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House of Representatives

The House met at 9 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. NEUGEBAUER).

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
July 29, 2011.

I hereby appoint the Honorable RANDY NEUGEBAUER to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer:

Thank You, Lord, for giving us another day. At the end of a hard week and after a long night, we ask again Your blessing on the Members of this people's House.

There is very hard work to do as the weekend nears. Give each Member strength and wisdom that they might fulfill the awesome responsibility they have to work a solution to our Nation's challenges.

We earnestly pray as well for the families of these men and women during a distressful time. Give them peace and calm as their loved ones labor here. May they know and experience the presence of Your Spirit and know with confidence that the entire Nation is grateful for their generosity. It is their love and support that strengthens the Members of the House.

Bless all families, O God, that their love for each other will be a witness to Your love for each one of us.

May all that is done this day be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. CICILLINE) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. CICILLINE led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will entertain up to five requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

CUT, CAP, AND BALANCE IS THE BEST FOR THE NATION

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, when the President is correct, we should thank him, such as keeping open the Guantanamo Bay detention facility despite his promise to close it. And in the recent past, as Senator in 2006, the President was correct:

''The fact that we are here today to debate raising America's debt limit is a sign of leadership failure. It is a sign that the U.S. Government can't pay its own bills. It is a sign that we now depend on ongoing financial assistance from foreign countries to finance our government's reckless fiscal policies.''

House Republicans, with the positive leadership of Speaker JOHN BOEHNER, last week passed the best solution to the debt ceiling: the Cut, Cap, and Balance Act of 2011. The liberals' cowardly response in the Senate was to table it and hide their Members from an open vote. It is not too late for liberals to vote and join conservatives for a solution which creates jobs and stops the President, who is stuck on his failed policies of tax increases, destroying jobs.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

ON THE BRINK OF DEFAULT, TAKE THE ARGUMENT TO THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

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

Mr. KUCINICH. Here is how we can take a couple steps back from the brink of a default.

First, raise the debt ceiling until December 31, 2012, without its being contingent on cuts to Social Security, Medicare or Medicaid, or increases in taxes, or cuts in taxes, or cuts in spending. The attempt to resolve all of these issues at once as the moment of reckoning arrives was never a good idea. It guarantees that the people we were sent here to represent will lose either in the details of a rushed grand bargain or through the consequences of default.

Take the debate to the American people in the next election. Ask the American people if they want cuts in Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, increases in taxes, what kind of cuts in spending, what kind of jobs, programs.

For those who say, ''well, that's what we were sent here to do,'' claim your victory. You've come here and you've changed the terms of the debate. You lose the debate if America defaults.

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You win if you bring this debate into every district in America in the 2012 election.

When you go home, people will thank you for being able to focus America's attention on these fiscal issues, but you may be surprised to learn that the American people did not want us to burn down the house in an argument over the height of the ceiling.

DEBT CONTRIBUTION ACT

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

Mr. STIVERS. It has been said, ''A journey of a thousand miles begins with a small step.''

Today, with a looming national debt of over $14.2 trillion, we need to take dramatic steps to decrease spending, but we can make a difference by taking small steps as well. Throughout our Nation's economic crisis, I've heard from constituents who have said they want to do more to pay off the national debt.

I voluntarily give back $700 from every paycheck to help pay down the national debt, and I wanted to make it easier for like-minded citizens to do the same. That's why I've sponsored the Debt Contribution Act, which creates a checkoff box on the tax return for individuals who want to donate money to pay down the national debt. It ensures 100 percent of those proceeds are used to pay down the national debt, and it makes sure that it's still a tax deductible contribution, which it has been since 1964.

So with a national debt of over $14.2 trillion, we won't be running a surplus anytime soon, but we can allow patriotic Americans who want to volunteer and give money to pay down the national debt to do that, and I hope my colleagues will help me support and pass the Debt Contribution Act.

RECOGNIZING KIDS FIRST, WINNER OF JOHN H. CHAFEE CONSERVATION LEADERSHIP AWARD

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

Mr. CICILLINE. I rise to recognize Kids First of Pawtucket, Rhode Island, an exemplary community organization for environmental and conservation outreach.

Kids First is the recipient of the John H. Chafee Conservation Leadership Award for its Rhode Island Farm Produce to School Lunch Program, which brings healthy and sustainable nutrition and wellness programs to every school district in Rhode Island. Their strong partnerships with nutritionists, dietitians, chefs, and school administrators have brought important nutrition education programs into schools, and have benefited local produce growers since 1999.

Kids First is a win-win for farmers and students, providing local farmers with a reliable market and schoolchildren with 200,000 pounds of fresh, locally grown fruits and vegetables for healthy meals.

I commend and congratulate Kids First for promoting community sustainability through environmental conservation and for growing Rhode Island's local economy.

OUR NATIONAL DEFENSE IS IN PERIL

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

Mr. MCKEON. As Congress continues to debate proposals to raise the debt limit and rein in Federal spending, I wish to remind my colleagues of the perils of Senator REID's proposal, specifically as it relates to national defense. The Reid plan would cut defense, including funds to maintain the reliability of our nuclear weapons and triad of strategic delivery vehicles that represent our deterrent for both ourselves and our allies.

Because the Obama administration has reduced our strategic forces to the lowest level in decades, the health of our deterrent must be a top national security priority. Prior to the ratification of the New START Treaty, the President committed to fund a host of nuclear modernization efforts that were supported on a bipartisan and bicameral basis. The House also passed language in the fiscal year 2012 Defense authorization bill to ensure the President makes good on these commitments.

We cannot allow a proposal like Senator REID's to jeopardize the reliability and security of our strategic deterrent. We must continue to maintain our investment in our security, stability, and peace.

□ 0910

WAKE UP

(Ms. HANABUSA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. HANABUSA. Mr. Speaker, we must not forget we're here to represent the people of this great Nation. In a recent poll, 2–1 people said that the reason why we are in this crisis is because of the policies of President Bush. So let's look at those policies because that's the best way to understand why we're in this crisis.

You cannot wage two wars and give tax cuts at the same time. Let's not also forget that President Clinton, by many reports, left a $5 trillion surplus and President Bush left a $5 trillion deficit—$10 trillion.

I ask you, if you believe that these tax cuts are so necessary for the economic growth of this Nation, then what happened for these 10 years? Why aren't we facing a booming economy versus just avoiding another Great Depression?

Mr. Speaker, it seems like you're dreaming while the rest of us are living one of the worst nightmares we can possibly imagine.

Mr. Speaker, wake up. Please, wake up.

PREVENT A DEFAULT

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

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, the Speaker of this Chamber has a choice to make with 3½ days remaining until we risk default on our debt. And what does that mean to American families? It means higher interest rates on your variable home mortgage. It means higher interest rates on your credit card debt. For our own Federal Government, as well as local and State governments, it means more of our taxpayer money will have to go to interest to service these existing debts.

At this point, the Speaker of this body has a choice. To be sure, he has a negotiation ahead of him. He has compromise ahead of him. He can choose to negotiate and compromise with only those in his own party further to the right than he is within this very body, or to compromise and come to a deal with those who matter and can actually pass something into law that prevents a default.

Namely, I call upon the Speaker to continue negotiations with the President of the United States and the Senate of the United States to resolve this self-caused crisis within 3½ days and avert a fate that will cost middle class families and taxpayers trillions of dollars.

TIME TO COMPROMISE

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

Ms. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, nearly 8 months ago we stood on the floor of this House led by the Republican majority, swore the oath of office to uphold the Constitution of the United States, and even read the Constitution here on the floor of the House.

We read in the 14th amendment, Section 4: ''The validity of the public debt of the United States, authorized by law, including debts incurred for payment of pensions and bounties for services in suppressing insurrection or rebellion, shall not be questioned.''

We read that, and here we are on the brink of default because the Republican majority has failed to compromise. The Republican majority said we won't do what we've done for every other President, which is give him a clean debt ceiling vote on this floor so that he can pay the debts and obligations of the United States.

So seniors are waiting on Wednesday next week to know whether they're going to get their Social Security benefits. Military servicemembers are

waiting for their checks. Retirees are waiting for their checks. And we stand here on the brink of default.

I would ask the President of the United States to exercise whatever authority is necessary to pay our seniors their Social Security benefits and to meet the obligations of the United States.

It's time for us to do our job. It's time for this majority to compromise. It's time for us to lead.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 9 o'clock and 15 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mrs. CAPITO) at 2 p.m.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION OF S. 627, BUDGET CONTROL ACT OF 2011

Mr. SESSIONS, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 112–187) on the resolution (H. Res. 383) providing for further consideration of the bill (S. 627) to establish the Commission on Freedom of Information Act Processing Delays, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

WAIVING REQUIREMENT OF CLAUSE 6(a) OF RULE XIII WITH RESPECT TO CONSIDERATION OF CERTAIN RESOLUTIONS

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 382 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 382

Resolved, That the requirement of clause 6(a) of rule XIII for a two-thirds vote to consider a report from the Committee on Rules on the same day it is presented to the House is waived with respect to any resolution reported through the legislative day of August 2, 2011.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. POLIS), my friend, pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

Mr. SESSIONS. House Resolution 382 waives the requirement of clause 6(a) of rule XIII requiring a two-thirds vote to consider a rule on the same day it is reported by the Rules Committee. This would allow for the same-day consideration of any resolution reported through the legislative day of August 2, 2011. This rule will ensure that Congress has the necessary tools to pass a bill that ensures we cut spending without defaulting on our national debt.

Madam Speaker, today you will hear my friends the Democrats argue about a closed process, but you will not hear them discuss the unprecedented spending spree that my friends the Democrats on the other side of the aisle went through for the last two Congresses. We will discuss how Republicans continue to come up with thoughtful solutions—and I add, balanced, thoughtful solutions—to our Nation's economic troubles, what we think will, and what has up to now, only failed in the Senate. We will talk about the magnitude of this vote and the importance of reaching an agreement before Tuesday. Madam Speaker, it is time to stop pontificating and start acting like Members of Congress. The Nation calls for a solution, and Republicans are the only ones to offer solutions in legislation, in debate on the floor, and with actual votes.

My friends on the other side of the aisle will go on and on today about how Republicans are closing the process and shutting out Members of Congress, when we're really here providing for the flexibility for the Speaker of the House to simply work with the Senate to ensure a solution to the looming debt crisis deadline is met so that we will not default on our obligations. If my Democrat colleagues were serious about finding solutions to this problem, they would vote in favor of this rule today.

The facts of the case are clear: The chairman of the Rules Committee, the gentleman from California, DAVID DREIER, has issued more open rules in the last month than Congress has seen over the last two Congresses—or for a total of 4 years combined. Additionally, in the 111th Congress, under the leadership of NANCY PELOSI and the chairman of the Rules Committee at the time, LOUISE SLAUGHTER, 26 same-day rules were reported out of the Rules Committee. And in the previous Congress, the 110th Congress, under the same leadership, 17 same-day rules were reported out by the Rules Committee. In comparison, the process regarding these rules in this Congress is a far cry from the previous Democrat leadership's unorthodox and unprecedented closed processes.

I rise today in support of this rule. This rule is essential to allow the House of Representatives the flexibility it needs to ensure the safety and soundness of our country's economic future. Over the past 4 years we've seen record debt and deficits, which have brought us to the crossroad that we face with the looming August 2 deadline for raising the debt ceiling. Americans continue to speak out loudly and clear. And just as they did last November, they are saying it is time to stop the out-of-control spending, wasteful Washington spending, and excessive government. Republicans have cut spending at every opportunity in this Congress, and we are hoping to do that again today.

Discretionary and mandatory spending at Federal levels are on unsustainable paths. In the last 2 years of Democrat control, Congress has approved and the President has signed into law an 84 percent increase in nondefense discretionary spending, and the President's budget proposes to freeze discretionary spending at these inflated levels. America can no longer support or afford this kind of leadership.

The President's proposed FY 2012 budget also doubles, then triples the Federal deficit over the next 10 years. And while increasing taxes on the Nation's job creators by $1.6 trillion sounds like a good deal to the President, in fact, free enterprise system employers and American workers know otherwise. Additionally, the President's budget makes no substantial effort to address the unsustainable rate of entitlement spending, one of the major aims of the President's own fiscal commission, which he has ignored. Obviously, the President has no intention of cutting spending or reining in Big Government programs. Big Government, more taxes, more regulations are directly in the President's strike zone. And that is the process he intends to challenge Congress to come right along with him on and keep marching toward the cliff.

Madam Speaker, we're at the end of the road. Once again today, Republicans are saying, We are going to have to make tough choices. That's why we came to Congress. And the majority party will continue to do that today. Over the past 7 months, Republican leadership has been steadfast in their support for cutting spending and getting control of our record deficit and debt. The House passed H.R. 1, a continuing resolution that brought back spending levels to 2008 levels, cutting $100 billion in 1 year. In April, this House passed a budget that would cut $6.2 trillion in government spending over the next decade compared to the President's budget. Just last week, this body passed Cut, Cap, and Balance, which would limit discretionary spending, cap spending to a lower percentage of GDP, and lead to a Balanced Budget Act, so Congress could no longer write checks that they can't cash without passing the debt on by asking foreign governments and others to make up the difference for us.

Republicans are willing to pay the balance if the President is willing to cut up the credit card. And that is why we are here also today. Republicans have again and again in the House offered commonsense solutions to rein in spending and cut down our debt. My friends on the other side of the aisle continue to reject every single proposal. So, one might ask, What is their solution? What have they have offered this Nation to spur economic growth and to put Americans back to work, we would ask. So, let me tell you. By raising taxes. By raising taxes on individuals, on small businesses, and corporations alike. This is no wonder why we see stagnant job growth, GDP that lags behind, and high employment rates—and that means we cannot meet the needs of this country.

□ 1410

Even when the increase in taxes hurts our economic recovery, slows job growth and places more uncertainty in the marketplace, our friends the Democrats continue to argue for more spending and more taxation.

President Obama has asked Congress for an increase in the debt ceiling, and my Republican colleagues and I refuse to grant that request without a commitment to long-term spending cuts. We reject President Obama's insistence for a blank check to pay the credit card bills that he has run up over the past 2½ years. President Obama's unwillingness to address the true drivers of our debt assured me and my party that we cannot achieve a true solution to the debt crisis we are facing today unless we're able to make tough decisions.

The Budget Control Act we discussed yesterday and what we will discuss today is a step in the right direction. It accomplishes what Republicans and the American people have been asking for since the beginning of this process. It will reduce spending more than we increase the debt limit, it imposes no new taxes on anyone, and it guarantees to Americans that the House and the Senate will vote in the next 6 months on the only permanent solution to our debt crisis.

Yes, Madam Speaker, the Republicans are here on the floor again working on behalf not only of employers and employees but the middle class of this country, those of us who are concerned about where we are headed. There is nothing in this resolution that should cause anyone to worry about losing Social Security or Medicare. That is not even intended in this process. What is is to solve the spending and the debt crisis that we have in this country.

I encourage a ''yes'' vote on this rule.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. POLIS. Madam Speaker, before I begin, I have a point of personal privilege. I thank the gentleman from Texas for the time.

We on the Rules Committee and as Members of Congress rely on the hard work of our staff people, particularly on Rules Committee, working into the wee hours of the night, last night being an example, until 11:30. After 3 years of tremendous service, my Rules associate, Rosalyn Kumar, has accepted another position in the Senate, and I just want to express my appreciation for her hard work.

She hails from the city of Dallas, Texas, and her hometown Representative is my colleague on the Rules Committee, Mr. SESSIONS.

I'd like to yield for a moment to my colleague from Texas.

Mr. SESSIONS. I thank the gentleman for yielding to me.

Rosalyn, congratulations. I am going to miss you. It is a good day for you; it's a bad day for us. It is with regular occurrence that I look over at you. You have a bright, smiling face. You have the enthusiasm not only of a bright, young professional staffer on the Rules Committee, but I think you will be a true asset to Senator STABENOW, as you take the experiences from a body that does a lot of work to a body that needs to do more work, and I wish you the very best.

If I could, I would also like to tell the gentleman that Jenny Gorski, who is behind me, a professional staff member of the Rules Committee, will also be leaving, I have found out, after this process. She will be going to Congressman DOC HASTINGS' office to be his adult supervision. So we're taking two Rules Committee professional staff members who will aid and help other Members in their betterment.

I again thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. POLIS. I thank the gentleman from Texas, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I want to be perfectly clear about what we're talking about here today. From the moment Speaker BOEHNER walked away from the negotiating table last Friday to the opening bell of the stock markets this morning, shareholders in U.S. stocks, American retirees, investors, our middle class have lost $405 billion based on Third Way's analysis of data from the Standard and Poor's 500 Index, and Americans stand to lose more if we fail to resolve this crisis.

Third Way has put together a comparison between the interest rate paid on sovereign debt between AAA and AA nations. This is why credit is important. People understand that. Depending on your credit rating, you pay a different rate on your home mortgage. You might have different financing opportunities on your credit card. If America misses a debt payment, the rating agencies have let us know that it likely will result in a downgrade from AAA status to AA status.

I would also point out that this current bill before us would likely lead to that as well because it only contains a short-term, a 6-month renewal of our debt ceiling. Having watched the dysfunction of Congress over the last few weeks, the global investment community, those who loan us money, will say the last thing we need to do is put ourselves through this again in 6 months to ensure stability.

Countries that have AAA ratings have an average 10-year bond rate of 2.98 percent. Countries that have AA have an average bond rating of 3.75 percent. So, three-quarters of a percent difference. What does that mean? It means three-quarters of a percent on your variable rate home mortgage; it means three-quarters of a percent on your automobile; and, yes, it means more government expenditures, bigger government expenditures, just to cover the debt that we already have. In fact, that difference, that 0.75 percent difference over the next 10 years, will cost taxpayers, in additional interest payments, over $1 trillion.

So here we are with a bill that cuts spending, cuts $915 billion of spending, but, because it will likely lead to a downgrade, will cost over a trillion. The bill before us today will increase the deficit by over $100 billion. At a time of record deficits when we all know we need to enforce fiscal discipline, the last thing we need is an irresponsible bill to increase the deficit by $100 billion, which is what we have before us today.

