And what kind of an America would lay off the public sector employees—which, by the way, were the doors and opportunities that were opened to minority Americans. Large numbers of minorities are public sector employees. You are literally killing our community with the high number of unemployed. We are at double digits in the African American community.

I frankly believe that, as an American, I should look out for all interests, and that's why I believe we should stop the tomfoolery and come together as Americans. And yes, I will have to make sacrifices. We have laid out our parameters—mine are Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security—but what can we do together? And what can we do where the pain is distributed? And what can we do with the respect given to everyone—Speaker, Majority Leader, minority leader, whip, leadership in the other body? How can we come as those entities, respect the bodies that they represent, and we who are Members of Congress represent our constituents in that respectful manner, and most of all, respect the Office of the Presidency and, as well, to respect this President, President Barack Obama.

I hope someone will say that what it appears to be is not in fact accurate, but historically it seems to be nothing more. And I simply close in accounting for that attitude is the very visible debate, and in my memory, of the Affordable Care Act. And I have never seen the level of depicting of a President of the United States by Americans as I have seen during that debate; never seen it. I did not adhere to the burning in effigy of any President during the Iraq war—at that point it was President Bush. The shoe throwing, I spoke vigorously against that. You do not disrespect our President. You agree or you disagree, but not in the way that I have seen.

I simply close this afternoon by saying that it gives me a great sense of affection—I'd say pride, for lack of a better word—in what this country stands for.

□ 1350

I believe that America can solve any problem that she puts her mind to. The tumultuous sixties is part of my history, a segregated America is part of my history, and during that time one felt, could we ever come through this? The bloodshed, the hanging, the brutality. But isn't it wonderful that a man by the name of Martin King rose along with others, too many to name, and carried the mantle of peace, the drum major for peace, and he came through all of the contentiousness and all of the conflict and raised his voice and said, ''America can do better.''

And a President who I am most proud of by the name of Lyndon Baines Johnson used his political astuteness and crossed very difficult lines, the Dixiecrats and others in the United States Congress who couldn't imagine supporting any manner of civil rights legislation. Isn't that a miracle? What we thought we could not do. And that President, who I owe such a great debt of gratitude, that master of the political process, Lyndon Baines Johnson, the creator of the Great Society of which many of us now benefit from, Pell Grants and Medicare and housing, that person we call the President at that time orchestrated groups that possibly would never speak to each other and voted to change and move America forward.

And so I ask the question: What makes President Obama different? I cannot imagine coming this far in my life and that of my children's life and that of others to come to a point where we would use the uniqueness and the difference of this President to treat him differently. If that is not getting in our way, then there is no reason that we cannot come together and solve this problem. As some would say, this is not rocket science. It is voting for the right approach, and that approach is revenue and cuts.

I will go home to my district and engage with anyone who desires to engage in these discussions—we see each other as we walk about and go about our duties—and give them the sense of optimism that I have. As I do that, I will be in a meeting discussing why the North Forest Independent School District, one of the last remaining districts with a 70 percent plus African American population, has been closed by Governor Perry and the Texas Education Agency. Why? Seven thousand students and parents now looking as to what is their next step. Why is it closed? Is it because you underfunded them and didn't provide them with the resources? Is it because we have no interest in getting our hands into the mix and trying to help bring up the scores with teachers and salaries that can meet the needs of students who are in a property poor area?

I'll go home and deal with that. In the course of dealing with that, I'll talk to those parents about hope, about the greatness of this Nation, and about the fact that we're going to do our job. And, as well, I'll talk to them about the sense of pride and respect we have for the President that this Nation elected has come out of the history that I am very well aware of. We would hope that the same respect that was given to the first Irish Catholic President, the same respect and interest that has been given from any President that brings to bear a unique and valuable perspective, would be given to President of the United States, the American President, our President. He is no different from any other President that has served. I beg this House and I beg this Congress to treat him with the dignity that the office deserves. Get on with our work, get on with solving the problems for the American people, a vastly diverse and richly multicultural Nation. I am grateful for that.

God bless this Congress. God bless this President. God bless the United States of America. We can do this job.

I yield back the balance of my time.

THE NATIONAL DEBT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 5, 2011, the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. SCHWEIKERT) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

One of the reasons I'm here today is, have you ever had one of those moments where you've been watching some television, you've been hearing some of your friends here on the floor, and the level of frustration starts to boil over, and you decide, look, I even need to get up behind that microphone and do a series of explanations of why I'm bouncing off the walls frustrated, and think about what we've heard just today.

We had one Member come down here, meaning well and trying to find some way to tell his story, but treating the U.S. sovereign debt issue as a game. I heard the President today in a press conference once again throw out items like: Well, those corporate jets. Well, we need to tax the rich more.

