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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. WEBSTER).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
November 14, 2012.

I hereby appoint the Honorable DANIEL WEBSTER to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 17, 2012, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes each, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

DANNY DID FOUNDATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. QUIGLEY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. QUIGLEY. Mr. Speaker, an estimated 50,000 people die every year as a result of seizures. Some of these victims are youngsters like Danny Stanton. Chicagoans Mike and Mariann Stanton founded the Danny Did Foundation after their 4-year-old son, Danny, died from a seizure while he was sleeping. The foundation is dedicated to preventing deaths caused by seizures and raising epilepsy awareness among the public and medical community. That's no small task, but one brave 7-year-old is taking a courageous step to help raise awareness of epilepsy's dangers.

Nick Curley never met Danny, but Nick's cousin Jenny suffers from seizures. Nick has always helped out epilepsy charities in small ways, but felt the need to do something bigger. As an enthusiastic hockey player, he decided to combine his love for the sport and passion for charity to create ''100 Miles for Danny.''

The 7-year-old athlete visited 20 different hockey rinks in the Chicago area and skated 5 miles, or 50 laps, at each rink. His goal has been to raise money and awareness for epilepsy, as well as the Danny Did Foundation. I had the honor and pleasure to skate with Nick on two separate occasions. Not only is he an impressive skater, but his dedication to educating the public about the perils of epilepsy is extraordinary. Nick's determination and warm heart set a powerful example for all of us—one that I will not soon forget.

On Danny's first day of preschool, he told his teacher, I just want to learn. Like Danny, the foundation aims to educate the general public and the medical community about this misunderstood disease.

I admire the efforts of the Danny Did Foundation and heroes like Nick Curley, who truly enjoys life, just like Danny did.

AFGHANISTAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) for 5 minutes.

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, while we were home for the district work period in October, 18 American troops died in Afghanistan. In my home county of Pitt in North Carolina, Army Specialist Joshua Nelson was killed by the very Afghans he was sent to train. He is just one of the 60 killed by these insider attacks.

My adviser, a former United States Marine Corps commandant, recently said to me, I am more convinced than ever that we need to get out of Afghanistan. When our friends turn out to be our enemy, it is time to pull the plug.

It is such a tragedy when American servicemembers are sent to Afghanistan to train police and military and end up being killed by their own trainees.

Mr. Speaker, the whole war in Afghanistan is a tragedy. On October 7, there was a national article titled, ''A Mother Mourns a Grim Milestone,'' referring to the 2,000 American casualties from the war in Afghanistan.

Lisa Freeman, who was interviewed in the article, lost her son, Captain Mathew Freeman, in 2009 in Afghanistan. Ms. Freeman said:

> I just sat here, reliving the pain and wondering: Where is America's outrage? Where is America's concern that we're still at war?

My question is, Mr. Speaker, why is the House of Representatives still supporting a war that costs $10 billion a month? This money is borrowed primarily from the Chinese. All we hear about is the financial cliff, this crisis that is facing America. My question is, after 11 years, where is the outrage from Congress for our men and women in uniform dying in Afghanistan?

2014 is the date that the President has said that we will start bringing the troops out. That is 25 more months. Why do we have to wait until the end of 2014 to start bringing our troops home? How many more have to die at the hands of the very Afghans they are training?

An October 14 New York City Times editorial title ''Time to Pack Up'' has a subtitle that says it best: ''It should not take 2 more years for the United States to leave Afghanistan.''

Mr. Speaker, I have a petition on my Web site, Jones.House.gov. I'm asking

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people around this country to please sign this petition with their name and State, nothing else, who agree with us. We have people from both sides, but we need more Members, that 2013 is the time to start bringing our troops home, not waiting until 2014.

Mr. Speaker, beside me, again, I bring posters to the floor to show the Members of the House that we are still at war. The poster beside me, Mr. Speaker, is an Honor Guard bringing a flagged-draped transfer case off a plane.

Again, I join my friends and ask the Members of Congress to start debating the policy, and let's start bringing our troops home in 2013 and not wait until December of 2014. As a former commandant said, when our friends start killing us, then it's time to pull the plug.

I close by asking God to please bless our men and women in uniform, to bless the families of our men and women in uniform. I ask God in His loving arms to hold the families who've given a child dying for freedom in Afghanistan and Iraq.

God, please bless the House and Senate, that we will do what is right in Your eyes for Your people here in the United States of America.

God, please give strength, wisdom, and courage to President Obama, that he will do what is right in Your eyes for his people.

And I close by saying three times: God, please, God, please, God, please continue to bless America.

RESULTS OF PUERTO RICO POLITICAL STATUS PLEBISCITE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Puerto Rico (Mr. PIERLUISI) for 5 minutes.

Mr. PIERLUISI. Mr. Speaker, Puerto Rico recently held a plebiscite on its political status. I want to convey the results to the American public, describe their significance, and outline the next steps I will take.

As background, Puerto Rico has been a U.S. territory since 1898. The island is home to 3.7 million American citizens who cannot vote for President, are not represented in the Senate, and elect one nonvoting Member to the House. Federal law is supreme in Puerto Rico, but its residents are treated unequally under many Federal programs.

Plebiscite voters were first asked whether they want Puerto Rico to remain a territory. Over 1.7 million people answered, which is about 75 percent of registered voters on the island. Fifty-four percent said they did not want the current status to continue, while 46 percent said they did.

Voters were then asked to express their preference among the three viable alternatives to the current status: statehood, free association, and independence. Over 1.3 million people chose an option. Sixty-one percent voted for statehood, 33 percent voted for free association, and 5.5 percent voted for independence. In addition, 472,000 voters did not provide an answer.

This plebiscite marked the first time voters were directly asked whether they want Puerto Rico to remain a territory. One of the two main political parties in Puerto Rico urged a ''yes'' vote. Nevertheless, the ''no'' vote won by eight points. Those voting ''no'' included statehood supporters, as well as advocates of independence and free association. These three groups are united in their opposition to the current status which is colonial in nature. It deprives Puerto Ricans of their right to choose their leaders who make their national laws and to equal treatment under those laws.

□ 1010

Not one of my stateside colleagues in Congress would accept this response for their constituents. So they should respect that my constituents no longer accept it either.

The rejection of territory status fundamentally changes the terms of this debate. After this vote, the question is not whether but when Puerto Rico will cease to be a territory and will have a fully democratic status. Defenders of the status quo may obstruct change in the short term, but in a democracy, the will of the people ultimately prevails.

Let me turn to the second question in the plebiscite, asking voters which status should replace the current status. Of the 1.3 million people who voted for one of the three options, a supermajority chose statehood. Of critical importance, the 810,000 votes for statehood on the second question exceeded the 803,000 votes for the current status on the first question. For the first time, there are more people in Puerto Rico who want to become a State than who want to continue as a territory. This fact further undermines the democratic legitimacy of the current status.

Some wish to downplay the results of the plebiscite by citing the voters who left the second question blank, but this argument does not withstand scrutiny. In our democracy, outcomes are determined by ballots properly cast. Power rests with the citizen who votes, not the one who stays home or who refuses to choose from among the options provided.

Some voters may have left the second question blank simply because they prefer the current status to its alternatives. Those voters were able to vote for the current status in the first question. So their viewpoint was reflected in the plebiscite results. Others may have declined to answer because they were led to believe there was another option that should have been on the ballot, a best-of-all-worlds proposal called ''enhanced commonwealth.'' But each of the last four Presidential administrations has rejected this proposal, as have all key congressional leaders. A blank vote to protest the exclusion of an impossible status proposal is entitled to no weight.

As Puerto Rico's representative in the U.S. Congress, I will work with my allies to ensure that the President and Congress take appropriate action in light of these results. The people of Puerto Rico have spoken, and I intend to make certain that their voice is heard loud and clear.

ACCELERATE THE TIMETABLE: BRING THE TROOPS HOME BEFORE 2014

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, since the House last convened in late September, about 30 more Americans have given their lives in the war in Afghanistan. The total number of fatalities has now passed 2,000. And as of October 7, we've been at war in Afghanistan for a staggering 11 years. There are more than 2,000 families that will have an empty chair this Thanksgiving, more than 2,000 families with a void that can't possibly be filled—husbands and wives who will have to go on without their life partner, children missing a parent, parents who are suffering the terrible grief of losing a child.

The human cost has become too steep for our Nation to bear. We can't ask our troops and their families to endure any more sacrifice for a military occupation—now more than a decade old—which has not accomplished its goals and is undermining our national security as well.

And of course, the fiscal burden is one that rests on the shoulders of every single taxpaying American. The Afghanistan pricetag would be high even for a successful, well-executed policy that was actually making America stronger. But to waste the people's money to the tune of $10 billion a month on this failure is a national scandal.

To every one of my colleagues who has spoken on this floor about excessive government spending, it's time to look at the cost of foreign wars before we start cutting domestic programs that our very own people need to survive.

It's not just progressives like me who believe we need a change in policy, Mr. Speaker. There is a clear consensus among the American people. They agree that this military occupation is bad for America, bad for Afghanistan, and bad for the cause of peace and stability around the world. I think it was pretty telling that, during the recent campaign, even the Republican candidate for President ended up supporting a withdrawal of troops by 2014. But in my opinion, that's not nearly soon enough.

Now that the Presidential campaign is over, we must accelerate that timetable and end this war as soon as is safely possible because every remaining day that we have troops on the ground is another day that gives

strength to the very extremists that we're trying to defeat.

The time has come to invest in Afghanistan the right way, with humanitarian aid and civilian support rather than military force. It's time for a SMART Security approach that puts development and diplomacy first—not just in Afghanistan but throughout the developing world and in other nations where terrorism poses a threat. It's not only the right thing to do, Mr. Speaker; it's the most cost-effective way as well. It's pennies on the dollar to invest in humanitarian support for nations rather than military involvement.

On Sunday, many of us took part in Veterans Day parades back in our home districts. In doing so, we heard expressed that our Nation is so grateful for the service of these men and women, those who left their families and their communities to serve their country. I bow to no one in my respect for our veterans and those currently deployed overseas. But I believe the best way for us to support them right now and the best way to honor American values is to end the war in Afghanistan and bring our troops home.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 16 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

PRAYER

Reverend Donna Kafer, Arizona Legislative Chaplaincy, Peoria, Arizona, offered the following prayer:

Dear Holy and Righteous Father,

As this honored body of Congress convenes today, we come first to humbly submit ourselves before You, acknowledging You as Lord and Creator, the One who directs the paths of those who call upon Your precious name. Savior God, we also want to thank You for Your infinite grace, Your divine mercy, and for the deep love that You extend to each of us.

Father, I ask that You faithfully pour out an overflowing measure of health, wisdom, and clarity of mind on our leaders as they attend to the many critical tasks at hand. Provide each Member with an ever-increasing abundance of comfort, peace, and a renewed sense of purpose.

Lord, may we grasp the full spectrum of Your character, so that our love for You might never waver. And Sovereign God, may Your life-giving truth preside here forevermore. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. WALZ) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. WALZ of Minnesota led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

WELCOMING REVEREND DONNA KAFER

The SPEAKER. Without objection, the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. FRANKS) is recognized for 1 minute.

There was no objection.

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. Mr. Speaker, I was gratified today to hear our beloved citizen of Arizona, Chaplain Donna Kafer, offer our prayer.

Chaplain Kafer is the author of two books, ''Women of Courage'' and ''Women of Faith,'' and she's currently working on a third book called ''Women of Grace.'' And that will complete the series, ''Gardens of Grace.''

Mr. Speaker, I think it's especially appropriate because, indeed, Donna Kafer is a woman of grace that I've had the privilege to know for a very long time and am so grateful to be able to call her ''friend.''

She has made her aim in life to serve her God, her country, her family, and the truth. She serves as the appointed chaplain for the Arizona State Legislature, where she has provided spiritual encouragement for leaders, staff, and State employees for about 14 years now, Mr. Speaker.

Chaplain Kafer has a master's degree in ministry through Phoenix University of Theology, and has received chaplaincy training through the Southwest School of Chaplaincy.

Chaplain Kafer is an Arizona native. She lives in Peoria, Arizona, with her husband of 23 years, Ross, a firefighter-paramedic, and their daughter, Andrea, a 20-year-old college student. They've been members of Christ's Church of the Valley in northwest Peoria for nearly 18 years, under the noble leadership of Pastor Don Wilson. And it is my honor for her to be our guest today.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. YODER). The Chair will entertain 15 further requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

HONORING THE SERVICE OF ARMY STAFF SERGEANT KENNETH BENNETT

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

Mr. CRAWFORD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Army Staff Sergeant Kenneth Bennett. As an explosive ordnance disposal technician, Bennett put his life on the line every day to protect his comrades. As a former EOD tech myself, I know the danger Bennett faced, and today I honor his ultimate sacrifice.

Staff Sergeant Kenneth Bennett is an American hero. He entered the Army in 2004, and in 2006 he trained to be an explosive ordnance disposal technician. Bennett was serving his third, and what was to be his last, deployment to Afghanistan. Bennett earned numerous awards for his service, including the Defense Meritorious Service Medal and the Combat Action Badge.

I did not know personally Staff Sergeant Bennett, but I do know this: He was a son, a husband and father, and a friend to many. Staff Sergeant Bennett leaves behind his wife, Mandi, their 2-year-old daughter, and another child on the way. Because he served, America and the world are more free.

EOD technicians are the first line of defense in protecting our servicemembers overseas and with homeland missions. The EOD community deserves the respect and full resources of the Department of Defense to continue saving lives.

God bless the memory of Staff Sergeant Kenneth Bennett, and may God continue to bless the United States of America.

SUPPORT RECOGNITION OF MALALA YOUSUFZAI BY THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS

(Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. First, I think it is appropriate to welcome back my colleagues and to congratulate all of those who have chosen again, if reelected, to serve this great, great Nation, and for those for the first time who have the honor and privilege of being in this storied institution.

Now words are that we can come together and make a difference in the lives of Americans and we can, in fact, find a way to help the most vulnerable, the impoverished, and those who work every day. I know that we can solve this problem of sequestration.

I lead now into something that is quite contrary to the idea of America's issues and problems and ask my colleagues to join me in supporting a Congressional Gold Medal for Malala Yousufzai. This is the little girl who was shot in the head by the Taliban in Pakistan standing up for education for our children and for her fellow boys and girls. What an amazing young lady now healing in a British hospital.

Sixty-one million children worldwide are not enrolled in school. We're advocating, or many around the world are advocating, for a Nobel Peace Prize for her. I believe that the Congressional Gold Medal symbolizes those who are willing to suffer for others and to make a difference. I ask my colleagues to join me.

The United Nations declared Saturday, November 10, 2012, as Malala Day, to highlight the lack of access to education for 32 million girls. I think that we can join together and say we stand with girls and boys around the world and we stand with our children.

Support a Congressional Gold Medal for the little girl who was willing to stand up to the Taliban.

LET'S END PARTISAN GRIDLOCK

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

Mr. DESJARLAIS. The American people have voiced their demands for an end to the partisan gridlock that has for far too long plagued Washington. They expect their elected officials to work across party lines and across the branches of government to solve the challenges facing our Nation.

Unless we act now, we run the risk of allowing this country to go off a fiscal cliff in January. This would have both severe economic and security ramifications. Defense Secretary Panetta says it would be devastating to our national defense.

The accounting firm Ernst & Young said it would cost us nearly 700,000 jobs. Almost every American would fall victim to a tax increase. This would be an unacceptable blow to our economy that is still struggling to get back on its feet.

House Republicans have already passed legislation to address these issues and stand ready to build upon them to avert this crisis.

THE FEDERAL WIND PRODUCTION TAX CREDIT

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

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, the American people expect Congress to go to work, to create jobs and grow our economy. We all heard that message loud and clear in last week's election.

We have an opportunity to save 75,000 American jobs right now by extending the wind production tax credit. In Minnesota, this tax credit helped create an entire industry, employs thousands of people from construction workers to high-tech analysts, and all of these jobs now, well, they're under threat.

The St. Paul Pioneer Press ran a story last week, entitled, ''Wind-energy jobs falling off as tax credit set to expire.'' Minnesota companies are now being forced to lay off workers because the House has failed to act.

Last quarter there was not one new single wind project announced in America because of the uncertainty of the tax credit. This is unacceptable and is completely avoidable.

There is strong bipartisan support for extending this credit. Congress cannot wait until December 31. I urge Congress to pass the wind production energy tax credit.

□ 1210

ARLINGTON HEIGHTS MAYOR ARLENE MULDER

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

Mr. DOLD. Today, I rise to recognize a woman who embodies dedication to public service and the best of what we hope for in our public officials.

Recently, Mayor Arlene Mulder of Arlington Heights announced her retirement, ending a long and successful tenure. Mayor Mulder served her community as village president for 20 years—the longest-serving village president in Arlington Heights history. She is respected by her colleagues and constituents alike for her commitment to work together and to better her community. She has been an advocate for local businesses and has helped transform downtown Arlington Heights into the beautiful and vibrant area that it is today.

I want to express my appreciation for Mayor Mulder's 34 years in public service as village president, as trustee, and as park district commissioner. Her commitment to making Arlington Heights a better community is exactly what we look for in our public officials. I know she will continue to contribute in great ways to our communities, and I look forward to working with her in the future.

WE NEED A FARM BILL

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

Mr. WALZ of Minnesota. Last week, the American people spoke; and I, for one, heard them loud and clear: quit arguing and get your dang work done.