Now, if we had this bill before us 2 weeks ago or 3 weeks ago, I would still oppose it—increasing the deficit is the last thing we need to do now—but it would have been an interesting discussion. It would have been maneuvering and politics and all this stuff that this body does too much of in posturing, in my opinion. But here we are 3½ days from the debt ceiling expiring, and the gentleman from Texas and the chairman of our Rules Committee and many others have said, We want to. We know we need to do this. We know we need to do this.

If we know we need to do this, why are we doing this 3½ days before the expiration of the debt ceiling? Why are we potentially passing a bill that will increase the Federal deficit? that will almost certainly lead to a downgrade? that the Senate has said they will kill? that the President has said he will veto?

I understand that the plan was to pass this bill last night. I understand that the majority party was short of a few votes. That would have been yet another window of opportunity for this Speaker, who has had many, to negotiate a real solution, to be the statesman, to work with the President and the Senate to come up with a bipartisan package to increase the debt ceiling, cut spending, decrease the deficit.

The President has talked about decreasing the deficit by $4 trillion. Instead, we have a force of bill that's likely to increase the deficit by $100 billion—the last thing we need from Congress at this juncture in time. Three-and-a-half days is how long we have to get this right.

I ask you, Madam Speaker, is this the step we need to take towards that

outcome, passing yet another ideological bill that will cost taxpayers $100 billion and cost middle class families another percentage point on all the debt that they have?

Madam Speaker, there is a route out of this, and the route out of this does not involve the majority party trying to pull back the four or five or six people that they need over there. The path out of this is the Speaker engaging us, engaging all Members of this Chamber, engaging the President of the United States, who has to sign this at the end of the day, engaging the Senate majority leader and the Senate minority leader, to go back to that table that Speaker BOEHNER walked out on last Friday, to negotiate a real solution to the deficit crisis and the spending crisis that has gripped this country, that could very well lead to a downgrade and increased deficit spending unless we get our arms around it.

□ 1420

Look, I think many on my side of the aisle are open to a compromise. President Obama, himself, has called for a compromise, and I know my office and the offices of many other Members of Congress have received hundreds of calls from constituents who echo that desire to reach a solution on this. I fear that the step before us today is yet another example of the dysfunction of this institution under this leadership, but it's not too late.

I call upon the Speaker to move away from this direction and get back to the negotiating table to establish a real solution: to reduce the deficit, retain our Nation's good credit and faith in our system and show that this institution—the institution of the House of Representatives and the institution of Congress—can work and do what's right for our country.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, I would like to yield 5 minutes to a brand new member of the Rules Committee, one of our 87 new Republican freshmen, the gentleman from Lawrenceville, Georgia, Congressman WOODALL.

Mr. WOODALL. I very much thank my friend from Texas for yielding.

It's true. I'm one of the new guys there on the Rules Committee, one of the new guys here in this Congress; and because I haven't been watching this process go on quite this closely before, I'm prepared to answer the questions today of ''Why are we here?'' and ''Why are we here doing this?''

Now, for folks who don't watch the process, who haven't watched it like I have, this rule that we're working on today is to say that you can bring up a bill in the Rules Committee and then bring that bill to the floor on the very same day. That's unusual because regular order in this body says, if you bring something up, let's let it sit overnight so that everybody has a chance to look at it, and we'll bring it up the next day. I'm a big proponent of regular order. I believe we get the best work product out of this body when we work through regular order, and we've done that time and time and time again in this Congress, and we'll do it time and time again in the future.

But today we're faced with a predicament where August 2 is looming on the horizon.

Now, it's Friday. For folks who don't know, we're not going home tonight after work. Don't worry, Madam Speaker. As you know, this House is going to be in full swing tonight, tomorrow morning, tomorrow night, on Sunday, on Monday to get America through this challenge; but my White House, my President, tells me that August 2 is the day by which we must pass a bill, and here we are at the last hour to make that happen.

Now, why are we at the last hour? That was a question my friend from Colorado asked, and I have the answer: because we didn't actually start this process today. We didn't start it last night in the Rules Committee. We started this process back in February with H.R. 1, a bill to fund the government all the way through October 1 of this year.

It was an open rule. For the first time in the history of this House of Representatives, it was an open rule on a continuing resolution. It took us 5 days, going day and night—24 hours a day at the end—to get that bill discussed fully, because we all had input on that process; we all had things that we wanted to add. This House passed that bill. It went across to our friends in the Senate, and they did nothing.

We had another shot at this in April when we worked through the budget process. That budget process, as you know, Madam Speaker, is supposed to take us through 10 years—10 years. We asked every Member of this House of Representatives to bring their ideas to the floor. The Rules Committee, in its wisdom, made every single budget that any Member of this House offered available as a bill on the floor to consider, and we debated them all. There were some that raised taxes by $10 trillion. There were others that cut spending by $10 trillion and all in between. We debated them all, and the House decided on one: the House budget in April of this year. We sent it to the Senate, and they did nothing. In fairness, they did defeat that bill we sent to them. They defeated ours. We only got 40 votes on ours, which was better than when they worked on the President's budget over there—he got zero votes on his. So they're good at defeating things, but they didn't pass anything at all.

That's the partnership we have to have. I say to my friend from Colorado that I'm so proud of our partnership in the Rules Committee and, really, of our partnership beyond the Rules Committee, too, on some of the issues that we work on here. If we could develop the kind of partnership with our friends in the Senate that we've been able to develop between ourselves here on the House side, it would be a completely different situation here in Washington, D.C.

But even as part of that raucous freshman class that folks read about in the newspaper, I don't have the ability to control what goes on in the United States Senate. All I have the ability to do is to come down here and participate in our process, which in February produced H.R. 1, which could have averted this crisis today; in April produced the House budget, which could have averted this crisis today; and last week produced Cut, Cap, and Balance—which was sent to the Senate and they did nothing—which could have averted this crisis yet again.

In light of all of those failures of action in the Senate, we are forced to come here today. We don't have overnight to lay a bill over. We don't have 72 hours to lay a bill over. We only have 72 hours until my President tells me D-day arrives for our financial markets. So we're here supporting this rule for same-day consideration so that we can do whatever it takes to get the job done.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. SESSIONS. I yield the gentleman 2 additional minutes.

Mr. WOODALL. I very much thank the gentleman from Texas.

We're going to do whatever it takes to get the job done, but there is a teaching moment in this process, Madam Speaker. Maybe it's obvious to some of the senior Members. Again, I'm one of the new guys—only 7 months on the job here in Congress—but what I've noticed this week is this:

Last night, we tried to bring up a bill. Now, it was a bill that our Speaker and the majority leader of the Senate negotiated over last weekend. We thought bringing that bill to the floor would be that compromise, and I promise you it was a compromise because it was not what I wanted to bring to the floor of this House. We thought that compromise would be the solution to get America out of this situation.

Mr. POLIS. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. WOODALL. I would be happy to yield to the gentleman from Colorado.

Mr. POLIS. The majority leader in the Senate has never at any time expressed support for this bill and actually opposes this bill.

I would ask the gentleman to clarify that.

Mr. WOODALL. I thank my friend.

There is a lot of conversation in this town, but I maintain that this was the topic of discussion and agreement between the Speaker and the majority leader last week. Absolutely, the majority leader has walked away from that agreement since then, and I don't dispute that; but here's the thing:

We had this agreement on the floor of the House last night, and we couldn't find one Democrat vote in favor of it. Fair enough. Folks ought to vote their

consciences; they ought to do what they need to do. We couldn't find one Democrat vote in favor of it, and we've come back with a new bill today that moves us to the right. Now, as someone who comes from one of the most conservative districts in the country, I think that's fantastic. More moving to the right. Let's keep on moving. There's a lot more space over there. Let's move some more over to the right.

But I say to my friends on the left as we try to get through a crisis, a national crisis, that we only needed a few votes from you last night, and then this would have been a bipartisan bill. Instead, we're back down here today.

Mr. POLIS. I would like to yield 2 minutes to a member of the Budget Committee, the gentleman from New York (Mr. TONKO).

Mr. TONKO. I thank my colleague from Colorado for yielding.

Here we go again, my friends. Here we go again wasting another day of debate on a proposal that is more of a press release than a plan. News broke this morning that, from the moment Speaker BOEHNER walked away from the table last Friday to the opening bell this morning, shareholders in United States stocks lost over $400 billion.

My colleagues have been unwilling, not unable, to reach compromise in this Chamber. They have been unwilling, not unable, to tell extremists that while they write their press releases and shake their fists, the rest of us must get down to governing. They have been unwilling, not unable, to let us vote on a balanced plan; and that choice, for it was a choice, cost the American economy almost as much in 5 business days as my Republican colleagues are trying to cut from the budget in 5 years. They're using a manufactured crisis to make the problem worse.

So here we are again. My Republican colleagues have wasted another 24 hours making a bad plan worse, a plan that is based on the same tired policies that got us into this mess: cut taxes for millionaires; give kickbacks to special interests; pay for it all with cuts to the middle class, including Medicare and Social Security.

□ 1430

If they try to tell you that these cuts are not in this bill, ask them to sign a pledge that this legislation will not be used to cut benefits for seniors in the next 12 months. They won't.

After my Republican colleagues pulled their bill from the floor last night, they went back to the negotiating table. But with whom? The Senate? No. The President? Surely not. No, they went back behind closed doors to negotiate with themselves to run further to the right at the behest of the most ideologically entrenched members of their caucus. This may be good politics, but it's not good government.

I'm tired of it, my constituents are tired of it, anyone who's watched the nightly news for the last 6 months is tired of it.

Washington loves to kick the can down the road. That's how we got here in the first place. This is our moment. We need a plan, not another Republican manifesto, and there are better plans out there.

So, again, I ask my Republican colleagues, let us vote on a plan that has a chance.

Mr. SESSIONS. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. POLIS. Again, my colleague from Georgia mentioned that there are no Democrats behind this initiative. Again, Democrats were not consulted or talked to to ask for their support or input into this initiative. And you won't find much support for a proposal that would increase the deficit by $100 billion over 10 years.

The Democrats and our Democratic plan are seeking to decrease the deficit by trillions of dollars over that same period rather than increase it by $100 billion as the Republican plan does.

Madam Speaker, I would like to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts, my colleague on the Rules Committee, Mr. MCGOVERN.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to this closed martial law rule.

Today is a sad, sad day. In just a few days, the process in this House has completely devolved. It's shameful. We've gone from open rules to closed rules to same-day martial law rule all because a few extreme Members of the House refuse to do the right thing.

The rule today paves the way for a bill today that is even a worse bill than the one the Republicans were forced to pull from the floor yesterday. That's not coming together, Madam Speaker. It's pushing us further and further apart.

These last few days have not been about trying to find a united solution. These last few days and last few weeks have been about trying to unite the House Republicans. It has been wasted opportunities.

For weeks and weeks and weeks my Republican friends have walked away from a balanced, fair, and bipartisan approach allowing the United States to pay its bills. They've walked away from a balanced, fair, and bipartisan approach to addressing the Nation's long-term fiscal challenges. Democrats have been willing over and over and over again to move forward on such an approach.

To be honest, I'm not thrilled with some of the things that President Obama has put on the table. But I'm willing to consider them in order to get past this crisis. Unfortunately, the Republican leadership of this House is unwilling to meet us halfway. They're not even willing to meet us a tenth of the way.

All we're asking for, and I think all the American people are asking for, is a balanced approach. All we're asking for is for everyone to chip in to solve this problem.

I'll say to my friends on the other side of the aisle, if you're going to ask seniors to pay more for their Medicare, if you're going to cut vital investments in education, transportation, medical research, and other programs, then the least you can do is ask the various wealthiest Americans to pay their fair share.

How in the world can my friends on the other side of the aisle justify slashing Medicare while they refuse to ask Big Oil and gas companies or corporate jet owners or hedge fund managers to give up their unnecessary and unjustified taxpayer subsidies. But that's their position, Madam Speaker, not asking billionaires to pay a little bit more but asking middle class families to pay a lot more. It's reckless, it's wrong, it's unfair. And I for one will not go along with it.

My friend from Texas (Mr. SESSIONS) says we have to make tough choices. I agree, we have to make tough choices. But why do you always have to be tough on working families or on poor people or on senior citizens? They didn't create this economic crisis.

We're in this mess because of unpaid-for tax cuts, mostly for wealthy people; we're in this mess because of two wars that are not paid for that are on our credit card; we're in this mess because of a prescription drug bill that wasn't paid for.

I would say to my colleagues, enough of the press releases, enough of the theatrics, enough of the political stunts.

I urge you to reject this martial law rule and get back to the negotiating table and avert an economic crisis.

Mr. SESSIONS. I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. POLIS. Madam Speaker, I would like to yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO).

Ms. DELAURO. We are now 4 days away from an historic, unprecedented, and needless default that could grind this economy to a halt. And yet, even as they show their disarray to the entire world, this House Republican majority is continuing to hold our Nation hostage to press their radical agenda. Worse, there's only 4 days to go. They're moving in the wrong direction.

The Speaker should have taken yesterday's rebuke by his own party as a clear indication that he needs to go back to the drawing board and pass a debt ceiling increase that both parties can sign on to.

Instead, he and the Republican majority have doubled down on ideology and dangerous brinksmanship requiring that a balanced budget constitutional amendment—a total nonstarter—that would threaten Medicare and Social Security be sent to the States before a second debt ceiling increase is approved. This ensures another Republican-created crisis in only a few short months.

This bill slashes $917 billion from critical public investments: education, infrastructure, research, law enforcement, food safety. And even though the

spending on these programs is less than what it was under the Reagan and the first Bush administration, in fact members of the majority even balked at $17 billion in Pell Grant funding in the bill because to some of them helping Americans go to college is ''the welfare of the 21st century.''

We know the deficits have grown because revenues are lower than they've been in the last 60 years thanks to the Bush tax cuts for the wealthy and the two wars that have been put on the Nation's credit card.

With 14 million unemployed, we should be focused on creating jobs, putting Americans back to work. It's time for the majority to quit playing political games, start acting responsibly with the stewardship of our economy.

I urge my colleagues to oppose this bill. Start to work on what the American people need most right now—that's jobs.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, I am delighted that the gentlewoman comes down and talks about this game that's going on about jobs.

I am going to read from an article that I will insert into the RECORD regarding information on tax hikes and what that does to American jobs:

''This past January, Illinois Governor Pat Quinn signed into law a 67 percent increase in the State personal income tax rate and a 45 percent increase in the State corporate tax rate. Between its passage then and June, Illinois lost 56,223 jobs.

''To combat the job loss caused by the higher taxes on businesses, the Illinois Department of Commerce 'has already shelled out some $230 million in corporate subsidies to keep more than two dozen companies from fleeing the State.' ''

Well, this is exactly what President Obama is suggesting for America, the same thing that they do in his home State in Illinois, raise taxes substantially on all of those rich people and corporations. Madam Speaker, a 56,000 job loss. They're now having to spend an incredible amount of money to convince people, really to pay them off, just to stay.

This is the game that the Democratic Party plays. This is exactly what the gentlewoman was talking about about the serious elements of jobs and the consequences of killing jobs in this country.

Madam Speaker, I will tell you the Republican Party will not fall victim to raising taxes like the Democratic Party and like President Obama want us to do.

We will not raise the debt limit without making tough choices. And, Madam Speaker, we're going to add jobs and do the things that are right that the American people expect us to do. And that's why we're here today.

THE REAL-WORLD IMPACT OF TAX HIKES ON AMERICAN JOBS

(By Rep. Pete Sessions & Rep. John Shimkus)

[From the Daily Caller, July 28, 2011]

Over the last few weeks, President Barack Obama has adamantly supported raising taxes on corporations and small businesses that employ millions of American workers as a precondition for cutting our bloated federal spending.

To see the real-world effect of this proposal on jobs and the economy, President Obama's home state provides a useful and cautionary example.

This past January, Illinois Governor Pat Quinn signed into law a 67 percent increase in the state personal income tax rate and a 45 percent increase in the state corporate tax rate. Between its passage and June, Illinois lost 56,223 jobs, according to statistics released last week.

To combat the job loss caused by the higher taxes on businesses, the Illinois Department of Commerce ''has already shelled out some $230 million in corporate subsidies to keep more than two dozen companies from fleeing the state.''

So not only is Illinois bleeding productive jobs, but it's now allowing the government to pick winners and losers.

Extracting an ever-increasing toll from job creators is simply the wrong answer for American jobs. Just ask the 56,000 Illinoisans who have lost their jobs since January. Spreading this failure nationwide is simply not an option.

We are in a debt crisis not because we tax too little, but because Democrat-led Washington spends beyond its means. House Republicans have been focused on encouraging and providing certainty (not new burdens) to our nation's job creators—and trying to get our debt and deficit-spending under control.

The rest of America simply cannot afford more of the failed policies of the president's home state, and House Republicans will fight against tax hikes so that we may ensure a brighter future for generations to come.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. POLIS. Madam Speaker, I have an article entitled, ''Debt Ceiling Impasse Rattles Short-Term Credit Markets,'' again from The New York Times, discussing how this uncertainty that is not being caused by external factors but is being caused by us, by politicians, by people here in this body, is rattling those who lend our country money. And that's why this plan before us today will increase the deficit by over $100 billion over 10 years. In addition to those spending cuts, it will cost taxpayers more in interest payments if it jeopardizes our credit rating.

[From the New York Times, July 28, 2011]

DEBT CEILING IMPASSE RATTLES SHORT-TERM CREDIT MARKETS

(By Nelson D. Schwartz and Azam Ahmed)

The reverberations of Washington's impasse over a debt deal are already being felt in the short-term credit markets, a key artery of the economy that daily supplies trillions of dollars of credit.

Over the last week, big banks and companies have withdrawn $37.5 billion from money market funds that invest in Treasury debt and other ultra-safe securities, the biggest weekly drop this year. Meanwhile, in the vast market for repurchase agreements, in which many financial firms make short-term loans to one another, borrowers are beginning to demand higher yields.

These moves underscore how companies and big financial institutions are beginning to rethink their traditional view that notes issued by the United States Treasury are indistinguishable from cash, even though many experts say they think it is unlikely that the government would miss payments on its obligations.