And here's the problem: The math just doesn't work. So I thought, okay, I have these boards in the office that I use for a lot of other speeches. It's time to bring them here to the floor and walk through. And, I'm sorry, I know I'm running two easels. I'm going to do this fairly quickly because I know I have some other friends of our conference that want to speak. But, first, let's do the big picture.

This is our world today. This is a dollar bill. Today, every dollar this Federal Government spends, 42 pennies of it are borrowed. Get that through your head. Every time we send out a check, every time we pay a vendor, that dollar that we pay that vendor, 42 pennies of it had to be borrowed. Once you understand that, a lot of the other rhetoric you hear around here is just bizarre, if not bordering on silly.

Let's actually bounce onto this next board. This one here is just to sort of help understand how fast our numbers are eroding and why we need to do it now. This is not the day we come to the floor next week and vote for something, so let's just raise the debt ceiling and we'll all have an honest discussion next month about the scale of the debt. We'll have an honest discussion some other day about what we're going to cut. You've got to understand, every—what is it?—7.2 seconds, someone now turns 65, and the money that this body, I think, had the moral responsibility to set aside for those baby boomers is gone. The most beautiful example I can give you of that is how many of you, when you think about it, have always heard from the politicians, oh, don't worry, Social Security's just

fine. But didn't we just hear the President say, well, if we don't raise the debt ceiling, there might be a problem?

Well, okay, which is it? Is Social Security just fine, or is it actually living on borrowed money? You can't have it both ways. Finally, I think the American people are waking up and understanding the scale of this debt and the crisis it brings us. So let's have a little interest here.

Here we are in 2010. Here's where we are in four budget years from now, 2016. This blue line is mandatory spending. It continues to grow and grow and grow. I'm told in about 13½ years, this blue line consumes every dime of Federal spending. We are consumed by the mandatory spending. The entitlements consume everything we are as a people. But here's one of the rubs. If I look at even last year and this year, we don't take in enough revenue today to cover just the mandatory spending. So when you think about what we call discretionary, military, EPA, all the other alphabet agencies, all those exist on borrowed money. This is our world today.

I've been struggling and struggling trying to find a way to say how do you help people understand the scale of these numbers? And then we came up with this idea, we'll make a clock. Everyone knows how to read their clock, I hope. Of course, the problem is, as one of my staffers pointed out, all the kids today are wearing digital watches, but we're going to try it this way. How many of you repeatedly, whether it be today or the press conference a couple of weeks ago have heard the President over and over and over and over say things like, those corporate jet owners need to step up and start participating more.

Okay, fine. Let's say we all agree with that.

□ 1400

How much does that actually buy us? Think about this. We borrow $4.7 billion every single day. This whole discussion over here where people—and we heard it just an hour ago from a Member and the leadership on the minority—saying, Oh, corporate jets. You've got to be willing to give up those.

Okay. Let's say we do. What does it really buy us? Well, you'll be happy to know that we did the calculation to make it easy. It will buy you 15 seconds of borrowing a day. Work through this with me. There's what, 1,440 minutes a day, you know, out of those 24 hours. And we're having discussions about things that are 15 seconds. This is absurd. So let's actually go on to some of the other really brilliant suggestions that seem to be coming out here.

How many of you remember about 6 weeks ago the majority in the U.S. Senate, how literally hearing after hearing about those subsidies to Big Oil, and acted like if we get rid of these, they'll actually do something. We even heard it again an hour ago over here from the left, saying if we get rid of those subsidies, that's our first step in the balancing of this budget.

So let's do the math. But let's actually do it my way. We wipe out the depletion allowance and all of these other subsidies for not just Big Oil but for all oil. It equals $2.44 billion a year. And just for a reference standpoint over there, I thought it would be fair for everyone to understand, that $2.44 billion that we call subsidies to Big Oil, there's $8.72 billion that goes to green energy. So understand the scale here.

But right now we're only going to fixate on fossil fuels. What does that really buy us?

I did it both ways for those people who like charts and for those people who like a clock. It buys you 2.2 minutes.

So you see our little hand here? This whole discussion—and they act like it really does something.

So we had the corporate jets at 15 seconds, now this whole discussion about Big Oil and taking away those subsidies. It buys you 2.2 minutes of borrowing a day. Think of that.

This is what holds up around here as honest debate? These are the honest proposals that this government is throwing out and letting the American people think we're actually talking about, saying, Well, if we raise the debt ceiling we're going to go after these things, and we'll get rid of those corporate jet subsidies, and we'll get that Big Oil, and, yes, we'll have almost gotten 3 minutes of borrowing covered today. It's absurd.

