

works out to be about \$3.4 million a minute. To put that in better perspective, it's \$58,000 a second. We can't even say it fast enough. This is a problem.

How do we get out of this problem? We have to map out a course. It's a budget. The Republicans passed a budget. The House passed a budget outlining a way for us to be able to cut back over \$6 trillion over the next decade. I would argue that American families and households all across the land operate on a budget. Businesses do the same. Yet we happen to not be able to do that here in Washington.

The United States Senate has not picked up or passed a budget in over 750 days. The American family wouldn't operate like that. I know as a small business owner I couldn't keep my doors open if I didn't have a budget to outline where our priorities were going to be. It is a blueprint. It's not a final standing bill or thing that's going to say exactly how we're going to spend it, but it is a blueprint going forward so that we can get those in the Senate and elsewhere to be able to come together so that we can map out how we are going to get out of this mess. Because I do agree with the President when he says that the choices that we're making today, the bad choices of today are going to be placed on the backs of our children and grandchildren. For me, that's unacceptable.

I decided to run for Congress largely because the amount of money that we were spending in Washington was going to be unconscionable for me to pass along to my children. I have a 9-year-old, a 7-year-old, and a 4-year-old. By the time they're my age, we are going to have to pay exactly double in taxes just to service the government. We pay 42 cents of every single dollar we have just to service our debt.

The administration now is asking us to raise the debt ceiling. This is an important issue. But I'm here to tell you that we need to have some leadership. Leadership is critical at this point in time.

What is the plan? I don't want to talk about bickering. I want to make sure that colleagues on both sides of the aisle come to the table. We know that there are negotiations going on right now, but I still would like to have a plan articulated to the American public. What is the plan? Because simply raising the debt ceiling without a plan on how we're going to pay down this debt is like—well, it's like sitting around the kitchen table and not worrying about the credit card debt of an irresponsible teenager. You wouldn't do that at home. We wouldn't do that in business. You should expect that your government does the same.

Now, when we look at this debt crisis that we have, as a small business owner, I look at it somewhat like a business. I look at it that we have just purchased a business, and we think it's the greatest business in the world with the United States of America. That business has some debt, and we're obli-

gated to pay that debt. We just have to figure out how it is that we are going to restructure that business so that we can pay down that debt and make it a strong, viable business going forward. That's what we have to do. To simply raise the debt ceiling and not have to restructure would be a violation of everything that we hold dear.

With that, I call on leadership, leadership here in Washington from those on both sides of the aisle, to come together to solve the problems of our time and put our country first.

HONORING THE LIFE AND MEMORY OF BERNADETTE MCARN

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

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, this past Saturday in my home town of Wilson, North Carolina, the Wilson Community College held its annual commencement exercise. From all accounts, it was a wonderful occasion. But for one family in the community, the McArn family, there was great sadness on this occasion because their loved one was due to graduate; but sadly, she passed away on January 14, 2011, at the young age of 45. And so I take this opportunity today to honor the life and memory of that individual, Ms. Bernadette McArn.

The youngest of four children, Bernadette was born on July 12, 1965, to Isiah and Wynomia Crocker McArn. She was a graduate of Ralph L. Fike High School and, but for her passing, would have earned an associate's degree from the college. It is fitting to note that last spring Bernadette distinguished herself and pleased her family when she made the Dean's List.

This has been a very difficult time for the McArn family. They were very proud of Bernadette, and her memory will live within their hearts forever.

I ask my colleagues to join me in offering our deepest condolences to the McArn family, friends, and loved ones.

FOOD INSECURITY

Mr. Speaker, I want to use my remaining time to talk about the issue of hunger.

In this same community where Bernadette McArn lived her entire life, many are suffering from what I call food insecurity. At 11 p.m. last night, a line began to form at the Wilson OIC to receive food commodities today. Hundreds of citizens in this small community—black, white, and brown—stood all night long to be positioned to receive the basic commodity of food.

Earlier this year, a study by the Food Research and Action Center showed that the First District of North Carolina ranks as the second worst for food insecurity in the country. Last Thanksgiving, about 2,000 people waited overnight—again—for a 25-pound bag of groceries at this same community-based program. For those of us living in eastern North Carolina, this

comes as no surprise and underscores the need for a strong nutrition safety net.

Unfortunately, this is not an isolated incident in our country. As a State, North Carolina ranks sixth worst in the country for food security, with a food hardship rate of 23.5 percent, and the numbers are even worse in my district in eastern North Carolina.

The Food Bank of Central & Eastern North Carolina is called on to serve more than 500,000 people annually in 34 counties in central and eastern North Carolina, and about 73,000 different people receive emergency food assistance in any given week. Of those people, the food bank reports that 40 percent choose between paying for food and paying for utilities or heat; 33 percent choose between paying for food and paying their rent or mortgage; 37 percent choose between paying for food and paying for medicine or medical care; and 38 percent choose between paying for food and paying for transportation.

Mr. Speaker, as we continue our work, we must keep in mind that as many as 50 million Americans are struggling with food security. The Federal Government certainly needs to find ways to cut costs and reduce spending, but that burden should not fall heaviest on the people with the greatest needs.

As I close, let me just encourage our citizens to stay strong in their faith and know that Democrats will fight for you.

And I would like to thank Mr. Howard Jones of the Wilson OIC, his staff, and all of the volunteers for their extraordinary contribution to the Wilson community.

DEBT CEILING

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

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. Speaker, creating jobs and growing the economy is the number one goal of the 112th Congress, everything we can do to create jobs and help this country move forward and get our economy back on track, but long-term economic growth and job creation is only possible if we control the uncontrolled debt and deficit situation that is driving this country into bankruptcy.

Last week, I had the opportunity to visit with a number of voters in my district who were very concerned about the direction of our country, and I read the following quote to them: "Leadership means that the buck stops here. Instead, Washington is shifting the burden of bad choices today onto the backs of our children and grandchildren. America has a debt problem and a failure of leadership. Americans deserve better."

I didn't tell them who had said that. I just asked them if they agreed with that statement. Everybody clapped and cheered. I mentioned that this was said