WHERE ARE THE JOBS?

(Mr. LUETKEMEYER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, hardworking individuals and entrepreneurs have always been the life blood of our economy. They create jobs. They spur innovation. They have made the American free enterprise system the envy of the world.

As Americans, we all understand that if you work hard you can be successful. Unfortunately, that spirit appears to be undergoing a fundamental transformation in which government comes before the spirit of free enterprise.

The trend began early in 2009 when the government passed the so-called ''stimulus package'' that was supposed to boost the economy and keep unemployment under 8 percent. More than a year after stimulus, unemployment remains well above 9 percent.

Around this country there is an atmosphere of uncertainty caused by Washington's anti-worker agenda. New taxes, mandates, and regulations in countless new laws and proposed laws are threatening to strangle our Nation's entrepreneurs and workers. As I travel around my district, a prevailing feeling of uncertainty about what lies ahead has made employers hesitant to create new jobs; and until this fear and uncertainty about the future is allayed, the American people will continue to wonder and ask the question: Where are the jobs?

UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFIT EXTENSION

(Mr. BRALEY of Iowa asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BRALEY of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, unemployment benefits and Social Security benefits are a safety net. They are not a lottery handout; and as we struggle to try to get the Senate to pass an extension of unemployment benefits, with 15 million out-of-work Americans who are depending on us to pay their bills, it's important to remember that the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office has said that passage of unemployment benefit extensions is one of the most cost-effective and fast-acting ways to stimulate the economy.

But lost in all of this debate and all of this delay is the human side. So I want to share the story fresh from the headline of today's Dubuque Telegraph Herald with the headline: ''Desperation sets in for jobless parents.'' A family with a 32-year-old dad and 30-year-old mom could provide for their children a year ago, but times have changed because Mom suffered an injury at work and hasn't been able to work since March. Dad lost his job a couple of months later, and their unemployment benefits expired in July. The family includes girls, 14 and 10, and boys, 11 and 7.

These are the Americans who need us to act now.

IT'S POLITICS AS USUAL

(Mrs. MILLER of Michigan asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, last week, President Obama was in Holland, Michigan, announcing the award of an economic stimulus grant to a Korean Company: 300 jobs, $150 million, all at a cost of $500,000 per job, all financed by the American taxpayer.

Every Republican in this Chamber voted against the stimulus because we don't think that having the Federal Government pick winners and losers is a way back economically. We don't think borrowing over 40 cents for every dollar that we spend is the way to create jobs. We don't think that this out-of-control spending and piling mountains and mountains of debt on future generations is the kind of America that our Founding Fathers envisioned.

But then the President, while accepting our State's gracious hospitality and respect for his office, chose to take a cheap, partisan, political shot at Congressman PETE HOEKSTRA, whose district he was in. President Obama is proving himself to be the most partisan President in our Nation's history, and instability will not create jobs. Instead, it's politics as usual. It is certainly not change that we can believe in.

REJECT PROPOSALS TO PRIVATIZE SOCIAL SECURITY OR MEDICARE

(Ms. MARKEY of Colorado asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. MARKEY of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, as we debate ways to tackle our growing deficit and create jobs, I call today on this Congress to reject proposals that would privatize Social Security or Medicare.

Colorado seniors rely on Social Security and Medicare; and as we struggle to climb out of a deep recession, the security provided by these programs is more critical than ever.

Dismantling Medicare and adding trillions of dollars to the deficit with a risky privatization scheme that gambles seniors' financial security in the stock market is just the wrong way to go. Rolling the dice on the financial security our seniors depend on, in a financial system that recently almost collapsed, is reckless in the extreme and has been roundly rejected by the American people.

We can cut waste, fraud, and abuse from Social Security and Medicare without cutting a penny in benefits, and I will fight to protect the promise that we made to America's seniors.

COLOMBIA FREE TRADE AGREEMENT

(Mr. PITTS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, as the American people ask where are the jobs, the President's economic advisers reply with weak statistics about the wasteful government stimulus program. All the while, we're losing billions of dollars to tariffs that could have been eliminated years ago.

It has been 1,337 days since the U.S. and Colombia negotiated a free trade agreement. For over 3 years, the Democrat leadership in Congress has refused to consider the legislation to ratify that treaty. In that time, American businesses have paid an estimated $2.8 billion in tariffs. This is $2.8 billion that could have gone to good American jobs, and this number grows higher every day. You can see it on the Republican Ways and Means Committee Web site.

We need to stop wasting our time, hoping that more government spending and borrowing will revive the economy. Instead, we need to unleash American businesses and entrepreneurs to expand into new markets. Passing the Colombia, South Korea, and Panama Free Trade Agreements would give real, tangible benefits to American workers and create jobs.

MAINTAINING CURRENT RETIREMENT AGE FOR SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFITS

(Mr. COURTNEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, during the first decade of this century, the Bush economy destroyed the middle class. Today, we are at a point where 72 percent of Social Security retirees have elected early retirement at age 62 because they had no other financial choice.

But despite the fact that they have voted with their feet in unprecedented numbers, what is Mr. BOEHNER's proposal for Social Security, which he told the Pittsburgh Gazette a couple of weeks ago? He wants to raise the retirement age to age 70. If there is a more out-of-touch statement about what the middle class of this country is going through and what an out-of-touch proposal, to basically totally knock the stuffing out of the retirement security, Mr. BOEHNER's proposal to raise the Social Security retirement age to 70, to means test benefits would decimate what's left of the American middle class.

We cannot let that happen. Democrats will protect this program, which is celebrating its 75th anniversary this August, by maintaining the retirement age which exists today, a program which is solvent until 2037 and with moderate, balanced changes can protect its solvency for future years and generations.