

Thomas S. Johnson, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, GreenPoint Financial Corporation.

Henry Kaufman, President, Henry Kaufman & Company, Inc.

William I. Ledman, Senior Vice President of Information Systems and Services, Freddie Mac.

John B. McCoy, Retired Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Bank One Corporation.

Shaun F. O'Malley, Chairman Emeritus, Price Waterhouse, LLP.

Ronald F. Poe, President, Ronald F. Poe & Associates.

Stephen A. Ross, Professor, Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

William J. Turner, Manager, Signature Capital, Inc.

#### MESSAGE FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Mrs. MYRICK) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. MYRICK. Mr. Speaker, I bring a message from the American people. They don't like us. They viewed Congress as a body that's comprised of individuals that they elect and expect to reason together in the best interests of America and Americans. They don't see that happening. They insist they have had it with the politics itself and party.

Americans are hurting because of fuel costs which are pushing up all other costs, including food. Winter is approaching, and the pain will grow much worse.

This crisis is seriously threatening our national security. We are sending more money to foreign nations than ever before, many of whom don't like us, to put it mildly. We, in government, refused to get our financial House in order. We are forcing our Nation to depend on foreign oil.

Oh, and in an aside, emptying our Strategic Petroleum Reserve is not a solution. What if we are attacked, disaster? That's why reserves are called strategic. Politicians since, and including Jimmy Carter, have promised energy solutions.

Well, where are they? Under Carter we imported about 24 percent of our oil, and now we import about 70 percent. The American people are tired of hollow promises. They are demanding action now, now, not after the election, now. They demand plans for eliminating our dependence on oil, beginning with foreign oil, plans to use our own resource from offshore drilling to sugar cane conversion, all the while putting advanced batteries, hybrids, plug-in hybrids, wind, solar, hydrogen, nuclear and any other realistic alternative on a critical fast track.

Of course, we must do everything we can to protect our environment if for no other reason than we all must breathe clean air, consume safe food and water, and, of course, protect God's creatures.

The people know it's their government, and they intend to take charge.

Simply put, they are mad. Those before us, as well as many selfless heroes today, have and are now paying grievously. For this great opportunity that we call home, this America, the American people worked very hard to keep our Nation strong and productive. They do their jobs. The very least we can do as U.S. Congress is do our job.

#### OPTIMISM

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

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, today on a lighter note, I would like to talk about optimism and the wherewithal that our country has, especially among our young people. I want to talk about a subject that doesn't really get a lot of attention in this whole debate about energy and oil and the fact that we are now faced with skyrocketing prices at the gas pump.

I want to talk about investing in our future. I want to talk about young people not only from my district but across the country, and I want to talk about what we call green jobs, green-collar jobs. Some people might think that's a misnomer, you know, but we have actually changed. Blue-collar jobs have, as you know, been outsourced to other countries.

What we are attempting to do in the Congress and something that President Bush signed into law just last December was an act that was part of the energy bill, the energy package, that said we are going to make a difference in this country by investing in America's future. We will provide 10 million jobs in green technology if our government steps up to the plate.

Now we are asking for that appropriation for \$125 million to help create, and, I think, minimally, 10 million jobs, that will be reaped across this country that will secure our energy security here at home. It will also send a steep message to many nonbelievers across the country that we mean business, that we are actually going to keep these jobs here, that these jobs won't be outsourced, that they won't be going to China and India and Indonesia and even to Mexico, because we are going to make an investment here.

It's, very simply, trying to set a precedent here to provide opportunities for people to get retrained or to get into new technology, into are renewable energy, into biofuels, and into creating solar panels. Those manufacturing jobs that we knew as blue-collar workers that my father as a teamster and other people in my district represented, could be retooled to help provide and incentivize our economy by keeping those jobs here at home.

No more of this minimum-wage jobs, but providing good, sustainable, liveable-wage jobs for working men and women and people that could rely on this to raise a family, not in the state that we are in right now, where you

have a single head of household, a woman, in many cases, that's working three jobs just to make that rent, just to make that electricity bill, just to get that extra gallon of gas to get to her job. Those are things that we know are resonating right now with our constituents, and they demand a change.

It isn't just enough to say that we are going to lower the energy costs, they have to have a good-paying job to provide for all those commodities, luxuries that they need to keep their family going.

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And one best way of doing it is by jump-starting the economy and by supporting the Green Jobs Act, something that the Senate and also the House passed again that was signed into law in December. We need \$125 million to help jump-start that program.

I want to illustrate something here, a picture of some youngsters who were actually installing on a roof, who had just completed a project in Oakland, California, who were trained in a program, who went through an apprenticeship program that was done in a private and public partnership. It was to help install solar panels and to retrofit them in some of our oldest buildings in very dilapidated parts of our country.

What an incentive that would be to help to jump-start our communities and to revitalize those communities that have been left behind by the manufacturing jobs that went to other countries but also to incentivize those places that have high unemployment like in Oakland, like in East Los Angeles, like in the Bronx, like in Little Havana in Florida. These places need relief, and the government has an obligation to help provide an incentive, working closely, hand in hand, with private industry.

The reason I say that is that I know it works, and it's working right now in an obscure place in my district in East Los Angeles. The LA Unified School District, which doesn't always get honors for many things that they do, has invested in a program out of the East LA Skills Center to help retrain individuals. The majority of those who are participating right now happen to be middle-aged people who are saying, "I need to get retrained into a better paying job, a job that's going to help me in the rest of my life and in my retirement." They're taking that challenge; they're going through training, and they're being offered jobs.

One of the dilemmas that we're facing right now is that we don't have an adequate workforce available to fill all of these potential jobs. I say: Why? Why should we go outside and bring people in when we need to make those investments here in the United States and in Los Angeles?

So, Mr. Speaker, I would just like to say and would like to urge my colleagues to support the Green Jobs Act and to provide that infusion of \$125 million that will act as a stimulus package for our economy.