

And I think in terms of not just investment in infrastructure but also investment in research, medical research which probably is the real answer to our long-term health care financing costs. If we can control or cure diabetes and cancer and make an impact on heart disease, these are the things that are really going to help us in the future. But to set up these kind of rules which basically, again, disenfranchise not just 434 Members of Congress but, in the process, virtually every American citizen from the process of deciding what money should be spent and invested in some very, very important aspects of the general welfare.

And I would like to yield to the gentleman from Maryland, DONNA EDWARDS.

Ms. EDWARDS. I thank the gentleman for yielding. And it occurred to me as we heard this discussion—and thank you to Mr. COURTNEY for raising these issues with us, Mr. Speaker. Because it occurred to me that while we should be spending our time focused on job creation—and we know that a core for job creation for the 21st century for this country is in our investment in our transportation infrastructure, really putting people back to work. And instead, we are relitigating what the American people thought we had finished with—health care.

So here we are with a rule that then says to us, Even as the bipartisan debt commission has said that we need to invest in the Nation's infrastructure—those are investments that create jobs, jobs where taxpayers are paying into the system so that we have revenue, so that we can invest in our infrastructure—that we are going to be constrained from doing it. And I am reminded that in the last Congress, in the 111th Congress, every Member, I believe, of our Transportation and Infrastructure Committee wrote to the President of the United States saying, We need to do a long-term transportation and infrastructure bill so that our States can begin to really put people back to work. And here we are in the 112th Congress, led by the Republicans who have put forth a rules package that will constrain our ability to create jobs in this country.

Mr. YARMUTH. I thank you for that contribution. And we've also been joined by the gentleman from Tennessee, Congressman COHEN, and I would like to yield to him.

Mr. COHEN. Thank you, Mr. YARMUTH.

Indeed, the issues that Mr. COURTNEY brought forward in his 1 minute today were alarming to me because my hometown of Memphis depends upon transportation. That's what makes it America's distribution center, the roads, the rivers, the runways, and the rails. And if we don't have moneys to go into helping our airports—where Federal Express is located in my district, and in your district, Mr. YARMUTH, UPS—because that's how we move products all over the world. From those hubs, we

move commerce. And that is why it's so important that we have an FAA Reauthorization Act passed, a lot of which would be expenses to modernize the structure and the transportation bills that Mr. Oberstar, who was one of the great Members of this House but is no longer a Member, tried to get passed last year to both stimulate the economy in the short run and in the long run, as Mr. COURTNEY said, with that multiplier effect by creating jobs. It's roads that take goods to market, that move commerce, that move raw materials. And I was hoping and do hope that we will have bipartisan efforts to have transportation, FAA reauthorization bills pass that will move this economy forward.

The economy is still in a difficult spot, and we can't really see that the economy is improving if we continue to cut spending, particularly in places such as transportation, infrastructure, and the airport infrastructures. That's so important. So it was distressing news to see this happen.

It is difficult to see how we can get ourselves out of this near depression that was caused by the Bush administration with cutting spending. I know Paul Krugman has people who don't think he is correct all the time. I happen to think he is correct most of the time. And the Nobel Prize people aren't always correct. But when they gave him the Nobel Prize for economics, some of the brighter people in the world thought he was pretty good on economics. And it's his belief that we need to do more spending, and I concur with him. I would hate to see us lead this economy—it's about to get out of the ditch—put it back in the ditch.

Mr. YARMUTH. I thank you for that.

As we wind down, pursuing the analogy with families and also with small businesses, I mean, people legitimately borrow money, and businesses legitimately borrow money for two reasons. One is for survival, to eat, to pay salaries if you are a small business. And they borrow money for investments. We have plenty of investments that we can make in this country that are desperately needed. Infrastructure being one, education being another, medical research being a third category.

And we basically have been told by the Republicans that there is no basis, no justification for spending any more money. And because we're in a deficit situation, borrowing more money—except when it comes to giving tax breaks for very, very wealthy Americans, millionaires, billionaires hedge fund managers, and the like, that's okay. We can do that, and we can balloon the national debt to do that, but we can't do it to help people, to provide people's health care, to invest in needed infrastructure, to invest in the things that will make this American economy the kind of economy that we will all be proud of, that will work for everyone, that will truly live up to the ambitions of the Founding Fathers when they wrote the Constitution that

we read today, to create a more perfect union. That's what we are all about. And we'll continue, as Democrats and now as Members of the loyal opposition in this body, anyway, to fight for the kind of balanced and intelligent investment and restraint of spending that will get us to the world that we all envision.

So I thank my colleagues for joining me today.

#### ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded not to traffic the well while another Member is under recognition.

#### ISSUES FACING THE 112TH CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 5, 2011, the gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. PEARCE) is recognized for 30 minutes.

Mr. PEARCE. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to address the House on this historic day, this historic day when we have had the entire body read the Constitution of the United States. As that process went on, there was some wonderment in the audience about why we were doing it and what it would mean. But as I listened to the different bipartisan Members reading the Constitution, I felt a gravity come through the institution that we began to listen to and hear and read the words of our Founding Fathers as they set us on this great experiment called the American Republic, the Republic which was turned loose for the first time, a government of the people, by the people, and for the people.

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And on this historic day, we have to contemplate what our tasks are as they lie ahead. For myself, I see the most important thing in front of us as being economic growth, jobs; and we have to wonder what we're going to do about that.

As I traveled around the district, after the election, we did—we have 18 counties, and we did 18 different town hall meetings, listening to the people of the district after the election. And the overriding concern is what are we going to do about jobs and what are we going to do about the economic future of the country.

I think people are alarmed at the policies that they have seen come out of Washington. They're alarmed at the spending. They're angry that Washington has not been listening, and they're just upset with the policies in general.

The last election sent two very clear messages: number one, you, in Washington are not listening to us; number two is that we don't like what you've been doing.

So, as we contemplate the future, we have to try to get our hands around the