The $37.5 billion drop, reported Thursday in a weekly survey by the Investment Company Institute, echoed what other analysts were seeing.

In the first three days of this week, investors pulled $17 billion from funds that invested only in government securities, a reversal of the daily inflows of $280 million for much of July, said Peter Crane, the president of Crane Data, which tracks money market mutual funds.

''It's big, no doubt about it,'' he said. ''Seventeen billion isn't a run, but it's definitely indicative that investors are shifting their assets. If this were to continue for another week or two, it would be very disturbing.''

Though lawmakers have been clashing all week on proposals to cut the deficit and raise the debt limit ahead of an Aug. 2 deadline set by the Treasury Department, bond markets have largely shrugged off the risk of a default or a downgrade of the Washington's AAA credit rating.

Interest rates on longer-term Treasuries have held steady, but the yield on notes coming due next week, after the deadline, has moved sharply higher in recent days. The yield on Treasury bills coming due Aug. 4 jumped five basis points to 15 basis points, a significant move for a security that carried a yield close to zero earlier this month, said Jim Caron, head of interest rate strategy at Morgan Stanley.

''It's a tell-tale sign of something that could reverberate if it spreads to other markets, and all the uncertainty with the debt ceiling is the functional equivalent of a tightening,'' Mr. Caron said. ''I don't think there is a default risk at all but the market is saying it's not going to take any chances.''

While money market fund managers say they are not seeing a sizable wave of redemptions yet, they are setting aside more cash, leaving it at custodial bank accounts in case investors demand their money back. At Fidelity, the Boston-based firm that has $442 billion in money market assets, managers are avoiding Treasury bills that come due on Aug. 4 and Aug. 11, however unlikely a technical default may be.

''We are positioning our portfolio to respond to a downgrade or a default and we are positioning the fund to respond to redemptions,'' said Robert Brown, president of money markets at Fidelity. Mr. Brown would not say how much cash was being kept at hand, but said ''it's a higher balance than one would expect to see.''

In the commercial paper market, where companies raise funds for their short-term borrowing needs, buyers are also seeking shorter-term paper.

In the last week, investors have shown signs of wanting quick access to their money, with financial borrowers raising on Wednesday only $1 million in notes that come due in 81 days or more, according to the Federal Reserve. That is down from $479 million on July 22.

At the same time, the amount of commercial paper issued with a duration of just one to four days rose to $920 million, from $771 million.

''Investors are scrambling to bolster their liquidity profile,'' said Chris Conetta, head of global commercial paper trading at Barclays Capital. ''They understand that a default or downgrade could be a big, systemic event.''

In the repurchase market, known as the repo market, borrowers take loans and in exchange hand over a little more than the equivalent loan amount in securities. Because of their risk-free status, Treasuries are highly favored as collateral, estimated to account for about $4 trillion in the repo markets.

The fear is that if the United States credit rating drops, the value of those treasuries

could respond in kind. Borrowers would then have to post more collateral to obtain their loans, effectively raising the cost of borrowing. That could ripple into the broader market, raising interest rates on all types of loans, analysts warn.

''The repo market is a pressure point because it can have an impact on overall credit availability, which bleeds through to mortgage rates,'' said Robert Toomey, managing director at the Securities Industry and Financial Markets Association. ''Treasuries become a little less attractive if they are more expensive to finance.''

The overnight repo rate, which started the week at about three basis points, was about 17 basis points Thursday evening, according to Credit Suisse. That means that to finance $100 million overnight in the repo market it would now cost about $472 per day, up from about $83 on Monday.

''It's a bigger deal than a lot of people recognize,'' said Howard Simons, a strategist at Bianco Research, a bond market specialist. ''If you downgrade the securities you have to put more up for collateral and that affects pretty much everybody out there who has held these in reserve. I don't care if you're a bank, insurance company, exchange or clearinghouse.''

To be sure, most observers say the ripples in the repo market will not be anything like those felt in the fall of 2008, when creditors lost faith in the ability of banks to pay back their short-term loans. That caused a problem for companies like General Electric, which struggled to finance its daily operations as a result. Back then, the sharp drop-off in repo lending helped bring the financial system to its knees.

''I think people are looking at the U.S. as the cleanest shirt in the dirty laundry pile,'' said Jason New, a senior managing director at GSO Capital Partners.

''To me, the downgrade is not dropping a boulder in a still lake. This is dropping a pebble, but nevertheless there are still ripples.''

□ 1440

I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. YARMUTH).

Mr. YARMUTH. I thank the gentleman from Colorado.

Madam Speaker, yesterday our Republican colleagues said that their party was using the leverage of the default crisis to get what they want, their ideological agenda passed. The problem is it's not what the American people want. Our constituents have made it very clear that when we're trying to solve our deficit crisis, they want a real compromise, shared sacrifice, where millionaires, billionaires, and oil companies are asked to contribute. They also want their Social Security and Medicare benefits protected. Now with the clock ticking on the entire economy, they definitely don't want us wasting time on this hoax of a bill that has no chance of passing in the Senate.

The Republicans took a bad bill and made it worse and less likely to pass, putting in the requirement for sending a constitutional amendment to the States, which requires a two-thirds vote in each body. If that doesn't happen, 6 months from now, what happens? The country defaults again. That may help the Republicans. It may help the Republican leadership save face with the Tea Party and their party, but it does nothing to help the American people or save us from a pending economic chaos.

This isn't leadership. It's the worst type of failure. It's a failure to stand up for what we know is right, a failure to stand up for the American people, and a failure to protect and preserve the United States of America.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, at this time I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Savannah, Georgia (Mr. KINGSTON).

Mr. KINGSTON. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Madam Speaker, Americans have had to tighten their belts. All around the country, American families have had to decide what is important to them and to divide their needs from their wants. Washington, D.C., has to do that. We have to have not just a balanced approach, we need to have a balanced budget. We need to cut our spending, we need to control our spending, and we need to have accountability so that when Washington politicians make decisions, that the families back home can take a look at it and decide what are the consequences of these decisions.

Now, there have been a lot of consequences that America has suffered because of the failed economic policies of President Obama. One must ask him- or herself, when will President Obama admit that his stimulus program was a failure? When will the President admit that the consequences of his health care mandate has killed jobs? When will President Obama admit that Cash for Clunkers wasn't such a great idea? And, most importantly, when will President Obama admit that it's a failure of leadership not to present a plan to balance the budget to Congress? We need to see the President's plan.

Today, we will be voting on yet another Republican proposal to cut spending and control spending and give accountability to our process, but we have yet to have a bill introduced by the President of the United States. And keep in mind, before he was President, as a Senator, he voted against increasing the debt ceiling, siting a lack of leadership. Today, the bill that we will be considering cuts spending now. It also controls spending because it has an across-the-board trigger that if we spend too much money, there will be a cut.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. SESSIONS. I yield the gentleman 1 additional minute.

Mr. KINGSTON. Madam Speaker, these cuts are real. They are measurable. This is what the American people need to know, something that is accountable. This puts in place a 10-year budget.

The United States Senate, under HARRY REID's leadership, has not had a budget in 3 years. There's no end to their spending without a budget. American families have budgets. Why doesn't the U.S. Senate?

So this bill puts in accountability, 10 years' worth of accountability. It puts in controls in spending, across-the-board triggers. And finally, it has cuts to it.

Again, Madam Speaker, American families have had to tighten their belts. Washington must do the same thing, and that's what we're doing here today.

I urge my colleagues to vote ''yes'' on this legislation and ''yes'' on the rule.

Mr. POLIS. The gentleman from Georgia mentioned that the President hasn't introduced a bill. I would just like to point out that the President of the United States cannot introduce a bill in the House or Senate. The President can sign a bill. In fact, in this particular case, he said he would veto this bill because it increases the deficit, it risks increasing it by over $100 billion.

I would like to submit for the RECORD a study that shows the difference in interest rates between AAA and AA ratings, which demonstrably shows, in fact, that if this bill is passed here today with only a 6-month extension, it would likely cost taxpayers over $100 billion.

AAA OR AA? IN WHICH CLUB DO WE WANT TO BELONG?

AAA Ratings	10-Year bond yield (%)
Australia	4.92
Austria	3.39
Canada	2.93
Denmark	2.99
Finland	3.13
France	3.25
Germany	2.76
Hong Kong	2.26
Luxembourg	3.29
Netherlands	3.14
Norway	3.24
Singapore	2.10
Sweden	2.75
Switzerland	1.45
United Kingdom	3.04
USA	3.00
AAA Average	2.98

AA Ratings	10-Year bond yield (%)
Abu Dhabi	3.84
Belgium	4.32
Chile	2.92
China	4.12
Israel	5.16
Japan	1.09
Qatar	3.95
Saudi Arabia	3.97
Spain	5.99
Slovenia	4.43
Taiwan	1.50
AA Average	3.75

With that, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Vermont (Mr. WELCH).

Mr. WELCH. I thank the gentleman.

What's going on here, Madam Speaker, is extraordinarily dangerous and it's completely unnecessary. We are using the full faith and credit of the United States, the reputation this country has had since its founding that we are a country who pays our bills, we are using that as political leverage to get our way on budget and tax issues. That's wrong. It's dangerous.

Ronald Reagan, no stranger to fierce tax and budget battles, would never allow the linkage to be made that would jeopardize the full faith and credit of the United States. We're a bigger and better country than to threaten that we won't pay our bills. This is wrong. We should raise the debt ceiling cleanly because that is what Americans do. We pay our bills.

Second, the bill before us now is, as my friend from Kentucky said, making a bad bill worse. The process that Americans want is a balanced approach. Balance is revenues along with cuts. Democrats have to make concessions on cuts. We're prepared to do that. The President has led. But there have got to be revenues, particularly when we have got a Tax Code that is completely a mess.

What we've seen is that in the Biden discussions, Mr. CANTOR walked out when there were revenues on the table. The Speaker walked out on the President when revenues were still on the table. And now this bill is attempting to impose a constitutional amendment and has no chance of passing; and it, in effect, is a white flag of surrender to a small group in the Republican caucus who won't pass the bill that was brought to us before.

We've got to work together. That means we've got to put everything on the table. We've got to maintain our credit rating by paying our bills, and we have to have a balanced approach to long-term fiscal stability that requires revenues as well as cuts.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, at this time I yield 2 minutes to another one of our 87 new freshmen, Mr. WOMACK, the former mayor of Rogers, Arkansas, one of the most beautiful cities in America.

Mr. WOMACK. Madam Speaker, I would like to thank the gentleman not only for yielding some time but also for his glowing remarks about a great community and one of the 10 most livable cities in all of America that I had the privilege of presiding over for about 12 years as mayor, a city that continues to enjoy tremendous economic development and influence in the State of Arkansas.

And let me just say this, using that as a context for my remarks, that I think the model that the community that I had the privilege of presiding over for 12 years is the model that Washington needs. It's a model that balances its budget.

When I inherited that city in 1999 as its mayor, it did not have a balanced budget. The government was in the way. The discriminate developer did not want to develop in that community because there were too many regulations, too many reasons why they could go elsewhere and have better margins. Well, we changed all that, and now the city is flourishing in a remarkable sort of way.

And I want to steal something from a colleague of mine from Mississippi that was said yesterday out on the Triangle in a media event. He said: All across America we're sitting down with legal pads, and we're drawing that line down the middle and we're discussing the amount of income that we have. This is what's happening to families around the country, what kind of income we have and what kind of expenses we have.

□ 1450

Where the expenses exceed the income, we are having to make some very difficult choices as to what do we do without. Well, quite frankly, I think that that's exactly what's happening in this Congress right now. We have to take the legal pad out. We have to decide those things that we can do that we need and those things that we can do without based on the amount of income that we have coming in.

The sad thing is in order to be able to create that kind of fiscal discipline, it's going to take something like a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution in order to guarantee an enforcement mechanism that this Congress or future Congresses cannot undo. So it's that context that I bring to the table today.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. SESSIONS. I yield the gentleman 1 additional minute.

Mr. WOMACK. It is that basis on which I think this Congress should rally behind the plan that we have offered today that is going to cap spending, that is going to cut spending, and is going to require a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution so that future Congresses can't put us in a similar situation that we are in today.

So I would urge a ''yes'' vote. I support it wholeheartedly, and I would ask the American people to join us by promoting fiscal sanity by approving this piece of legislation.

Mr. POLIS. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER).

Mr. BLUMENAUER. I appreciate the gentleman's courtesy.

Well, we are approaching the real prospect of default for the first time in American history, and we have wasted 2 days. While we have wasted 2 days, the American public has lost over $400 billion of wealth as the stock markets started to slide when Speaker BOEHNER walked away from negotiations with the President. The Republicans have been twisting arms to make a bill that could never pass the Senate even more objectionable by chasing a few extreme Members of their party instead of working with over 180 Democrats on a balanced approach.

I would suggest that people think of three words. First is recklessness. This is the first time in history that we have taken the debt ceiling discussion and held it hostage; 102 times we have increased the debt ceiling since 1917. This is an entirely manufactured crisis.

Second is abuse. This is an abuse of power to try and hold this debt ceiling discussion hostage, refusing to compromise, trying to avoid a balanced approach that is supported by the American public and what ultimately is going to be required to solve this problem.

The third point is hypocrisy. On this floor, earlier this week, when Republicans actually had the chance to vote for real spending cuts that would be required under their bizarre proposal for spending reductions in the future, when they had a chance to vote for it, in this Congress, offered up by the Republican Study Committee—and I think it was misguided, but at least it was honest—and what did the Republicans do? They voted it down, 104 of them, including their own subcommittee chairman, because it was too extreme.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, I would like to inquire about the time remaining on both sides, please.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas has 5 minutes remaining, and the gentleman from Colorado has 8½ minutes remaining.

Mr. SESSIONS. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. POLIS. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. ELLISON).

Mr. ELLISON. Madam Speaker, many words will be spoken at podiums on the House floor today, some helpful and illuminating, some not. But there are a few facts that need to stand in very stark contrast to all the din.

First, this has never happened in the history of the United States, not from the first Congress until this very moment, that a Congress, a caucus in this body, has tried to hold hostage the American economy in exchange for raising the debt ceiling. Never before, never. We will distinguish ourselves as a body that has failed and has deliberately harmed the American economy because of obstinacy, stubbornness, and recklessness. First time.

Second, in less than 3½ days, our Nation will default. This will, without a doubt, cause a dramatic amount of cost on the American people in almost every aspect of our lives, whether it's in the area of credit cards, mortgages, car notes, or many other areas. Our State and local governments' costs will go up. Investors, pensioners, 401(k) holders will suffer. This is in no way helpful and in dramatic contrast to everything we have ever done before.

There is no doubt about it, Madam Speaker. The Republicans and the Democrats have a very different view of the role of government. Democrats believe that a government in partnership with a free market works well to guarantee a strong economy for the American people, and Republicans see almost no role for government at all and speak derisively and contemptuously about government all the time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. POLIS. I yield the gentleman 15 additional seconds.

Mr. ELLISON. The American people, I believe, will agree with the Democrats and history will bear us out as being on the right side.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, day after day the American people receive more bad news, economic bad news, about the shape our country is in. That is what Republicans respond to.

Today, news came out that the first quarter GDP that was provided by the Federal Government, first quarter, was actually wrong, dead wrong. They said the GDP growth was 1.9 percent. Today we find out it was .4.

Madam Speaker, the disastrous results of the Obama-Pelosi years are evident. Republicans want jobs. We need a middle class, and we are willing to fight for it. That's why we are here today with commonsense legislation.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. POLIS. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE).

Ms. LEE. Thank you very much for yielding.

I rise in opposition to this rule and in opposition to the bill that we will vote on later today. And, yes, the Bush economic policies have really now come home to haunt us.

It's shameful that the Republican Party continues their drive to plunge our Nation into default and our economy over the brink. And the bill that Speaker BOEHNER has unveiled today does exactly that. His plan fails to end the threat of default.

And his plan targets, mind you, targets the programs aimed at America's most vulnerable, our seniors, our children, and our low-income families for more draconian cuts. And this plan would sign these cuts into the Constitution; it would sign these cuts into stone into the Constitution.

Trying to balance the budget on the backs of the poor is morally wrong and it's economically bankrupt. This rule and this bill begin to erode and dismantle Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security; and it creates more unemployment. There will be more job loss as a result of this rule and bill.

Instead of creating jobs, the Republicans are holding our economy hostage once again and threatening to plunge our economy back into recession. Instead of quickly passing a debt ceiling vote and bill, the Republicans are marching lockstep towards default. Instead of supporting the safety net that will protect our most vulnerable, the Republicans are trying to balance our budget on the backs of the poor while maintaining tax cuts for millionaires and billionaires and Big Oil. It's totally irresponsible to put forth a bill that would put the economy on the brink of disaster once again in 6 months.

Madam Speaker, there is no time for these Republican Tea Party games. This rule and this bill turn the American Dream into a nightmare for millions. Seniors need to know that they will receive their Social Security checks. Veterans need to know that they can go to the doctor. Small businesses need to know that they have some financial security and stability to create jobs.

Defeat this Boehner rule and bill. It's really a default Boehner rule and bill.

□ 1500

Mr. SESSIONS. I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. POLIS. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO).

Mr. DEFAZIO. Tax cuts, tax cuts, tax cuts. Tax cuts solve all problems, especially for the millionaire and billionaire job creators.

We're in the 10th year of the Bush tax cuts: $4 trillion. We're in the third year of the Obama tax cuts: $1 trillion. Now we have to cut programs to continue the tax cuts that don't create jobs.

What's one of the specified targets? Student financial aid. Hey, they don't know anybody at the country club who can't afford to put their kid through medical school, but at the top of their list is cutting student financial aid.

Cutting investments in transportation that could put millions to work. Stopping taxes on the aviation industry, which is, guess what, capturing the money, not lowering prices, and laying off 90,000 people and stopping critical infrastructure jobs for that industry. Tax cuts, tax cuts, tax cuts.

Let's get real. Let's do things for the American people, put people back to work, and solve the deficit problem.

Mr. SESSIONS. I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. POLIS. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Mr. GARAMENDI).

Mr. GARAMENDI. A very interesting point in our progress here in America. There is a real difference in view, and we're in the process now of choosing which path this Nation will go.

