a criterion for rating a proposal for funding? The answer: ''No.''

Le me repeat that again. Will jobs be used as a criteria to determine whether or not this project will be funded? The answer from the DOE is no.

In fact, the guidance goes on to say that DOE removed the criterion on the extent of jobs creation and now will require applicants to report quarterly on the number of jobs created and retained. Job creation was supposed to be the primary requisite for receiving recovery funds, and yet now has been changed to simply a reporting requirement. This is typical Washington. Instead of creating more jobs, we are creating more paperwork.

The Vice President now says they misread the economy, but the truth is they misread the solution. The stimulus bill was a grab bag of Democrat spending priorities, not a timely, targeted and temporary stimulus package. Government spending does not, does not, create jobs or wealth. It consumes it and destroys it.

We are throwing money at a problem that is not increasing consumer confidence, financial certainty or provide a business environment that will encourage job growth. Democrat policies are clearly, clearly, not creating jobs. I cannot, I cannot in good conscience justify throwing good money after bad. That only leaves a legacy of debt for our children and our grandchildren to pay.

I will continue to oppose policies that I believe hurt the American people and the people I represent, and I will gladly, gladly work with my colleagues across the aisle whenever there is an opportunity to do so because good policies that help Texans and help Americans aren't Republican, and they aren't Democrat; they are the right thing to do.

HEALTH CARE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. SARBANES) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SARBANES. Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to take a few minutes today and talk about health care, because that is really the most pressing issue that's facing our country right now. It's inextricably tied to the economic situation of millions of Americans. So even as we struggle to deal with this difficult economy, we can't lose sight of the importance of health care reform.

Now, we have in this country a real paradox with our health care system, because on the one hand America has the best doctors, it has the best nurses, it has highly, highly trained professionals. And I believe, having worked with caregivers for almost 20 years representing providers in Maryland, I think we have the most compassionate caregivers you can find any place.

We have wonderful, fine institutions in my district—the University of Maryland medical system, Johns Hopkins health system. These are some of the finest institutions in the world, year after year being identified at the top of their class.

And we have amazing technology. Every year the advances in technology make it easier for us to address some of the most persistent health care problems in our country. So that's on the one side of the equation.

On the other side we have the highest health care costs in the developed world, we have tremendous shortages of our caregivers, shortages of physicians, shortages of nurses and many other categories of those who provide care.

We have millions of people, millions of people who have no health insurance, and we argue over the number. Some say it's 47 million, some say it's less. But we're talking about tens of millions of people who don't have health insurance coverage in this country. Means we have got a problem.

There are millions more who are underinsured. What does that mean? That means that they have health coverage, but they are one serious health crisis away from pitching over the edge in terms of their families and themselves.

And then those who do have coverage, adequate coverage, are paying premiums that go up by 15, 20, 25 percent a year. So we are all in it together. We all understand at some level that the current system is broken. This is our chance, this is our time. This is the moment to fix it. The American people have been clamoring for this for decades.

So we have to take up the charge. We are not going to borrow anybody's model. We are not going to import a model from England or Canada or France. We are going to design our own brand of American health care, and we are going to fix this system. We can do that.

There are two parts of the discussion. There is a coverage discussion. How do we get to where everybody has decent access to care? I think we ought to pursue this public plan option, because it will keep costs down. It will compete with the private health insurance plans who had kind of a stranglehold on the system, and Americans understand this.

They have moved past this in the discussion. They know we need the public option, because it will create a more level playing field. And, in the words of the President, it will keep the insurance companies honest.

But on the other side of the equation, in addition to the coverage issue, is the delivery of care. And we have got to look at investing in our workforce, and I am glad to say I have introduced legislation that attempts to do that, the health care Workforce Investment Act of 2009, which would create a national workforce advisory board to do just this, look at this question of filling in the workforce.

We have got to focus more on primary and preventive care so we can keep people healthy on the front end instead of just looking after them after they get sick on the back end. We need to change our system and move in that direction.

I like the idea of play space health care. What is that? Instead of expecting people to come to the health system let's figure out how we can take the health care system to people where they are already gathered. Let's go to our schools, where 98 percent of the people between the ages of 5 and 16 can be found 5 days a week, and let's intervene there.

Let's go to senior centers and provide care to our seniors where they are already gathering. And let's go to workplaces and incentivize with tax breaks and tax incentives large employers to put clinics in place to serve working adults right there where they are in the workplace.

These are all things we can do to improve the delivery system.

So let me just close with this: As this health care reform leaves the station, there are three things that need to be on that train so that it's a train to somewhere, not a train to nowhere.

Those three things are universal access to coverage, and I think this public plan option is a wonderful way to go. Second, investment in our workforce, and, third, focusing on primary and preventive care. If we do that, we are going to fix this health care system for millions of Americans across this country.

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The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. MORAN of Kansas addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

IN MEMORY OF LANCE CORPORAL SETH SHARP

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGREY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GINGREY of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, today, the residents of Adairsville, Georgia, in my district, the 11th, are saying good-bye to a local hero who died while bravely serving his Nation in Afghanistan. Lance Corporal Seth Sharp was killed in action on July 2, 2009, from a gunshot wound to his neck during one of the biggest United States military operations in Afghanistan since the global war on terror began back in 2001.

Later this week, I will join Seth's family, his friends and supporters at his funeral in honor of the life of this brave soldier, a life given as the ultimate sacrifice, a sacrifice of duty and love. For, as it is written in John, ''Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.''

This was not Seth's first deployment in the global war on terror. He enlisted with the Marines at age 17 and was serving his Nation in Iraq at age 18. Even at such a young age, Seth embraced the challenge of the Marine Corps and took pride in serving his country. His service and his sacrifice will never be forgotten.