My suggestion is that we've got a piece that we can do today—pass the farm bill for America. America's farm economy has been one of the bright spots over the last 5 years, and our farmers and our consumers deserve some certainty. The House has already passed the farm bill through the Ag Committee with a two-thirds vote. The Senate passed a farm bill with a two-thirds majority. They couldn't agree it's Wednesday over there, yet they passed a farm bill. This bill adds certainty to rural America. It creates jobs on Main Street. It provides stable prices in the grocery stores, and it makes sure that in drought-stricken areas of our country farmers are there to produce.

This is a jobs bill. It's a bipartisan bill. It's a compromise. Every major farm and nutrition group has asked for it to be done. All we need to do is to bring it to the floor and to push one of the two buttons—''yes'' for jobs in rural America and food for this country or ''no'' for more gridlock. I think we want the green button.

VOICE OF TEXAS: ELM

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, Elm from Houston, Texas, wrote me this:

> My grandparents immigrated to the United States from the Philippines in the sixties. They spoke no English, had very little money and virtually no contacts, yet they were able to create a legacy. They legally became American citizens. They built a strong life and worked hard. Our family became successful through self-dedication, self-worth, self-drive, and self-perseverance—similar to many immigrants before them. We did this without the help and having to rely on government handouts or legislative attempts to redistribute wealth through mass programs. In return, our family gave back to this great country. Since then, we have had four generations of military service in the United States Navy or the United States Army. We worked hard. We beat adversity. We gave back and we served this country.

Mr. Speaker, Elm and Elm's family worked hard for their American Dream. This is an immigrant success story in spite of and without the help of big, oppressive government.

And that's just the way it is.

HURRICANE SANDY

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

Mr. SIRES. Mr. Speaker, Hurricane Sandy was an unprecedented storm that left a devastating impact on the New Jersey and New York region—damaging homes, businesses and leaving millions without power. My district was hit particularly hard. Numerous substations in our area were submerged under water, leaving many residents without electricity for nearly 2 weeks.

As a result, thousands of linemen have worked around the clock to assist those in need and to help restore power. Not only have those in the New Jersey and New York region joined together to help those impacted by Sandy, but hundreds of individuals from across the country have come to lend a hand to the people of New Jersey. Just the other day, as I was touring the damaged areas of my district, I saw license plates that ranged from Wisconsin to Louisiana.

Whether they have come from around the block or from hundreds of miles away in order to assist our region in its recovery, I want to thank all the workers and volunteers.

While the road ahead to a full recovery will be long, there is no doubt that the progress we have made over the past 2 weeks could not have been possible without the assistance of all of those people who came from around the country. I thank all of those people who came to assist the people of New Jersey.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, KADEN

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

Mr. HULTGREN. Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege to be back here to work on some of the most pressing issues facing our Nation.

The first time I ran for office was as grade school vice president in the fifth grade. Back then, I'm not sure what the most pressing issue was for our classroom—maybe the option of getting chocolate milk for lunch. But today, I serve for a very different reason. I want to preserve the greatness of the United States for my kids, including for a very special fifth grader in my house.

Happy birthday, Kaden. I love you so much and I am so proud of you, and I'm sorry I can't be with you today. I want you to know how proud I am of you and how your mom and I are so grateful to God that He gave you to us. Happy birthday.

THE FISCAL CLIFF

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

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, left unresolved, the uncertainty of the fiscal cliff, with spending cuts and increased taxes, will exact real and permanent damage on the American people and on the American economy.

What we need is leadership—leadership that was lacking and that created the fiscal cliff in the first place—one that provides a balanced approach of spending cuts and increased revenues, one that is bipartisan and one that is aspirational.

Throughout the history of our Nation, we only experience job growth when we invest in our own people and in our own economy—in education, in scientific research, and in road and bridge building. To invest and to grow this economy and to grow jobs, we have to produce the kind of strategic investments that are required. We need to get to work now to avoid this catastrophe.

REFORM THE TAX CODE

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

Mr. CLARKE of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I agree that we must avoid this fiscal cliff, but let's come to an agreement to reduce the deficit in a way that will make this country more competitive: let's reform the Tax Code to boost manufacturing; let's close those loopholes that send jobs overseas; and let's replace them with tax credits, which will relocate jobs back to the U.S.

Let's reform our Code in order to bring American jobs back home, and let's create more jobs by promoting U.S. manufacturing.

HURRICANE SANDY

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

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, on October 29, Hurricane Sandy—a 1,000-mile-wide storm—struck the northeastern portion of America, including the State of Connecticut. Ninety-mile-an-hour winds arrived at 9 o'clock that night, coinciding with high tide, flooding communities from Stonington all the way to Madison in eastern Connecticut, knocking out power, destroying property—leaving a wake of destruction in its path.

First responders from Stonington—like George Brennan, the fire chief in New London; like Ron Samuel, the fire marshal in Madison, Connecticut; like Sam DeBurra, and many, many others—rose to the challenge to save lives and to protect human life from one end to the other. There were first selectman and mayors—like Paul Formica from the town of East Lyme, where a regional emergency shelter was put into operation—who worked to restore power. Again, teamwork. The volunteers at the Red Cross and the Salvation Army came together and had one mission, which was to save lives and restore the region.

We need to follow that example here in Congress as we face the challenges that confront this Nation over the next 7 weeks. Thank you to all of those leaders who again rose to the challenge of a historic storm—bigger than in 1938. Let's follow their example to advance the interests of our Nation.

□ 1220

EXTEND THE WIND CREDIT NOW

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

Mr. LOEBSACK. Mr. Speaker, I rise again to highlight an important issue to Iowa and the Nation, the wind production tax credit. It expires in a month and must be extended immediately. Inaction has already led to job losses in Iowa and threatens thousands more jobs in our State.

The wind credit has bipartisan roots and was an important issue in the Presidential and many congressional campaigns this year. The Senate already passed a bipartisan package that included the wind credit. It's past time for the House to act.

Iowa is the second-largest producer of wind energy in the country. Wind manufacturing involves about 200 companies and 6,000 good-paying jobs for Iowans. Congress should not play games with people's jobs and pull the rug out from an industry employing thousands in the middle of an economic downturn.

The wind credit is also critical for energy production and job creation. Congress must extend the wind credit now before more jobs are lost, especially at this time with unemployment and economic downturn that we still continue to suffer from.

OPERATION HONOR FLIGHT

(Ms. KAPTUR asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, on this week of Veterans Day, I rise to pay tribute to two noble Americans and a great organization, Honor Flight. Earl Morse of Ohio and Jeff Miller of North Carolina are two of the founding members of the Honor Flight Network.

The Honor Flight Network philanthropy is dedicated to bringing World War II veterans to their memorial here in Washington, D.C., the National World War II Memorial. That memorial is now the most visited on our Nation's Mall with over 4 million visitors a year. Imagine if every World War II veteran who wanted to come could.

These brave men and women served our country during World War II during the 20th century's most profound struggle of liberty over tyranny. Their sacrifices, with over 400,000 lost in those horrendous conflicts, ensured that our generation and those to follow could enjoy our freedoms in the 20th century, the 21st, and beyond.

Earl Morse started the Honor Flight Network. He led the inaugural flights to the World War II memorial starting in 2005, not long after the memorial opened. Jeff Miller began to serve those from rural areas.

Mr. Speaker, let me say that these two men's ennobling work has now allowed over 100,000 Americans of the World War II generation who fought to come and visit the memorial.

Let me thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank those veterans and Honor Flight and these men for what they are doing for our Nation.

NATIONAL FAMILY CAREGIVERS AWARENESS MONTH

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

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, November is National Family Caregivers Awareness Month, a time to honor the work of over 65 million family members who sacrifice every day to care for their loved ones with special needs.

Whether they have a father with Alzheimer's or a mother with Parkinson's

disease or a child with autism, these caregivers provide approximately 80 percent of the long-term care for the chronically ill. Unfortunately, this 24-hour-a-day commitment can take a toll on the caregiver's emotional, physical, and financial well-being.

Respite care provides a temporary break for family members engaged in the full-time task of caregiving. In fact, it is the most frequently requested support service, yet nearly 90 percent of caregivers still go without needed assistance. That's why I've introduced the Lifespan Respite Care Reauthorization Act, and will continue to advocate for its passage and funding.

Mr. Speaker, family caregivers are our Nation's silent heroes, and they deserve our recognition and support not just in November but every day of the year. To all of them, I say a heartfelt ''thank you.''

LET'S TURN THE WHEEL TOGETHER

(Mrs. MALONEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, all along the east coast, families are struggling to recover from superstorm Sandy. That makes avoiding the fiscal cliff even more important.

Unless we come together in this body to reach across the aisle and compromise, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, FEMA, which is helping thousands and thousands of people and small businesses recover from this disaster, could be cut as much as $848 million. Cutting FEMA would be a manmade disaster that would cripple relief efforts in my home State of New York and in many other States.

I don't believe that anyone in this body campaigned on raising the unemployment rate or campaigned to see the U.S. economy fall back into a recession, which would happen if we went over this fiscal cliff. I hope that no one here wants to place a significant new tax burden on the middle class.

In these final days of Congress, let's reach across the aisle, let's reach to one another and work together on the critical problems we need to solve. We need to avoid the fiscal cliff.

FEMA'S HELP AND RESPONSIVENESS

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

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I just met with the FEMA director, Craig Fugate, and expressed some general concerns first about the need for temporary housing for those in my district. We talked about bringing in trailers, and he discussed that and said this was something that they were working on. We also talked about the need to have the Army Corps do emergency work on dunes and beaches that have been destroyed in the storm, and he said he was going to follow up on that.

We also asked about the State and local match because many of my towns are very small, and they can't afford the 25 percent State and local match for long-term recovery work. So we're trying to get that reduced or eliminated.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, many of my homeowners have been asking if their homes can be bought out or raised up on stilts or pilings. This is another thing that we're following up on.

I just wanted to say that I felt that the FEMA director, Mr. Craig Fugate, was very responsive to our concerns, and we're going to follow up on these and other concerns of a general nature as we continue to work on the humanitarian concerns in the individual towns in the Sixth District and throughout the State of New Jersey.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote incurs objection under clause 6 of rule XX.

Recorded votes on postponed questions will be taken later.

NEW YORK CITY NATURAL GAS SUPPLY ENHANCEMENT ACT

Mr. AMODEI. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and concur in the Senate amendment to the bill (H.R. 2606) to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to allow the construction and operation of natural gas pipeline facilities in the Gateway National Recreation Area, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the Senate amendment is as follows:

Senate amendment:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''New York City Natural Gas Supply Enhancement Act''.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) PERMITTEE.—The term ''permittee'' means the Transcontinental Gas Pipeline Company, LLC, (Transco), its successors or assigns.

(2) SECRETARY.—The term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of the Interior.

SEC. 3. AUTHORIZATION FOR PERMIT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may issue permits for rights-of-way or other necessary authorizations to allow the permittee to construct, operate, and maintain a natural gas pipeline and related facilities within the Gateway National Recreation Area in New York, as described in Federal Regulatory Commission Docket No. PF09–8.

(b) TERMS AND CONDITIONS.—A permit issued under this section shall be—

(1) consistent with the laws and regulations generally applicable to utility rights-of-way within units of the National Park System; and

(2) subject to such terms and conditions as the Secretary deems appropriate.

(c) FEES.—The Secretary shall charge a fee for any permit issued under this section. The fee shall be based on fair market value and shall also provide for recovery of costs incurred by the National Park Service associated with the processing, issuance, and monitoring of the permit. The Secretary shall retain any fees associated with the recovery of costs.

(d) TERM.—Any permit issued under this section shall be for a term of 10 years. The permit may be renewed at the discretion of the Secretary in accordance with this section.

SEC. 4. LEASE OF HISTORIC BUILDINGS AT FLOYD BENNETT FIELD.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may enter into a non-competitive lease with the permittee to allow the occupancy and use of buildings and associated property at Floyd Bennett Field within the Gateway National Recreation Area to house meter and regulating equipment and other equipment necessary to the operation of the natural gas pipeline described in section 3(a).

(b) TERMS AND CONDITIONS.—A lease entered into under this section shall—

(1) be in accordance with section 3(k) of the National Park System General Authorities Act (16 U.S.C. 1a–2(k)), except that the proceeds from rental payments may be used for infrastructure needs, resource protection and restoration, and visitor services at Gateway National Recreation Area; and

(2) provide for the restoration and maintenance of the buildings and associated property in accordance with section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (16 U.S.C. 470f) and applicable regulations and programmatic agreements.

SEC. 5. ENFORCEMENT.

The Secretary may impose citations or fines, or suspend or revoke any authority under a permit or lease issued in accordance with this Act for failure to comply with, or a violation of any term or condition of such permit or lease.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Nevada (Mr. AMODEI) and the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GRIJALVA) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Nevada.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. AMODEI. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on the bill under consideration.

There was no objection.

Mr. AMODEI. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

H.R. 2606, introduced by Congressman MICHAEL GRIMM, authorizes construction of a lateral pipeline off the coast of New York City. The pipeline will pass under the Gateway National Recreation Area and deliver natural gas to residents of Brooklyn and Queens.

Under current law, the National Park Service does not have the authority to approve the pipeline. Therefore, Congressman GRIMM introduced H.R. 2606 to allow the project to move forward, benefiting not only New York residents but also visitors to the Gateway National Recreation Area.

H.R. 2606 has bipartisan support and is supported by the National Park Service. The House approved this legislation in February. It has passed the Senate with noncontroversial amendments, and we are now acting to send this to the President.

I urge adoption of H.R. 2606 and reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1230

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Mr. GRIJALVA asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GRIJALVA. We have no objection to the Senate amendments to H.R. 2606. As amended, this bill allows for the delivery of natural gas into an underserved area while also providing a revenue stream that will allow the National Park Service to rehabilitate important historic structures at Gateway National Recreation Area.

We support enactment of H.R. 2606, as amended.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. AMODEI. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from the Empire State, Mr. GRIMM.

Mr. GRIMM. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for all of his work on this as well.

It is a great opportunity to speak on this bill, H.R. 2606, the New York City Natural Gas Supply Enhancement Act, which would authorize the Secretary of the Interior to allow the construction and operation of a natural gas pipeline facility in the New York portion of the Gateway National Recreation Area.

I appreciate Chairman HASTINGS and Ranking Member MARKEY's support for the bill when it was first considered here in the House, and now as it is considered with the Senate modifications.

Further, I wish to extend my sincerest appreciation to a good friend and my colleague from New York, Mr. GREGORY MEEKS. From start to finish, this bill has been a bipartisan effort and is an example of what exactly we can accomplish when we work together toward a common goal.

This project will be the first bulk natural gas transmission project in Brooklyn, Staten Island, and Queens in more than 40 years. The 5.2 million people living in these three boroughs are demanding more and more natural gas. Natural gas, as we all know, is reliable. It's clean, it's domestic, and it's economical.

On September 15 of last year, New York City Deputy Mayor Cas Holloway testified before the National Parks Subcommittee in support of the Grimm-Meeks bill. I appreciate all of the courtesies shown to him on that day. In this testimony, the deputy mayor stated ''energy demand in New York City is increasing and will continue to grow.'' Therefore, getting the Gateway project done is a major effort that includes the private sector, the city, State, and Federal governments.

The Gateway pipeline project will generate approximately $265 million in construction activity, create almost 300 local jobs, and bring in about $8 million in annual local revenue for the city of New York, providing much-needed short- and long-term boosts to our economy.

Following House passage, my colleague Congressman CROWLEY praised the bill for reducing the use of two so-called dirtier fuels: No. 4 and No. 6 oil. The Senate modification of H.R. 2606 resolves concerns raised by the National Park Service about the House bill and now has full National Park support, as well as that of the Partnership for New York City, the Regional Plan Association, organized labor, and Mayor Bloomberg.

When I came to Congress, I promised my constituents in Staten Island and in Brooklyn that I would find fiscally conservative ways to create jobs and get our country moving again. Mr. Speaker, this bill does just that. Not only will it create a unique public-private partnership to revitalize Floyd Bennett Field, but it also creates well-paying jobs and it increases the supply of inexpensive natural gas, and does it all at absolutely no cost to the taxpayer, even bringing revenue to the Treasury.

So, Mr. Speaker, I thank you again for the opportunity to speak in support of this bill. I urge my colleagues to support it.

Mr. Speaker, thank you for the opportunity to speak in support of my bill, H.R. 2606, the New York City Natural Gas Supply Enhancement Act which would authorize the Secretary of Interior to allow the construction and operation of natural gas pipeline facilities in the New York portion of the Gateway National Recreation Area.

I appreciate Chairman HASTINGS and Ranking Member MARKEY'S support for the bill by when it was first considered by the House and now as we consider the Senate modification.

Further, I wish to extend my sincerest appreciation to my friend and colleague from New York, Mr. MEEKS. From start to finish this bill has been a bipartisan effort and an example of what we can accomplish when we work together towards a common goal.

This project will be the first bulk natural gas transmission project in Brooklyn, Staten Island and Queens in more than 40 years. The 5.2 million people living in these three boroughs are demanding more and more natural gas. Natural gas, as we all know, is reliable, clean, domestic and economical.

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The Gateway pipeline project will generate approximately $265 million in construction activity, almost 300 local construction jobs, about $8 million in annual local property taxes for New York City, providing a much-needed short-term and long-term boost to our economy.

Following House passage, my colleague Congressman CROWLEY praised the bill for reducing the use of "two dirtier fuels: number four and number six oil."

The Senate modification of H.R. 2606 resolves concerns raised by NPS about the House bill and has full NPS support as well as that of the Partnership for New York City, the Regional Plan Association, organized labor, and Mayor Bloomberg.