This is not about a deficit. This is about the very nature of America. It's about our heart and soul. Are we going to be a country that uses all of our resources, whether they are the public resources or the private resources, to fill the needs of our people—their education, their health care, their well-being after they retire—or are we going to go a different path and not use all of our potential?

The Republican proposal that's before us—this is not the first—would change America and really drive us back to the 19th century, a time in which the government did not have a social welfare program such as Social Security and Medicare.

Make no doubt about this and have no doubts that the proposal before us is a very significant step towards ending Social Security and Medicare. If that's what the American people want, well, we shall see.

Mr. SESSIONS. I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. POLIS. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL).

Mr. ENGEL. I thank the gentleman.

You know, this is political theater at its worst. This bill has no chance of becoming law. It's extreme. It was put together so that the Speaker could pick up the last two or three votes from the extreme element of the Republican Party. We refuse to be held hostage and the American people refuse to be held hostage.

Let me say to my Republican colleagues: Why don't you try working with us? Why don't you try to work with the Democrats? Why don't we kind of move to the sensible middle and have a bill that can pass? This is what the American people want us to do. They are sick of the political posturing. They are sick of this day in and day out. We are now bringing our country to the brink of financial disaster because of cheap political games. Meet us in the middle.

In order to balance our budget, we need to have a cut in spending, yes, but we also need to have those who can afford to pay more pay a little more, and we need to close corporate tax loopholes, not protect the rich. My Republican friends want to balance the budget on the backs of the middle class, want to tell seniors that Medicare as we know it will be destroyed, want to tell our students that they cannot get Pell Grants. We don't want to do this.

Pass a clean debt ceiling. That's what we need to do. We did it 18 times under Reagan and eight times under Bush. We ought to do it again now and stop the political charade.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, the reason why we're here today is because we're spending too much money.

Another reason why we're here today is because the Democratic Party and the Members—many of them who have spoken today—took $500 billion out of Medicare, and that's why that system is in real trouble. Republicans will save Medicare, not bankrupt it like our friends the Democrats have done.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. POLIS. Madam Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

First, in response to the claim of the gentleman from Texas in regards to saving Medicare, well, if ending Medicare is one way of saving it, I guess that would be consistent. In fact, the Republican package that was passed in this House phased out Medicare. Nobody under 55 would receive Medicare.

By definition, Medicare is a medical insurance program for seniors. It would be replaced with a voucher that would pay for part of private insurance that seniors need to get, but it would no longer be Medicare. It would no longer exist. So, certainly, getting rid of Medicare, if you consider that a way of saving it, the Republican budget will do that. But if you want to save Medicare, it requires cutting costs and investing in the system and making it work for more American families.

Again, what we have before us today, Madam Speaker, is not a solution; it's further political machinations of the

House. Rather than talking to the President, rather than talking to the Senate, unfortunately, the Speaker of this body has chosen to talk to five or six people, move the bill further away from the middle, further away from what the President will sign, further away from what the Senate will pass with only 3½ days left.

Three-and-a-half days left before what? Three-and-a-half days left before this country jeopardizes our credit rating and our good standing as a Nation that pays interest on our debt. And just as American families, when your credit score gets messed up, you pay more, taxpayers will pay more if this bill passes.

Madam Speaker, it has been estimated that the approximately 1 percent interest rate increase that a downgrade from AAA to AA would provide will cost taxpayers over $1 trillion over 10 years. And this bill will increase the deficit by $100 billion.

I urge a ''no'' vote on the rule and the bill.

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

Mr. SESSIONS. I yield myself the balance of my time.

Madam Speaker, I appreciate the conjecture the gentleman has made and extrapolated this out of what this bill would do. In fact, that's not what the bill does at all.

The bill says that we will approach in a reasonable way and with respect to the American taxpayer—and to the marketplaces—a plan, a plan that will put America on sound financial footing, which would be the envy of the world, which is part of what the Republican Party would choose to do.

Madam Speaker, once again, this rule provides the necessary flexibility the Republican leadership needs to ensure that we do not default on our obligations in the next 4 days. Republicans will continue to provide sound, balanced, and real leadership and pass solutions while the President continues on the pathway—along with the Democratic Party, as we've heard here today—of tax increases and job-killing ideas.

With over 14 million Americans unemployed, a $1.4 trillion projected deficit this year, and over $14 trillion in debt, our current financial policies are simply not working. I don't know why we would continue doing what we've been doing when it doesn't work, but perhaps that's what our friends, the Democrats, want to do. We, as Republicans, disagree.

So I'm asking the Democratic colleagues, our colleagues on the other side of the aisle, to join their Republican colleagues and me for real fiscal change. Cutting spending and reducing government programs, each of these help us encourage economic growth, not just as we heard in Rogers, Arkansas, but all over this country. It does work, putting Americans back to work.

Madam Speaker, I will insert into the RECORD an article titled, ''Texas Bucks National Unemployment Trends,'' because they do things that balance out the marketplace.

I applaud our Speaker, the gentleman from Ohio, JOHN BOEHNER, for his hard work and commitment to the American people, and those people here in the House of Representatives who will do their duty and provide for real and conservative solutions, market-based answers to get our economy back on track.

Madam Speaker, this Republican House will not raise taxes. We will not raise spending. We will not yield to the old ways of taxing and spending and not listening and then thinking we know better than others.

We're for the free enterprise system.

□ 1510

We're for families back home. We're for job growth and real meaningful opportunities for the future of our children. That is what we stand for.

So we are here today. Yes, we'll stay in town until we get our job done. We're the people who believe in the free enterprise system. We're the people who believe in the people back home. And we're the people who are going to say ''no'' to Washington, D.C., taxing, spending, big wasteful government. We are the people, the Republican Party. The elephants are in town, and we have a great memory. We know what works. So, Madam Speaker, I encourage a ''yes'' vote on the rule.

TEXAS BUCKS NATIONAL UNEMPLOYMENT TREND

(By Tony Gutierrez)

Finding work may not be quite that simple, but it sure seems that way. While the nation's job growth has limped along since the economic recovery began two years ago, the Lone Star State is enlarging payrolls in Texas-size fashion.

From June 2009 to June 2011 the state added 262,000 jobs, or half the USA's 524,000 payroll gains, according to the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas and the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Even by a more conservative estimate that omits states with net job losses, Texas' advances make up 30% of the 1 million additions in the 34 states with net growth.

The stunning showing could play a role in the presidential race. Texas Gov. Rick Perry is signaling he may run for the Republican nomination. If he does, he's likely to ground his campaign in his state's outsized job growth.

Texas' big gains are partly a reflection of its population growth. But the recent job gains are outpacing the rate of population growth in Texas, the nation's second-largest state, with 25 million residents—about 8% of the U.S. population.

INTERACTIVE: SORTABLE CHART: STATE-BY-STATE LOOK AT EMPLOYMENT CHANGES

The state's payrolls have risen 2.9% since the end of the recession, third behind North Dakota and Alaska and far outpacing the USA's 0.4% growth, according to the BLS. Also, Texas' 8.2% unemployment rate is well below the nation's 9.2%.

''For one large state to grow (jobs) so much faster than the rest of the nation is very unusual,'' says Moody's economist Ed Friedman.

Economists point to an array of factors, including high energy prices that set off an oil-drilling frenzy, rising exports and a conservative banking industry that helped the state sidestep the housing crash.

Yet while energy has been a spark—employment in natural gas, oil and other mining sectors rose by 45,000, or 23%, since the recession ended—growth has been broad-based. During the past two years, professional and business services added 74,000 jobs; education and health care gained 91,000; and leisure and hospitality grew by 29,000, according to BLS.

State officials cite a pro-business climate that Perry helped foster that's drawing scores of businesses from high-cost states—a trend that took on urgency for firms that got lean in the economic downturn.

The 10-year Texas governor is ''really focused on creating an environment where people can risk their capital and get a return on investment, and that, in turn, creates jobs for Texans,'' says Lucy Nashed, spokeswoman for the state's economic development office.

Nashed notes Texas has no state or corporate income tax and keeps regulations at a minimum to allow businesses to grow quickly. She says Perry also has worked to develop a skilled workforce by requiring additional public school classes and pushing through tort reform to limit frivolous lawsuits. The state, meantime, has doled out more than $600 million in grants and investments since 2003 to recruit out-of-state companies and help Texas firms expand.

DOES PERRY REALLY DESERVE CREDIT?

Yet some question Perry's role in the so-called Texas Miracle.

James Galbraith, a professor of government at the University of Texas-Austin, largely attributes the state's job growth to the energy and export booms. Texas, he notes, has never had an income tax. From 1990 to 2000, before Perry took office, Texas payrolls swelled 36%, compared with 21% for the nation.

''Rick Perry did not come and find a high-tax, high-service state and dismantle it,'' Galbraith says. ''For something to contribute, there (has to be) a change. There's been a change in oil prices.''

Others say the state's low tax burdens exact a high cost: fewer state services. Perry, for example, refused to raise taxes to close a $27 billion budget gap last spring. Instead, the Legislature slashed more than $4 billion in funding for public schools the next two years, a move that's likely to lead to tens of thousands of teacher layoffs.

''We're not preparing our children to compete in tomorrow's economy,'' says Scott McCown, head of Texas' Center for Public Policy Priorities.

Texas ranks 44th in the USA in per-student expenditures and 43rd in high school graduation rates, McCown says. Seventeen percent of Texans lived below the poverty level in 2009, compared with 14% for the nation. The state leads in the percentage of the population with no health insurance and was ninth in income inequality in the mid-2000s, the latest data available, according to McCown and the Economic Policy Institute.

McCown says Texas should not serve as a job-growth paradigm for the rest of the nation.

''If you're saying you want to look like Texas, you're saying you want to be poor and have less health care,'' he says.

The state's relatively low wages, particularly for low-skilled jobs, stems in part from its status as a right-to-work state with little unionization. That dampens consumer spending and limits economic growth, McCown says. In June, average hourly earnings for private-sector employees in Texas were about 5% lower than the U.S. average.

But Mark Dotzour, chief economist at Texas A&M's Real Estate Center, says the state's lower pay helps it compete in a global economy. ''Either you choose to have low-wage jobs or you choose to have no jobs at all,'' he says.

The state's reasonable cost of living, he adds, makes it possible for many residents to live comfortably on lower salaries. The Dallas area ranks 10th in housing affordability among 82 metro areas with more than 1 million residents, while Houston is 15th, according to the Demographia International Housing Affordability Survey. That's partly because Texas has an abundance of cheap land—another draw for firms looking to relocate.

Other reasons for the state's robust job growth:

The energy boom. Oil prices have nearly tripled since early 2009. High prices spark more exploration and production. Meanwhile, technological breakthroughs have let companies extract natural gas embedded in shale deposits. Barnett Shale in Fort Worth is one of the USA's largest gas fields, and drilling began at the Eagle Ford Shale in South Texas in 2008. The number of oil and gas rigs in the state has jumped to 850 from 330 in July 2009, says Ana Orozco, economist for IHS Global Insight. Each rig employs a few dozen workers and leads to hiring by engineering firms, pipeline builders and other services.

Exports. Overseas shipments by Texas' strong computer, electronics, petrochemical and other industries rose 21% last year, compared with 15% for the nation, according to the Dallas Federal Reserve Bank. The state also benefits from its proximity to Latin American countries that are big importers of U.S. goods, Friedman says. The surge creates jobs for Texas manufacturers and ports.

No housing crash. Texas never had a housing boom but also avoided the bust that decimated consumer credit and home construction in much of the rest of the nation. While prices of single-family homes more than doubled from January 2000 to their mid-2000s peak in cities such as Los Angeles, Miami and Las Vegas, they rose less than 27% in the Dallas/Fort Worth market, according to the S&P/Case-Shiller Home Price index.

Meanwhile, Texas banks burned by the savings-and-loan crisis in the 1980s were less eager than those in other states to approve risky mortgages. And Texas law limits mortgage debt, including home-equity loans, to 80% of a home's value.

''People didn't use their houses like ATMs,'' says Dallas Fed Vice President Mine Yucel.

Texas still was hit by the recession. Annual permits for single-family homes declined 59% from their 2005 peak to 2010, but that's less than the nation's 73% plunge, according to Texas A&M. Similarly, employment fell 4% in the downturn; the USA's overall drop was 6.3%. Texas has recovered 380,000 jobs since its December 2009 low and is now just 54,000 shy of its 10.6 million peak.

Population growth. Texas' population grew by 4.3 million, or 21%, during the past decade, more than twice the national pace. About half the total was because of births, but Texas also gained 849,000 residents via state-to-state migration, second only to Florida.

Texas thus benefits from a virtuous cycle: More people are moving there for work, generating consumer demand that creates still more jobs. That's expanded the workforce, keeping the unemployment rate at 8.2%—ranked just 26th in the nation—despite the strong payroll advances.

One recent arrival is Ife Oyedokun, 26, who this month moved to the Austin area from Philadelphia, where he worked as a high school counselor, to be closer to his family. Within two weeks he had a job as a rehabilitation specialist for a growing outpatient facility for the mentally ill.

''I was very surprised,'' he says. ''With just how the economy is now, I figured three, four, five months'' to find a job.

'HUNTING' FOR POSSIBLE RELOCATIONS

Companies also are feeling the pull.

Corporate giants including Fluor, Toyota and Medtronic recently moved headquarters or operations to Texas, and eBay, AT&T, Samsung and Cirrus Logic have expanded there. Samsung added about 700 jobs in Austin since last year, enlarging a plant that makes chips for smartphones.

Area business leaders, meanwhile, have aggressively courted out-of-state companies.

The Dallas Regional Chamber this month sent a letter to 50 Illinois corporations, urging them to consider a move to Texas. The mailing includes a side-by-side comparison of the two states that notes Illinois recently raised corporate and personal income taxes and highlights Texas' lower housing, labor and other expenses.

''States with heavy-duty business taxes, personal taxes or regulatory mind-sets define themselves as our targets,'' says Chamber CEO Jim Oberwetter. ''That's just where we go hunting.''

Texas has particularly tried to lure high-tech California companies to lower-cost technology corridors in Austin, Dallas and San Antonio. Medtronic, the Minneapolis-based medical device giant, has moved customer support for its diabetes unit from the Los Angeles area to San Antonio in the past 22 months, creating 750 jobs in Texas.

Jeff Ruiz, head of Medtronic's Texas operations, says the company was drawn by labor costs that are ''significantly lower'' than those in Los Angeles and a large, high-quality workforce. Ruiz also points to more affordable real estate and the lack of a state corporate tax, though he says the latter was a minor factor. The company, which also received $14 million in incentives from the state—a figure Ruiz says was comparable with other offers—chose San Antonio from among more than 900 U.S. cities it evaluated.

For some, the benefits are more basic.

Marketing firm Red Ventures this year opened a San Antonio office that's expected to grow to 250 employees from 60 by year's end, says spokeswoman Kylie Craig. Besides the region's ample talent pool, other draws were the city's non-stop flights to Red Ventures' other offices in Miami and Charlotte and its 7.3% unemployment rate.

In cities with high jobless rates, ''We're having to sift through (many) unqualified applicants.''

Then there's Texas' laid-back lifestyle and lower costs, assets that prompted Vermillion, a start-up developer of blood tests with 29 employees, to move from Fremont, Calif., to Austin about a year ago. ''We found it very difficult to recruit people into California because of the cost of living, traffic, congestion,'' says CEO Gail Page.

The corporate relocations and expansions are having a ripple effect on restaurants, hospitals and other service businesses. Winstead, a Dallas law firm with about 270 lawyers statewide, has added 50 since last year to handle the extra workload from firms, such as Comerica Bank, that have moved to Texas the past few years, says Mike Baggett, Winstead's chairman emeritus.

And after cutting staff in 2009 and 2010, DeMontrond Automotive in Houston has hired about 20 employees the past few months in response to a 20% jump in revenue, says owner George DeMontrond. Houston lost 120,000 jobs in the recession but has gained about 50,000 the last seven months.

''I think people who have held off and not purchased large-ticket items because of uncertainty are a little bit more ready to do it,'' DeMontrond says.

