We must not fail our American families again. The Members of Congress have the opportunity to extend unemployment benefits as such benefits expire on May 31, 2003. We must do so.

Our African American families have fared the worst during this economic crisis. The unemployment rate for African Americans is almost 11 percent at 10.9 percent. This rate is twice that of whites. In February, the number of unemployed African Americans totaled 1.7 million.

Every Member of Congress is witnessing firsthand the toll that this economy is taking on our constituents. Not one state is unaffected by this issue. The unemployment rate in Michigan is 6.7 percent. The unemployment rate in Detroit is 7.2 percent. This particular statistic has more than doubled since the last Administration. In November of 2000, the unemployment rate in Detroit was at 3.0 percent.

The budget resolution approved last month guarantees that this country has not yet seen the worst of these unemployment statistics for my District, our community, and the entire country as well.

The Administration claims that the approved budget will create 190,000 jobs. Is the Administration to be commended for creating 190,000 jobs? This number equates to less than the number of jobs that were lost during February and March of this year. During those months, 477,000 jobs were lost.

How are we to alleviate this economic downturn when we fail to provide employment opportunities for this country's citizens? How can we then fail to give those hard-working Americans, who have been laid off with no job prospects in sight, sustenance during these hard times.

While I have highlighted the unemployment statistics within the African American community and Michigan, let me make it clear—this is not a Black issue or a Michigan issue. This is an issue that affects all Americans and as such, we must extend the Temporary Emergency Unemployment Compensation Program (TEUC).

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to address the rising unemployment in our country. Since President Bush took office, 2.7 million people—538,000 in the past three months—have lost their jobs. The unemployment rate now stands at 8.8 million people, 6 percent, the highest level in more than 10 years. California, which has bourne the brunt of the economic downturn has nearly 1.2 million people out of work. In my home city of Los Angeles, our unemployment rate is almost 6.5 percent.

The President and his party will say that it isn't their fault. They will say that this recession started well before the President was sworn into office. That clearly is not true, even if it were, the President's policies have only made the problem worse. By advocating tax cuts to solve every problem, President Bush has avoided taking any type of leadership role in solving this problem. The President, so far, has prescribed tax cuts as his sole cure for budget surpluses, budget deficits, the energy crisis, the war on terrorism and heaven knows what else. It is clear that this is part of a calculated strategy on the part of this Administration to starve domestic health and social programs to meet our peoples' needs: Programs like S-Chip, Head Start, public housing. Unfortunately, this list goes on and on.

Meanwhile, our nation's workers are out of work, out of options and out of benefits. Nationwide, an estimated 2.1 million workers—80,000 a week—will exhaust their regular unemployment benefits over the next five months. In California, 150,400 workers will exhaust their unemployment benefits by the end of May. But, while Congress can find the time to pass two multi-trillion tax cuts to benefit the wealthy, those who need it least, it can not find the time to extend unemployment benefits for workers whose benefits have been exhausted, those who need it most.

Extending unemployment benefits is the simplest and most effective way we can improve this economy. A recent study by Economy.com found that each dollar dedicated to extending unemployment benefits would boost the economy by $1.73. However, the same study found that the centerpiece of the GOP package, the dividend tax cut, would be the least efficient in stimulating the economy. Each dollar dedicated to reducing the taxation of dividends would boost the economy by only 9 cents.

But the President continues to advocate tax cuts. As if this failed policy will now miraculously work. It did not work in 2001 and it will not work in 2003. After passage of the largest tax cut in US history—$1.3 trillion—the economy lost 1.7 million jobs. The Republicans call their plan a ''jobs and economic growth'' bill. Yet, study after study—from the Congressional Budget Office to Economy.com to the editorial pages of the country's leading papers—show that it is anything but a job and growth plan. The bill the Republicans have drafted will have no stimulus effect on the economy, nor will it create jobs.

The Democrats, on the other hand, have developed a strong and balanced policy that will create over a million jobs this year alone. Importantly, the Democrats put money in the hands of the unemployed through the extension of unemployment benefits and tax breaks that help the middle class. It also provides desperately needed help to the States who are struggling under the worst financial crisis since the Great Depression. Under the Republicans' plan, mind you, economists expect the states' financial crisis to worsen.

About the only thing that this bill does is explode the deficit. Less than two years after President Clinton left office, we find ourselves in record deficits and an exploding national debt. President Bush promised when he came into office that the would pay off the debt, not too quickly though. He was concerned about the repercussions of paying off the debt too quickly.

So what did this president do? Well, he certainly didn't pay off the debt. Instead, he increased the national debt by $1.5 trillion over the next ten years. As if this was not bad enough, the debt subject to statutory limit, which at the beginning of this Administration was $5.7 trillion, is now projected to reach more than $12 trillion by the end of 2013, all thanks to Republican policies.

I close, Mr. Speaker, wondering when we will throw away these policies of yesteryear and start doing something of substance? People are hurting. They don't need cheerleading or Horatio Algers stories about how, if they work hard, they, too, can become millionaires. They need our help. When are we going to stop pretending that tax cuts are the cure all for the nation's problems and begin doing meaningful work that will put our constituents to work and not burden our children with trillions in debt. When will we return to funding health, education and social service programs to meet the needs of our people. I hope soon, Mr. Speaker.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. COLE). Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 9 o'clock and 8 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

□ 2345

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. DREIER) at 11 o'clock and 45 minutes p.m.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1588, NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2004

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 108–122) on the resolution (H. Res. 247) providing for further consideration of the bill (H.R. 1588) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2004 for military activities of the Department of Defense, to prescribe military personnel strengths for fiscal year 2004, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2185, UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION AMENDMENTS OF 2003

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 108–123) on the resolution (H. Res. 248) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2185) to extend the Temporary Extended Unemployment Compensation Act of 2002, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION WAIVING REQUIREMENT OF CLAUSE 6(a) OF RULE XIII WITH RESPECT TO CONSIDERATION OF CERTAIN RESOLUTIONS

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 108–124) on the resolution (H. Res. 249) waiving a requirement of clause 6(a) of rule XIII with respect to consideration of certain resolutions reported from the Committee on Rules, which