

## Response to Questions from Recent Town Hall Meetings

□

### **Baseline Budgeting: Why does the federal government use baseline budgeting?**

The entire federal government does not use baseline budgeting, but the Congressional Budget Office does. In late January of each year, CBO reports on the economic and budget outlook, including estimates of spending and revenue levels for the next 10 years under current law. This so-called budget baseline serves as a neutral benchmark against which Members of Congress can measure the budgetary effect of proposed legislation. The baseline is constructed according to rules set forth in law, which generally instruct CBO to assume that current spending and revenue laws continue without change. Thus, the baseline is not a prediction of future budget outcomes. Rather, it reflects CBO's best judgment about how the economy and other factors will affect federal revenues and spending under existing laws. Each summer, CBO updates its baseline projections, incorporating a new economic forecast and the effects of laws that have been enacted to date in that session of Congress.

### **Tax Code: What amounts of income taxes are paid by citizens as they fall on the income spectrum?**

The following links will open a spreadsheet file from the official IRS website:

TOP of the income scale: <http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-soi/08in05tr.xls>

BOTTOM of the income scale: <http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-soi/08in06tr.xls>

*Income taxes paid by what tax bracket people are currently in.*

The income tax brackets have been the same since 2003: 10, 15, 25, 28, 33, and 35. The capital gains and dividends rate has been 15 percent since that time.

For more information, you may access the following spreadsheets:

<http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-soi/09in34tr.xls>

<http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-soi/09in35tr.xls>

<http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-soi/09in36tr.xls>

### **What is the status of the NAFTA Superhighway?**

The “NAFTA Superhighway” is a collection of proposals for free trade facilitating highways from Mexico to Canada through the United States. There is not any one specific plan or any specific legislation introduced in the 112<sup>th</sup> Congress. Congressman Coffman supports infrastructure improvements but won't support efforts to remove the current border safety, inspection and protection measures.