I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. MILLER of Michigan). The question is on ordering the previous question.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 and clause 9 of rule XX, this 15-minute vote on ordering the previous question will be followed by 5-minute votes on:

adoption of House Resolution 382, if ordered;

motion to suspend the rules on H.R. 440, by the yeas and nays;

motion to suspend the rules on H.R. 2244, if ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 237, nays 185, not voting 10, as follows:

[Roll No. 671]

YEAS—237

Adams
Aderholt
Akin
Alexander
Amash
Austria
Bachus
Barletta
Bartlett
Barton (TX)
Bass (NH)
Benishek
Berg
Biggert
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Bonner
Bono Mack
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brooks
Broun (GA)
Buchanan
Bucshon
Buerkle
Burgess
Burton (IN)
Calvert
Camp
Campbell
Canseco
Cantor
Capito
Carter
Cassidy
Chabot
Chaffetz
Coble
Cole
Conaway
Cravaack
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Davis (KY)
Denham
Dent
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Dold
Dreier
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers
Emerson
Farenthold
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Flake
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
Gardner
Garrett
Gerlach
Gibbs
Gibson
Gingrey (GA)
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (MO)
Griffin (AR)
Griffith (VA)
Grimm
Guinta
Guthrie
Hall
Hanna
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings (WA)
Hayworth
Heck
Hensarling
Herger
Herrera Beutler
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurt
Issa
Jenkins
Johnson (IL)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jones
Jordan
Kelly
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Labrador
Lamborn
Lance
Landry
Lankford
Latham
LaTourette
Latta
Lewis (CA)
LoBiondo
Long
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
Lungren, Daniel E.
Mack
Manzullo
Marchant
Marino
McCarthy (CA)
McCaul
McClintock
McCotter
McHenry
McKeon
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
Meehan
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller, Gary
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Myrick
Neugebauer
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Nunnelee
Olson
Palazzo
Paul
Paulsen
Pearce
Pence
Petri
Pitts
Platts
Poe (TX)
Pompeo
Posey
Price (GA)

Quayle
Reed
Rehberg
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rigell
Rivera
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross (FL)
Royce
Runyan
Ryan (WI)
Scalise
Schilling
Schmidt
Schock
Schweikert
Scott (SC)
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Southerland
Stearns
Stivers
Stutzman
Sullivan
Terry
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Turner
Upton
Walberg
Walden
Walsh (IL)
Webster
West
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Wolf
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Young (AK)
Young (FL)
Young (IN)

NAYS—185

Ackerman
Altmire
Andrews
Baldwin
Barrow
Bass (CA)
Becerra
Berkley
Berman
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Blumenauer
Boren
Boswell
Brady (PA)
Braley (IA)
Brown (FL)
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cardoza
Carnahan
Carney
Carson (IN)
Castor (FL)
Chandler
Chu
Cicilline
Clarke (MI)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly (VA)
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Costello
Courtney
Critz
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
DeFazio
DeGette
DeLauro
Deutch
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Donnelly (IN)
Doyle
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Farr
Fattah
Filner
Frank (MA)
Fudge
Garamendi
Gonzalez
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutierrez
Hahn
Hanabusa
Hastings (FL)
Heinrich
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Hochul
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hoyer
Inslee
Israel
Jackson (IL)
Jackson Lee (TX)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kildee
Kind
Kissell
Kucinich
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lee (CA)
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren, Zoe
Lowey
Luján
Lynch
Maloney
Markey
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (NY)
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McIntyre
McNerney
Meeks
Michaud
Miller (NC)
Miller, George
Moore
Moran
Murphy (CT)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Olver
Owens
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor (AZ)
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Peterson
Pingree (ME)
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rahall
Rangel
Reyes
Richardson
Richmond
Ross (AR)
Rothman (NJ)
Roybal-Allard
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Schwartz
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell
Sherman
Shuler
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Stark
Sutton
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tierney
Tonko
Towns
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz (MN)
Watt
Waxman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Woolsey
Wu
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—10

Baca
Bachmann
Coffman (CO)
Giffords
Hinchey
Hirono
Johnson (GA)
Speier
Wasserman Schultz
Waters

□ 1534

Mr. CLEAVER changed his vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

So the previous question was ordered.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the resolution.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. POLIS. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 236, nays 186, not voting 10, as follows:

[Roll No. 672]

YEAS—236

Adams
Aderholt
Akin
Alexander
Amash
Austria
Bachus
Barletta
Bartlett
Barton (TX)
Bass (NH)
Benishek
Berg
Biggert
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Bonner
Bono Mack
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brooks
Broun (GA)
Buchanan
Bucshon
Buerkle
Burgess
Burton (IN)
Calvert
Camp
Campbell
Canseco
Cantor
Capito
Carter
Cassidy
Chabot
Chaffetz
Coble
Coffman (CO)
Cole
Conaway
Cravaack
Crenshaw
Culberson
Davis (KY)
Denham
Dent
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Dold
Dreier
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers
Emerson
Farenthold
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Flake
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
Gardner
Garrett
Gerlach
Gibbs
Gibson
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (MO)
Griffin (AR)
Griffith (VA)
Grimm
Guinta
Guthrie
Hall
Hanna
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings (WA)
Hayworth
Heck
Hensarling
Herger
Herrera Beutler
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurt
Issa
Jenkins
Johnson (IL)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jones
Jordan
Kelly
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Labrador
Lamborn
Lance
Landry
Lankford
Latham
LaTourette
Latta
Lewis (CA)
LoBiondo
Long
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
Lungren, Daniel E.
Mack
Manzullo
Marchant
Marino
McCarthy (CA)
McCaul
McClintock
McCotter
McHenry
McKeon
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
Meehan
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller, Gary
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Myrick
Neugebauer
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Nunnelee
Olson
Palazzo
Paul
Paulsen
Pearce
Pence
Petri
Pitts
Platts
Poe (TX)
Pompeo
Posey
Price (GA)
Quayle
Reed
Rehberg
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rigell
Rivera
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross (FL)
Royce
Runyan
Ryan (WI)
Scalise
Schilling
Schmidt
Schock
Schweikert
Scott (SC)
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Southerland
Stearns
Stivers
Stutzman
Sullivan
Terry
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Turner
Upton
Walberg
Walden
Walsh (IL)
Webster
West
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Wolf
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Young (AK)
Young (FL)
Young (IN)

NAYS—186

Ackerman
Altmire
Andrews
Baldwin
Barrow
Bass (CA)
Becerra
Berkley
Berman
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Blumenauer
Boren
Boswell
Brady (PA)
Braley (IA)
Brown (FL)
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cardoza
Carnahan
Carney
Carson (IN)
Castor (FL)
Chandler
Chu
Cicilline
Clarke (MI)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly (VA)
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Costello
Courtney
Critz
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
DeFazio
DeGette
DeLauro
Deutch
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Donnelly (IN)
Doyle
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Farr
Fattah
Filner
Frank (MA)
Fudge
Garamendi
Gonzalez
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutierrez
Hahn
Hanabusa
Hastings (FL)
Heinrich
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Hochul
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hoyer
Inslee
Israel
Jackson (IL)
Jackson Lee (TX)
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kildee
Kind
Kissell
Kucinich
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lee (CA)
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren, Zoe
Lowey
Lynch
Maloney
Markey
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (NY)
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McIntyre
McNerney
Meeks
Michaud
Miller (NC)
Miller, George
Moore
Moran
Murphy (CT)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Olver
Owens
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor (AZ)
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Peterson
Pingree (ME)
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rahall
Rangel
Reyes
Richardson
Richmond
Ross (AR)
Rothman (NJ)
Roybal-Allard
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Schwartz
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell
Sherman
Shuler
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Stark
Sutton
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tierney
Tonko
Towns
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz (MN)
Wasserman Schultz
Watt
Waxman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Woolsey
Wu
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—10

Baca
Bachmann
Crawford
Giffords
Gingrey (GA)
Hinchey
Hirono
Luján
Speier
Waters

□ 1540

So the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated against:

Mr. LUJÁN. Mr. Speaker, due to my participation in a meeting with some of my constituents, I was unable to be present for rollcall vote No. 672. Had I been present, I would have voted "no" on this vote.

ESTABLISHING SPECIAL ENVOY FOR RELIGIOUS FREEDOM IN THE NEAR EAST AND SOUTH CENTRAL ASIA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 440) to provide for the establishment of the Special Envoy to Promote Religious Freedom of Religious Minorities in the Near East and South Central Asia, as amended, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, as amended.

This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 402, nays 20, not voting 10, as follows:

[Roll No. 673]

YEAS—402

Ackerman
Adams
Aderholt
Akin
Alexander
Altmire
Andrews
Austria
Bachus
Baldwin
Barletta
Barrow
Bartlett
Barton (TX)
Bass (CA)
Bass (NH)
Becerra
Benishek
Berg
Berkley
Berman
Biggert
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Bishop (UT)
Blackburn
Blumenauer
Bonner
Bono Mack
Boren
Boswell
Boustany
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Braley (IA)
Brooks
Brown (FL)
Buchanan
Bucshon
Buerkle
Burton (IN)
Butterfield
Calvert
Camp
Campbell
Canseco
Cantor
Capito
Capps
Capuano
Cardoza
Carnahan
Carney
Carson (IN)
Carter
Cassidy
Castor (FL)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Chandler
Chu
Cicilline
Clarke (MI)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coble
Coffman (CO)
Cohen
Cole
Conaway
Connolly (VA)
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Costello
Courtney
Cravaack
Crawford
Crenshaw
Critz
Crowley
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
Davis (KY)
DeFazio
DeGette
DeLauro
Denham
Dent
DesJarlais
Deutch
Diaz-Balart
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Dold
Donnelly (IN)
Doyle
Dreier
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Edwards
Ellison
Ellmers
Emerson
Engel
Eshoo
Farr
Fattah
Filner
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxx
Frank (MA)
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Fudge
Gallegly
Garamendi
Gardner
Garrett
Gerlach
Gibbs
Gibson
Gingrey (GA)
Gohmert
Gonzalez
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (MO)
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Griffin (AR)
Griffith (VA)
Grimm
Guinta
Guthrie
Gutierrez
Hahn
Hall
Hanabusa
Hanna
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings (FL)
Hastings (WA)
Hayworth
Heck
Heinrich
Hensarling
Herger
Herrera Beutler
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Hochul
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hoyer
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurt
Inslee
Israel
Issa
Jackson (IL)
Jackson Lee (TX)
Jenkins
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (IL)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jordan
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly
Kildee
Kind
King (NY)
Kingston
Kinzinger (IL)
Kissell
Kline
Kucinich
Lamborn
Lance
Landry
Langevin
Lankford
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latham
LaTourette
Latta
Lee (CA)
Levin
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (GA)
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren, Zoe
Long
Lowey
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Luján
Lummis
Lungren, Daniel E.
Lynch
Mack
Maloney
Manzullo
Marchant
Marino
Markey
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (CA)
McCarthy (NY)
McCaul
McCollum
McCotter
McDermott
McGovern
McHenry
McIntyre
McKeon
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McNerney
Meehan
Meeks
Mica
Michaud
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller (NC)
Miller, Gary
Miller, George
Moore
Moran
Murphy (CT)
Murphy (PA)
Myrick
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Neugebauer
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Nunnelee
Olson
Olver
Owens
Palazzo
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor (AZ)
Paulsen
Payne
Pearce
Pelosi
Pence
Perlmutter
Peters
Peterson
Petri
Pingree (ME)
Pitts
Platts
Polis
Pompeo
Price (GA)
Price (NC)
Quayle
Quigley
Rahall
Rangel
Reed
Rehberg
Reichert
Renacci
Reyes
Richardson
Richmond
Rigell
Rivera
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross (AR)
Ross (FL)
Rothman (NJ)
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Runyan
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Ryan (WI)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Scalise
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schilling
Schmidt
Schock
Schrader
Schwartz
Schweikert
Scott (SC)
Scott (VA)
Scott, Austin
Scott, David
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sessions
Sewell
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuler
Shuster
Simpson
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Southerland
Stark
Stearns
Stivers
Sullivan
Sutton
Terry
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tierney
Tipton
Tonko
Towns
Tsongas
Turner
Upton
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walberg
Walden
Walz (MN)
Wasserman Schultz
Watt
Waxman
Webster
Welch
Whitfield
Wilson (FL)
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Wolf
Womack
Woolsey
Wu
Yarmuth
Yoder
Young (AK)
Young (FL)
Young (IN)

NAYS—20

Amash
Broun (GA)
Burgess
Farenthold
Flake
Flores
Graves (GA)
Jones
King (IA)
Labrador
McClintock
Mulvaney
Paul
Posey
Ribble
Stutzman
Walsh (IL)
West
Westmoreland
Woodall

NOT VOTING—10

Baca
Bachmann
Black
Giffords
Grijalva
Hinchey
Hirono
Poe (TX)
Speier
Waters

□ 1546

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

CORPORAL STEVEN BLAINE RICCIONE POST OFFICE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the question on suspending the rules and passing the bill (H.R. 2244) to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 67 Castle Street in Geneva, New York, as the ''Corporal Steven Blaine Riccione Post Office''.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. LANKFORD) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 418, nays 1, answered ''present'' 1, not voting 12, as follows:

[Roll No. 674]

YEAS—418

Ackerman
Adams
Aderholt
Akin
Alexander
Altmire
Amash
Andrews
Austria
Bachus
Baldwin
Barletta
Barrow
Bartlett
Barton (TX)
Bass (CA)
Bass (NH)
Becerra
Benishek
Berg
Berkley
Berman
Biggert
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blumenauer
Bonner
Bono Mack
Boren
Boswell
Boustany
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Braley (IA)
Brooks
Broun (GA)
Brown (FL)
Buchanan
Bucshon
Buerkle
Burton (IN)
Butterfield
Calvert
Camp
Campbell
Canseco
Cantor
Capito
Capps
Capuano
Cardoza
Carnahan
Carney
Carson (IN)
Carter
Cassidy
Castor (FL)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Chandler
Chu
Cicilline
Clarke (MI)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coble
Coffman (CO)
Cohen
Cole
Conaway
Connolly (VA)
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Costello
Courtney
Cravaack
Crawford
Crenshaw
Critz
Crowley
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
Davis (KY)
DeFazio
DeGette
DeLauro
Denham
Dent
DesJarlais
Deutch
Diaz-Balart
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Dold
Donnelly (IN)
Doyle
Dreier
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Edwards
Ellison
Ellmers
Emerson
Engel
Eshoo
Farenthold
Farr
Fattah
Filner
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Flake
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxx
Frank (MA)
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Fudge
Gallegly
Garamendi
Gardner
Garrett
Gerlach
Gibbs
Gibson
Gingrey (GA)
Gohmert
Gonzalez
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (MO)
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Griffin (AR)
Griffith (VA)
Grimm
Guinta
Guthrie
Gutierrez
Hahn
Hall
Hanabusa
Hanna
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings (FL)
Hastings (WA)
Hayworth
Heck
Heinrich
Hensarling
Herger
Herrera Beutler
Higgins

Himes
Hinojosa
Hochul
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hoyer
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurt
Inslee
Israel
Issa
Jackson (IL)
Jackson Lee (TX)
Jenkins
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jones
Jordan
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly
Kildee
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kinzinger (IL)
Kissell
Kline
Kucinich
Labrador
Lamborn
Lance
Landry
Langevin
Lankford
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latham
LaTourette
Latta
Lee (CA)
Levin
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (GA)
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren, Zoe
Long
Lowey
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Luján
Lummis
Lungren, Daniel E.
Lynch
Mack
Maloney
Manzullo
Marchant
Marino
Markey
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (CA)
McCarthy (NY)
McCaul
McClintock
McCollum
McCotter
McDermott
McGovern
McHenry
McIntyre
McKeon
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McNerney
Meehan
Meeks
Mica
Michaud
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller (NC)
Miller, Gary
Miller, George
Moore
Moran
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Myrick
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Neugebauer
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Nunnelee
Olson
Olver
Owens
Palazzo
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor (AZ)
Paul
Paulsen
Payne
Pearce
Pelosi
Pence
Perlmutter
Peters
Peterson
Petri
Pingree (ME)
Pitts
Platts
Poe (TX)
Polis
Pompeo
Posey
Price (GA)
Price (NC)
Quayle
Quigley
Rahall
Rangel
Reed
Rehberg
Reichert
Renacci
Reyes
Ribble
Richardson
Richmond
Rigell
Rivera
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Rooney
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross (AR)
Ross (FL)
Rothman (NJ)
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Runyan
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Ryan (WI)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Scalise
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schilling
Schmidt
Schock
Schwartz
Schweikert
Scott (SC)
Scott (VA)
Scott, Austin
Scott, David
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sessions
Sewell
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuler
Shuster
Simpson
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Southerland
Stark
Stearns
Stivers
Stutzman
Sullivan
Sutton
Terry
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tierney
Tipton
Tonko
Towns
Tsongas
Turner
Upton
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walberg
Walden
Walsh (IL)
Walz (MN)
Wasserman Schultz
Watt
Waxman
Webster
Welch
West
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Wilson (FL)
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Wolf
Womack
Woodall
Woolsey
Wu
Yarmuth
Yoder
Young (AK)
Young (FL)
Young (IN)

NAYS—1

Schrader

ANSWERED ''PRESENT''—1

Johnson (IL)

NOT VOTING—12

Baca
Bachmann
Bishop (NY)
Burgess
Giffords
Grijalva
Hinchey
Hirono
Murphy (CT)
Rokita
Speier
Waters

□ 1553

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Ms. HIRONO. Madam Speaker, had I been present, I would have voted as follows: On rollcall No. 671, "no;" rollcall No. 672, "no;" rollcall No. 673, "yes;" rollcall No. 674 "yes."

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 451

Mr. CRITZ. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that my name be removed from the list of cosponsors of H.R. 451.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Pennsylvania?

There was no objection.

BUDGET CONTROL ACT OF 2011

Mr. DREIER. Madam Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 383 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 383

Resolved, That during further consideration of the bill (S. 627) to establish the Commission on Freedom of Information Act Processing Delays, as amended, pursuant to House Resolution 375, the further amendment printed in the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution shall be considered as adopted.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from California is recognized for 1 hour.

□ 1600

Mr. DREIER. Madam Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to my very good friend, the gentlewoman from Rochester, New York (Ms. SLAUGHTER), the distinguished ranking minority member of the Committee on Rules, pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Mr. DREIER asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DREIER. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. DREIER. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on the measure before us.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

Mr. DREIER. Madam Speaker, as I began yesterday, when we launched the debate, it was exactly 3 p.m. It's 4:01 on Friday, July 29. And as we stand, as I do, or sit here, as any many of our colleagues do, we're exactly 4 days away from that August 2 date at which time the Department of Treasury has calculated that the Federal Government will run out of money. At that point, we, as a country, will face impossible choices about what obligations to default on first.

As I said, with this August 2 date rapidly approaching, we know that we are faced with the potential of running out of money. We also know that under that kind of scenario, there are no winners, and there are no losers. We have a profound responsibility to resolve the crisis at hand and avert the economic catastrophe that will come if we do not join together and find a way to raise the debt ceiling.

But this looming crisis is not the fundamental problem. We're facing this crisis because of a much larger, much longer-term problem. The Federal Government spends more than it has. If you think about it, Madam Speaker, we don't have a debt ceiling problem; what we have is a debt problem. The former cannot be resolved without addressing the latter. You can't address the debt ceiling issue unless you address the debt issue that is before us. That's precisely what today's process and the amendment that we are putting to the measure that we debated all day yesterday is all about. And the rule before us is moving us toward addressing the root cause of the problem.

We're adding another layer of accountability, something that Democrats and Republicans alike regularly talk about. Accountability is being added to the plan that Speaker BOEHNER is moving forward. With the amendment that we're going to consider that this rule will make in order, the House will proceed with the critical business at hand. We will pass a bold and credible plan to rein in our debt and responsibly avert the crisis that looms just a few days from now.

It's extremely unfortunate that this process has become so lengthy and partisan. I think everyone feels very saddened at the fact that it's become such a lengthy and very, very partisan process. But Madam Speaker, time is running out. Today we have the opportunity to do our work, and with passage of this measure, we will be moving the process forward to help avert the crisis that we potentially face on August 2.