So let's actually bounce on to one of the other bits of discussion that bounces around here.

We actually just heard it a little while ago, those tax cuts—do you remember those Bush tax cut extensions?—which actually now are the Obama-Bush tax cut extensions because the President signed them back in December under the lame duck session. We all remember that. And we hear the discussion we need to take those tax cuts away from those millionaires and billionaires. That will balance this budget.

Does anyone out there actually pull out their calculator and do math? So I thought, Why don't we make a clock out of it. We'll make a slide out of it so we understand reality.

If you remove the tax cut extensions for everyone—not just the millionaires and billionaires, let's just do everyone because math was easier to do that way—it buys you a whopping 28 minutes of borrowing a day. Think of that. I've watched people walk up to this well of this House, stare into this audience, this august body, and act like it would solve the problem.

How can this place be operating under math fantasy? Twenty-eight minutes. And that's playing the assumption that it doesn't slow down the economy, doesn't raise up unemployment, and every dime actually comes in. But if we're willing to engage in that fantasy—because why not, the argument is fantasy—it takes care of 28 minutes of borrowing.

So let's see. So far we've covered 15 seconds with the corporate jets and 2.2 minutes with going after all fossil fuels, and now we found another 28 minutes of borrowing can be covered if we wiped out what we call the Bush tax extensions that are really important to economic growth, but we'll just give it and just also pretend every dime comes in.

Are you starting to realize we're barely at a half an hour of borrowing a day, and these are the types of proposals we're getting from the left on what we should do? You start to realize, where is this basis in reality?

So let's actually go for a big one. Let's actually hop on—because, you know, I'm not a big fan of war. So I thought, hey, why don't we calculate the big kahuna. What would happen if we took in all that money from those corporate jet subsidies and all of that money from getting rid of anything that incentivizes fossil fuel exploration, and we also get rid of those Bush tax cut extensions and we're willing to slow down the economy and assume that every dime comes in, and we just didn't have any of the wars—we didn't have Libya, we didn't have Afghanistan, and we didn't have Iraq. They just all magically went away tomorrow. Because we've had repeatedly Members from the left stand up behind these microphones and tell us this would take care of the problem. We just wouldn't have that $1.6 trillion we're going to run in debt this year if we just didn't have these sorts of things.

Once again, it's time to put some batteries in the calculator. If we pretend every dime of that all went straight to paying down the debt, it's 3 hours.

And we've actually put these slides up on our Web site so people can actually download them and look at them.

But I want to turn to my brothers and sisters on the left here and say, Okay, if I assume everything you're saying equals 3 hours, do you have any honest solutions for the other 21 hours a day instead of some of this silly rhetoric that I hear our President walking up to microphones and throwing things out and acting like, this is my solution to the American people?

The American people need to understand the scale of this debt. It is going to destroy us as a people. For once you are seeing your Congress, at least on our side, stand up, be tough enough and say, We're going to use this opportunity to save our kids and our grandkids and we're going to save this Republic. Please, learn the numbers. Understand how devastating this is. It's time for the fantasy to come to an end and to start dealing with real math.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 5, 2011, the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING) is recognized for the remainder of the hour.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to be recognized here on the floor of the House of Representatives and be able to address you about the matters of the day and about the important issues that are before us here in this Congress and in this Nation.

And I am continually impressed by the quality of the young people that are attracted to this city, both as visitors, vacationers, but also from people that will get their college degree or degrees and many of them with a 4.0 grade point average, active in all kinds of extra curriculars. The stellar cream of the American crop are magnetized to come to this city. I am impressed with them—their intelligence, their patriotism, their dedication on both sides of the aisle, Mr. Speaker.

But I want to add something that is a perspective that I think those of us that have been around this planet a little bit longer have to offer, and that is, first, that some of us have lived a lot of history that others had to learn by reading the history book. And we know how the history books have been truncated. And there's not time to learn all the things that happened in history.

Some of us learned a lot of history from the front page, from the radio, from the television, from the news, or from being in the middle of that history. And that all is part of the collective memory of this House of Representatives and the Senate on the other side. Some will say they probably remember more history in the Senate than we do here in the House.

□ 1410

Mr. Speaker, my point is this: You can have very smart people with very good principles, and the experiences of their life are supportive of them understanding the underpinnings of the greatness of this country, understanding the pillars of American exceptionalism, but sometimes the definitions and as it's presented is taken at face value because they might not have had years to see things go wrong when good ideas come before this Congress.