When I came to Congress I promised my constituents on Staten Island and Brooklyn that I would find fiscally conservative ways to create jobs and get our country moving again. Mr. Speaker, this bill does just that. Not only will it create a unique public-private partnership to revitalize Floyd Bennett Field, but it also creates good paying jobs, increases our supply of inexpensive natural gas, and does it all at no cost to the taxpayer and even brings revenue into the Treasury.

Mr. Speaker, thank you again for the opportunity to speak in support of the New York City Natural Gas Supply Enhancement Act. I urge my colleagues to support this bill and ask that my written statement be included in the RECORD.

Mr. AMODEI. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Nevada (Mr. AMODEI) that the House suspend the rules and concur in the Senate amendment to the bill, H.R. 2606.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the Senate amendment was concurred in.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

CONSOLIDATION OF CERTAIN CBO REPORTING REQUIREMENTS RELATING TO ARRA AND TARP

Mr. GARRETT. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 6570) to amend the American Recovery Reinvestment Act of 2009 and the Emergency Economic Stabilization Act of 2008 to consolidate certain CBO reporting requirements.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 6570

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. CONSOLIDATION OF CERTAIN CBO REPORTING REQUIREMENTS RELATING TO ARRA AND TARP.

(a) ARRA-RELATED REPORTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 1512(e) of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Public Law 111–5; 123 Stat. 288) is amended by amending the second sentence to read as follows: ''Such comments on all reports for calendar quarters in a year shall be due 45 days after the report for the last calendar quarter of the year is submitted.''.

(2) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by paragraph (1) shall apply to comments on reports submitted on or after October 1, 2012.

(3) REPEALER.—Effective on January 1, 2016, section 1512(e) of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 is repealed.

(b) TARP-RELATED REPORTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 202 of the Emergency Economic Stabilization Act of 2008 (12 U.S.C. 5252) is amended—

(A) in subsection (a), by striking ''semi-annually'' and inserting ''annually''; and

(B) by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(e) SUNSET.—Notwithstanding the previous provisions of this section, the reporting and comment requirements under this

section shall terminate with the annual period on the last day of which all troubled assets acquired by the Secretary under section 101 have been sold or transferred out of the ownership or control of the Federal Government.''.

(2) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this subsection shall take effect the first day after the date of enactment of this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. GARRETT) and the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MALONEY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GARRETT. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and add extraneous material.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New Jersey?

There was no objection.

Mr. GARRETT. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, under the current law, the Congressional Budget Office, the CBO, is statutorily required to submit semiannual and quarterly reports to Congress pursuant to TARP and stimulus requirements. Unfortunately, these reports have become mainly duplicative and repetitive in nature. They say the same thing over and over again, and do not provide a lot of new information to Congress. In addition, these reports consume a great deal of limited CBO staff resources. So to remedy this, we have H.R. 6570 before us. What this will do is reduce the frequency of the reports required each year by the CBO as well as required by the GAO.

First, H.R. 6570 would change the quarterly stimulus reporting requirements for the CBO and GAO to annual report requirements due at the end of each calendar year. This legislation would also sunset the ARRA reporting requirements for CBO and GAO on January 1, 2016. H.R. 6570 would not impact the current reporting requirements for recipients of ARRA funds or the reports required by the executive branch agencies, I would like to point out.

Secondly, H.R. 6570 would change the TARP reporting requirements for CBO and the OMB to an annual basis from a semiannual basis. So this legislation would also sunset the reporting requirements for the CBO and OMB to when the last TARP asset has been sold or last transferred out of the ownership control of the Federal Government.

So, Mr. Speaker, I think this is a commonsense bill to reduce government duplication and ensure that congressional support agencies such as CBO and the GAO are using their limited resources most effectively. With that, I urge support of this legislation.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in support of H.R. 6570, which will amend the reporting requirements in two laws: the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, also known as the stimulus package, and the Emergency Economic Stabilization Act of 2008, which created TARP. I commend my colleague from the great State of New Jersey for bringing this bill to the floor.

In both laws, the Congressional Budget Office, the Government Accountability Office, and the Office of Management and Budget have certain reporting and comment requirements. The goal of the bill before us today is to streamline those requirements and make them workable for all of the agencies and for the American public while preserving access to the information. It will make these agencies more efficient in their oversight of both the stimulus and of the TARP programs.

First, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 requires recipients of grants made under the law to produce detailed quarterly reports on their use of the funds. These reports include the amount that was spent, the number of jobs that were created, and certain information about the subcontractors. The reports are publicly available, and the bill before us does not touch the reports themselves or the requirements that they are required to produce. However, CBO and GAO are also required under the law to comment each quarter on the content of the reports. This bill before us today simply says that they can provide those comments on an annual basis rather than quarterly. This will ease the burden on the CBO and GAO while maintaining their oversight responsibilities.

Second, in the law that created the TARP fund, OMB was required to report on a semiannual basis the estimated cost of TARP, the assumptions behind that estimate, and estimate how the costs have changed. The bill before us today would amend the law to allow OMB to submit these reports annually rather than semiannually. This again lessens the burden on OMB, especially 4 years after TARP was enacted and when a large majority of those funds have been paid back.

□ 1240

Semiannual reports are simply no longer needed.

Finally, the bill before us includes a commonsense provision to sunset OMB's reporting requirement once all remaining troubled assets acquired under the TARP program are no longer owned or controlled by the Federal Government.

So I support this bill. I support this effort to lessen the burden on agencies that are stretched extremely thin and are already stretching every single dollar while ensuring that the public continues to have the valuable information the reports would provide and information that these agencies are providing.

I support the bill. I have no further requests for time, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GARRETT. I also have no further requests for time. So I will just conclude by saying to the gentlelady, thank you very much for working with us on this bill. Thank you for the support for the legislation.

And with that, I will yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. MALONEY. I join my colleague and commend his work on relieving unnecessary burdens and requirements on important agencies. I support this bill.

And I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. GARRETT) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 6570.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

MARK TWAIN COMMEMORATIVE COIN ACT

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and concur in the Senate amendments to the bill (H.R. 2453) to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of Mark Twain.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the Senate amendments is as follows:

Senate amendments:

On page 7, strike lines 5 through 7 and insert the following:

(2) One-quarter of the surcharges, to the University of California, Berkeley, California, for the benefit of the Mark Twain Project at the Bancroft Library to support programs to study and promote the legacy of Mark Twain.

At the end, add the following:

SEC. 8. NO NET COST.

The Secretary shall take such actions as may be necessary to ensure that—

(1) minting and issuing coins under this Act will not result in any net cost to the United States Government; and

(2) no funds, including applicable surcharges, are disbursed to any recipient designated in section 7 until the total cost of designing and issuing all of the coins authorized by this Act (including labor, materials, dies, use of machinery, overhead expenses, marketing, and shipping) is recovered by the United States Treasury, consistent with sections 5112(m) and 5134(f) of title 31, United States Code.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. LUETKEMEYER) and the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MALONEY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Missouri.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to add extraneous material to this bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Missouri?

There was no objection.

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. I yield myself such time as I may consume, and I rise in support of the Senate amendment to H.R. 2453, the Mark Twain Commemorative Coin Act.

The underlying legislation, which passed the House by a vote of 408–4 on April 18 and the Senate by unanimous consent in September, will allow the U.S. Treasury to mint $1 and $5 commemorative coins in 2016, which will promote the important legacy of Mark Twain and benefit four institutions that bear his name: the Mark Twain House & Museum in Hartford, Connecticut; the University of California Berkeley; Elmira College in New York; and in my congressional district, the Mark Twain Boyhood Home & Museum in Hannibal, Missouri.

I want to remind my colleagues that this bill will cost the American taxpayers nothing. In fact, the Senate has included language that specifically ensures that the minting and issuing of coins under this act will not result in any net cost to the United States Government and that no funds can be disbursed to the recipients until the total cost of designing and issuing all coins is first recovered by the U.S. Treasury.

I would like to thank my colleague, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, for his leadership on this legislation.

I also would like to acknowledge Hannibal's Mark Twain Boyhood Home & Museum executive director Dr. Cindy Lovell and the museum's curator Henry Sweets, as well as their dedicated staff, for their incredible work to promote awareness and appreciation of the life and works of Mark Twain.

The bill we consider today honors the legacy of a great American and will greatly help to educate the public of his great accomplishments and contributions to society. I urge my colleagues to join me in passing this legislation.

And with that, Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. MALONEY. I yield myself as much time as I may consume, Mr. Speaker.

I rise in strong support of H.R. 2453, the Mark Twain Commemorative Coin Act. This legislation will allow the U.S. Treasury Department to mint $1 silver and $5 gold commemorative coins in recognition of Mark Twain's incredible legacy.

The minting of these coins will come at no additional cost to the taxpayer and will be divided among four important organizations dedicated to promoting the legacy of Mark Twain. One will be the Mark Twain House & Museum in Hartford, Connecticut; secondly, the Mark Twain Project at the Bancroft Library at the University of California, Berkeley; thirdly, the Center for Mark Twain Studies at Elmira College in my home State of New York; and, lastly, the Mark Twain Boyhood Home & Museum in Hannibal, Missouri.

I commend the work of my colleague from Missouri, Representative LUETKEMEYER. This bill will ensure that these great institutions will benefit directly from Mark Twain's legacy.

Samuel Clemens, better known to the world as Mark Twain, was one of the most important and unique American voices whose literary work has had a lasting effect on our Nation's history and culture. In fact, Mark Twain was instrumental in popularizing the image of an America full of hardworking men and women who pulled themselves up by their own bootstraps, an America that is still very much alive and well and part of the American Dream.

Mark Twain's literary achievements and educational legacy remain strong to this very day, with nearly every book he wrote still in print, still taught in our schools, and still providing us with a social narrative that we will not and should not forget.

''The Adventures of Tom Sawyer,'' ''Huckleberry Finn,'' ''The Prince and the Pauper''—Twain's writings continue to be printed over a century after they were first published, and they continue to make a lasting impact. They are a cherished memory for every American school child.

So as Mark Twain once wrote: ''There is nothing that cannot happen today.'' Isn't that the American spirit, the can-do American spirit?

I support this legislation as the recognition of one of America's greatest authors and certainly one of America's most popular authors, Mark Twain. I thank my colleague for bringing forward this important legacy legislation, American legislation.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, I just want to close by inviting my colleague from New York to come to the district to see the landmarks that inspired Mark Twain to write about Huckleberry Finn and Tom Sawyer. And you can see from those landmarks where he got the inspiration to do what he did and the type of people that he was around to see how he came up with his ideas. It's really a neat place to visit, and I certainly welcome and encourage you to come.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time.

And I would like to take up my good friend on the other side of the aisle on his offer and see if we can get a group of Congress Members to come and see this lasting legacy. Mark Twain—I read every single one of his books. I would love to see his inspiration from the great State of Missouri.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. LUETKEMEYER) that the House suspend the rules and concur in the Senate amendment to the bill, H.R. 2453.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

DIRECT REVIEW BY U.S. SUPREME COURT OF DECISIONS OF VIRGIN ISLANDS SUPREME COURT

Mr. COBLE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 6116) to amend the Revised Organic Act of the Virgin Islands to provide for direct appeals to the United States Supreme Court of decisions of the Virgin Islands Supreme Court.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 6116

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. DIRECT REVIEW BY U.S. SUPREME COURT OF DECISIONS OF VIRGIN ISLANDS SUPREME COURT.

Section 23 of the Revised Organic Act of the Virgin Islands (48 U.S.C. 1613) is amended by striking '': Provided, That'' and all that follows through the end and inserting a period.

SEC. 2. JURISDICTION OF THE SUPREME COURT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 81 of title 28, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''§ 1260. Supreme Court of the Virgin Islands; certiorari

''Final judgments or decrees rendered by the Supreme Court of the Virgin Islands may be reviewed by the Supreme Court by writ of certiorari where the validity of a treaty or statute of the United States is drawn in question or where the validity of a statute of the Virgin Islands is drawn in question on the ground of its being repugnant to the Constitution, treaties, or laws of the United States, or where any title, right, privilege, or immunity is specially set up or claimed under the Constitution or the treaties or statutes of, or any commission held or authority exercised under, the United States.''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The table of sections for chapter 81 of title 28, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new item:

''1260. Supreme Court of the Virgin Islands; certiorari.''.

SEC. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE.

The amendments made by this Act apply to cases commenced on or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. COBLE) and the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina.

□ 1250

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. COBLE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on H.R. 6116, as amended, currently under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from North Carolina?

There was no objection.

Mr. COBLE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

H.R. 6116 authorizes direct review by the United States Supreme Court of decisions rendered by the Supreme Court of the Virgin Islands. I thank Representative CHRISTENSEN for her work on this bill.

Created in 2007, the Supreme Court of the U.S. Virgin Islands is the equivalent of a U.S. State supreme court. It is authorized to review all final orders, judgments, and specified interlocutory orders of the Virgin Islands Superior Court.

Appeals from the Virgin Islands Supreme Court are made by petitions of certiorari to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit.

Federal statute specifies that discretionary review by the third circuit exists for the first 15 years following inception of the Virgin Islands Supreme Court or until it ''has developed sufficient institutional traditions to justify direct review by the Supreme Court of the United States from all [of its] final decisions,'' whichever is sooner.

The third circuit's judicial council, Mr. Speaker, evaluates the progress of the Virgin Islands Supreme Court in 5-year intervals. Following extensive review, the council published its initial 5th-year report last April. The council recommends that the U.S. Supreme Court exercise direct review of all final decisions made by the Virgin Islands Supreme Court.

H.R. 6116 adopts the third circuit recommendation. The bill simply authorizes the U.S. Supreme Court to review, at its discretion, all final judgments rendered by the Virgin Islands Supreme Court.

The suspension version under consideration makes two technical changes to the bill as introduced. First, it clarifies that the U.S. Supreme Court may review final judgments of the Virgin Islands Supreme Court pursuant to cert petitions. In other words, the U.S. Supreme Court may exercise its own discretion to accept or reject cases.

Secondly, the suspension version expands the U.S. Supreme Court's appellate jurisdiction through an additional reference to chapter 81 of title 28 of the U.S. Code. Chapter 81 sets forth the jurisdiction and venue of the U.S. Supreme Court. Judges, lawyers, and litigants look to it when they have questions about the Court's appellate jurisdiction. The creation of an additional reference to chapter 81 makes it easier to find the new law.

I again express my thanks to Mrs. CHRISTENSEN for her work on this bill, and I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 6116.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 6116, as amended. I support this legislation for several reasons.

To begin with, this bill simply implements the recommendation of the third circuit judicial council to allow decisions of the Virgin Islands Supreme Court to be reviewed directly by the United States Supreme Court. The Virgin Islands Supreme Court is the equivalent of a U.S. State supreme court. It is authorized to review all final orders, judgments, and specified interlocutory orders of the Virgin Islands superior courts. Appeals from the Virgin Islands Supreme Court are made by petitions of certiorari to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit at this time.

The Revised Organic Act specifically grants the third circuit appellate jurisdiction for the first 15 years of the Virgin Islands Supreme Court's existence. In addition, the act requires the third circuit judicial council to submit reports to two congressional committees every 5 years assessing whether the Virgin Islands Supreme Court ''has developed sufficient institutional traditions to justify direct review by the Supreme Court of the United States from all of its final decisions.''

In April of this year, the third circuit judicial council submitted the first of these 5-year reports. In it, the council concluded that the Virgin Islands Supreme Court had met the standard necessary to justify direct review of its decisions by the United States Supreme Court. Accordingly, the council recommended that Congress enact legislation to allow for such direct review.

H.R. 6116 effectuates the third circuit's recommendations by deleting from the Revised Organic Act both the provisions granting appellate jurisdiction to the third circuit and the reporting requirement.

I also support changes reflected in the version of the bill we are considering today because they reflect input both from the U.S. Supreme Court and an academic expert. Specifically, the amended version of the bill requires both the bill's long title and header to section 1 so that they refer to direct review rather than direct appeals. This change more accurately reflects the discretionary nature of the U.S. Supreme Court's appellate jurisdiction over most cases whereby it selects cases for consideration through granting petitions for writs of certiorari.

Additionally, the amended version of H.R. 6116 adds a provision to chapter 81 of title 28 of the United States Code to further clarify the scope of the U.S. Supreme Court's discretionary appellate jurisdiction with respect to decisions of the Virgin Islands Supreme Court.

Finally, H.R. 6116 is consistent with precedence. For example, in 2004, Congress enacted similar legislation to provide for direct review by the U.S. Supreme Court of decisions of the Guam Supreme Court.

I congratulate the gentlelady from the Virgin Islands, Dr. CHRISTENSEN, for her leadership in this measure. I also thank the Judiciary Committee chairman, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SMITH), for his assistance in bringing this legislation to the floor.

I urge my colleagues to support the bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Does the gentleman have additional speakers?

Mr. COBLE. I have no additional speakers, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. I would like to yield such time as she may consume to the gentlelady from the Virgin Islands, Dr. CHRISTENSEN.

Ms. CHRISTENSEN. Thank you, Congressman SCOTT, for yielding the time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 6116, legislation I sponsored to provide for direct appeals of decisions of the Virgin Islands Supreme Court to the U.S. Supreme Court.

I want to begin by thanking the chairman and ranking member of the Committee on the Judiciary and their staff for working together in a bipartisan way to swiftly report H.R. 6116 and bring it to the House floor today. On behalf of the people of the Virgin Islands, I want to say thank you to Chairman SMITH and Ranking Member CONYERS, as well as to my colleagues, Congressman COBLE and Congressman SCOTT, who are managing the bill on the floor today.