Lance Corporal Sharp leaves behind his fiancee and lifelong sweetheart, Katie McMahon; his father and his stepmother, Rick and Tiffany Sharp of Adairsville, Georgia; his mother, Angela Preston of Alligator Point, Florida; as well as many other close relatives and friends spread out all across the country.

Mr. Speaker, my prayers go out to his family, and my most heartfelt gratitude goes out to Lance Corporal Seth Sharp for his selfless sacrifice for this Nation. I ask all Members to please join me in honoring the distinguished memory of Lance Corporal Seth Sharp.

CLEAN ENERGY AND THE GREAT LAKES REGION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow, hundreds and hundreds of Americans will gather in Massena, New York, to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Saint Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation, the fourth seacoast of our country, stretching all the way from Duluth, Minnesota, all the way out to the Atlantic Ocean, and for communities such as Toledo and Port Clinton and Sandusky in my own congressional district, the Saint Lawrence Seaway waterborne corridor is our gateway to the Atlantic and the world beyond.

The seaway is the linchpin in our efforts to create sophisticated, modern, multimodal distribution hubs that can skirt the congestion in coastal ports in our country. The seaway, our corridor that we share with the Canadians, is the vital link of commerce between our Nation's heartland and world markets. Therefore, investments in the seaway are not only investments in our economic future for the Great Lakes States but for the Nation.

As the United States Congress considers clean energy legislation and a national power generation policy, it is important that that policy remediate a major national energy inequity that must be included in any reform bill.

Power costs are just horrendous in the Great Lakes States, in fact, double and triple the rates of our western and southern brethren and southeastern brethren in our country. And when you think about those regions having had the luxury of Federal power support for nearly 75 years—and they have enjoyed those power supports—they were really a product of a Nation that believed in growing to the west and the south. And we made it happen.

But our Great Lakes region, along with some northeastern States, are the only parts of our country without equal access to Federal benefit for electric power generation and transmission, thus denying competitive rates to our residential, commercial, and industrial consumers.

The high costs of power just in my district here in northern Ohio—at 14 to 18 cents a kilowatt hour—is a serious factor contributing to job loss. In fact, the Midwest is put at a competitive disadvantage with the entire rest of the country, not because we have fewer resources or less skilled workers, but because Federal subsidies encourage development in western and southern areas, but not in ours.

The House version of the energy bill includes a provision members of the Great Lakes States worked very hard to incorporate. It begins the process of leveling the energy playing field for these Great Lakes States and creating the startup of Federal energy parity.

The Great Lakes region is home to 116 million people that account for well over a third of our Nation's gross domestic product, and we've long endured these serious competitive disadvantages because of the absence of Federal power parity.

This provision aims to level the playing field with all other regions of the country—the South, the West, the Southeast, the Tennessee Valley Authority—that have benefited for over 75 years from Federal power assistance to develop their economies.

These regions borrow at very favorable Federal funds rates and also receive significant energy infrastructure investments annually, with the Western Power Authority alone receiving over $228 million just in the last year.

In the recovery bill passed earlier this year, there was an additional $6.5 billion just for Bonneville Power Authority and the Western Area Power Authority, along with $10 million for added infrastructure and administration.

For infrastructure, for renewable power generation, really, these Federal supports provide a huge strategic advantage. The language we're offering would propose a similar $3.5 billion borrowing authority to create jobs through the development of clean energy platforms, and if we don't do this in our region, those green energy jobs are going to flow to the other parts of the country.

This provision would allow a Federal instrumentality such as the Saint Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation to undertake these green energy development activities across Great Lakes communities. And as the energy bill moves to the Senate, Members of this body must continue to demand equal treatment from the Federal Government for all regions of our Nation.

Our region's track record is commendable. It speaks for itself. We're among the three top solar centers in the hemisphere. We have massive biofuels industries, the first solar plant at a U.S. National Guard base, establishment of clean energy incubators at many of our advanced universities, and an expanding roster of startup green companies that are pursuing exciting opportunities in solar, wind, and other green power sectors.

The Great Lakes deserve to be a part of the solution to clean energy in our country, but in order to do this, we need to have that Federal energy power parity with the other regions of the country that have now developed as a result of what the Midwest and Northeast did for them over three-quarters of a century ago.

A true revolution in green energy can only be ushered in in a balanced way when the Great Lakes have the same instrumentalities that ushered in generations of western and southern growth.

ARE WE REDISTRIBUTING THE WEALTH?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. INGLIS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. INGLIS. Today, the Obama administration has floated an idea that really is rather shocking and is quite different than what I thought we were going to do with the TARP money that's coming back to us. In fact, last week I had two town meetings where I talked to folks in South Carolina's Fourth District about how it is that the $350 billion of TARP I is now coming back to us, the taxpayers of the United States. In fact, $70 billion has been repaid.

We're earning interest ranging from 5 to 9 percent on that. And the last reports we had, it's totaling $4.5 billion that's paid back to us in interest. So you have the principal return of about $70 billion. We have interest coming back to us in the form of the magnitude of somewhere around $4.5 billion.

Today's story indicates that really it's a larger amount of interest; it's $6.5 billion.

Now, what the Obama administration is talking about doing—and this truly is shocking, Mr. Speaker—is that that money would not come back to pay down the deficit from whence cometh the $350 billion that we spent on TARP but, rather, they would divert this money to troubled homeowners.

There are two problems with this, Mr. Speaker. One is a real constitutional question, which is: What gives? The administration gets to decide, not Congress. The administration gets to decide, the Executive gets to decide about how to redistribute this money so that they can basically take it and use it for the Treasury purposes to do something else besides pay back to the deficit or pay back to the Federal Treasury? I don't think so, Mr. Speaker. It's a constitutional problem with that. That's the first objection.

The second is: Is this administration absolutely intent on redistributing