And I look back and think of the time in 1995—actually, in 1994, when Republicans took over the majority in the House of Representatives here after 40 years of wandering in the wilderness of being in the minority and not being able to advance legislation. There were many here on the Republican side of the aisle that were complacent with that, Mr. Speaker, but accepted the idea that the majority would maybe never change in their lifetimes, and they operated in the zone that had been delivered to them and they didn't go and charge the ramparts or the windmill, so to speak, because the ramparts, to them, were windmills.

Yet there were others that were visionaries, that saw the vision, that realized that America was going in the wrong direction, and they built a coalition here in the House of Representatives that I watched on C–SPAN night after night after night, step down here on this floor at the very spot, Mr. Speaker, and make arguments to the American people, make arguments to me that moved me, moved me in my head and moved me in my heart and helped me understand that it wasn't me alone that was seeing that America was going in the wrong direction, that we were overspending and we had this massive welfare system and that we were expanding the dependency class in America. This spirited people that we are, this unique people that we are here in America were being diminished, were being diminished by the growth of the nanny state and the growth of the dependency class in America.

So in 1994, the inspiration came from many people that were hearing the inspiring words that were spoken into this very microphone, Mr. Speaker, but also across the country. On talk radio, across the backyard fence, over a cup of coffee, at work, at church, at school, at play, at recreation, in fishing boats and golf carts across America, we had a national conversation about where America needed to go. And the result of that consensus of the national conversation was a massive change in the seats here in the House of Representatives and a new majority in the House of Representatives that came sweeping in in November of 1994.

And there were big changes. The freshmen class that came in and was sworn in here on this floor in January of 1995 were revolutionaries, and they brought a difference and they forced a balanced budget here in the House that was not expected to ever be reached. They cut spending until they forced a balanced budget. And they reduced welfare and put more people in a position where they could earn their dignity and a paycheck at the same time.

Now, as this unfolded, they brought forth, as they said they would in the Contract with America, that they would vote on a constitutional amendment to produce a balanced budget. That was a 1994 promise that was fulfilled in 1995. A vote on a balanced budget amendment here in the House of Representatives that passed the House of Representatives, was messaged right directly down the hallway to the United States Senate, Mr. Speaker, where the Senate took up the vote for the constitutional amendment to balance the budget, and it failed in the Senate in 1995 by a single vote.

How different, how different might it have been, Mr. Speaker, if one more Senate seat had gone the other way, if one more United States Senate race had resulted in a victory for someone who believed in a balanced budget amendment, believed in the Constitution, itself, fiscal responsibility—those American exceptionalism principles that I have briefly mentioned—but believed in requiring a balanced budget constitutionally. How different it might have been if the Senate had voted with a two-thirds majority, as the House did in 1995, and sent a constitutional amendment to require a balanced budget to the States, the 50 States for ratification.

Now, we know, Mr. Speaker, it takes three-quarters of the States to ratify an amendment to the Constitution before it becomes incorporated into our Constitution. We'll never know how many States would have ratified that amendment because they didn't get the chance to do so. Had that been messaged to the States in 1995, we can only ask the question: Would the States have ratified a balanced budget amendment? I think so. I believe three-quarters of the States, at a minimum, would have done so; and if they did not, I think it would have changed the politics within enough of the States so that they would have.

Imagine if this Congress here and now, today, this week, this month would pass a balanced budget amendment to the United States Constitution out of this House with a better than two-thirds majority—equal or better than—to the Senate where they need 67 votes in the Senate, if that constitutional amendment to require a balanced budget gets messaged to the States. Some will say look at the makeup of the State legislatures. Let's put it this way, Mr. Speaker: There aren't enough Republican majorities to pass and ratify a constitutional amendment to require a balanced budget. Maybe not, and not by an analytical judgment of this moment, Mr. Speaker.

But think of what happens in a State like my neighboring State of Illinois, for example, where Democrats control the politics and they insist on deficit spending and running themselves into the red. It seems as though the right of passage in Illinois is, if you are elected Governor, you go off to prison. But if we have a balanced budget amendment sitting on the docket of the Illinois State Legislature today, I don't think there's much of any chance that they would ratify an amendment to the U.S. Constitution to do such a thing.

But I do think, Mr. Speaker, that there will be hundreds of people all across Illinois that will decide that they want to step up and run for public office so that they can have the chance to vote to ratify a balanced budget to the United States Constitution in the State legislature. They would go out and campaign, and they would knock on doors, and they would talk to their friends and neighbors and say, I don't care if you're a Democrat. I don't care if you have some other interest. The best interest you can have is the long-term best interests of the United States of America. And it's becoming increasingly clear that the long-term best interests of the United States of America are to require that the budget