It was just 5 months ago that I had the pleasure of joining the elected leaders of the Virgin Islands at a ceremony to celebrate the Virgin Islands Supreme Court reaching a historic milestone. Specifically, the occasion was to receive the report from the judicial council of the third circuit regarding their review of the Virgin Island Supreme Court during its first 5 years, as required by law, which authorized the Virgin Islands to create a local appellate court.

The third circuit report concluded that the U.S. Virgin Islands Supreme Court developed sufficient institutional traditions to justify direct review of its final decisions by the United States Supreme Court and urged Congress to enact legislation providing that the Supreme Court of the U.S. Virgin Islands enjoy the same relationship with the U.S. Supreme Court as the highest court of any State.

Today, the House will take the first step in making the Virgin Islands Supreme Court just like every other high court in the States and territories. This is just one more step on the journey for further local self-governance, which was begun in 1984 when my predecessor, former Delegate to Congress, Ron de Lugo, amended the Virgin Islands 1954 Organic Act to allow for the creation of an appellate court chartered under local law, while it took another 20 years for Virgin Islands Act No. 6687 to be signed into law by then-Governor Charles W. Turnbull, and 2 more years for a chief justice and two associate justices to be nominated and confirmed and for the Supreme Court to formally accept appellate jurisdiction.

Chief Justice Hodge and Associate Justices Cabret and Swan are to be

commended for the work they did to earn the recommendation of the third circuit's judicial council for appeals of their decisions to go directly to the U.S. Supreme Court. In doing so, they are following our sister territory of Guam, which was the last Supreme Court to gain direct appeals of their decisions to the U.S. Supreme Court.

Over these past 5 years, the Virgin Islands Supreme Court has issued opinions on such wide-ranging cases as whether and when a judge could be disciplined, to affirming in a landmark ruling that women are not property. By my staff's unofficial count, among the court's many accomplishments is the issuance of over 180 published opinions since 2007.

Other noteworthy accomplishments include making several structural reforms in the areas of attorney admissions to the Virgin Islands Bar, discipline procedures, and mandating new requirements for continuing legal education courses for all active members of the Virgin Islands Bar Association.

□ 1300

I had the pleasure of joining Chief Justice Hodge and Associate Justices Cabret and Swan at their official swearing-in ceremony in 2006. At that time I focused my remarks on the historic nature of the occasion as well as the personal relationships I share with each of the individual justices. With all that they have accomplished over the short time that this court has been in existence, all Virgin Islanders will look back on this time with great pride and gratitude for the way in which they laid the foundation for appellate jurisprudence in the territory that is second to none.

While it took more than 20 years after the law's authorizing us to establish a local appellate court, and while we are the last U.S. territory to do so, it is more than fitting that we are on the verge of accomplishing the final goal of making the U.S. Virgin Islands Supreme Court just like all other State supreme courts, and I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of H.R. 6116.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA).

(Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. I thank the gentleman from Virginia, and especially also my dear friend and colleague, the gentleman from North Carolina, as managers of this important legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 6116, a bill to provide for appeals from the Virgin Islands Supreme Court to go to the U.S. Supreme Court instead of the Third Circuit Court of Appeals.

H.R. 6116, sponsored by my good friend, the gentlelady from the U.S. Virgin Islands, Dr. CHRISTENSEN, simply puts into legislation a decision vetted by the judicial council of the third circuit, established through a process which has already been authorized by Congress.

Mr. Speaker, in 1984, Congress provided Guam and the Virgin Islands with the authority to establish local supreme courts, and the law provided for appeals from these courts to go to their respective circuit courts of appeals for the first 15 years unless after 5 years their respective court of appeals found the local supreme court was ready for appeals to go directly to the U.S. Supreme Court.

On April 18 of this year, the third circuit's judicial council published a 23-page report on the Virgin Islands Supreme Court that was submitted to the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources and also to the House Committee on Natural Resources. In its review, the council concluded that the Virgin Islands Supreme Court has developed sufficient institutional traditions to justify direct review by the Supreme Court of the United States of all final decisions. The council affirmed that the Virgin Islands Supreme Court's quality of case law was commensurate with that of the supreme courts of several States, and among other remarkable reviews, stated further that the third circuit court has yet to reverse a decision of the Virgin Islands Supreme Court.

I congratulate the Virgin Islands Supreme Court Chief Justice Rhys Hodge and Associate Justices Maria Cabret and Ive Swan for this extraordinary feat, and I commend again the gentlelady from the Virgin Islands for introducing this timely legislation.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume just to thank the gentlelady from the Virgin Islands, Dr. CHRISTENSEN, and the leadership of the Judiciary Committee, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SMITH) and the gentleman from Michigan, the ranking member, Mr. CONYERS, for bringing this bill to the floor.

And with that, Mr. Speaker, I ask Members to support the bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. COBLE. Mr. Speaker, I, too, want to express my thanks to Dr. CHRISTENSEN and to my friend from American Samoa for their assistance, and Mr. SCOTT as well.

I have no additional speakers, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. COBLE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 6116, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The title was amended so as to read: ''A bill to amend the Revised Organic Act of the Virgin Islands to provide for direct review by the United States Supreme Court of decisions of the Virgin Islands Supreme Court, and for other purposes.''.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

STOP TOBACCO SMUGGLING IN THE TERRITORIES ACT OF 2012

Mr. COBLE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5934) to amend title 18, United States Code, to include certain territories and possessions of the United States in the definition of State for the purposes of chapter 114, relating to trafficking in contraband cigarettes and smokeless tobacco.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 5934

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Stop Tobacco Smuggling in the Territories Act of 2012''.

SEC. 2. TERRITORIES AND POSSESSIONS OF THE UNITED STATES INCLUDED IN THE DEFINITION OF STATE FOR THE PURPOSES OF THE PROHIBITION AGAINST TRAFFICKING IN CONTRABAND CIGARETTES AND SMOKELESS TOBACCO.

Paragraph (4) of section 2341 of title 18, United States Code, is amended by striking ''or the Virgin Islands'' and inserting ''the Virgin Islands, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, or Guam''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. COBLE) and the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. COBLE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on H.R. 5934 currently under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from North Carolina?

There was no objection.

Mr. COBLE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

H.R. 5934, the Stop Tobacco Smuggling in the Territories Act of 2012, was introduced by Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA, my good friend from American Samoa—and I apologize if I did damage to that. I thank him for his work on this issue.

Cigarette trafficking is one of the most lucrative smuggling operations in the United States and around the world. It is estimated that illicit cigarettes account for over 10 percent of the more than 5.7 trillion cigarettes sold globally each year.

Here in the United States, approximately 4 billion cigarettes sold each year are illicit. Cigarette smuggling is typically carried out by sophisticated,

large-scale criminal organizations that take advantage of the significant disparity between the taxes levied on cigarettes across the States. For example, Mr. Speaker, a pack of cigarettes that costs $13 in a high-tax State like New York will cost only about $5 in a low-tax State such as Virginia.

These differences create a highly lucrative market for individuals to evade the local sales tax and purchase cigarettes in one locality and transport them to another for resale below the market value. Criminal organizations are able to make a profit of as much as $1 million on just a single truckload of illicit cigarettes.

State cigarette taxes in the United States have been on the rise since 1992 and have increased more than 65 percent over this period; however, the States' gross tax revenues have increased by only 35 percent due in significant part to the illicit tobacco trade.

Exploiting the price disparity for a single pack of cigarettes between individual States has proved profitable for criminal networks. According to the Justice Department, this illicit activity costs the States and the Federal Government approximately $5 billion each year. This is money that could—and should—be put to better use.

Congress took steps to curb the sale of contraband cigarettes with the Prevent All Cigarette Trafficking (PACT) Act of 2009. The PACT Act prohibits the sale of cigarettes and smokeless tobacco products over the Internet, and it made changes to the criminal anti-cigarette smuggling statutes.

H.R. 5934, Mr. Speaker, provides a technical correction to ensure that the criminal prohibitions against cigarette smuggling apply to the U.S. territories of American Samoa, Guam, and the Northern Mariana Islands in the same way that they do for the rest of the country. This is a modest but important change that will help to promote safety and tax revenues in these territories.

I again thank my friend from American Samoa for his work on this issue, and I urge my colleagues to join me and Mr. SCOTT in support of this bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 5934, the Stop Tobacco Smuggling in the Territories Act of 2012.

When enacted, H.R. 5934 will amend the Contraband Cigarette Trafficking Act by including American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and Guam in existing legislation which makes it illegal to knowingly ship, transport, receive, possess, sell, distribute, or purchase 10,000 or more contraband cigarettes that do not have a State or territorial stamp.

Under the Contraband Cigarette Trafficking Act, violators face criminal penalties and fines. Currently, there are no such sanctions in effect for violations that occur in the territories, thus prohibiting the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives from investigating cigarette smuggling and Trafficking Act violations. H.R. 5934 will fix this.

□ 1310

Mr. Speaker, each year hundreds of millions of cigarettes are diverted from legal trade channels into the underworld. Cigarette counterfeiting is growing steadily. Cigarettes are believed to be the most illegally trafficked product in the world.

Cigarette smuggling results in significant economic impact in terms of depriving governments of excise tax revenue and depriving legitimate businesses from income due to unfair competition. Smuggling of genuine cigarettes steals as much as an estimated $40- to $50 billion from governments in tax revenue, with trafficking in counterfeit cigarettes stealing even billions more.

In May 2011, a report from the Territorial Audit Office on collection of cigarette tax by the American Samoa Government found that cigarettes are likely being smuggled into American Samoa and that, as a result, their government is losing a significant amount of cigarette excise tax revenue.

A subsequent study estimated that as many as close to 6 million cigarettes had been smuggled into the territory in 2010, resulting in an estimated loss of revenue to the American Samoa Government of over $700,000.

In addition to the economic impact, there are public health and public safety concerns. Smuggling delivers cigarettes that are cheaper to buy. Because cheaper cigarettes lure youth and other new customers, they boost sales and consumption, making it harder for smokers to quit.

It's also been reported that some import imitation cigarettes have been found to contain toxins. As a result, illegal trade adds steadily to healthcare costs, worker productivity losses, and the growing death toll from tobacco use, already almost over 5 million lives per year, projected to rise to 8 million by 2030.

From a public health standpoint, it is well documented that, as with other contraband, proceeds from cigarette trafficking support organized crime and even terrorist networks.

For these reasons, I support the bill. I encourage my colleagues to support the bill as well.

If the gentleman has no other speakers, I'd like to yield to the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA) for such time as he may consume.

Mr. COBLE. I have no additional speakers. I reserve the balance of my time.

(Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, again I cannot express enough my deepest appreciation to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT) and my good friend, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. COBLE) for their management of this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 5934, a bill that I authored to stop tobacco smuggling in the territories.

First, I want to thank the chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, Mr. SMITH, and my dear friend, the ranking member, Mr. CONYERS, and all the members of the committee for their strong support of this legislation.

I also want to acknowledge Speaker JOHN BOEHNER and House Majority Leader CANTOR, and our Democratic leader, NANCY PELOSI, for their support of this bill.

I thank my colleagues, the gentlelady from Guam, and also, the gentleman from the Northern Mariana Islands, Ms. BORDALLO and Mr. SABLAN, respectively, for their cosponsorship of this bill.

Mr. Speaker, today American Samoa faces a serious problem of tobacco smuggling, as I'm sure it's the same with the other territories. According to a recent study, 2 years ago, as many as 5,792,924 cigarettes were smuggled into the territory. The study found that tobacco smuggling resulted in the loss of about $724,116 in revenues to the American Samoa Government.

If continued undeterred, tobacco smuggling in the territory will lead to heavier losses in local tax revenues, especially if cigarette excise tax rates were to be increased.

Mr. Speaker, in this age of government fiscal responsibility, securing and sustaining stable resources of local revenue stream is essential and must be encouraged for the territories. It was for this reason I began to look into this important issue. And I was disappointed, however, to find that, under current law prohibiting cigarette smuggling, not all the territories were included.

Under the Contraband Cigarette Trafficking Act that Congress passed in 1978, it is illegal to ship, sell, transport, or possess more than 10,000 cigarettes, or 500 packs per month, not bearing the tax stamp of the jurisdiction in which they are found. Violation is a felony punishable by up to 5 years in prison and seizure of the contraband cigarettes.

The Contraband Cigarette Trafficking Act currently, however, does not apply to American Samoa, Guam, and the Northern Mariana Islands. Historically, when Congress considered the bill in 1978 the Senate version defined State to include the 50 States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, or a territory or a possession of the United States, while the House provision excluded the smaller territories. For some reason unbeknown to me, the conference substitute adopted the House provision, and according to the conference report, the House provision

is described as ''more accurately delineating the practical scope of the legislation.''

Mr. Speaker, the bill before us today will correct this oversight in the current law. This important piece of legislation will amend the Contraband Cigarette Trafficking Act to include the territories of American Samoa, Guam, and the Northern Mariana Islands. It will amend the definition of a State for the purpose of this Act to include all U.S. territories.

Again, I commend my good friends, the gentleman from North Carolina, as well as my friend from Virginia, for their extensive understanding and knowledge of this issue and the matter now before us. I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume to thank the gentleman from American Samoa, the leadership of the Judiciary Committee, and my friend from North Carolina (Mr. COBLE) for bringing this measure to the floor. I urge my colleagues to support the bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. COBLE. In closing, I want to thank Mr. SCOTT as well, and my good friend from American Samoa. ENI, I apologize for my having fractured the pronunciation of your name earlier. But folks, this is a good bill that addresses a formidable threat, and I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of the bill and support it.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. COBLE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5934.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, November 14, 2012.

Hon. JOHN A. BOEHNER,
The Speaker, H–232 U.S. Capitol, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on November 14, 2012, at 10:49 a.m.:

That the Senate agrees to House of Representatives amendment to the bill S. 743.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.

EXTENDING THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL LADDERS TO SUCCESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 5, 2011, the gentleman from California (Mr. GARAMENDI) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, we're back, and America expects that we ought to be going back to work. And we have a heavy load ahead of us. We want to make sure that every American has the opportunity to climb up that economic and social ladder as high as they want to and can go. So we have to make sure that those ladders of opportunity are in place.

We also have to make sure that we are a compassionate Nation, that we're willing to reach out to those in our country who have been harmed by devastating natural disasters. We certainly saw this on the east coast, and I'd like to spend a good portion of this hour talking about how we, as a Nation, can respond to superstorm Sandy and the lessons that we should learn from this disaster.

□ 1320

It's not the first that has occurred in America, and it's certainly not going to be the last. In previous disasters, we learned a few lessons, but it seems as though we have yet to achieve the necessary wisdom from those occurrences to really put in place the policies that can protect Americans.

First, our sense of compassion drives Americans to reach out in many different ways to assist those on the east coast that were so severely harmed by this storm. Our condolences go out to the families of those who were killed in the storm. Our wallets open to the American Red Cross and other organizations that are providing assistance. We should do that and we should do more of that, but as a Congress there are things that we must also do.

Proposals have been made on this floor to reduce the effectiveness and the support for the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Not a good idea. It's very clear from the disaster on the east coast that a single city or State or even a region is unable to adequately address—whether in the lead-up to a disaster where there is warning or in the immediate aftermath of that—the necessary resources to assist and to recover. As a Nation, we need some mechanism to gather together all of the strength of this incredible country we call America and apply that strength to those who have been so severely harmed by that disaster. That's occurring. FEMA has clearly been significantly improved in the last 4 years and certainly since the tragedies of New Orleans, but there is much more that needs to be done.

As a Congress, as Representatives of the American people—people who may be in any part of this country and who at any moment could be affected by a disaster—we need to make sure that there is a national response capability in place that is ready to act with the sufficient resources. That's not just an organizational and administrative issue. That is also the necessary funds available. Shortchanging that money that we set aside for those disasters can lead to a period of time in which inaction is inevitable.

So as we go about our budgeting, as we go about our appropriations process, we must make sure that we do not shortchange and that we provide enough money, that we set it aside and have it there, available for immediate response. It's not just the Federal response. It's those private companies and others that will be hired by the Federal Government or the States and cities to provide the necessary services.

There are many other lessons to be learned from superstorm Sandy and from previous disasters. Early warning systems are essential. Yet we have seen proposals here before the Congress, in the budgets and appropriations before the Congress, to diminish the ability of America to see ahead—to be able to predict storms or earthquakes or fires—by diminishing the money available for NASA in their satellite technology and other research capabilities that are out there by which we can learn well ahead of a disaster that it's coming so that we can then warn the citizens and take whatever precautions are necessary and implement whatever defensive systems may be required.

So it's not just the disaster. It's the preparation. It's the early warning—the ability to know what may be coming to harm the citizens of this Nation. As a Congress, we should be cognizant of the role that we play in providing the resources, the direction, and the authorization for those agencies that are able to have the technologies to perceive, to understand what may be coming to the citizens of this Nation and to those around the world.

Secondly, as individuals, it seems to me we ought to be paying attention, and when the authorities say it's time to leave, we really ought to do that. I was the insurance commissioner and Lieutenant Governor in California, and I often found myself in situations where I had responsibilities along these lines. All too often and all too tragically, the citizens who were warned early that they should leave because of a fire danger did not. Tragedy struck and they lost their lives. So we have individual responsibilities as well as community responsibilities.