When we pass this out, we will send a measure to the Senate, and as we all know, this is the only proposal that, when we pass it today, that will have passed either House of Congress. We need to have the support to do that. I hope very much that while many of my colleagues who are on the other side of the aisle may not be supportive of all the provisions in the Boehner plan, I hope very much to move the process forward so that we can ensure that our constituents get their Social Security

checks on August 3, since we all know the President, in his July 12 speech, said that if we don't increase the debt ceiling by August 2, he couldn't guarantee that Social Security checks would go out.

So to keep the process moving, to ensure that we get those checks out and address the other very, very important priorities that we need to have funding for, we can pass this in a bipartisan way so that we can get to the Senate, work out our differences as expeditiously as possible, and come back with what clearly has to be a bipartisan compromise to ensure that we are able to decrease spending, getting to the root cause of the problem, and at the same time, do what we all know has to be done and that is increase the debt ceiling.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. I thank my good friend, the gentleman from California, the chair of the Rules Committee, for yielding me the customary 30 minutes, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Ms. SLAUGHTER asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Madam Speaker, today we face a self-inflicted crisis, and the majority's proposed solution is no solution at all. The debt ceiling was created, ironically, to avoid forcing Congress to approve every new issue of debt. The debt ceiling was originally introduced to pay for World War I and was designed to be a formality that would help our country and economy operate smoothly and without interruption. All these years later, it having done that, the debt ceiling now appears to have outlived its usefulness. In fact, I believe we should abolish the debt limit altogether and never face a crisis like this again of whether we will be a responsible country that pays our bills. Only one other country has the debt limit, and that is Denmark. I think we really need to look at this as an anachronism from 1917.

Regardless, throughout the life of the debt ceiling, raising the ceiling has never been questioned. Since 1960, the ceiling has been raised 78 times. Throughout this time, there's been no quid pro quo demanded to raise the debt ceiling, no ransom demanded in exchange for raising our debt ceiling and preventing default. That is, until today. Bringing our Nation to the brink of collapse has been a conscious decision of the majority party. Placing ideology before country, they are demanding controversial and unacceptable cuts or else they are willing to let our Nation default.

We have been warned by the United States Senate and the President of the United States that the proposed legislation will not be passed into law. They have said it repeatedly. They have said it clearly. Yet the majority continues to believe this bill can actually avert the danger of default. They're playing a dangerous game of chicken, asking the Nation to give into their demands if we want the American economy to live to see another day. I simply cannot agree to the extreme demands being put forth by the majority today.

□ 1610

After pulling yesterday's legislation from the floor, the majority has introduced a piece of legislation that demands the impossible. Today's bill doesn't just require a vote on a constitutional amendment; it demands that a constitutional amendment be approved by both Chambers of Congress this fall. If the amendment doesn't pass, then we not only face the prospect of default again 6 months from now, but we have even fewer options to avoid default.

If previous proposals are any guide, the constitutional amendment would place the burden of debt reduction squarely upon the middle class, threatening Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid, and Members of Congress would be given a Sophie's choice: Do we vote against this amendment and protect Medicare or do we vote for the amendment to avoid economic default? This is totally unnecessary.

In effect, this legislation releases one hostage and takes another. Six months from now, we would be forced to choose between a constitutional amendment and putting the Nation back on the brink of default. I refuse to trade hostages with the majority and prolong this crisis for another 6 months.

I urge my colleagues to put the country before any ideology and come together to solve an urgent and serious crisis that we are facing today. It's our duty to put the welfare of the country before all else. That is why we were elected by the people who expect us to do just that, and that is what we swear to do. It is time we answered the call.

I urge my colleagues to vote ''no'' on today's bill and urgently, urgently, get back to serving the American people. And we spent far too much time on the useless bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DREIER. Madam Speaker, I yield myself 15 seconds.

I would say to my good friend that I would like to totally associate myself with her remarks at the end in which she said it is absolutely essential for us to work together in a bipartisan way to resolve this issue. But I know this will come as a surprise. When she began her remarks and said that we on our side are working overtime making a conscious decision to bring our Nation to the verge of collapse, that is a slight mischaracterization of exactly where we are.

Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to my good friend from Spring Hill, a hardworking and not-too-well-rested member of the Rules Committee, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. NUGENT).

Mr. NUGENT. I thank the distinguished chair of the Rules Committee, Mr. DREIER, for allowing me to speak.

I will be perfectly honest with you. There is a lot about this rule that I don't love but, quite frankly, we don't have much time left. We need to get something done and we need to get something done now. This rule provides us with the tools and the mechanisms that we need to get our jobs done and bring our economy and our country back from the brink of default.

Default is not an option. The underlying legislation, the Budget Control Act of 2011, saves us from default. Most of all, I support the Budget Control Act of 2011 because it means both Chambers of Congress must pass a balanced budget amendment before the President can raise the debt ceiling once again.

Do I like everything in the bill? No, I don't.

Does it do what the American people and the American economy need and deserve? Yes, it does. And that's why I support both the rule and the underlying legislation.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Madam Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the ranking member on Ways and Means, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN).

(Mr. LEVIN asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LEVIN. The gentleman from California has been talking about moving the process forward. It does not move the process forward to pass a bill that's dead before arrival in the Senate. It doesn't move the process forward to pass a bill that is even more partisan than the one yesterday.

You know, the country has to be wondering, we are 1 day closer to default and, indeed, one step backwards. The Republicans are trying to squeeze out a majority here, and what they are doing is inserting a provision that requires a two-thirds vote in the Senate and the House, and that's completely a nonstarter.

The American public is looking for a solution, not a stalemate, and the House Republicans have become the party of gridlock. Passing this only increases it. It's a move backwards, maybe to protect your flank, but not to protect America.

Mr. DREIER. Madam Speaker, I yield myself 10 seconds to say to my good friend that there's a bit of a disconnect from my perspective. So failure to act is not gridlock; passing legislation out of the House of Representatives is, in fact, gridlock.

I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Cincinnati, Ohio (Mr. CHABOT).

Mr. CHABOT. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Our national debt stands at a staggering $14.3 trillion and we currently borrow more than 40 cents on every dollar we spend, and our President and Democrats in the other body say that a balanced budget amendment is ''dead on arrival.''

Fifteen years ago, the balanced budget amendment passed the House with a bipartisan vote only to lose by one vote, one vote in the Senate. A constitutional amendment is the only way

to ensure that future Congresses live within their means and end the spending binge.

Our colleague, Congressman MCCLINTOCK, might have summed it up best in a Washington Times op-ed earlier this week. He said: Imagine a family that earns $50,000 a year but is spending more than $88,000 a year and has a credit card balance of $330,000 a year.

That's us. We're bankrupt, and Washington is broken.

Why are Senate Democrats and the President so afraid of making a commitment to balance our budget?

Stop the spending. No more empty promises. No more excuses.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to a member of the Committee on Ways and Means, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DOGGETT).

Mr. DOGGETT. You know, yesterday when the Speaker failed to secure the votes for his misbegotten deal, I thought all these Republicans would need to get under way today was a professional physical therapist to help heal the twisted arms, the sprains, perhaps even a dislocation as all that pressure was applied by the Speaker to get those final votes; you know, a therapist to kind of fit the slings and apply the splints.

But, no, the professional obstructionists among the Republicans have yielded for far less than a deep muscle massage. All they need is a meaningless vote on an amendment that is designed to fail, that they know will never rewrite the United States Constitution the way they would like to rewrite it to enshrine a little Republican dogma into the supreme law of the land.

I will admit that, through the years, the balanced budget amendment has gained more interest on my part. It became much more appealing as I saw years of Republicans entering wars without paying for them, insisting upon the mythology—no, indeed, it's really a political theology of Republicans—that you can cut taxes, raise spending, and everything will work out okay.

Their approach, even though their experts told them these tax cuts would drive us into deficit, they insisted on the political alchemy that they could take tax cuts and turn them into surpluses, just as if they could turn hay into gold. If there were one vote I could take to do something about the George W. Bush administration dripping in red ink, I would certainly want to take it, but a constitutional amendment is not a solution. It's an excuse for not having a solution, for not grappling with the financial problems we have. And the only reason it's being brought up this weekend is just to delay this crisis nearer and nearer to the precipice to which this Republican irresponsibility has taken us.

The credit worthiness and the full faith and the credit of the United States is endangered by the refusal to adopt a balanced approach that would close some tax loopholes and reduce spending all at once. That's what we need. Instead of putting all the burden on the many, demand a little from the few at the top.

Mr. DREIER. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to one of our very capable and thoughtful new Members of the 112th Congress, the gentleman from Drexel Hill, Pennsylvania (Mr. MEEHAN).

□ 1620

Mr. MEEHAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the opportunity to speak.

As we've been talking so much, I hear so much about a balanced approach. What we really need is a balanced budget.

The concern right now, as I talk to the many phone callers who are calling in, is that America has taken the time to tighten their belts at home; and when you talk to business people, they've made the tough decisions, and they're looking to us now to make the tough decisions as well.

And that's what I think this legislation has done, legislation which we can look at right now and we can put away the arguments from each side, the Republican side and the Democratic side. This is about America right now. The people who are calling in, who are watching, they are watching right now and greatly concerned because of the fact that they feel their economic security is at risk because we can't deal with the long-term implications of this budget and this debt.

There is a plan, and the Republicans in this House have put together a plan. And I'm not going to get into the partisan rhetoric. Let us go around this plan. If we've got differences, let us resolve those differences effectively for the American people. Let us get to work in this House, get it to the Senate, pass it today so we can get the good work done that will allow America to get back to work with a sense of confidence in the future of our economy, get people back to work creating jobs.

Mr. DREIER. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. MEEHAN. I yield to the gentleman from California.

Mr. DREIER. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I would like to compliment him on his very thoughtful remarks, Madam Speaker, and say that as I listen to this newly elected Member of the House, it is very difficult to imagine that he would consciously engage in an effort to bring our Nation to the verge of collapse, because we want to solve this problem and ensure that we can have a strong and vibrant United States of America, creating jobs and getting our economy growing.

I thank my friend for his thoughtful comments.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT), a constitutional scholar.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Madam Speaker, this rule provides for debate of legislation that was slapped together behind closed doors, providing for trillions of dollars in unspecified cuts. The final version was sprung on the House after being made public just this morning, and now we're expected to vote the whole thing up or down, without amendment, in spite of the fact that 53 Senators are already on record saying that they will oppose it.

This legislation is in response to a manufactured so-called ''crisis.'' We can avoid default on our obligations the same way we have done it almost once a year over the last half century, just increase the debt ceiling. And now this final version calls for default on our obligations unless we pass a constitutional amendment mislabeled a ''balanced budget amendment.''

The so-called ''balanced budget amendment'' reported from the Judiciary Committee does not require a balanced budget. In fact, it will make it more difficult to balance the budget, and it will certainly jeopardize Social Security and Medicare. It will also include a provision that requires a three-fifths vote to increase the debt ceiling, as if this week's drama isn't enough of a spectacle.

Madam Speaker, we should end this manufactured crisis, increase the debt ceiling to avoid default, and then seriously focus on legislation that will create jobs and restore fiscal responsibility.

Mr. DREIER. Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. ANDREWS).

(Mr. ANDREWS asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ANDREWS. Madam Speaker, the inevitable consequence of this bill is that when the United States wants to extend the debt ceiling to pay our bills, we will have to reduce Medicare and Social Security. That is the inevitable consequence of these balanced budget amendments. Therefore, inevitably, this bill will not see the light of day in the United States Senate.

What we ought to do is get to our inevitable obligation, which is to come to an agreement that extends our debt ceiling and makes a responsible down payment on our deficit. The President of the United States this morning outlined a way to do that, and that's what we ought to be working on. He talked about commonality between the two Houses and the two parties on cuts in annual programs in the area of 5, 6, 7 percent—painful, but necessary.

He talked about a fair process where a body that would act between the House and the Senate would consider all the options with respect to entitlement programs. Protecting Medicare and Social Security benefits, and looking at a contribution from the wealthiest Americans, the former revenue, would be considered and voted on. And certainly that approach would get us

out of this period of uncertainty by extending the debt ceiling for the country as was done 17 times without condition for President Reagan, seven times without condition for President George W. Bush.

This is an inevitable waste of time, this bill. It's a bad idea. Let's get on to the better idea of approaching this problem and fixing the problem for this country. Vote ''no'' on this underlying bill and this rule.

Mr. DREIER. I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to yield 1 minute to yet another constitutional scholar, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. WATT), a member of the Judiciary Committee.

Mr. WATT. Madam Speaker, I think this may be the absolute worst resolution I have seen before this House in the 19 years I've been here. It brings to continuing debate a bill that has already been debated yesterday with an amendment, but there is only 1 minute left in the debate.

And the change that is being made requires the passage of an amendment to the Constitution of the United States in order to ever raise the debt limit again. The effect of that is that we have 1 minute—we don't even have it, the majority has the 1 minute that's left in the debate. We have no time left in the debate on our side to debate whether we will pass an amendment to the Constitution of the United States that literally holds a gun to the head of the economy of the United States of America. We ought to be ashamed of ourselves legislating in this way. This is a terrible way to legislate to provide for a constitutional amendment. If we're going to do it, we ought to at least debate it in good faith.

Mr. DREIER. I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. I am pleased to yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. MORAN).

Mr. MORAN. Madam Speaker, this is a Republican-contrived bankruptcy.

A decade ago, the majority party inherited surpluses as far as the eye could see, and then they promptly took away the revenue that enabled us to balance our budget. They crippled this country with deep tax cuts. In fact, we have the lowest revenue that we've had at any time since before Medicare and basically at any time since before the Great Depression.

What this is going to do and the reason we oppose this is that if this were on the books, we never would have had the ability to rescue the world from the Great Depression in the 1930s; we never would have had the ability to win the war for democracy in the 1940s; we never would have created a permanent American middle class with the GI Bill that provided the working class with homes and higher education, we never would have won the race to space for the free world in the sixties; we never would have been able to establish Medicare and civil rights legislation in the mid-sixties.

And certainly, had we been stuck in this fiscal straightjacket, President Clinton never could have raised the needed revenue to balance the budget so we never would have been able to create 20 million new jobs as we did in the 1990s, and reduce poverty, and expand the middle class, and create all those trillions of dollars of projected surpluses that the majority inherited and promptly squandered.

This bill will make us a weaker, poorer and smaller country, and that's why it should be defeated.

Mr. DREIER. Madam Speaker, at this time I am very privileged to yield 2 minutes to my very good friend from Glendale, Arizona (Mr. FRANKS).

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. I certainly thank the gentleman.

Madam Speaker, Mr. Obama and the Democrats have constantly and consistently said we need to take a balanced approach to the debt crisis facing America, but they steadfastly refuse to even consider the one truly balanced approach to this program, that being a balanced budget amendment to the United States Constitution.

This effort today will be the second time that the House of Representatives will have passed legislation requiring a balanced budget amendment, which would actually create a permanent solution to this crisis and make sure that economic freedom can be available for Americans today and for future generations.

□ 1630

Yet Mr. REID says he will kill this bill as soon as it comes to the Senate, or at least strip out the balanced budget amendment that's in it.

Madam Speaker, if we can get Mr. REID here and the President himself, and I guess we would have to put out an APB on the President because we can't find him. He is AWOL in this debate. But if we could, I would ask him two questions: First, what is your plan to deal with this issue? Secondly, what on earth is so radical about having a balanced budget amendment to create a permanent solution to this problem?

Now, I doubt we would get an answer, Madam Speaker. So today, we will have to do as we have done before, and we will try to proceed without them and try to do something truly historic that will save this Nation and its people from economic ruin.

Madam Speaker, long ago, right after the Constitution was finished, Thomas Jefferson said: ''I wish it were possible to obtain a single amendment to the Constitution. I would be willing to depend on that alone for the reduction of the administration of our government to the genuine principles of its Constitution; I mean, an additional article, taking from the Federal Government the power of borrowing.''

Madam Speaker, Thomas Jefferson was right. And how I wish his contemporaries had listened to him about the balanced budget amendment, but they didn't. Now we have a crisis of $14 trillion facing us as a result of not having this amendment, and it could crush us in a way that no military power has ever done. And in this moment in history in America, we may get a second chance. I hope my colleagues will join us in this historic effort.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Madam Speaker, I am delighted to yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. FRANK), the ranking Democrat on the Financial Services Committee.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Madam Speaker, we have a sad spectacle today of a substantive mess brought to us by a procedural bigger mess. But I can't entirely blame Speaker BOEHNER. We have seen him all week forced to retreat continually from an effort to be conservative but somewhat responsible to a position where today we have a bill that no one thinks will solve the problem because it makes as a prerequisite to raising the debt a constitutional amendment that no one thinks will pass.

I remember Speaker O'Neill when I got here, and there's one thing he and Speaker BOEHNER seem to have in common, and that's a theme song. Speaker O'Neill's theme song was ''I'll Be With You in Apple Blossom Time.'' By now, Speaker BOEHNER is entitled to take as his theme song ''It's My Party and I'll Cry If I Want To'' because his party has forced him to retreat, first of all, from the position he tried to take to get this thing done; and, secondly, from a set of promises he made procedurally. As a result of where we are today, with martial law rules and amendments being sprung and amendments not being vetted, there is no procedural promise that the Republicans made that they have left unbroken.

So we have a flawed bill, brought to us by a weakened Speaker, under an unfortunate and undemocratic process. Once it's out of the way, once whatever impulses have driven members of his own party so to undercut him are satisfied, maybe then in an adult way we can sit down and work this out.

Now, I expect to vote for something I don't like because we have to compromise, but this bill doesn't even begin to meet any kind of serious test.

Mr. DREIER. I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to yield 1½ minutes to the gentlewoman from Maryland (Ms. EDWARDS).

Ms. EDWARDS. Madam Speaker, I'm shocked. We spent 4 hours on the floor of the House of Representatives in January reading the Constitution, and now we get to spend a minute debating it. It's pretty amazing how much the folks on the other side value the Constitution of the United States.

