

speaks directly to the comment of the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) about call centers, which really have become the engine of economic opportunity for many citizens here in the United States. There happen to be occasions for banks, credit card companies, and a number of other businesses in America to use these call centers.

I just want to emphasize that we are a world economy, we are an integrated world. But I also think it is important that we look to recruit not only American businesses, but American workers, to be able to do work that is viable for uplifting our own inner city and rural communities. Mr. Chase has a company that hires hundreds of persons who work in a call center and secure business for a number of our companies in the Nation, and he hopes to recruit companies from around the world.

We have to balance the responsibilities of making sure that Americans are at work, of keeping American jobs, of rebuilding a manufacturing economy along with our international economy and international friendship.

In particular, I want to talk about Houston, Texas, because one of the reasons I am concerned about the journey that this Congress is taking of not being concerned about jobs and not being concerned about infusing moneys into the domestic economy is because Americans are growing, and the communities are diverse, but the work is not growing commensurate with the population. The needs of America are growing, one in particular, and I will cite Houston, Texas because we are a microcosm of the struggle of improving the transportation and mobility of this Nation.

For over 20 years, Houston has been fighting to secure the opportunity to have light rail. It is located in a 3-million-to-4-million-person metroplex, and I cannot cite for my colleagues the traffic jams in Houston, Texas. We are trying to get better.

Unfortunately, we have had great opposition fighting against us in getting light rail right in our own community. But I am very proud of Houston because in November 2003 we voted to put in place light rail, first a 22-mile and then a 39-mile light rail track.

Why am I speaking about it? Because just yesterday, the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, under the gentleman from Alaska (Chairman YOUNG) and the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. OBERSTAR), the ranking member, gave Houston one more step toward completion of its light rail.

What does that do for Houston? What does that do for America? It creates jobs and provides the opportunity for people in this Nation to help build trains, to help build tracks, to help build a system, the technology, and to increase mobility.

I hope that in our effort to secure funding for our light rail and the authorization for our light rail, that we will have Members of our congressional

delegation, House and Senate, who will pay attention to the vote of the people of Houston. They have voted, they have spoken, and we want to have a unified effort in fighting for light rail in Houston, Texas.

Madam Speaker, I look forward to working with the mayor of the city of Houston, Mayor White, and the chairman of the Metro Board, Mr. Wolffe, who I inquired of the board's commitment to continue our light rail effort. I wanted to thank the previous board and thank the previous or existing Executive Director, Shirley Delibro, who will be passing the mantle on to another director.

But in this climate of lack of jobs, it is imperative that we support the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure as it looks to rebuild highways and freeways and roads in America in our urban and rural areas. That is where we can insist on jobs in America, with the buses, the trains, the airplanes that are covered by this transportation bill. We can encourage the utilization of American companies in providing for the improvement of our transportation system, putting America back to work, utilizing the back-drop of World War II and the aftermath of the depression, when the phrase was, a chicken in every pot and that was all that you would get.

Franklin Delano Roosevelt came in with a wise vision, putting people back to work and rebuilding America's infrastructure, and it worked. So many of us know those whose children, their economic opportunity was built upon the WPA, sweeping the streets, paving the streets, looking toward the visionary of new visions and roads.

Madam Speaker, it is imperative that we do that today, and I hope this Congress will support TEA 21 and vote to invest in America and create jobs.

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

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

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

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

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gen-

tleman from Washington (Mr. MCDERMOTT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

#### INVESTING IN AMERICA'S FUTURE: CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS FISCAL YEAR 2005 BUDGET AL- TERNATIVE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 2003, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Madam Speaker, I rise this evening to discuss the Congressional Black Caucus's fiscal year 2005 budget alternative.

Today, the Congressional Black Caucus offered a budget substitute that would invest in America's future while restoring fiscal responsibility in fulfilling our shared sacrifice.

Madam Speaker, when we are in a state of war, finding ourselves, even as we speak, with men and women in our armed forces fighting in Afghanistan and fighting in Iraq, and finding themselves spread out across the globe, the Congressional Black Caucus, which has consistently over and over and over again reiterated that we certainly support our troops and, at the same time, we are very firm on the fact that we must address the issue of terrorism.

But we also say that we must have a budget that is balanced, not only from the standpoint of economics, but also from the standpoint of doing for the people in the United States, people who work hard every day; people who give their blood, sweat, and tears to making this country the best that it can be; people who cannot even watch this on CSPAN because they left a job at 5 o'clock today and went to another job because ends simply are not meeting.

And not only those people, but 9 million people who are not watching this because they do not have cable, and the reason why they do not have cable is because they do not have a job. Nine million of them, at the end of every 2-week period when they normally would have gotten a check, they are not getting a check anymore, because they are simply unemployed.

Madam Speaker, despite the best efforts of over 100 of my colleagues in the House of Representatives, our budget substitute, that is the budget substitute of the Congressional Black Caucus, did not pass.

But one thing is clear, as I have said to the caucus many, many times, when I borrowed the words from former Representative Bill Clay, when he said to the caucus back in September, he said, you may not win every battle, but you will set the trend. You may not get what you want at that moment, but hopefully, we will be able to plant a seed in the minds of not only Members of this Congress, but in the minds of