There is another set of lessons to learn from superstorm Sandy and the drought in the Midwest and from other occurrences in the weather patterns of this Nation, which is that climate change is real. It is real. It is actually happening as we speak. We know that the great ice caps around this world are diminishing. We know that the ocean levels are rising. We know that there is a warming across the entire planet, and we know that this will have profound effects.

It was predicted back in the early nineties when I was working on this issue at the Department of the Interior as Deputy Secretary. We predicted that

there would be superstorms, that there would be droughts in new parts of this Nation, that the ice caps would melt, that there would be significant changes in the agricultural patterns around the world, and that certainly there would be significant changes in the river and stream flows. In my own State of California, we anticipated then—some almost 20 years ago now—in the Sierras, which is our single biggest reservoir, that we would see the snow pack diminish and that we would see there would be changes in the flows of the rivers and, quite likely, greater flooding.

That brings us to the necessity of recognizing this as a Nation and for this Congress to work to address not just the reasons for climate change but, just as important, to prepare for the inevitability of the effects of climate change. A small rise in the sea level will certainly change the impact of major storms on all of our coastlines. The storm surges will be higher, the destruction greater, and therefore the twofold necessity: one, to do everything we possibly can to diminish climate change. That brings us to energy policy, which is not the subject of today's discussion; but it brings us, rather, to the issue of how we are going to effect and prepare for the inevitable changes.

A little over a year ago, the President proposed the American Jobs Act. In that American Jobs Act, there was a substantial increase—in fact, a very significant increase—in the amount of money that this Nation would spend on infrastructure. In addition to what we would normally do, the President proposed an additional $50 billion of infrastructure investment in the near term, over the next 2 to 3 years. Unfortunately, that proposal was not even brought up in the current Congress. Nonetheless, it is a proposal that we as Members of this House should give considerable thought to. I look now to the east coast and the west coast and to my own district in California, which is the Sacramento Valley, and I'm looking at the President's proposal of some $50 billion, and saying: What if? What if we would actually undertake a major infrastructure action in the United States? What if we were to really prepare ourselves for the inevitable climate change? What would it mean to Americans?

Certainly, right off, it would mean jobs. It would mean that we would be able to employ, perhaps, 2 million people immediately in building that infrastructure. It also means something beyond that. It could mean we would increase the deficit; or if we were wise, it could mean that we would not increase the deficit at all and that we would simply make some shifts in certain tax breaks that are now given to various parts of our economy—for example, to the oil and gas industry—and shift those tax breaks around so that we would fund infrastructure projects. In fact, that's what the President proposed to do.

□ 1330

Before I go further into how we might use the effort to build infrastructure, I want to say that that infrastructure program is going to be absolutely essential to rebuild an extraordinarily important part of this Nation; that is, the east coast.

New Jersey, New York, Connecticut, and some parts of Pennsylvania were devastated. There is going to be a multibillion-dollar rebuilding program necessary just to go back to where those parts of this country were before the storm hit. Much more will be needed to protect those parts of this country from future storms that are certain to occur.

I'll let it go at that. I see my colleague from New York City has arrived here. I'd like her to pick this issue up and talk about the devastation that occurred in her communities, and then we can come back to the infrastructure.

Thank you for joining us, NYDIA. I suppose the proper introduction would be NYDIA VELÁZQUEZ.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Thank you for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, if Hurricane Sandy taught us anything, it is the importance of infrastructure to New York City and our Nation.

Right now, New Yorkers are struggling with day-to-day challenges, many of them without power. In certain parts of the metropolitan area, gasoline shortages continue presenting enormous difficulties. But even as New Yorkers work to rebuild and recover for the short term, we cannot ignore long-term problems.

In many ways, the city of New York took a number of prudent steps that reduced damage and sped up recovery time. However, it is painfully clear that more must be done in the future to ensure our Nation's infrastructure can withstand assaults from Mother Nature.

As Governor Cuomo said, ''We have a new reality, and old infrastructures and old systems.'' We can start by protecting low-lying areas near the ocean, like Brooklyn and Manhattan in my district, with seawalls, bulkheads, and floodgates. In other areas, soft infrastructure investments such as sand dunes and embankments can minimize flooding. Our electrical system needs to be hardened and protected. Other energy sources must also be safeguarded. Ensuring refineries and petroleum supplies do not fall victims to floods can prevent future fuel shortages.

Just as with ensuring automobiles have fuel after disasters, other vital transportation arteries must be protected. Raising entryways to New York's subways could minimize flood damage to our subway system, ensuring our city gets back on its feet faster after the next storm.

Constructing a storm surge barrier and implementing infrastructure changes like this, as you said, will not be cheap. It has been estimated costs could run as high as $20 billion just for New York City. But let's remember, in this one storm alone, New York City suffered $26 billion in economic damage and losses—and lives that were lost.

Sadly, the question is not if there will be future storms, but when. By investing in our infrastructure now, we can prevent future economic damage, to say nothing of protecting our citizens from danger.

Not only will these investments protect our city from disaster down the road, but they can provide a much-needed employment boost. New Yorkers are ready to go to work. Not only strengthening our city for the long haul, making this investment now can create good-paying jobs in the short term and reduce damage from future disasters over the long term.

In New York, we're ready to go to work, investing not only in New York's infrastructure but also in our entire Nation's.

Mr. GARAMENDI. I thank you very much. Maybe we can engage in a little colloquy here, and we can talk about this in a little more detail.

The storm surge that came into New York was anticipated, but the New York/New Jersey region were not prepared with the necessary infrastructure to protect the communities from that surge. And if I understood you correctly, you're suggesting that the cities or the region needs to put in place those infrastructures to protect it. The subways have to be secured from the inflow of water, and the seawalls and certain other things need to be put in place. Did you estimate a cost of some $20 billion?

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. For New York City?

Mr. GARAMENDI. For New York City. Not including New Jersey?

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Correct. Just for New York City.

Mr. GARAMENDI. I will share with you my experience in my part of California, which is the Sacramento Valley, the city of Sacramento and the surrounding area.

We have significant flood potential. In fact, the northern part of Sacramento is considered to be the most flood prone or dangerous city in America after New Orleans. That creates a need in my own region for some of those same protective measures. We call them levees, not seawalls, but rather levees. They have to be improved. We anticipate the cost in Natomas, which is part of Sacramento, to be well over $1.4 billion. Another city I represent, Marysville, needs some $20 million to protect that city, and then Yuba City next to it. The entire region that I represent has similar needs. I shouldn't use the word ''similar,'' because we're not on the ocean. But we have needs for flood protection just like New York City and New Jersey.

We can do this. We're a very strong and powerful Nation, and you couldn't be more correct by saying that if we do

it, we protect ourselves, we reduce the potential damage, and we also put people to work.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. That's correct.

In the long haul, not only do we protect our citizens, but the economy will not suffer.

Look at New York. It came to a standstill. Our transportation infrastructure was totally paralyzed. Transportation in terms of bringing gasoline into New York, we couldn't do it.

This is the right thing to do in order for our Nation to protect its citizens, but also it could improve the economic conditions of our entire Nation by creating many high-paying jobs at this time when the economy continues to struggle.

Mr. GARAMENDI. I know that you're deeply involved in small business. You're the ranking member of the Small Business Committee here in the House of Representatives. I would expect that there would be a significant opportunity for small businesses in this also.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Definitely.

When it comes to transportation and infrastructure, a lot of the businesses are small businesses, and they are the backbone of our economy. They will be the ones creating the jobs that are so much needed in our local communities.

Mr. GARAMENDI. I noticed that we've now been joined by another representative from an area that was significantly damaged, Mr. PALLONE from New Jersey.

Perhaps you would like to share with us your thoughts and your experience. I did see you on CNN one night as you were working with your constituents trying to meet the disaster in your area.

Mr. PALLONE. I want to thank my colleague from California for having this Special Order and talking about the hurricane damage and what needs to be done in the future.

I have to say that the damage to my district was catastrophic. We had many towns where initially at least it looked like the majority of the homes and businesses were wiped out.

When we go back and look again, some of them can be saved. But we're talking about thousands of people who lost their homes and many others who lost their businesses.

It really created a humanitarian crisis in that first week or so because we were trying to get FEMA in with the disaster recovery centers and with the Red Cross and the Salvation Army. Over the first week, the main concern was just humanitarian, trying to find shelter for people, trying to make sure they had food and water and clothes.

I have to say the response was overwhelming. So many of the towns in my district—basically, it was a voluntary effort because in the first few days, it was pretty much the people locally that were doing all those things.

□ 1340

Towns had shelters set up. People were bringing in food, making hot meals. I never saw such an outpouring of support, if you will. And it continues. This weekend, by this last weekend, there were disaster recovery centers set up by FEMA in many of the towns, particularly those that were hardest hit. And I have to say that locally FEMA did a very good job. The people who came out and set up the disaster recovery centers or helped with the humanitarian needs, they really were excellent.

But I wanted to talk a little bit today, if I could, not that the humanitarian concerns have disappeared, because they haven't, I don't want to suggest that, but I wanted to talk a little bit about long-term needs, if I could, and take just a little bit of your time.

We met with the FEMA director this morning, and I talked essentially about four needs that we really need to address. One was what I call temporary housing. In other words, I want people to get out of the shelters and either be able to go back to their homes or some kind of temporary housing that would last them for a year or 18 months. We set up, and I think it should open by this weekend at Fort Monmouth, which is one of the military bases that was closed under BRAC, but we have identified at least 600 units I believe now where we can put people temporarily who lost their homes and can't go back to their home. But I talked to the FEMA director today about trying to get trailers in. And he said that was going to happen, but it hasn't happened yet, because many of the people right now are still living in a house that has no power and is not functional. But because it is not terribly cold, or hasn't been, they are able to stay there. Once it gets cold, they won't be able to and will have to go back to a shelter. And we want people to get out of these shelters.

So I'm hoping that not only will we have some housing at Fort Monmouth, but we can also supplement that and get some trailers in from FEMA that could actually be put in place on people's own property so they don't have to go to Fort Monmouth or elsewhere over the next year or 18 months. This is sort of the second stage, out of the shelter and into some temporary housing for a year or 18 months, and then back to your own house once it is repaired or rebuilt.

The second thing is that, and I think you were getting at it before, we have a lot of the beach replenishment and the dunes and the seawalls that were being used as protection. Some of my towns are actually below sea level, and if it wasn't for the seawall or the dunes or the beach replenishment, artificial beach replenishments that have been put in place, the loss would have been even worse. And now those are gone. Not completely, but in a town like Keansburg, New Jersey, the dune is gone. And in many towns along the Atlantic coast, the slope of the beach has gone down 6 or 7 feet, and so they don't have any protection anymore. Seawalls have been broken up.

I asked the Corps and FEMA today, the FEMA director, to give the Corps the go-ahead to do emergency work. Right now in Keansburg, for example, if you have another storm, not even a hurricane, since the dune is not there, the water will come right in, and you'll have the same problem again. So we got a positive response on that, but we need to find out when that is going to happen, when it's going to begin.

The third thing is the match. I have a lot of very small towns. Some of my towns have 1,000 people, 2,000 people. When you talk about long-term work on infrastructure, municipal or State infrastructure, there is a 25 percent match. We are trying to get that reduced or eliminated because the towns cannot afford that.

The last thing, many people have asked, and I'm sure we're going to have a debate, I have no doubt that these more severe and frequent storms are a consequence of global climate change. I have been around 60 years, and I've never seen a storm like this. Nobody has. They say it is the 500-year storm. I'm afraid, my colleagues, that the 500-year storm is now the 10-year storm. And the nor'easter that we would get every 20 years is going to happen every year. I hope not, but it certainly seems that way.

So we have to look at in some cases buy-outs. In other words, people have said, look, we can't do this every 2 or 3 years, so can we have the government buy our home. Well, there is no home, but what's left of it rather than rebuild—and in many areas if the homes could be lifted and put on a platform or piling, then maybe they could stay because the water would rush underneath. I also brought this up with the FEMA director, and he said there are programs at the Federal level that would accomplish that.

So we are now looking, and I'm not taking away from the humanitarian problem that still exists, it definitely does, but we have to look at some of these issues in terms of housing, rebuilding, and changes in the way we build over the long term.

I know that all of you and all of our colleagues, hopefully on a bipartisan basis, will be supportive of trying to get funding for all of these things. The FEMA director said for emergency purposes there is adequate funding at least until the spring. But when we talk about some of these long-term things, undoubtedly there will have to be some kind of an appropriation that we're going to have to pass here; and I hope and I pray that we're all going to work together to accomplish that.

Thank you for the time.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Thank you very much, Mr. PALLONE.

There is no part of this Nation that is immune from a natural disaster. The disasters will be different: tornadoes, superstorms, hurricanes, droughts, floods, and fires. The west coast, we talk earthquakes. You could talk

earthquakes on the east coast, and certainly the new Madrid fault in the central Missouri area ought to keep everybody a little bit nervous. So wherever it is around this Nation, the disasters could occur, and the response which you described is critically important, that is, the forewarning and then the response when the disaster actually hits.

But the preparation to put in place the infrastructure to best protect those critical parts of the communities, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ talked about the refineries which were badly damaged by the storm. There are certain things that can be done to protect them; and in doing so, you protect your power supplies, the grid systems, seawalls and the like. All of these things are critically important.

I remember last year I was on this floor with my colleague from the New York area who was deeply concerned about another storm that came through. Was it Irene, I believe, that came through the northeast and created significant damage. Mr. PAUL TONKO, you spoke with great skill and compassion about your citizens, their lessons learned, and things to share with us today.

Mr. TONKO. Thank you, Mr. GARAMENDI, for leading us in this very important hour of discussion.

As I listened to Representative PALLONE speak about the disaster in his district and across the map of New Jersey and now into New York City and Long Island and great portions of New York State, it was shades of the not-so-distant past that came to mind. And we're still doing recovery from the storm of August, the flooding of Irene and Lee in August of 2011, which impacted my district severely. There were human lives that were lost, property that was damaged, homes that were swept away into the river. Everything for which people had ever worked taken from them. Drastic situations. So as we do our work here in Washington, we need to make certain that on this House floor there is advocacy for the response to these given situations.

Already the price tag is coming forth from the leadership back home. Governor Cuomo, for instance, suggesting the price, the impact has now steadily risen. At first snapshot, you cannot begin to comprehend all of the damage and all of the aspects and dynamics of recovery that will be required. And now we are looking at something like $30 billion that impacts a State in a very severe way, disrupts service and electric power that is disrupted, commerce that's frozen in place, human misery that's incalculable where lives have been impacted forever by the forces of Sandy.

So, you know, this is a revisitation, so to speak, as we are still recovering. It was a fight on this floor to make certain that disaster aid moneys were brought into play so we could respond with compassion and dignity and integrity to these given situations.

□ 1350

So the lessons here are to go forward as we deal with this given fiscal issue at hand, to go forth with the priorities that are the most urgent and important and meaningful in putting back the fabric of these communities.

There is a need to work closely with an outlay of resources to FEMA, making certain that disaster aid is at the level that will be required here, working with other agencies that are as significant in the equation—the Department of Transportation, the Small Business Administration—working with HUD, making certain that all of these various elements are addressed in our sense of advocacy here.

The human misery, again, is impacting. It is a situation that now brings to mind the fact that in upstate New York, and even in metro New York City and the Long Island area and in New Jersey, these are atypical situations for hurricanes to travel that far north. To have something in upstate New York do the sort of hurricane damage that we witnessed last year is not typical.

So the nomenclature of a ''100-year storm'' is just ludicrous. It doesn't speak to what's really happening. We've had several storms in a 20-year period that were dubbed 100-year storms. So right there, the logic and, again, the nomenclature is misrepresenting the facts at hand. We are getting more and more repeats here of situations from disasters driven by mother nature. And as Representative PALLONE made mention, a 500-year storm is what they were dubbing the case to be in the 21st Congressional District that I now represent in the State of New York.

So there is a need here for us to be cognizant of those responses to disaster situations but also to look at the bigger, bigger public policy issue—that of the environment and that of climate change and global warming. We need to be cognizant of our stewardship over our planet. We need to make certain that if these data that are compiled are telling us that there is increased precipitation, for instance, over a given Catskill watershed in the area just south of my district, let's be aware of that. Let's know what's happening here, and let's respond accordingly to sound public policy as it relates to the environment and our stewardship of the environment, and let's be cognizant of the needs in responsiveness measure.

I know that you want to add to this discussion here, so I'll just say this. In a time where government perhaps has been hit hard by critics out there who are suggesting there's no role for the public sector here, we need to reduce government, I can tell you that people were addressing ''the war room,'' as they designated it, putting together all of the professionals and academics and people who operate these programs and are well trained. Watching that compilation, that collaborative effort of these professionals who are responding through public sector employment to the needs of these given communities is powerful, and it speaks to what I think the public asks for and deserves—sound, effective government. But this option of ''no government,'' I know people were reaching out. They wanted that partnership because they were in such immense pain and were at a loss for how and where to move.

So, Representative GARAMENDI, thank you very much for bringing the focus to what should be our staunch advocacy for people in need.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Representative TONKO, once again, it's good to be with you on the floor, sadly reliving what you and I discussed here almost a year ago in response to Hurricane Irene and the devastation that occurred in your community.

It seems to me that there are many, many lessons to learn here, some of which I talked about before you came in. Certainly the ability to know well ahead of time what is coming.

We saw with Hurricane Sandy that NASA was able to anticipate, the Weather Service was able to anticipate the nature of the storm and where it was going. That ability to understand what is happening and what is likely to happen really comes from the support of the Federal Government appropriating money to those agencies and then directing those agencies to provide those services. This is something we need to keep in mind.

