. In the 1990s a series of tax credits, such as the child tax credit and lifetime learning credit, were adopted without any regard to the AMT. The AMT limited the use of nonrefundable credits, and that did not change.

Congress quickly realized the ridiculousness of this situation and waived the AMT disallowance of nonrefundable personal credits, but it only did so through 1998. In 1999 the issue again had to be dealt with. The Congress passed the Taxpayer Refund and Relief Act of 1999. In the Senate, only Republicans voted for the bill. That bill included a provision to repeal the AMT. Senator McCain voted in favor of this bill to repeal the AMT. President Clinton vetoed the bill.

Later on in 1999, an extenders bill including a fix good through 2001 was enacted to hold the AMT back for a little longer.

In 2001 we departed from these temporary piecemeal solutions a little bit with the Economic Growth and Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2001. The 2001 bill permanently allows the child tax credit, the adoption tax credit, and the IRA contribution credit to be claimed against a taxpayer's AMT. While this was certainly not a complete solution, it was a step in the right direction. More importantly, the 2001 bill was a bipartisan effort to stop the further intrusion of the AMT into the middle class. The package that Senator Baucus and I put together effectively prevented inflation from pulling anyone else into the AMT through the end of 2005.

Our friends in the House originally wanted to enact a hold-harmless only through the end of 2001, but the final bill signed by the President increased the AMT exemption amount through 2005. Since the 2001 tax relief bill, the Finance Committee has produced bipartisan packages to continue to increase exemption amounts to keep taxpayers ahead of inflation, including the Tax Increase Prevention and Reconciliation Act of 2005. Most currently, the 2007 AMT patch was extended in late 2007.

These packages put together since 2001 are unique in that they are the first sustained attempt undertaken by Congress to stem the spread of the AMT through inflation.

Admittedly, these are all short term fixes, but they illustrate a comprehension of the AMT inflation problem and what needs to be done to solve it.

I now look at how the candidates have voted with respect to the AMT. Senator McCain has consistently voted to protect Americans from the AMT. Senator McCain voted for the Tax Refund and Reconciliation Act of 1999, which contained a proposal to completely phase-out the AMT. In fact, in the Senate, that conference report passed on Republican votes only, including Senator McCain's. In 2001, when the AMT patch began, Senator McCain supported the Senate version of the tax relief bill that patched the AMT for a longer period of time. Moreover, Senator McCain voted for the Tax Increase Prevention and Reconciliation Acts of 2005 and later bills that extended the AMT patch.

In stark contrast to Senator McCain's voting record of providing relief from the AMT, Senator Obama voted against the AMT patch contained in the Tax Increase Prevention and Reconciliation Act of 2005. Also, Senator Obama opposed Republican budgets in 2005 and 2006 that provided revenue room for the AMT patch. Senator Obama supported the 2007 Democratic budget that omitted any revenue room for the AMT patch. In 2008, Senator Obama supported the Democratic budget that, for the first time in this election year, provided some tax relief revenue room for the AMT patch. Senator McCain supported the 2008 Republican budget that provided similar revenue room for the AMT patch.

Therefore, when looking at each candidates' voting record, the conclusion that becomes apparent is that Senator McCain has been much more supportive of middle-class tax relief than Senator Obama.

I now turn to the third question: what new proposals do the candidates offer on middle class tax relief? We're going to move from the actions of the candidates and look, instead, at their words.

Let's take a look at Senator McCain's tax plan. Senator McCain proposes to extend all of the 2001 and 2003 bipartisan tax relief. This includes all of the provisions described above, some of which are the lower marginal income tax rates, protection against PEP and PEASE, marriage penalty relief, doubling of the child tax credit, and the tuition deduction. As I mentioned earlier, the extension of the 2001 and 2003 bipartisan tax relief alone creates average tax savings in 2011 alone of \$2300 for a married couple making \$50,000 with two children. Likewise, a single mom with two kids that makes \$30,000 a year would save an average of \$1,100 off her tax bill in 2011 off her tax bill if the 2001 and 2003 tax cuts are extended.