I'm opposed to the rule, the bill, everything that's connected with it. We approach this August 2 deadline. The markets have closed down yet one

more time before this weekend begins. And President Obama has been crystal clear. He said that any agreement to increase the debt ceiling has to extend it to 2013. And yet here we are considering something that the President has said is a nonstarter, the Senate has said is a nonstarter, the American people have said is a nonstarter, and here we are again debating something that will never go anywhere.

The Republican majority really should be embarrassed for the American people. They are putting everything in jeopardy and leaving nothing up to the President to decide come August 2 when this debt ceiling deadline approaches. And placing at risk our retirement security, placing at risk our ability to get credit, our ability to get a home mortgage, all of that because of this recklessness.

The bill that Speaker BOEHNER brought to the floor yesterday and this constitutional amendment that was hurriedly drafted today just to please the far right elements of the Tea Party, I can't even believe we are here today trying to satisfy the far right when we're not busy satisfying the needs of the American public and the markets around the world. Why are we voting on this plan and not one that has a fighting chance of avoiding default?

I want to say, Madam Speaker, it's time for America to get busy here, understanding that the Republican majority is ready to jeopardize our entire future and put at risk our entire future for this garbage.

Mr. DREIER. I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CONNOLLY).

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. Madam Speaker, the bill proposed last night by the House Republicans set us up to fail and risk a catastrophic default. Today's gimmick is more of the same. But to win over the crowd calling for default, House Republican leadership would now make the disaster even more likely by including a constitutional amendment likely requiring a three-fifths vote to avoid any future default.

As our Republican colleagues sadly demonstrated yesterday, that threshold will be impossible to meet today and in the future. Their blind adherence to the demands of the default caucus stands in sharp contrast to the desire of most Americans who, according to every poll, are demanding a balanced compromise.

This bill is a blatant, cynical exercise in raw political muscle and nothing more. To the House Republicans bent on turning our Founding Fathers into deadbeat dads, I would respond using Speaker BOEHNER's own words from last year: Hell no, you can't.

Mr. DREIER. I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN), the ranking member on the Budget Committee.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. I thank my colleague.

Madam Speaker, there is a little pattern emerging here. First we had our Republican colleagues walk out of the Biden talks. And then twice they walked out of talks with the President. And then they totally rejected a proposal put forward by the Republican leader in the Senate, MITCH MCCONNELL. And last night they said ''no'' to the proposal put forward by their own Speaker. And that brings us to where we are today.

In order to accommodate the more extreme elements of the Republican Caucus, they had to change the bill once again. Now what they are proposing is that ultimately we turn budget authority over not to the elected Representatives but to a Federal judge who would ultimately decide how we're going to deal with our budget. You talk about passing the buck, you talk about not taking responsibility, now is the time to come together to come up with a reasonable compromise, not to move the parties far apart.

The last point I want to make with regards to the deficit: We want to make sure that we have a plan, a balanced plan, to reduce the deficit. I'm just waiting for my colleagues on the other side to say that they're willing to get one penny from eliminating taxpayer subsidies to the oil companies or closing corporate loopholes for jets—just one penny—for the purpose of deficit reduction. Then we'll know that they're serious about that.

The President has said let's do $3 in spending cuts and $1 in revenue. But apparently asking $1 in revenue by eliminating a subsidy for the oil companies, that's too far. Oh, yes, we owe China. We need to do something about our debt to China, but asking the oil companies to take less taxpayer dollars, Federal taxpayer subsidy dollars, no, we can't do that.

Let's be serious about balancing the budget and getting the deficit under control, but let's do it in a balanced way. This proposal takes us further in the wrong direction and doesn't bring us together to solve a problem for the American people. Now is the time to get serious.

Mr. DREIER. At this time I am happy to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CULBERSON), a very hardworking member on the Appropriations Committee.

Mr. CULBERSON. Madam Speaker, I think it is very revealing in the debate today that the American people can see that the opposition to the proposal before the House is that we are attempting to even suggest that there be a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution, not any specific amendment.

□ 1640

We want, as a constitutional conservative majority, to see a vote in the House and the Senate on a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution, something I've coauthored since 2001. Yet the majority is strenuously objecting to that. The minority objects to our effort to control the debt and the deficit without raising taxes. They object to strong spending caps in the future, which by the way, exempts anyone over the age of 55 and under Medicare, Medicaid. They're exempt under the Paul Ryan budget; they're exempt on the proposal that Speaker BOEHNER has brought to us today.

The Speaker has attempted to find the largest possible cuts with the strongest possible enforceable budget caps that could pass a Democrat Senate in order to get it on the desk of the President before the August 3 deadline. The Speaker and this new constitutional conservative majority are doing everything in our power to avoid a default while honoring the trust that the Nation put in us in this landslide election which just occurred in November. The Nation spoke decisively in electing this new majority to the House. We were sent here to control spending, to control the size of the government, to get the government out of our lives, out of our pocket, and back within the bounds of the Constitution as designed by the Founders. And we've attempted to do that.

I applaud Speaker BOEHNER for working so diligently to find the largest possible cut that could possibly pass a temporarily liberal-controlled Senate in the very short span of time that we've got here. We would all like to get more. But if you can get 60, 70 percent of where you need to go to get the Nation back on track to a balanced budget and avoid the brick wall that lies ahead of us on August 3, we need to do so to avoid a default.

I applaud the Speaker for bringing this package to the floor and urge all the Members to support it.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Madam Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to a member of the Judiciary Committee, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. I thank the gentlelady very much.

Last night, the Democrats were here waiting while the Republicans could not get their own conference together. If any of you were watching the national news, it was not because we were not ready to vote and to move forward on a compromise. It was because those who believe they had a landslide victory are still talking about elections instead of talking about the American people.

This is the worst bill that any American could ever imagine in the history of this Nation. I tell you that because this bill will in fact default the American Government in 6 months, and it will not adhere to the Constitution, which says the Declaration is the promise and the Constitution is the fulfillment.

We actually have the authority, Mr. President, under the 14th Amendment

to raise the debt ceiling by way of acknowledging that the public debt should always be recognized. But in this particular legislation, in 6 months if we do not cut by $1.6 trillion and pass a balanced budget amendment, the Nation will default.

And the balanced budget amendment is not by a majority. It is 60 percent of this Congress will stop the American people from receiving their just due. We will not have Social Security. We will not have Medicaid. We will not have Medicare. In actuality, the mandate will cause us to support the Republican Study budget, which is $9 trillion in cuts, 70 percent of discretionary funding. That means all of your Medicare, all of your Medicaid, all of your Social Security.

Madam Speaker, I ask the American people to call in and say, stop the madness and compromise. Do what is right. Mr. President, if not, raise the debt ceiling under the Constitution. You have the authority.

Madam Speaker, I rise today in opposition to the "Budget Control Act of 2011," which, like the previous debt-ceiling bills introduced by my colleagues on the other side of the aisle, attempts to resolve our budget ceiling crisis by demanding sharp cuts to domestic programs that ask average Americans to make life-changing sacrifices while not asking America's wealthiest individuals and most profitable corporations to contribute their fair share.

In my lifetime, I have never seen such a concerted effort to ransom the American economy in order to extort the American public. While I support bipartisan efforts to increase the debt limit and to resolve our differences over budgetary revenue and spending issues, I cannot support a bill that unduly robs average Americans of their economic security and ability to provide for their families while constraining the ability of Congress to deal effectively with America's economic, fiscal, and job creation troubles.

The Budget Control Act of 2011 cuts $22 billion from the Federal Budget for FY2012. Robert McIntyre, of Citizens for Tax Justice testified before the Senate Budget Committee that tax loopholes for corporations, big business owners and business investors cost the Treasury Department $365 billion in FY2011.

We need to change the tone here in Congress. Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke said it best when he stated in a recently before the House Committee on Financial Services. "We really don't want to just cut, cut, cut," Chairman Bernanke further stated "You need to be a little bit cautious about sharp cuts in the very near term because of the potential impact on the recovery. That doesn't at all preclude—in fact, I believe it's entirely consistent with—a longer-term program that will bring our budget into a sustainable position."

The Boehner plan does just that it will cut, cut, cut without taking into full consideration the serious cuts to Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid. This bill is essentially a rehashed version of the same bill that President Obama promised to veto and the Senate vowed to reject. It asks for $917 billion in cuts from domestic spending for a $900 billion increase in the debt ceiling, while demanding nothing in revenue from the nation's wealthiest. This is nothing more than a ransom note, irresponsibly raising the debt ceiling for only a few months so that in just a short period of time, the American public will be hit again for $1.6 trillion in cuts from Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, and veterans benefits. Anyone who believes that this plan will not result in a serious cut to Social Security should consider this . . . Social Security represents 20 percent of all federal spending, making it unrealistic to think such large cuts in mandatory spending will not affect Social Security benefits.

I state here today that the Boehner proposal is ill-conceived and fails to offer a balanced approach to decreasing the deficit. Instead of requiring shared sacrifice, the Boehner plan places the entire burden on the backs of seniors, the middle class and our nation's most vulnerable citizens, while doing nothing to close corporate tax giveaways and increase taxes on those most able to afford them.

The Boehner plan calls for large cuts in discretionary programs of $1.2 trillion over the next 10 years through strict new spending caps. Most experts predict that the first round of cuts would target discretionary programs, including education, infrastructure, job training and law enforcement. The Boehner plan would then require an additional $1.8 trillion in savings to be identified by the end of the year as a condition for raising the debt ceiling again at that time. Given the magnitude of these additional required savings, it would result in deep draconian cuts in federal entitlement programs such as Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid. A repeal of health reform's coverage expansions. And a dramatic reduction in safety net programs for vulnerable Americans, such as food stamps and unemployment and disability insurance. This is unacceptable, and each is avoidable if corporations and the wealthy are required to shoulder a fair share of this burden.

The Speaker's plan requires a vote on an ill-advised constitutional balanced budget amendment in both chambers of Congress by the end of this year. The details surrounding exactly which proposed constitutional balanced budget amendment will be voted on are unclear. However, earlier proposals that have appeared in the House of Representatives, including H.J. Res. 1, would have a devastating impact on discretionary spending and on our modest economic recovery.

Passing an amendment to the Constitution is one of the most serious processes the United States Congress can undertake, requiring a two thirds supermajority of support in both the House and Senate and ratification by three fourths (¾) of the States. The Founders purposely made the amendment process a long and arduous one. Do my Republican colleagues really expect Congress to capriciously pass an amendment altering our nation's founding document on such short notice; an amendment that will fundamentally change our country without reasonable time for debate; without the opportunity for a hearing or questioning of witnesses; without any reports as to what impact it may have?

By tying the fate of whether the United States pays its debt obligations to the historically prolonged Constitutional amendment process, the Republicans who support this bill have demonstrated, at this critical juncture in American history, that they are profoundly irresponsible when it comes to the integrity of our economy and utterly bereft of sensible solutions for fixing it.

The Speaker's plan will result in for $2.7 trillion in deficit reduction and a $2.5 trillion increase in the debt limit in two stages, with the two debt ceiling increases being conditioned upon enactment of an initial set of spending, cuts and a later, second deficit reduction measure.

I do not believe that Congress should yield its authority to what amounts to a Commission. BOEHNER's plan creates a 12-member joint congressional committee to develop a plan for an additional $1.8 trillion in deficit reduction that Congress would vote on in December. In addition the Speaker's plan authorizes the president ito submit a $900 billion increase in the $14.3 trillion debt ceiling immediately after enactment of this bill, and a $1.6 trillion increase if the $1.8 trillion deficit reduction measure is enacted. Both debt limit increases would take effect automatically unless Congress enacted resolutions of disapproval. The Speaker's plan also requires the House and Senate to vote by the end of the year on a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution. As I have stated before this will tie the hands of Congress.

Finally, as noted above, the Boehner proposal provides only a short-term extension of the federal debt ceiling. This means that the gridlock that now prevails in our government will continue for the remainder of the 112th Congress. According to the Center on Budget and Policy, recent reports have suggested that rating agencies will downgrade the U.S. credit rating if the Boehner proposal is enacted. This would result not only in higher interest costs to the federal government but also would raise the interest rate paid by individuals and families on car loans, credit cards and mortgages throughout the United States. Taken together, all of these factors would undermine the nation's fragile recovery.

There has been a theme this Congress of focusing on cutting programs that benefit the public good and for the most at need, while ignoring the need to focus on job creation and economic recovery. This bill is wasting a tremendous amount of time when we should be focused on paying our nation's bills and resolving our differences!

In my district, the Texas 18th, more than 190,000 people live below the poverty line. We must not, we cannot, at a time when the Census Bureau places the number of American living in poverty at the highest rate in over 50 years, cut vital social services. Not in the wake of the 2008 financial crisis and persistent unemployment, when so many rely on federal benefits to survive, like the Supplemental Nutrition Access Program (SNAP) that fed 3.9 million residents of Texas in April 2011 or the Women, Infant, and Children (WIC) Program that provides nutritious food to more than 990,000 mothers and children in my home state.

In 2009, there were 43.6 million Americans living in poverty nationwide. According to the 2010 Federal poverty threshold, determined by the U.S. Census, a family of four is considered impoverished if they are living on less than $22,314 per year.

Children represent a disproportionate amount of the United States' poor population.

In 2008, there were 15.45 million impoverished children in the nation, 20.7% of America's youth. The Kaiser Family Foundation estimates that there are currently 5.6 million Texans living in poverty, 2.2 million of them children, and that 17.4% of households in the state struggle with food insecurity.

There is no doubt that we must reduce the national debt, but my Republican colleague's desire for instant gratification through deep spending cuts to benefits, Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security is reckless and threatens the financial security of millions of Americans.

Instead of closing corporate tax loopholes to reduce the deficit, the Budget Control Act cuts discretionary spending, and requires Congress to draft proposals to cut at least $1.8 trillion from Medicare and Social Security. This is an outrage, and an insult to the American dream.

Forcing Congress to draft plans to cut 1.8 trillion from Medicare and Social Security forces Members to disregard the best interests of their constituents. Medicare guarantees a healthy and secure retirement for Americans who have paid into it for their entire working lives. Protecting Medicare represents the basic values of fairness and respect for our seniors, including the 2.9 million Texans who received Medicare in 2010.

Any cuts to Medicaid would be just as damaging. Harris County has one of the highest Medicaid enrollment records in Texas. Limits and cuts to Medicaid funds would significantly hurt the citizens of Texas's 18th District. Harris County averages between 500,000 and 600,000 Medicaid recipients monthly, thousands of people who may not have access to healthcare should Congress sacrifice Medicaid to cut spending.

Yes, we must take steps to balance the budget and reduce the national debt, but not at the expense of vital social programs. It is unconscionable that in our nation of vast resources, my Republican colleagues would pass a budget that cuts funding for essential social programs. Poverty impacts far too many Americans and social safety nets provide these individuals with vital assistance.

Perhaps my friends on the other side of the aisle are content to conclude that life simply is not fair, equality is not accessible to everyone, and the less advantaged among us are condemned to remain as they are, but I do not accept that. That kind of complacency is not fitting for America.

As we continue to discuss the necessity of increasing our debt ceiling, I have heard the concerns of many of my constituents and the American people regarding the size of our national debt and the care with which taxpayer money is spent. I, too, am concerned about these issues; for to burden future generations of Americans with tremendous amounts of debt should not be a way to avoid our fiscal responsibilities to the American people. However, the task of resolving our debt ceiling crisis must take precedence over other concerns, including political ideology. The game is up, and the American people understand that increasing the debt ceiling has nothing to do with any new spending and everything to do with paying off the obligations that we have already agreed to and promised to pay.

Prior to the existence of the debt ceiling, Congress had to approve borrowing each time the federal government wished to borrow money in order to carry out its functions. With the onset of World War I, more flexibility was needed to expand the government's capability to borrow money expeditiously in order to meet the rapidly changing requirements of funding a major war in the modern era.

To address this need, the first debt ceiling was established in 1917, allowing the federal government to borrow money to meet its obligations without prior Congressional approval, so long as in the aggregate, the amount borrowed did not eclipse a specified limit.

Since the debt limit was first put in place, Congress has increased it over 100 times; in fact, it was raised 10 times within the past decade. Congress last came together and raised the debt ceiling in February 2010. Today, the debt ceiling currently stands at $14.3 trillion dollars. In reality, that limit has already been eclipsed, but due to accounting procedures by Treasury Secretary Geithner, the debt limit can be artificially avoided until August 2nd.

Congress must act now in order to avert a crisis. Never in the history of America has the United States defaulted on its debt obligations.

We must be clear on what this issue means for our country. America has earned a reputation as the world's most trusted borrower. United States Treasury bonds have traditionally been one of the safest investments another country or investor could make. For investors around the world, purchasing a U.S. Treasury bond meant that they held something virtually as safe as cash, backed by the full faith and credit of the United States government.

In turn, with the proceeds from the bonds, the federal government of the world's largest economy is able to finance its operations. If the United States defaults on its debt obligations, the financial crisis that began in 2008 would pale in comparison, according to economic experts. The ensuing economic catastrophe would not only place the U.S. economy in a tailspin, but the world economy as well.

The fact that Congress, a body that typically has its fair share of political battles, has never played political chicken when it came to raising the debt ceiling should give us all pause, and is a testament to the seriousness with which we must approach this issue. However, this lime around, my Republican colleagues have created an impasse based upon an ideological commitment to spending cuts. While I understand and share the concern of my Republican colleagues with respect to deficit spending, and will continue to work with them in order to find reductions, now is not the time to put ideology over pragmatism. The reality is that, on August 3rd, the United States will begin to default on its debt obligations if the debt ceiling is not raised.

This unnecessarily places the American public and the economy between a rock and a hard place. Either Congress sides completely with the radical agenda of the Tea Party, which in the irresponsibly pulls the chair out from under the average American while polishing the throne of the wealthiest.

This detour into a spending debate is as unnecessary as it is perilous, as increasing the debt ceiling does not obligate the undertaking of any new spending by the federal government. Rather, raising the debt limit simply allows the government to pay existing legal obligations promised to debt holders that were already agreed to by Presidents and Congresses, both past and present.

Moreover, the impending crisis would have already occurred were it not for the extraordinary measures taken by Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner, including the suspension of the investment in securities to finance the Civil Service retirement and Disability Fund, as well as the redemption of a portion of those securities already held by that fund.