As we go through the deficit reductions that we must do, we must begin a prioritization of those things that are critical to the well-being—indeed, the lives—of Americans.

We also know that we are going to have to rebuild. Ms. VELÁZQUEZ was suggesting that it was going to cost some $20 billion for New York City alone. And Mr. PALLONE didn't give us a number, but we can anticipate billions for the New Jersey area. And then the areas in upstate New York and Pennsylvania with lesser numbers, fortunately. But nonetheless, it begins to add up to a huge amount of money. And some of the damage is not well known even today.

I was talking with representatives of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, 500 of whom came from northern California to assist in New York, and we were talking about what those men and women were doing. They said, in the subway systems that were flooded, they were flooded with seawater. And the effect of salt on the electrical systems is—it's over. You've got to replace the entire electrical system. But not just to replace it, but to then anticipate that it could happen again, so to upgrade the entire infrastructure, to provide the protection that should it happen, you won't lose the entire subway system as has occurred in New York City.

So we need the infrastructure to be replaced but then also to be significantly enhanced. This is a very, very expensive proposition. It's also a way

in which people could go back to work and we could enhance the employment. We can do this. In fact, indeed, we must do it.

The American Society of Civil Engineers has said clearly that the infrastructure of America—not just New York City and New Jersey, but my own State of California, the flood control systems we have in our State are woefully inadequate, and they address it as a D. Fortunately, not an F. But not an A, not a B, not a C, but a D. So we know that we have extraordinary needs here.

The President, in his American Jobs Act, proposed a $50 billion addition to what we normally do with our infrastructure, which is a lot, an additional $50 billion to be spent in 2 to 3 years. That's a critical boost. And I know the cities I represent—the Sacramento area; Natomas area, one of the most dangerous places in America for flooding; Marysville and Yuba City; the delta, where I live—are all subject to flooding. We need to enhance our levees in order to protect ourselves, not from a 100-year, but from a 200-year storm, which is much more likely to occur.

We can pay for these things. This doesn't have to add to the deficit. For every dollar we put into infrastructure, we get $2-plus back in economic growth. So it's actually an investment, a short-term and long-term investment that will last for years.

There's another thing that we have which is no longer authorized. Part of the Recovery Act, the stimulus bill, was the creation of Build America Bonds. The President proposed that as part of his infrastructure program, the Build America Bonds, which are called BABs—it took me a while to figure that one out. But BABs, Build America Bonds, are partly funded by the Federal Government and partly funded by the local agencies and had an enormous effect on enhancing infrastructure, sanitation systems, water systems in communities.

Let's talk a little bit about these kinds of things, the effect that they may have on your communities in New York, Pennsylvania, and others.

Mr. TONKO. Sure.

Well, absolutely, some of these programs are welcomed news. Two points I would make—and I would just like to go back for a moment to the sense of community that is expressed at times like these tragedies. It's not government as a stand-alone solution—we understand that—but it's an essential part, and we want effective government.

We also have had a private sector response and volunteerism. I mean, the sense of volunteerism, that sense of American spirit comes right into the core of all of this expression. And you begin to understand the greatness of this Nation through some of the darkest hours that we share. So that point has to be made clear.

But to your point about infrastructure improvement, infrastructure bank bill, the transportation bill that provides for adequate amounts of resources, putting together these bonds that are unique in design so that we can have the resources to make it happen, I absolutely agree.

□ 1400

I contend that as we get impacted by some of the storm and Mother Nature occurrences, we need to make certain we've reached the facts. If data are telling us that we're going to have additional activity, two things need to happen. You need short-term and long-term response. You do not rebuild exactly as if you had. You need to retrofit that to the projected impacts of now a newer, stronger force of Mother Nature.

Secondly, we need that global policy. We need policy that speaks to the environmental outcomes. If we're ignoring that, we're going to see a hasty build-up, I believe, of some of these situations, which is only going to drain our budgets. So, it's time to be academic and to be economically wise and effective here.

I think that's what voters have asked for, that's what the electorate asked for, that's what the people of the country demand and deserve: a sound use of resources. To go forward and build it in a way that provides for a more improved, more effective outcome.

You look at some of this infrastructure, and it reminds you when it's taken away how significant it is to our quality of life and our profitability as a Nation. You know, a grid system that connects power to the sources that require it, a communications network that allows us to dialogue and build our profitability. The infrastructure that moves freight, our roads, bridges, highways. You talk about the damage done by salt-infested waters.

Again, it's incomprehensible about what that score goes to in terms of impact when you think of a subway system, rail system, energy generators, and all of the power supplies within the utility infrastructure and communications. It's just important for us to learn from these effects of the storms.

If we can put together concepts like an infrastructure bank, if we can put together the bond activities that will respond more compassionately and more effectively and more urgently to a given situation, then let's prioritize where we need to prioritize so as to make things happen.

The infrastructure needs—we've talked about them outside the context of the ravages of Mother Nature. Water and sewer systems that just need to be upgraded because of the age of some of these systems and the new technology that has been introduced where we can do it in energy efficiency formats where you save operating costs for local governments.

Now's the time, when you've taken this blow, perhaps we can then retrofit to do state-of-the-art that will mean less costly operating expenses for local entities and NGOs, nongovernment organizations, that allows for everyone to win and the taxpayer dollar is stretched in positive, favorable terms to be a more effective outcome for everyone in the equation.

Mr. GARAMENDI. You've raised some, I think, very, very important points.

These are not partisan issues. This is not Democratic or Republican. Over the years both parties have been champions of infrastructure investment, and both parties have been very clear about the need to respond to the disasters that have occurred.

We need to be ahead of this, and we need to work together. It's our responsibility, 435 of us here in the House of Representatives, as we end this session, we should be willing to step forward in the lame duck session, provide the resources that are needed immediately, if they are not now available, for the rebuilding, for the humanitarian efforts and the recovery that's necessary.

Then, we should, although I don't know that this would happen, we should take that step forward to put in place those programs that will create an infrastructure that will protect Americans from the occurrences that we know have happened and will happen in the future.

You've mentioned one that I think is very important, an infrastructure bank, together with the Build America Bonds, shifting unnecessary tax breaks from one industry back into others so that we can build. As we do this, as we do this rebuilding, as we do these infrastructures, it comes to my mind, something you and I have spent many days talking about here on the floor, is that we make it in America, that we use American-made equipment to build these projects, we use American-made equipment and supplies in the construction activities.

In doing so, we not only put in place the infrastructure, which is an investment for the long term, but we also build and rebuild the American manufacturing sector.

So we can have a win, and a win, and another win. So, we can have a triple win here if we are wise in putting our policies together.

I know that many of our colleagues on the Republican side have taken up these issues. We have time, 2 months now in this session, to deal with this. Obviously, we have the big deficit issue. But we also know that in that deficit issue, we cannot forget the immediate needs of America, and the long-term benefits that come from strategic investments.

I'll wrap with this, and then if you would care to call this a session.

I was flipping through the channels trying to find the latest news on the current scandal in Washington, and I came across, I think it must have been a PBS show on the Brooklyn Bridge. I think it was David McCullough who had written a book on the Brooklyn Bridge. And the 150th anniversary of

the Brooklyn Bridge is this year or maybe next year. It's in this period of time. It's a piece of infrastructure that has served New York City, and in a larger context, the Nation, for 150 years.

So, what we can do now as we rebuild New York, New Jersey, and the other areas, and, please, California also, as we protect ourselves from these natural disasters, we will put in place investments that will serve for multiple generations into the future.

Now, that's a capital investment with an enormous return, as the Brooklyn Bridge was 150 years ago.

So, we have these opportunities, and we ought to take advantage of them, not just for humanitarian reasons, but also for immediate jobs and long-term investments. That's our task. That's what we ought to be about. Not a Democrat, not a Republican idea, but a true American idea that goes way back to the very early ages of our country.

Mr. TONKO, if you'd care to wrap, we'll call this a day.

Mr. TONKO. Sure. Let me do this quickly.

I think we have it within our intellect to create the outcomes that are strong, that will reinforce those in need, and still go forward and address the critical economic times. I can tell you, because the memory is so fresh, people did not want to hear about offsets and Tea Party mentality when they were without last year. They lost everything for which they ever worked. They are endorsing, now, a balanced approach.

Take a scalpel to the situation. Don't wield an axe. Come up with sensitivity, with an effective response using academics. Deal with policy strengths in the long-term picture outcome, and get us our immediate assistance so we can rebuild and do it in cutting-edge fashion so we will have learned from this experience and come out even stronger.

I think in general, in a bigger picture framework, our best days lie ahead if we approach these issues with sound academics and with the skillfulness and the compassion required.

Thank you so much for leading us in this hour of discussion.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Thank you, Mr. TONKO, and I thank Mr. PALLONE and Ms. VELÁZQUEZ.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

FAREWELL TO CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DOLD). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 5, 2011, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. PAUL) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, this may be the last time I speak on the House floor. At the end of the year, I'll leave Congress after 23 years in office over a 36-year period. My goals in 1976 were the same as they are today: promote peace and prosperity by a strict adherence to the principles of individual liberty.

It was my opinion that the course that the U.S. embarked on in the latter part of the 20th century would bring us a major financial crisis and engulf us in a foreign policy that would overextend us and undermine our national security.

To achieve these goals I sought, the government would have had to shrink in size and scope, reduce spending, change the monetary system, and reject the unsustainable cost of policing the world and expanding the American Empire.

The problems seemed to be overwhelming and impossible to solve, yet from my viewpoint, just following the constraints placed on the Federal Government by the Constitution would have been a good place to start.

□ 1410

Just how much did I accomplish? In many ways, according to conventional wisdom, my off-and-on career in Congress from 1976 to 2012 accomplished very little—no named legislation, no named Federal buildings or highways, thank goodness.

In spite of my efforts, the government has grown exponentially, taxes remain excessive, and the prolific increase of incomprehensible regulations continues. Wars are constant and pursued without congressional declaration, deficits rise to the sky, poverty is rampant, and dependency on the Federal Government is now worse than any time in our history. All this, with minimal concerns for the deficits and unfunded liabilities that common sense tells us cannot go on much longer.

A grand, but never mentioned, bipartisan agreement allows for the well-kept secret that keeps the spending going. One side doesn't give up one penny on military spending, the other side doesn't give up one penny on welfare spending, while both sides support the bailouts and the subsidies for the banking and the corporate elite. And the spending continues as the economy weakens and the downward spiral continues.

As the government continues fiddling around, our liberties and our wealth burn in the flames of a foreign policy that makes us less safe. The major stumbling block to real change in Washington is the total resistance to admitting that the country is broke. This has made compromising just to agree to increased spending inevitable since neither side has any intention on cutting spending.

The country and the Congress will remain divisive since there's no loot left to divvy up. Without this recognition, the spenders in Washington will continue to march toward a fiscal cliff much bigger than the one anticipated this coming January.

I've thought a lot about why those of us who believe in liberty as a solution have done so poorly in convincing others of its benefits. If liberty is what we claim it is—the principle that protects all personal, social, and economic decisions necessary for maximum prosperity and the best chance for peace—it should be an easy sell. Yet history has shown that the masses have been quite receptive to the promises of authoritarians which are rarely, if ever, fulfilled.

Should we have authoritarianism or liberty? If authoritarianism leads to poverty and war and less freedom for all individuals and is controlled by rich special interests, the people should be begging for liberty. There certainly was a strong enough sentiment for more freedom at the time of our founding that motivated those who were willing to fight in the revolution against the powerful British Government.

During my time in Congress, the appetite for liberty has been quite weak, the understanding of its significance negligible. Yet the good news is that, compared to 1976 when I first came to Congress, the desire for more freedom and less government in 2012 is much greater and growing, especially in grassroots America. Tens of thousands of teenagers and college-age students are, with great enthusiasm, welcoming the message of liberty.

I have a few thoughts as to why the people of a country like ours, once the freest and most prosperous, allowed the conditions to deteriorate to the degree that they have. Freedom, private property, and enforceable voluntary contracts generate wealth. In our early history we were very much aware of this. But in the early part of the 20th century, our politicians promoted the notion that the tax and monetary system had to change if we were to involve ourselves in excessive domestic and military spending. That is why Congress gave us the Federal Reserve and the income tax.

The majority of Americans and many government officials agree that sacrificing some liberty was necessary to carry out what some claim to be ''progressive'' ideas. Pure democracy became acceptable. They failed to recognize that what they were doing was exactly opposite of what the colonists were seeking when they broke away from the British.

Some complain that my arguments make no sense, since great wealth and the standard of living improved for many Americans over the last hundred years, even with these new policies.

But the damage to the market economy and the currency has been insidious and steady. It took a long time to consume our wealth, destroy the currency, undermine productivity, and get our financial obligations to a point of no return. Confidence sometimes lasts longer than deserved. Most of our wealth today depends on debt.

The wealth that we enjoyed and seemed to be endless allowed concern for the principle of a free society to be neglected. As long as most people believed the material abundance would

last forever, worrying about protecting a competitive, productive economy and individual liberty seemed unnecessary.

The Age of Redistribution.

This neglect ushered in an age of redistribution of wealth by government kowtowing to any and all special interests, except for those who just wanted to be left alone. That is why today money in politics far surpasses money currently going into research and development and productive entrepreneurial efforts.

The material benefits became more important than the understanding and promoting the principles of liberty and a free market. It is good that material abundance is a result of liberty, but if materialism is all that we care about, problems are guaranteed.

The crisis arrived because the illusion that wealth and prosperity would last forever has ended. Since it was based on debt and a pretense that debt can be papered over by an out-of-control fiat monetary system, it was doomed to fail. We have ended up with a system that doesn't produce enough even to finance the debt and no fundamental understanding of why a free society is crucial to reversing these trends. If this is not recognized, the recovery will linger for a long time. Bigger government, more spending, more debt, more poverty for the middle class, and a more intense scramble by the elite special interests will continue.

We need an intellectual awakening. Without an intellectual awakening, the turning point will be driven by economic law. A dollar crisis will bring the current out-of-control system to its knees. If it's not accepted that Big Government, fiat money, ignoring liberty, central economic planning, welfarism, and warfareism caused our crisis, we can expect a continuous and dangerous march toward corporatism and even fascism with even more loss of our liberties. Prosperity for a large middle class, though, will become an abstract dream.

This continuous move is no different than what we have seen in how our financial crisis of 2008 was handled. Congress first directed, with bipartisan support, bailouts for the wealthy. Then it was the Federal Reserve with its endless quantitative easing. If at first it doesn't succeed, try again; QE–1, QE–2, QE–3, and with no results we try QE indefinitely—that is, until it, too, fails.

There is a cost to all of this, and let me assure you that delaying the payment is no longer an option. The rules of the market will extract its pound of flesh, and it won't be pretty.

The current crisis elicits a lot of pessimism, and the pessimism adds to less confidence in the future. The two feed on themselves, making our situation worse. If the underlying cause of the crisis is not understood, we cannot solve our problems.

The issue of warfare and welfare, deficits, inflationism and corporatism, bailouts and authoritarianism cannot be ignored. By only expanding these policies, we cannot expect good results.

Everyone claims support for freedom, but too often it's for one's own freedoms and not for others. Too many believe that there must be limits on freedom. They argue that freedom must be directed and managed to achieve fairness and equality, thus making it acceptable to curtail, through force, certain liberties. Some decide what and whose freedoms are to be limited. These are the politicians whose goal in life is power. Their success depends on gaining support from special interests. We don't need more ''isms.''

The great news is the answer is not to be found in more isms. The answers are to be found in more liberty, which costs so much less. Under these circumstances, spending goes down, wealth production goes up, and the quality of life improves.

□ 1420

Just this recognition, especially if we move in this direction, increases optimism, which, in itself, is beneficial. The follow-through with sound policies is required, which must be understood and supported by the people. But there is good evidence that the generation coming of age at the present time is supportive of moving in the direction of more liberty and self-reliance. The more this change and direction and the solutions become known, the quicker will be our return to optimism.

Our job, for those of us who believe that a different system than the one we have had for the last hundred years has driven us to this unsustainable crisis, is to be more convincing that there is a wonderful, uncomplicated and moral system that provides the answers. We had a taste of it in our early history.

We need not give up on the notion of advancing this cause. It worked, but we allowed our leaders to concentrate on the material abundance that freedom generates, while ignoring freedom itself. Now we have neither; but the door is open, out of necessity, for an answer.

The answer available is based on the Constitution, individual liberty, and prohibiting the use of government force to provide privileges and benefits to all special interests.

After over 100 years, we face a society quite different from the one that was intended by the Founders. In many ways, their efforts to protect future generations with the Constitution from this danger have failed. Skeptics at the time the Constitution was written in 1787 warned us of today's possible outcome. The insidious nature of the erosion of our liberties and the reassurance our great abundance gave us allowed the process to evolve into the dangerous period in which we now live.

Today we face a dependency on government largesse for almost every need. Our liberties are restricted and government operates outside the rule of law, protecting and rewarding those who buy or coerce government into satisfying their demands.

Here are a few examples: undeclared wars are commonplace. Welfare for the rich and poor is considered an entitlement. The economy is over-regulated, overtaxed, and grossly distorted by a deeply flawed monetary system. Debt is growing exponentially.

The PATRIOT Act and FISA legislation, passed without much debate, have resulted in a steady erosion of our Fourth Amendment rights. Tragically our government engages in preemptive war, otherwise known as aggression, with no complaints from the American people. The drone warfare we are pursuing worldwide is destined to end badly for us, as the hatred builds for innocent lives lost and the international laws flaunted.