In addition, Senator McCain proposes additional AMT relief by expanding the AMT patch in 2013 by indexing the patch by an additional 5% per year in addition to the indexing done for inflation, until the joint exemption amount is \$143,000, at which time the patch would only be indexed for inflation. Therefore, those families making \$143,000 and below would eventually be exempt from the AMT, and this \$143,000 amount would be indexed for inflation.

Senator McCain would also double the dependant exemption from the current amount of \$3,500 to \$7,000. Senator McCain proposes to do this by increasing the dependant exemption by \$500 each year beginning in 2010, until it reaches \$7,000 in 2016. Therefore, this would provide significant additional tax savings for any married couple or single parent with one or more children. The tax relief provided by the doubling of the dependant exemption would be in addition to the tax relief provided by the AMT patch and extension of the 2001 and 2003 tax cuts.

Senator Obama has said that he is in favor of extending what he calls the Bush tax cuts, except for those Americans that make over \$250,000.

As I've mentioned before, these should not be referred to as the Bush tax cuts, because the 2001 and 2003 tax bills were passed on a bipartisan basis and were significantly different than the proposals that President Bush wanted.

Regardless, Senator Obama says that he would extend all of the 2001 and 2003 bipartisan tax relief for those making \$250,000 or less. This includes the provisions that I discussed above regarding the 2001 and 2003 bipartisan tax relief, including lowering some of the marginal tax rates, providing marriage penalty relief, and doubling the amount of the child tax credit to \$1000 per child.

Although Senator Obama's voting record might indicate otherwise, Senator Obama claims that he is in favor of "fiscally responsible AMT reform." The Tax Policy Center assumes that this means using the AMT patch, and indexing that patch for inflation, to prevent more middle-class Americans from being hit by the AMT each year.

Senator Obama is proposing a new \$500 tax credit called the Making Work Pay credit that has the effect of exempting the first \$8,100 of earnings from the social security tax. He also proposes a credit of up to \$800 equal to 10% of the mortgage interest paid by Americans that do not itemize their deductions.

Senator Obama also proposes turning the current nonrefundable saver's tax credit into a refundable credit, and the maximum credit for a married couple is \$500. Senator Obama proposes to rename the Hope and Lifetime Learning Credit by calling it the American Opportunity Tax Credit.

In addition, he would like to increase the maximum amount of this nonrefundable credit from \$1,800 to \$4,000 and to make the credit refundable. Finally, Senator Obama claims he wants to expand the earned income tax credit in various ways. He also claims he wants to expand the child and dependant care credit by making it refundable.

I turn now to examine whether Senator McCain's and Senator Obama's promises regarding middle-class tax relief are realistic. Even if we assume that Senators McCain and Obama want to enact all the tax cuts they are promising, could they deliver on these promises?

The nominally non-partisan Tax Policy Center estimates that Senator Obama's tax plan will lose revenue of \$2.948 trillion over 10 years when compared with current law. As I mentioned in a previous speech, this \$2.948 trillion figure inaccurately assumes that Senator Obama's plan will be partially offset by \$925 billion in revenue raisers. The Tax Policy Center refers to Senator Obama's \$925 billion number as an "unverifiable campaign-provided revenue estimate." As I mentioned in that previous speech, a more realistic estimate of revenue raisers over 10 years is \$220 billion, meaning that Senator Obama's tax plan would actually lose another \$705 billion in revenue. Therefore, the total revenue loss from Senator Obama's plan is not \$2.948 trillion over 10 years, but instead is approximately \$3.65 trillion over 10 years.

The figure for Senator McCain's plan is higher. As you can see, the Tax Policy Center shows that Senator McCain's plan to prevent widespread tax increases would lose revenue of \$4.2 trillion over 10 years.

