are not the changes Americans voted for.

Mr. Speaker, when it comes to the idea of a spending freeze, this country needs more than just window dressing. It needs to return to balanced budgets and a real focus on job creation.

WORKING TOGETHER TO HELP THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

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

Mr. ENGEL. Tonight, when our President gives his State of the Union Address, I'm going to listen very intently. I know that he's going to talk about creating jobs, improving the economy, lowering unemployment, and also health care reform. Let's rally behind our President. The people sent us here to work together in a bipartisan fashion. Let's not talk about what is best politically for this party or that party, let's look at what is best for the American people.

I ask my Republican friends, stop being the Party of No. Work with us on health care. We can do it if we all put our heads together. Let me remind my friends that the TARP bailout and the bailout of the banks happened under President Bush. It was President Bush's recommendation, and I and other Democrats supported it because it was the right thing to do.

Let's support the President when he says the right things, as he will tonight. Let's understand that we can only succeed if we work together. We were left a mess by the previous administration. One year to clean it up is not enough. We prevented a depression. Now we have to move on. So I ask the other side of the aisle, please work with us. Please work with us to help the American people.

VISA FAILURE

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

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, we know that the best way to prevent an attack on U.S. soil is to ensure that terrorists are stopped before they reach our shores. Unfortunately, we failed to do so on Christmas Day and al Qaeda came close to significant victory. While the terrorist Abdulmutallab was noted in a terrorist identity database, he was not placed on a separate screening database and his U.S. visa was not revoked. Clearly, we did not connect the dots to notice that a man on a U.S. watch list also held a current U.S. visa. This has not been the first time terrorists have obtained U.S. visas. Several of the 9/11 hijackers did so as well.

We need to strengthen the visa application process. We need to streamline the intelligence gathering and sharing process. We need to end the visa lottery. We need to ensure that terrorists are turned around before they get to the airport before they even attempt to go through security. Were it not for the quick action of passengers on that flight, 288 innocent lives would have been lost. Passengers should not have to rely on last-minute heroics in order to travel safely. This administration must get serious about addressing this problem.

□ 1030

OUR ELECTIONS ARE NOT FOR SALE

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

Ms. EDWARDS of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, Justice Brandeis got it right: democracy or wealth concentrated in the hands of a few, but not both. And that's truer today as the United States Supreme Court just wiped away decades of legal precedent, allowing corporations to spend unlimited money from their treasuries in our elections.

The American people already believe that corporate special interests and their lobbyists run the show around here. I mean, the halls are crawling with them. But that's not enough. Now the Court says to the big banks, the credit card companies, the drug companies and to the insurance companies, Hey, all bets are off, and it's open season. Our elections are for sale. So that's right. If the corporations don't like what this Congresswoman is doing, they'll just forget the voters, buy TV ads, send robocalls, send a lot of mail, and beat her in November.

A law won't fix this. We have to fix it in the Constitution. So today I will introduce a constitutional amendment so that we, the people, can take back our elections and our democracy. This is not the People's House, Incorporated. We are the people. It's our House, it's our Constitution, and it's our elections. And we intend to take it back from the United States Supreme Court.

CREATING JOBS WHILE CLEANING UP THE ENVIRONMENT

(Mr. TIM MURPHY of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. TIM MURPHY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, since the $862 billion stimulus bill was signed into law last February, nearly 3 million more Americans have lost jobs. The projected deficit for this year is $1.3 trillion, second only to last year's $1.4 trillion. It's time to stop Washington's wild spending and start creating hometown jobs. Families want paychecks, not unemployment checks. That's why we introduced a bipartisan American Conservation and Clean Energy Independence Act, H.R. 2227, which opens up the U.S. coasts for environmentally responsible oil and gas exploration.

This bill produces 1.2 million new, good-paying jobs and an $8 trillion economic boost over 20 years. We will clean up America's waterways. We will clean our air by replacing old coal plants with new clean coal, nuclear, wind, solar, and geothermal energy generation. We will conserve energy by rebuilding our old infrastructure and a smart grid. Americans will modernize buildings to cut energy waste by 25 percent. We stop spending hundreds of billions of dollars on OPEC oil. We stop borrowing from China, and we do all of this without raising a single tax.

Join me in supporting H.R. 2227 with new jobs for a new energy-independent America.

THE PROPOSED 3-YEAR SPENDING FREEZE

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

Mr. BRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased that the President, according to the press reports that we are getting over the last couple of days, will be proposing a 3-year freeze on nonsecurity-related discretionary spending. This is a good and necessary first step to control government spending and reduce budget deficits.

However, our ballooning deficits mandate that we go even further. Wasteful and unnecessary programs need to be ID'd. They need to be reduced. They need to be eliminated, and they need to be eliminated immediately. I have and will consistently oppose legislation that I believe unnecessarily increases Federal spending or funding programs that do not warrant support during a recession, even when they are only a few million dollars.

You know, we must have the mindset that every little bit counts if we're going to be serious about cutting government wasteful spending. I hope the President goes further in explaining some of his proposals in the State of the Union tonight, and I will be listening very closely with many others.

Yesterday, the Blue Dogs, my colleagues, released a set of proposals that outline the steps that we must take to have meaningful budget reform. The President and leadership would be well-served to adopt and support these proposals in the coming weeks and months.

AMERICAN TAXPAYERS DO NOT WANT TO FUND ABORTION

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

Mrs. SCHMIDT. Mr. Speaker, last Friday, almost 500,000 folks gathered at the Capitol to remind us once again that all life is precious and that the unborn are guaranteed the right to life. While abortion has been allowed in this country for the past 37 years, Americans have made it crystal clear that they do not want their tax dollars being used to pay for it.