Once we are financially weakened and militarily challenged, there will be a lot of resentment thrown our way.

It's now the law of the land that the military can arrest American citizens, hold them indefinitely without charges or a trial. Rampant hostility toward free trade is supported by a large number in Washington. Supporters of sanctions, currency manipulation, and WTO trade retaliation call the true free-traders isolationists. Sanctions are used to punish countries that don't follow our orders.

Bailouts and guarantees of all kinds of misbehavior are routine. Central economic planning through monetary policy regulations and legislative mandates has been acceptable policy.

I have a few questions. Excessive government has created such a mess, it prompts many questions.

Why are sick people who use medical marijuana put in prison?

Why does the Federal Government restrict the drinking of raw milk?

Why can't American manufacturers manufacture rope and other products from hemp?

Why are Americans not allowed to use gold and silver as legal tender, as mandated by the Constitution?

Why is Germany concerned enough to consider repatriating their gold held by the Fed for her in New York? Is it that the trust in the U.S. and dollar supremacy are beginning to wane?

Why do our political leaders believe it's unnecessary to thoroughly audit our own gold?

Why can't Americans decide which type of light bulbs they can buy?

Why is the TSA permitted to abuse the rights of any American traveling by air?

Why should there be mandatory sentences, even up to life for crimes without victims, as our drug laws require?

Why have we allowed the Federal Government to regulate commodes in our homes?

Why is it political suicide for anyone to criticize APAC?

Why haven't we given up on the drug war, since it's an obvious failure and violates the people's rights? Has nobody noticed that the authorities can't even keep drugs out of the prisons? How can making our entire society a prison solve the problem?

Why do we sacrifice so much getting unnecessarily involved in border disputes and civil strife around the world, and ignore the root cause of the most dangerous deadly border in the world, the one between Mexico and the United States?

Why does Congress willingly give up its prerogatives to the executive branch?

Why has changing the party in power never changed policy? Could it be that the views of both parties are essentially the same?

Why did the big banks, the large corporations, and foreign central banks get bailed out in 2008, and the middle class lost their jobs and their homes?

Why do so many in the government and the Federal officials believe that creating money out of thin air creates wealth?

Why do so many accept the deeply flawed principle that government bureaucrats and politicians can protect us from ourselves without totally destroying the principle of liberty?

Why can't people understand that war always destroys wealth and liberty?

Why is there so little concern for the executive order that gives the President authority to establish a kill list, including American citizens, of those targeted for assassination?

Why is patriotism thought to be blind loyalty to the government and the politicians who run it, rather than loyalty to the principles of liberty and support for the people? Real patriotism is a willingness to challenge the government when it's wrong.

Why is it claimed that if people won't or can't take care of their own needs, that people and government are able to do it for them?

Why did we ever give the government a safe haven for initiating violence against the people?

Why do so many Members defend free markets, but not civil liberties?

Why do so many Members defend civil liberties, but not free markets? Aren't they the same?

Why don't more defend both economic liberty and personal liberty?

Why are there not more individuals who seek to intellectually influence others to bring about positive changes, than those who seek power to force others to obey their commands?

Why does the use of religion to support a social gospel and preemptive wars, both of which require authoritarians to use violence or the threat of violence, go unchallenged? Aggression and forced redistribution of wealth has nothing to do with the teachings of the world's great religions.

Why do we allow the government and the Federal Reserve to disseminate false information dealing with both economic and foreign policy?

Why is democracy held in such high esteem, when it's the enemy of the minority and makes all rights relative to the dictates of the majority?

Why should anyone be surprised that Congress has no credibility since there is such a disconnect between what politicians say and what they do?

Is there any explanation for all the deception, the unhappiness, the fear of the future, the loss of confidence in our leaders, the distrust and the anger and frustration? Yes, there is. And there's a way to reverse these attitudes.

The negative perceptions are logical and a consequence of bad policies bringing about our problems. Identification of the problems and recognizing the cause allow the proper changes to come easily. We should have more trust in ourselves, less in the government.

Too many people have, for far too long, placed too much confidence and trust in government and not enough in themselves. Fortunately, many are now becoming aware of the seriousness of the gross mistakes of the past several decades.

□ 1430

The blame is shared by both political parties. Many Americans now are demanding to hear the plain truth of things and want the demagoguing to stop. Without this first step, solutions are impossible. Seeking the truth and finding the answers in liberty and self-reliance promote the optimism necessary for restoring prosperity. The task is not that difficult if politics doesn't get in the way. We have allowed ourselves to get into such a mess for various reasons.

Politicians deceive themselves as to how wealth is produced. Excessive confidence is placed in the judgment of politicians and bureaucrats. This replaces the confidence in a free society. Too many in high places of authority became convinced that only they, armed with arbitrary government power, could bring about fairness, while facilitating wealth production. This always proves to be a utopian dream and destroys wealth and liberty. It impoverishes the people, and it rewards the special interests, who end up controlling both parties. It's no surprise that much of what goes on in Washington is driven by aggressive partisanship and power-seeking, with philosophical differences being minor.

Economic ignorance is commonplace. Keynesianism continues to thrive; although, today, it is facing healthy and enthusiastic rebuttals. Believers in military Keynesianism and domestic Keynesianism continue to desperately promote their failed policies as the economy languishes in a deep slumber.

Supporters of all government edicts use humanitarian arguments to justify them. Humanitarian arguments are always used to justify government mandates related to the economy, monetary policy, foreign policy, and personal liberty. This is on purpose to make it more difficult to challenge, but initiating violence for humanitarian reasons is still violence. Good intentions are no excuse and are just as harmful as when the people use force with bad intentions. The results are always negative. The immoral use of force is the source of man's political problems. Sadly, many religious groups, secular organizations, and psychopathic authoritarians endorse government-initiated force to change the world. Even when the desired goals are well intentioned—or especially when they are well intentioned—the results are dismal. The good results sought never materialize. The new problems created require even more government force as a solution. The net result is institutionalizing government-initiated violence and morally justifying it on humanitarian grounds.

This is the same fundamental reason our government uses force for invading other countries at will, central economic planning at home and the regulation of personal liberty and habits of our citizens. It is rather strange that, unless one has a criminal mind and no respect for other people and their property, no one claims it's permissible to go into one's neighbor's house and tell him how to behave, what he can eat, smoke, and drink, or how to spend his money. Yet rarely is it asked, Why is it morally acceptable that a stranger with a badge and a gun can do the same thing in the name of law and order? Any resistance is met with brute force, fines, taxes, arrests, and even imprisonment. This is done more frequently every day without a search warrant.

No government monopoly over initiating violence is what we need. Restraining aggressive behavior is one thing, but legalizing a government monopoly for initiating aggression can only lead to exhausting liberty associated with chaos, anger, and the breakdown of civil society. Permitting such authority and expecting saintly behavior from the bureaucrats and the politicians is a pipe dream. We now have a standing army of armed bureaucrats in the TSA, CIA, FBI, Fish and Wildlife, FEMA, IRS, Corps of Engineers, et cetera—numbering over 100,000. Citizens are guilty until proven innocent in the unconstitutional administrative courts.

Government in a free society should have no authority to meddle in the social activities or in the economic transactions of individuals; nor should government meddle in the affairs of other nations. All things peaceful, even when controversial, should be permitted.

We must reject the notion of prior restraint in economic activity just as we do in the area of free speech and religious liberty. But even in these areas, government is starting to use a backdoor approach of political correctness to regulate speech—a very dangerous trend. Since 9/11, monitoring speech on the Internet is now a problem since warrants are no longer required.

The proliferation of Federal crimes: the Constitution established four Federal crimes. Today, the experts can't even agree on how many Federal crimes are now on the books. They number into the thousands. No one person can comprehend the enormity of

the legal system, especially of the Tax Code. Due to the ill-advised drug war and the endless Federal expansion of the Criminal Code, we have over 6 million people under correctional suspension—more than the Soviets ever had and more than any other nation today, including China. I don't understand the complacency of the Congress and the willingness to continue their obsession with passing more Federal laws. Mandatory sentencing laws associated with drug laws have compounded our prison problems.

The Federal Register is now 75,000 pages long. The Tax Code has 72,000 pages, and it expands every year. When will the people start shouting enough is enough and demand Congress to cease and desist?

What we should be doing is achieving liberty. Liberty can only be achieved when government is denied the aggressive use of force. If one seeks liberty, a precise type of government is needed. To achieve it, more than lip service is required. There are two choices available:

One, a government designed to protect liberty—a natural right—as its sole objective. The people are expected to care for themselves and reject the use of any force for interfering with another person's liberty. Government is given a strictly limited authority to enforce contracts, property ownership, settle disputes, and to defend against foreign aggression;

Two, a government that pretends to protect liberty but is granted power to arbitrarily use force over the people and foreign nations. Though the grant of power many times is meant to be small and limited, it inevitably metastasizes into an omnipotent political cancer.

This is the problem the world has suffered throughout the ages. Though meant to be limited, it nevertheless is a 100 percent sacrifice of the principle that would-be tyrants find irresistible. It is used vigorously—though incrementally and insidiously. Granting power to government officials always proves the adage that power corrupts. Once government gets a limited concession for the use of force to mold people's habits and plan the economy, it causes a steady erosion and a steady move toward tyrannical government. Only a revolutionary spirit can reverse the process and deny the government this arbitrary use of aggression. There is no in-between.

Sacrificing a little liberty for imaginary safety always ends badly. Today's mess is the result of American's accepting option number two, even though the Founders attempted to give us option number one. The results are not good. As our liberties have been eroded, our wealth has been consumed. The wealth we see today is based on debt and a foolish willingness on the part of foreigners to take our dollars for goods and services. Then they loan them back to us to perpetuate our debt system. It's amazing that it has worked for this long, but the impasse in Washington in solving our problems indicates that many are starting to understand the seriousness of this worldwide debt crisis and the dangers we face.

The longer this process continues, the harsher the outcome will be. The financial crisis is actually a moral crisis. Many are acknowledging that a financial crisis looms; but few understand it is, in reality, a moral crisis. It's the moral crisis that has allowed our liberties to be undermined and that has permitted the exponential growth of illegal government power. Without a clear understanding of the nature of the crisis, it will be difficult to prevent a steady march toward tyranny and the poverty that will accompany it. Ultimately, the people have to decide which form of government they want—option number one or option number two.

□ 1440

There is no other choice. Claiming there is a choice of a little tyranny is like describing pregnancy as a touch of pregnancy.

It is a myth to believe that a mixture of free markets and government central economic planning is a worthy compromise. What we see today is a result of that type of thinking, and the results speak for themselves.

A culture of violence.

Americans now suffer from a culture of violence. It is easy to reject the initiation of violence against one's neighbor, but it's ironic that the people arbitrarily and freely anoint government officials with monopoly power to initiate violence against the American people, practically at will. Because it's the government that initiates force, most people accept it as being legitimate. Those who exert the force have no sense of guilt.

It is believed by too many that governments are morally justified in initiating violence, supposedly to do good. They incorrectly believe that this authority has come from the consent of the people. The minority, victims of government violence, never consented to suffer the abuse of government mandates, even when dictated by the majority. Victims of TSA excesses never consented to this abuse. This attitude has given us a policy of initiating war to do good, as well.

It is claimed that war to prevent war for noble purposes is justified. This is similar to what we were once told that ''destroying a village to save a village'' was justified. It was said by a U.S. Secretary of State that the loss of 500,000 Iraqis, mostly children, in the 1990s as a result of American bombs and sanctions was worth it to achieve the good we brought to the people of Iraq. Look at the mess Iraq is in today.

Government use of force to mold social and economic behavior at home and abroad has justified individuals using force on their own terms. The fact that violence by government is seen as morally justified is the reason why violence will increase when the big financial crisis hits and becomes a political crisis, as well.

First, we recognize that individuals shouldn't initiate violence, then we give the authority to the government. Eventually, the immoral use of government violence, when things go badly, will be used to justify an individual's right to do the same thing. Neither the government nor individuals have the moral right to initiate violence against another, yet we are moving toward the day when both will claim this authority. If this cycle is not reversed, society will break down.

When needs are oppressing and conditions deteriorate and rights become relative to the demands and the whims of the majority, it is then not a great leap for individuals to take it upon themselves to use violence to get what they claim is theirs. As the economy deteriorates and the discrepancy of wealth increases, as they already are occurring, violence increases as those in need take it in their own hands to get what they believe is theirs. They will not wait for a government rescue program.

When government officials wield power over others to bail out the special interests, even with disastrous results to the average citizens, they feel no guilt for the harm they do. Those who take us into undeclared wars with many casualties resulting never lose sleep over the deaths and the destruction their bad decisions cause. They are convinced that what we do is morally justified, and the fact that many suffered just can't be helped. When the street criminals do the same thing, they, too, have no remorse, believing that they are only taking what is rightfully theirs.

All moral standards become relative, whether it is bailouts, privileges, government subsidies, or benefits for some from inflating a currency. It's all part of a process justified by a philosophy of forced redistribution of wealth.

Violence, or a threat of such, is the instrument required and, unfortunately, is of little concern of most Members of Congress. Some argue it is only a matter of fairness that those in need are cared for. There are two problems with this:

First, the principle is used to provide a greater amount of benefits to the rich than to the poor;

Second, no one seems to be concerned about whether or not it's fair to those who end up paying for all the benefits. The costs are usually placed on the backs of the middle class and are hidden from the public eye.

Too many people believe government handouts are free, like printing money out of thin air, and there's no cost. That deception is coming to an end. The bills are coming due, and that's what the economic slowdown is all about.

Sadly, we have become accustomed to living with the illegitimate use of

force by government. It is the tool for telling the people how to live, what to eat and drink, what to read, and how to spend their money. To develop a truly free society, the issue of initiating force must be understood and rejected. Granting to government even a small amount of force is a dangerous concession.

Limiting government excesses vs. a virtuous moral people.

Our Constitution, which was intended to limit government power and abuse, has failed. The Founders warned that a free society depends on a virtuous and moral people. The current crisis reflects that their concerns were justified.

Many politicians and pundits are aware of the problems we face but spend all their time in trying to reform government. The sad part is that the suggested reforms almost always lead to less freedom, and the importance of a virtuous and moral people is either ignored or not understood. The new reforms serve only to further undermine liberty. The compounding effect has given us this steady erosion of liberty and the massive expansion of debt.

The real question is: If it is liberty we seek, should most of the emphasis be placed on government reform or trying to understand what a virtuous and moral people means and how to promote it?

The Constitution has not prevented the people from demanding handouts for both rich and poor in their efforts to reform the government, while ignoring the principles of a free society. All branches of our government today are controlled by individuals who use their power to undermine liberty and enhance the welfare/warfare state, and frequently their own wealth and power.

If the people are unhappy with the government performance, it must be recognized that government is merely a reflection of an immoral society that rejected a moral government of constitutional limits on power and love of freedom.

If this is the problem, all the tinkering with thousands of pages of new laws and regulations will do nothing to solve the problem. It is self-evident that our freedoms have been severely limited and the apparent prosperity we still have is nothing more than leftover wealth from a previous time.

This fictitious wealth based on debt and benefits from a false trust in our currency and credit will play havoc with our society when the bills come due. This means that the full consequence of our lost liberties is yet to be felt. But that illusion is now ending. Reversing a downward spiral depends on accepting a new approach.

Expect the rapidly expanding homeschooling movement to play a significant role in the revolutionary reforms needed to rebuild a free society with constitutional protections. We cannot expect a Federal Government-controlled school system to provide the intellectual ammunition to combat the dangerous growth of government that threatens our liberties.

The Internet will provide the alternative to the government media complex that controls the news and most political propaganda. This is why it's essential that the Internet remains free of government regulation.

Many of our religious institutions and secular organizations support greater dependency on the state by supporting war, welfare, and corporatism and ignore the need for a virtuous people.

I never believed that the world or our country could be made more free by politicians if the people had no desire for freedom. Under the current circumstances, the most we can hope to achieve in the political process is to use it as a podium to reach the people to alert them of the nature of the crisis and the importance of their need to assume responsibility for themselves, if it is liberty that they truly seek. Without this, a constitutionally protected free society is impossible.

If this is true, our individual goal in life ought to be for us to seek virtue and excellence and recognize that self-esteem and happiness only comes from using one's natural ability in the most productive manner possible according to one's own talents.

Productivity and creativity are the true source of personal satisfaction. Freedom, and not dependency, provides the environment needed to achieve these goals. Government cannot do this for us. It only gets in the way. When the government gets involved, the goal becomes a bailout or a subsidy, and these cannot provide a sense of personal achievement.

Achieving legislative power and political influence should not be our goal. Most of the change that is to come will not come from the politicians but, rather, from individuals, family, friends, intellectual leaders, and our religious institutions. The solution can only come from rejecting the use of coercion, compulsion, government commands, and aggressive force to mold social and economic behavior. Without accepting these restraints, inevitably, the consensus will be to allow the government to mandate economic equality and obedience to the politicians who gained power and promote an environment that smothers the freedoms of everyone.

□ 1450

It is then that the responsible individuals who seek excellence and self-esteem by being self-reliant and productive become the victims.

In conclusion, what are the greatest dangers that the American people face today and impede the goal of a free society? There are five.

The continuous attack on our civil liberties which threatens the rule of law and our ability to resist the rush of tyranny.

Number two: violent anti-Americanism that has engulfed the world. Because the phenomenon of ''blowback'' is not understood or denied, our foreign policy is destined to keep us involved in many wars that we have no business being in. National bankruptcy and a greater threat to our national security will result.