In addition, as I mentioned in my prior speech, Senator McCain's proposal assumes revenue raisers of \$365 billion. If we net that \$365 billion number against the known revenue raisers number of \$220 billion, we find that Senator McCain's plan is short of revenue raisers by \$145 billion.

Therefore, adding this \$145 billion to the revenue loss of \$4.2 trillion that the Tax Policy Center estimates for Senator McCain's tax relief plan results in a total revenue loss of \$4.345 trillion.

The National Taxpayers Union, also known as the NTU, is a non-partisan public policy research organization. The NTU's analysis, updated September 25, 2008, says that Senator McCain's plan would include new spending of \$92.4 billion per year. Therefore, according to the NTU, this would result in spending increases of \$924 billion over ten years. Adding this \$924 billion in estimated new spending to the revenue loss from Senator McCain's tax relief plans, this results in a total of \$5.269 trillion of revenue loss plus spending from Senator McCain's plan.

I turn now to Senator Obama's tax and spending plans. Would Senator Obama's Democratic colleagues that have an obsession with pay-go on the tax side, but not the spending side, including the House blue dogs, go along with increasing the deficit approximately \$3.65 trillion by Senator Obama's proposed tax cuts? This is before even taking into account the spending increases that Senator Obama is proposing.

According to the non-partisan National Taxpayers Union's analysis, which was updated September 25, 2008, Senator Obama has proposed to increase spending by \$293 billion per year, which amounts to \$2.93 trillion dollars in additional spending over 10 years.

Therefore, Senator Obama is proposing tax and spending programs that would increase the deficit by \$6.58 trillion, before even considering the cost of interest resulting from such an astronomical addition to our national debt. Therefore, Senator Obama proposes to increase the national debt by a whopping \$1.31 trillion more than Senator McCain over the next ten years. A portion of Senator Obama's March 13, 2006 speech regarding fiscal responsibility is posted on his campaign website. A portion of this speech states: "If Washington were serious about honest tax relief in this country, we'd see an effort to reduce our national debt by returning to responsible fiscal policies."

Senator Obama's proposal to increase the national debt by \$6.58 trillion is inconsistent with his statement regarding a return to fiscally responsible policies.

Even if he really did want to provide the tax relief he is promising, would a Democratic Congress let Senator Obama make good on most of his promises that he will provide middle-class tax relief? Also, would a Democratic Congress fight attempts by Senator McCain to enact the tax relief proposals that he has made?

Similar promises to those made by Senator Obama were made by Candidate Clinton in 1992. Candidate Clinton said that taxes wouldn't be raised on people making under \$200,000. However, President Clinton then raised taxes on everyone making \$20,000 and over in 1993.

Perhaps Senator Obama would be able to provide some of the tax relief that he's been promising, but only to those Americans falling within his narrow version of the middle class, stopping at individuals making \$66,000 or less, that he's been using in the campaign ads stating that he will provide 3 times more tax breaks than Senator McCain. Senator Obama has changed his definition of the middle class from \$250,000 and below in his public statements to those making \$66,000 and below in his campaign ads and on his campaign website.

This is definitely change, but if you make more than \$66,000, I wouldn't think this is change you'd ever want to believe in. One man's change is another man's flip-flop.

Considering the history when the Democratic party has been in control of the House, the Senate, and the Presidency, are you confident that the Democrats won't raise taxes on you if you make \$67,000, which is above the middle class according to one of Senator Obama's two inconsistent definitions of the middle class? As history has shown us, the largest tax increases come when the Democrats control the House, the Senate, and the Presidency.

We need to carefully scrutinize Senator Obama's claim that Senator McCain wouldn't provide any tax relief at all for 100 million Americans, citing the IRS's statistics of income tax stats.

Moreover, Senator Obama has criticized Senator McCain's tax relief plan by saying that Senator McCain's plan would not provide any direct tax cut other than increasing the dependant exemption. Even the nominally non-partisan Tax Policy Center states that Senator McCain would provide tax cuts for all Americans, as did the 2001 and 2003 bipartisan tax cuts.

I yield the floor.