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House of Representatives

APPRECIATING THE SUPPORT OF OUTSIDE GROUPS ON THE DEMOCRATIC BUDGET ALTERNATIVE

HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN
OF MARYLAND
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

March 25, 2015

MR. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, while we were crafting the Democratic alternative budget we met with organizations representing millions of Americans – from seniors to students to hard-working families. I want to thank the many people who took the time to advocate so passionately for their cause. Many of these groups have written to Congress to publicly state their strong opposition to the Republican budget before the House today, eloquently enumerating the many hardships it will cause to working families, students, seniors and other Americans.

I also wanted to thank those who expressed support for the Democratic alternative because of its efforts to ensure broadly shared prosperity, helping middle-class families and those working their way into the middle class, and to invest in the future. I appreciate the support we have received from people working on a broad range of issues. This includes groups representing those concerned with educating our children and making college affordable, such as the National Education Association and the Student Aid Alliance. We also heard from those who represent the many federal employees who provide vital services, such as the National Treasury Employees Union. The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights also wrote in to share their support for our Democratic alternative and the policies it reflects.

I also want to thank those who are working tirelessly to protect Social Security for the growing number of seniors who depend on the program, including the strong advocacy from the National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare. I share the Committee's goal of ensuring a livable retirement for all seniors and the importance of Social Security as fewer Americans have defined benefit pension plans. That is why during the Budget Committee's consideration of the resolution I offered an amendment to protect Social Security benefits from the threat of privatization or benefit cuts that could result from the Republican budget. We have heard from many others who strongly oppose the harmful cuts in the Republican budget – groups as diverse as the National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association, the Coalition for Human Needs, Citizens for Tax Justice, Paralyzed Veterans of America, and the Service Employees International Union.

I appreciate the input, advice, and support of the many people who helped us design the Democratic alternative and work for its passage.