Number three: the ease in which we go to war, without a declaration by Congress, but accepting international authority from the U.N. or NATO even for preemptive wars, otherwise known as aggression.

Number four: a financial political crisis as a consequence of excessive debt, unfunded liabilities, spending, bailouts, and gross discrepancy in wealth distribution going from the middle class to the rich. The danger of central economic planning by the Federal Reserve must be understood.

Number five: world government taking over local and U.S. sovereignty by getting involved in the issues of war, welfare, trade, banking, a world currency, taxes, property, and private ownership of guns must be addressed.

Happily, there is an answer for these very dangerous trends. What a wonderful world it would be if everyone accepted the simple moral premise of rejecting all acts of aggression. The retort to such a suggestion is always: it's too simplistic, too idealistic, impractical, naive, utopian, dangerous, and unrealistic to strive for such an ideal.

The answer to that is that for thousands of years the acceptance of government force, to rule over the people, at the sacrifice of liberty, was considered moral and the only available option for achieving peace and prosperity. What can be more utopian than that myth—considering the results, especially looking at the state-sponsored killing by nearly every government during the 20th century, estimated to be in the hundreds of millions of people. It's time to reconsider this grant of authority to the state.

No good has ever come from granting monopoly power to the state to use aggression against the people to arbitrarily mold human behavior. Such power, when left unchecked, becomes the seed of an ugly tyranny. This method of governance has been adequately tested, and the results are in: reality dictates we try liberty.

The idealism of nonaggression and rejecting the offensive use of force should be tried. The idealism of government-sanctioned violence has been abused throughout history and is the primary source of poverty and war. The theory of a society being based on individual freedom has been around for a long time. It is time to take a bold step and actually permit it by advancing this cause, rather than taking a step backwards as some would like us to do today.

Today the principle of habeas corpus, established when King John signed the Magna Carta in 1215, is under attack in our own government. There's every reason to believe that with a renewed effort, with the use of the Internet, we

can instead advance the cause of liberty by spreading an uncensored message that will serve to rein in government authority and challenge the obsession with war and welfare.

What I'm talking about is a system of government guided by the moral principles of peace and tolerance. The Founders were convinced that a free society could not exist without a moral people. Just writing rules won't work if the people choose to ignore them. Today the rule of law written in the Constitution has little meaning for most Americans, especially those who work in Washington, D.C.

Benjamin Franklin claimed ''only a virtuous people are capable of freedom.'' John Adams concurred: ''Our Constitution was made for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other.''

A moral people must reject all violence in an effort to mold people's beliefs or habits. A society that boos or ridicules the Golden Rule is not a moral society. All great religions endorse the Golden Rule. The same moral standards that individuals are required to follow should apply to all government officials. They cannot be exempt. The ultimate solution is not in the hands of the government. The solution falls on each and every individual, with guidance from family, friends, and communities.

The number one responsibility for each of us is to change ourselves, with hope that others will follow. This is of greater importance than working on changing the government; that is secondary to promoting a virtuous society. If we can achieve this, then the government will change.

It doesn't mean that political action or holding office has no value. At times it does nudge policy in the right direction. But what is true is that when seeking office is done for personal aggrandizement, money or power, it becomes useless if not harmful. When political action is taken for the right reasons, it's easy to understand why compromise should be avoided. It also becomes clear why progress is best achieved by working with coalitions, which bring people together, without anyone sacrificing his principles.

Political action, to be truly beneficial, must be directed toward changing the hearts and minds of the people, recognizing that it's the virtue and morality of the people that allow liberty to flourish.

The Constitution or more laws per se have no value if the people's attitudes aren't changed.

To achieve liberty and peace, two powerful human emotions have to be overcome. Number one is envy, which leads to hate and class warfare. Number two is intolerance, which leads to bigoted and judgmental policies. These emotions must be replaced with a much better understanding of love, compassion, tolerance, and free market economics. Freedom, when understood, brings people together. When tried, freedom is popular.

The problem we have faced over the years is that economic interventionists are swayed by envy, whereas social interventionists are swayed by intolerance of habits and lifestyles. The misunderstanding that tolerance is an endorsement of certain activities motivates many to legislate moral standards, which should only be set by individuals making their own choices. Both sides use force to deal with these misplaced emotions. Both are authoritarians. Neither endorses voluntarism. Both views ought to be rejected.

I have come to one firm conviction after these many years of trying to figure out the plain truth of things: the best chance for achieving peace and prosperity for the maximum number of people worldwide is to pursue the cause of liberty. If you find this to be a worthwhile message, spread it throughout the land.

I yield back the balance of my time.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Occupants of the gallery are reminded that it is inappropriate to express approval or disapproval of the proceedings of the House.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. RUSH (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today and the balance of the week on account of family medical reasons.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 2 o'clock and 58 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Thursday, November 15, 2012, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

8296. A letter from the Acting Congressional Review Coordinator, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule — Agricultural Bioterrorism Protection Act of 2002; Biennial Review and Republication of the Select Agent and Toxin List; Amendments to the Select Agent and Toxin Regulations [Docket No.: APHIS-2009-0070] (RIN: 0579-AD09) received October 4, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

8297. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Buprofezin; Pesticide Tolerances [EPA-HQ-OPP-2011-0759; FRL-9364-9] received October 15, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

8298. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Trinexapac-ethyl; Pesticide Tolerances [EPA-HQ-OPP-2010-0524; FRL-9363-4] (RIN: 2070-ZA16) received October 2, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

8299. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Alkyl Amines Polyalkoxylates; Exemption from the Requirement of a Tolerance [EPA-HQ-OPP-2011-0949; FRL-9361-7] received October 2, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

8300. A letter from the Chief Counsel, FEMA, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Suspension of Community Eligibility [Docket ID: FEMA-2012-0003] [Internal Agency Docket No.: FEMA-8247] October 4, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

8301. A letter from the Chief Counsel, FEMA, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Suspension of Community Eligibility [Docket ID: FEMA-2012-0003] [Internal Agency Docket No.: FEMA-8249] received October 4, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

8302. A letter from the Chief, Counsel, FEMA, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Changes in Final Flood Elevations Determinations [Docket ID: FEMA-2012-0003] received October 4, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

8303. A letter from the Assistant General Counsel for Regulatory Services, Department of Education, transmitting the Department's ''Major'' final rule — Final Requirements — Race to the Top — Early Learning Challenge; Phase 2 [Docket ID: ED-2012-OESE-0012; CFDA Number 84.412A] (RIN: 1810-AB15) received November 7, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

8304. A letter from the Assistant General Counsel, Regulatory Services, Department of Education, transmitting the Department's ''Major'' final rule — Federal Perkins Loan Program, Federal Family Education Loan Program, and William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan Program [Docket ID: ED-2012-OPE-0010] (RIN: 1840-AD05) received November 7, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

8305. A letter from the Director, Directorate of Cooperative and State Programs, Department of Labor, transmitting the Department's final rule — Hawaii State Plan for Occupational Safety and Health [Docket ID: OSHA 2012-0029] (RIN: 1218-AC78) received October 10, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

8306. A letter from the Program Manager, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's ''Major'' final rule — Medicaid Program; Payments for Services Furnished by Certain Primary Care Physicians and Charges for Vaccine Administration under the Vaccines for Children Program [CMS-2370-F] (RIN: 0938-AQ63) received November 2, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

8307. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Revisions to the Nevada State Implementation Plan, Washoe County Air Quality District [EPA-R09-OAR-2012-0556;

FRL-9736-8] received October 2, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

8308. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Air Quality Implementation Plans; Alabama; Attainment Plan for the Alabama Portion of the Chattanooga 1997 Annual PM2.5 Nonattainment Area [EPA-R04-OAR-2011-0084; FRL-9737-8] received October 2, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

8309. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; Alaska: Infrastructure Requirements for the 1997 8-Hour Ozone National Abmbient Air Quality Standard [EPA-R10-OAR-2011-0883; FRL-9701-5] received October 15, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

8310. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Delaware; Attainment Demonstration for the 1997 8-Hour Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standard for the Philadelphia-Wilmington-Atlantic City Moderate Nonattainment Area [EPA-R03-OAR-2008-0930; FRL-9737-9] received October 2, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

8311. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Illinois; Greif Packaging, LLC Adjusted Standard [EPA-R05-OAR-2012-0541; FRL-9733-6] received October 15, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

8312. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; West Virginia; Prevention of Significant Deterioration [EPA-R03-OAR-2012-0388; FRL-9738-2] received October 15, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

8313. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Pennsylvania; Streamlining Amendments to the Plan Approval Regulations [EPA-R03-OAR-2009-0882; FRL-9738-1] received October 2, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

8314. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; Georgia 110(a)(1) and (2) Infrastructure Requirements for the 1997 and 2006 Fine Particulate Matter National Ambient Air Quality Standards [EPA-R04-OAR-2012; FRL-9739-1] received October 15, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

8315. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; Mississippi; 110(a)(2)(G) Infrastructure Requirement for the 1997 and 2006 Fine Particulate Matter National Ambient Air Quality Standards [EPA-R04-OAR-2012-0238; FRL-9738-6] received October 2, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

8316. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; North Dakota: Prevention of Significant Deterioration; Greenhouse Gas Permitting Authority and Tailoring Rule; PM2.5 NSR Implementation Rule [EPA-R08-OAR-2012-0299, FRL-9742-3] received October 15, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

8317. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Maryland; The 2002 Base Year Emissions Inventory for the Washington DC-MD-VA Nonattainment Area for the 1997 Fine Particulate Matter National Ambient Air Quality Standard [EPA-R03-OAR-2010-0140; FRL-9735-6] received October 2, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

8318. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Determination of Attainment of the 1-Hour Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standards in the Scaramento Metro Nonattainment Area in California [EPA-R09-OAR-2011-0372; FRL-9741-8] received October 15, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

8319. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Limited Approval and Disapproval of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Nevada; Clark County; Stationary Source Permits [EPA-R09-OAR-2012-0566; FRL-9740-3] received October 15, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

8320. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; Mississippi; 110(a)(1) and (2) Infrastructure Requirements for the 1997 and 2006 Fine Particulate Matter National Ambient Air Quality Standards [EPA-R04-OAR-2012-0402; FRL-9738-7] received October 2, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

8321. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Partial Approval and Partial Disapproval of Air Quality State Implementation Plans; Nevada; Infrastructure Requirements for Ozone and Fine Particulate Matter [EPA-R09-OAR-2011-0047; FRL-9739-8] received October 15, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

8322. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Revisions to the California State Implementation Plan, San Joaquin Valley Unified Air Pollution Control District [EPA-R09-OAR-2012-0359; FRL-9732-5] received October 15, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

8323. A letter from the Director, Regualtory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Partial Approval and Partial Disapproval of Air Quality Implementation Plans for Florida, Mississippi, and South Carolina; Section 110(a)(2)(D)(i)(I) Transport requirements for the 2006 24-Hour Fine Particulate Matter National Ambient Air Quality Standards [EPA-R04-OAR-2012-0553; FRL-9738-9] received October 2, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

8324. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; State of Arizona; Prevention of Air Pollution Emergency Episodes [EPA-R09-OAR-2012-0244; FRL-9713-4] received October, 2, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

8325. A letter from the Chief, Satellite Division, International Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — In the Matter of 2006 Biennial Regulatory Review —— Revision of Part 25 [IB Docket No.: 06-154] received October 19, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

8326. A letter from the Chief of Staff, Media Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — In the Matter of Amendment of Section 73.202(b), Table of Allotments, FM Broadcast Stations (Randsburg, California) [MB Docket No.: 12-177 (RM-11665) received October 19, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

8327. A letter from the Chief of Staff, Media Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — In the Matter of Revision of the Commission's Program Access Rules; News Corporation and The DIRECTV Group, Inc., Transferors, and Liberty Media Corporation, Transferee, for Authority to Transfer Control; Applications for Consent to the Assignment and/or Transfer of Control of Licenses, Adelphia Communications Corporation (and subsidiaries, debtors-in-possession), Assignors, to Time Warner Cable Inc. (subsidiaries), Assignees, et al; Implementation of the Cable Television Consumer Protection and Competition Act of 1992; [MB Docket No.: 12-68] [MB Docket No.: 07-18] [MB Docket No.: 05-192] [MB Docket No.: 07-29] received October 19, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

8328. A letter from the General Counsel, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Revision to Form No. 6 [Docket No.: RM11-21-000; Order No. 767] received October 4, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

8329. A letter from the Director, Office of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting the Department's final rule — NRC Regulatory Issue Summary 2012-11 NRC Staff Position on Dispositioning Boiling-Water Reactor Licensee Noncompliance Operations with a Potential for Draining the Reactor Vessel received October 4, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

8330. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Export Administration, Department of Commerce, transmitting the Department's final rule — Addition of Certain Persons to the Entity List [Docket No.: 120816347-2347-01] (RIN: 0694-AF77) received October 4, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

8331. A letter from the Associate Director, Department of the Treasury, transmitting the Department's final rule — Iranian Transactions Regulations received October 19, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

8332. A letter from the Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, Department of

Commerce, transmitting the Department's final rule — Second Fishing Capacity Reduction Program for the Longline Catcher Processor Subsector of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Non-Pollock Groundfish Fishery [Docket No.: 110819517-2456-02] (RIN: 0648-BB06) received October 15, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

8333. A letter from the Chief, Branch of Listing, Department of the Interior, transmitting the Department's final rule — Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Designation of Critical Habitat for the Cumberland Darter, Rush Darter, Yellowcheek Darter, Chucky Madtom, and Laurel Dace [Docket No.: FWS-R4-ES-2011-0074] (RIN: 1018-AX76) received October 11, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

8334. A letter from the Program Manager, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's ''Major'' final rule — Medicare Program; End-Stage Renal Disease Prospective Payment System, Quality Incentive Program, and Bad Debt Reductions for all Medicare Providers [CMS-1352-F] (RIN: 0938-AR13) received November 2, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); jointly to the Committees on Energy and Commerce and Ways and Means.

8335. A letter from the Program Manager, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's ''Major'' final rule — Medicare Program; Revisions to PaymentPolicies Under the Physician Fee Schedule, DME Face-to-Face Encounters, Elimination of the Requirement for Termination of Non-Random Prepayment Complex Medical Review and Other Revisions to Part B for CY 2013 [CMS-1590-FC] (RIN: 0938-AR11) received November 2, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); jointly to the Committees on Energy and Commerce and Ways and Means.

8336. A letter from the Program Manager, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's ''Major'' final rule — Medicare and Medicaid Programs: Hospital Outpatient Prospective Payment and Ambulatory Surgical Center Payment Systems and Quality Reporting Programs; Electronic Reporting Pilot; Inpatient Rehabilitation Facilities Quality Reporting Program; Revision to Quality Improvement Organization Regulations [CMS-1589-FC] (RIN: 0938-AR10) received November 2, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); jointly to the Committees on Energy and Commerce and Ways and Means.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII,

Mr. BURGESS (for himself and Mr. THORNBERRY) introduced a bill (H.R. 6589) to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 321 East California Street in Gainesville, Texas, as the ''Brig. Gen. Robert E. Galer Post Office Building''; which was referred to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

Mr. BURGESS:

H.R. 6589.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

''To establish post offices and post roads'' pursuant to Article I, Section 8, Clause 7 of the United States Constitution.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions as follows:

H.R. 24: Mr. RUNYAN.

H.R. 300: Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia.

H.R. 1244: Mr. ROYCE.

H.R. 1718: Ms. DELAURO.

H.R. 1845: Mr. CONYERS.

H.R. 2028: Mr. RANGEL.

H.R. 2449: Ms. NORTON.

H.R. 2563: Mr. PEARCE.

H.R. 2655: Mr. POLIS.

H.R. 2705: Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas, and Ms. BONAMICI.

H.R. 2969: Mr. LANGEVIN and Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina.

H.R. 3032: Mr. CRAWFORD and Mr. WOMACK.

H.R. 4318: Ms. MCCOLLUM.

H.R. 4972: Mr. CUMMINGS.

H.R. 5647: Mr. CUMMINGS.

H.R. 5741: Mr. SMITH of Washington.

H.R. 5746: Mr. BUCHANAN.

H.R. 5817: Mr. LUJÁN and Mr. CARSON of Indiana.

H.R. 5914: Mr. DONNELLY of Indiana.

H.R. 5934: Mr. WATT.

H.R. 6015: Mr. YARMUTH.

H.R. 6087: Mr. SMITH of Washington and Mrs. MALONEY.

H.R. 6117: Mr. WATT.

H.R. 6174: Mr. PAULSEN.

H.R. 6304: Mrs. MALONEY, Mr. GRIMM, Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, Mr. CROWLEY, and Mr. TONKO.

H.R. 6364: Ms. FOXX.

H.R. 6377: Mr. CARSON of Indiana.

H.R. 6428: Ms. BONAMICI.

H.R. 6480: Mr. DEFAZIO.

H.R. 6490: Mr. SHULER, Mr. WHITFIELD, Mr. POSEY, and Mr. ROSS of Florida.

H.R. 6575: Mr. LUETKEMEYER and Mr. NUNNELEE.

H.R. 6588: Mr. WALZ of Minnesota, Mr. HIGGINS, Mr. CLARKE of Michigan, Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. LOEBSACK, Mr. LANGEVIN, and Mr. GRIJALVA.

H.J. Res. 78: Mr. CLARKE of Michigan.

H. Con. Res. 122: Mr. HARRIS.

H. Res. 793: Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Mr. COBLE, and Mr. CLEAVER.