If the United States defaults on its obligations on August 3rd, the stock market will react violently to the news that for the first time in history, America is unable to keep its promises to pay. Not once in American history has the country's full faith and credit been called into question.

Once America defaults, investors who purchase U.S. bonds and finance our government will be less likely to lend to America in the future. Just as a person who defaults on a loan will find it harder to convince banks to lend them money in the future, a country that defaults on its debt obligations will find it harder to convince investors to lend money to a government that did not pay.

Showing the world that the United States does not pay its debts makes the purchasing of that debt less desirable because it requires the assumption of more risk on the part of the investors. The proponents of this bill are putting the country at serious risk of losing its status as the world's economic superpower. Our allies will lose faith in our ability to manage global economic affairs. Our status in the world will be diminished, which will undermine our leverage on the world stage that allows us to command the respect and compliance of other nations when it comes to decision-making. This bill will reduce America's ability to compete with a surging China.

Furthermore, any investors that do continue to purchase U.S. Treasury bonds will demand much higher interest rates in order to cover the increased risk. Once a default occurs, investors figure that the chance of the United States defaulting again is much greater, and will require the government to pay higher rates of interest in order to make the loan worth the risk for investors to take on.

Imagine the impact on our stock market if we do not pay our debts. As we have seen throughout the recent financial crisis, a bad stock market hurts not only big businesses and large investors on Wall Street, but small businesses and small investors as well. Families with investments tied to the stock market, such as 401(k)s, pension plans, and savings, will once again see the value of their investments drop. The American people are tired of the uncertainty of the value of their retirement accounts. We must not allow another wild fluctuation to occur due to default and add to the uncertainty still lingering in the minds of citizens.

The Speaker's plan is a short term fix for a long term issue. It is a patch rather than a proper repair. BOEHNER's plan requires that Congress address debt ceiling once again in a short span of time, which will once again lead to market uncertainty in a time when we are trying to rebuild our nation. This plan is not good for Wall Street and it is not good for the American people. The Speaker's bill is a short-term debt limit increase that will only ensure that Congress will go through this exact same standoff again in the next few months. Short-term proposals risk further uncertainty and the potentially damaging downgrade of the U.S. credit rating. The markets have made it clear that a short-term extension is not sufficient and could result in very serious consequences. While Democrats support deficit

reduction, we support doing it in a balanced way that provides certainty to the economy.

As if another stock market crisis were not enough, the housing market would take another hit if America defaulted. Higher mortgage rates in a housing market already weakened by default and foreclosures would cause a further depression of home values, destroying whatever equity families might have left in their homes after the housing crisis. Moreover, the long-term effects would reduce spending and investment in the housing market.

Increasing the debt ceiling is the responsible thing to do. Congress has already debated and approved the debt that an increased ceiling makes room for. However, my Republican colleagues have chosen to use this as an opportunity to hold the American people hostage to their extreme agenda.

Even prominent Republicans like Senator JOHN MCCAIN and Christine Todd Whitman have criticized the radical elements of their party who insist upon holding up the entire political process in order to flaunt their extreme, irrational, and unrealistic ideology. Senator MCCAIN has called the Tea Party's stance and the way they have conducted themselves during this manufactured crisis ''bizarre,'' and I am inclined to agree. Their agenda for this country is even too radical for Speaker BOEHNER, with the Tea Party vowing to reject their leader's own bill.

They live in a world that is not the world that the American people live in. In their world, they believe that taxes are always too high, even on people making over a billion a year in a struggling economy; that any increase in revenue is fundamentally wrong, even if it comes from large corporations who use tax loopholes at the expense of our job-creating small businesses; that investing anything in our economic future above tax revenues is impermissible, even in the midst of an economic downturn; and that tax cuts for the wealthy are always the nation's top priority, even at the expense of people that depend on Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, and veterans benefits to survive.

These beliefs place them on the fringe of American society, and yet due to the nature of our political process, they have held up the entire government and placed our economy on the precipice of a turbulent second recession.

If Congress cannot find a resolution then Congress will open the possibility that the President may invoke the Fourteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution, Section four, which states ''the validity of the public debt of the United States . . . shall not be questioned.'' The argument can be made that if Congress will not resolve our nation's pending default then the President, to protect the interest of our nation, must act. The President would then have to consider his powers under the Fourteenth Amendment which may grant him the authority to raise the debt ceiling, on his own, through executive order if Congress fails to raise the debt limit by the August 2, 2011 deadline. As a body we should not place the President or our country in this position.

For those reasons, I urge my colleagues to consider the constituents in their home districts who would be hurt by this bill. I urge my colleagues to return to the world in which the vast majority of Americans live; a world in which our shared destiny is determined by reasonable minds and good faith efforts to compromise. Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke warned that defaulting could ''throw the financial system into chaos,'' and ''destroy the trust and confidence that global investors have in Treasury securities as being the safest liquid assets in the world.''

Instead of injecting ideological spending cuts and Constitutional amendments into the traditionally non-political business of raising the debt ceiling, we must work quickly to pass a bill that makes good on our debt obligations and restores confidence in American credit.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to direct their remarks to the Chair.

Mr. DREIER. Madam Speaker, at this time I am very pleased to yield 1 minute to one of our thoughtful, hard-working new Members of this Congress, the gentleman from Manchester, New Hampshire (Mr. GUINTA).

Mr. GUINTA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for yielding.

What I want to say to the American people is: Let's stop the spending. Let's not call the President or the Congress to say stop this madness. Call this body and say: Stop the spending. Because we have a $14.3 trillion debt. We have a $1.6 trillion deficit. Most Americans know and appreciate that that is not sustainable.

We today, through the will of the House and the work over the course of this week and past several weeks, have a piece of legislation that is responsible in that it cuts spending, caps future spending, requires a balanced budget amendment, so the country can finally have a voice—have a voice in how people in this body spend taxpayer dollars.

It's time for us to tell the American people the truth about how their money is being wasted. It is time to stop that spending. It is time to get responsible and serious. And we are here to do that. Not just my freshman class, but this Congress is here to do that. And I ask my friends from the other side to join us in that fight to protect taxpayers and vote for this bill.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. I am pleased to yield 1½ minutes to the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR).

Ms. KAPTUR. I thank the ranking member, Ms. SLAUGHTER, for her generosity.

I advise my colleagues, budgets will balance when people go back to work. I rise against this amendment, the rule, and the underlying bill as ''inartful'' dodges from necessity. When a patient is weak, do you pull out their intravenous feeding tubes, or do you help them recover? Do you do everything possible to build their strength, or do you keep shutting off their oxygen machine?

America's economy is struggling to grow after the deep Bush recession triggered by his bailout of Wall Street abuse, two wars, and trillions in tax cuts to the super-rich who, by the way, didn't create any jobs with it. Revenues to our Federal Government have fallen over $400 billion a year due to unemployment. That's $4 trillion over a decade. So what does the majority do to the patient? They pull out the tubes, and they now shove them down the elevator chute.

Never before has any political party chosen to hurt America when she was recovering by edging her toward default. Their dangerous behavior has already caused hundreds of billions of dollars of losses in the stock market, pension funds and annuities. Social Security and Medicare checks are threatened, and economic growth and jobs are stalled due to all this uncertainty in the markets.

Madam Speaker, America needs a Congress and President that focus on economic recovery and job creation. Budgets will balance when people go back to work. To delude oneself the cause is otherwise is to take America down the proverbial black hole. Jobs are the answer—not more dodges, not pushing the patient down the shaft, and not proposing amendments that truly dodge the real question, which is full economic recovery for the people of this country.

Mr. DREIER. Madam Speaker, may I inquire of my good friend from Rochester how many speakers she has remaining.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. I believe I have two.

Mr. DREIER. In light of that, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. I am pleased to yield 1½ minutes to my colleague from New York (Mrs. MALONEY).

Mrs. MALONEY. I thank the gentlelady for her leadership.

I rise in opposition to the Republican rule.

We have all been getting numerous phone calls from our constituents who are rightly worried that the interest rates will be going up on their homes, on their cars, on their student loans, because they see that this Congress is in chaos. Already since last Friday, shareholders in U.S. markets have lost over $400 billion in value just due to the uncertainty and the lack of action. Our constituents' retirement funds have been taking a hit—and will continue to until this issue is decided. We have less than 4 days.

We must stop this ''Republican roulette'' and get to work on a plan that is realistic, that can pass both Houses. This is a dangerous game, putting forward a partisan bill that, each time it comes back, is more partisan, appealing to a narrower sliver of America.

Madam Speaker, we need to revisit a clean vote on the debt ceiling—as we have done 78 times since 1960. If we don't, the President should do his constitutional duty and raise the debt ceiling on his own under the authority of the 14th Amendment. The Republican leadership has walked out on President Obama, on Vice President BIDEN, on MCCONNELL, and even their own leader, BOEHNER. Then they want us to revisit

this in 6 months and put the economy in uncertainty. This is the wrong direction.

I urge a ''no'' vote.

□ 1650

Mr. DREIER. I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to yield 1 minute to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. ROTHMAN).

Mr. ROTHMAN of New Jersey. I oppose the Republican default bill because it will lead to drastic cuts to Medicare and Social Security. Also, I oppose the Republican default bill because it protects tax breaks and loopholes for those Americans who make millions and billions of dollars in income per year. I oppose the Republican default bill because it calls for another default summit, another default crisis, in 6 months, thereby undermining the certainty that American businesses, investors, and families need to create jobs and move our country forward.

With only a short-term increase under the Republican default bill, the full faith and credit of the United States will once again be held hostage to the differences in Washington. The Republicans' short-term plan that creates uncertainty will result in billions of dollars in increased interest rates that will hurt every single American and will hurt our country.

I urge my Republican colleagues to join with the Democrats, to join with President Obama in creating a balanced plan with shared sacrifice that solves our debt crisis and eliminates this cloud hanging over our economy.

Mr. DREIER. Madam Speaker, at this time I am happy to yield 1 minute to the former mayor of one of the 10 most livable cities in the United States of America, the gentleman from Rogers, Arkansas (Mr. WOMACK).

Mr. WOMACK. I thank the gentleman for yielding some time.

On my way over to the Capitol this afternoon, I was accompanied by some young people from back in my district, Payson and McKenna from Mena, Arkansas, and Adam and Grace Anne from Fayetteville, Arkansas; and we were having a conversation about the debate that's going on right now in Washington, the debate about the debt ceiling. I explained to these young people that the current debt of the United States of America, their share of that current debt, is well into the mid-$40,000 range, $46,000-or-so of debt.

It is for this very reason that we are proposing what we are proposing, because the only way to keep this debt on these innocent young people from soaring to greater and greater levels, to an area that they can no longer afford, is to restrain, constrain government; and the only sure way to do that, the only guaranteed enforcement mechanism that I know that can accomplish that very thing is a balanced budget amendment.

So on behalf of these young people and on behalf of young people across America, let's quit piling more and more debt on our children and grandchildren. Let's pass the rule. Let's pass this bill.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. SCOTT).

Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia. In my 1 minute, I want to make a special appeal that we pay close attention to what I consider the most devastating, damaging part of this bill, and that is what we are doing and what the Republicans are doing to Social Security, to Medicare, and to Medicaid.

In this bill, it requires that we set up a joint select committee. There are no protections in here. And it says in order for us to give the raise to the debt ceiling, we must concur and cut $1.6 trillion from the budget from discretionary funding. The Center for Policy and Budget Priorities has said that since 80 percent of the discretionary areas come from Social Security, Medicaid and Medicare, it doesn't take a genius to know that we're talking about drastic cuts in this area, and they will come out to a tune of about a thousand dollars for each recipient.

Now, I don't know about you all, but we have some people in this country who are hanging on by their fingernails. We have widows, we have seniors, we have youngsters who are depending upon Social Security, depending upon Medicare; and to say that in this measure that we will make these drastic cuts in Social Security and Medicare is totally irresponsible, and for that reason let us vote this measure down.

Mr. DREIER. Madam Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Mr. COSTA).

Mr. COSTA. Madam Speaker, this rule and the bill will further drive a wedge between the two parties rather than bringing us closer to an agreement, which we must have. It's been a week since the bipartisan discussions over the $4 trillion ''grand deal'' broke down, and we've seen little progress toward a solution since then.

Missing in today's debate is a bipartisan approach toward our Nation's fiscal health. We must have a bipartisan approach. We can cut through the partisan rhetoric with a balanced package. For me, that means implementing the Simpson-Bowles recommendations to reduce spending by $4 trillion over the next 10 years, lowering tax rates, ensuring solvency of Medicare and Social Security, and stabilizing our debt.

The House should also consider a clean balanced budget amendment, H.J. Res. 2, which says the country can't spend more than it takes in. This amendment and the Simpson-Bowles recommendations must be coupled with a debt limit increase to get us through the next 18 months.

It's time for cooler heads to prevail. With the clock ticking down, our Nation's first-ever default is at hand. We cannot afford to wait a minute longer. Default is not an option.

Mr. DREIER. I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts, ranking Democrat on the Energy and Commerce Committee, Mr. MARKEY.

Mr. MARKEY. I thank the gentlelady.

The Republican Party deficit plan is very simple:

Number one, send the financial markets into a nose dive.

Number two, drive up costs for home mortgages, student loans, and credit cards.

Number three, spook businesses to stall job growth, bringing the Nation to the brink of economic collapse.

Number four, repeat it all again and again until election day 2012.

The Republicans don't want compromise; they want capitulation. The Republicans have brought to the floor a constitutional amendment to balance the budget that's going nowhere. It is phony. But there's another sinister constitutional amendment being debated here, it's very real; and it will cause our country to default on its obligations.

Amendment 14, section 4, of the Constitution says: ''The validity of the public debt shall not be questioned.'' But this bill would change the Constitution forever—forever.

Under this Republican bill, our country would be pushed into defaulting on our obligations. The Republican Party would turn the 14th Amendment from a guarantee into a question mark. Now, under the Republican bill: ''The validity of the public debt shall be questioned.'' That is what they are doing this weekend.

This is unacceptable and would have a disastrous effect upon our economy and the middle class. The only way to end this historic nightmare is to resolve another massive deficit, the leadership deficit in the Republican Party. We must vote down this constitutional amendment, which will have us not honoring the full faith and credit of the United States which was built into the 14th Amendment of our United States Constitution. They are amending that Constitution here this evening. They are leading us to a default which will be a violation of that Constitution.

Mr. DREIER. I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Madam Speaker, I am very pleased to yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from California, the Democrat leader, Ms. PELOSI.

Ms. PELOSI. I thank the gentlelady for yielding and commend her and her colleagues on the Rules Committee for their important work in bringing legislation to the floor.

Madam Speaker, the clock is ticking. The clock is ticking on the need for us to raise the debt ceiling so that we do not default on our past obligations, that we uphold the full faith and credit of the United States of America.

□ 1700

As we continue this debate today, one thing is very clear to me. If our goal were to find deficit reduction in a balanced, bipartisan way, we could certainly do that. We've had models by Simpson-Bowles. We've had the Gang of Six. We've had the President's conversations with Speaker BOEHNER. We could find a path to very serious deficit reduction, but I think it has become very clear that that is not the goal of the Republicans in the House of Representatives.

They keep moving the goalpost, making it very evident that their goal is to reduce the public role in the lives of the American people. That's why, in other legislation on the floor, like the Interior bill that has been debated, you see the abandoning of clean air standards, clean water, food safety. I've said before I come to this Congress as a mother and a grandmother. We all want to do the best for our children personally, but we need a public role in their education and, again, in clean air, clean water, food safety. We can't do that for ourselves, but part of the Republican plan is to unravel 50 years—five decades at least—of bipartisan progress on behalf of America's middle class families.

Flatout, this bill and the other bills accompanying it will end Medicare, will end Medicare, will say to seniors, You will pay more for your health care costs to get less so that we can give tax subsidies to Big Oil. We will say to those families, We're going to cut Medicaid. What that means to seniors in nursing homes is that we will give tax breaks to corporations sending jobs overseas. We will say to the young people, You're going to pay more for your college loans so that we can give tax cuts to the people at the highest end.

We all know that we have to participate in reducing the deficit. Everybody has to ante up. Why is it that the Republicans insist on having the middle class pay the price so that the high end is off the hook?

If we are concerned about addressing the problems of the American people, we would end this debate. This bill is going nowhere. It is a total waste of time. Every day that we spend on these wastes of time that are not going anywhere is another day we are not talking about the highest priority of the American people, which is job creation, job creation, job creation. That is their priority. We have an obligation to reduce the deficit and get on with it so we can create jobs.

If we are concerned about the economic security of the American people and their families, we must recognize that, since the Republicans' most recent walking away from the table—they've done it on more than one occasion, but last Friday the Speaker and the Republicans walked away from the table—the stock market has dropped 483 points, and the American people have lost over $400 billion in their personal assets, $400 billion. Every day that goes by and if the market goes down any more, it comes right out of what the American people have in their 401(k)s, in their pensions and other pensions, and in their savings for their children's educations.

I remember when we had the debate on TARP. We cooperated with President Bush at that time to bring legislation to the floor. It was very unpopular. It was probably the most unpopular vote any of us will have to take, but we were on the brink of a financial crisis, and we had to act; but the Republicans did not step up to the plate, and the market went down 777 points the next day.

Is that what they're waiting for, for the market to go down not 485 points in the last few days but hundreds of points more, diminishing the personal assets and wealth of the American people? I certainly hope not.

When the Speaker walked away and he made his statement, Speaker BOEHNER, our Speaker, said that we couldn't reach agreement, words to that effect, that we couldn't connect because we have different visions of America. I believe the Speaker when he speaks, but I don't believe we have different visions of America.

President Obama's vision of America is one where we are committed to the education of our children so they can reach their personal fulfillment and so our country through innovation can continue to be number one—committed to creating jobs, good-paying jobs, for America's workers. I think that vision is the vision of the American people, the high ground of where we share values: in the education of our children, jobs for our workers, in the dignified retirement and health security for our seniors, and in the personal safety and national security of our people—all done in a fiscally sound way.

I think that that's common ground on the high ground of values. If you believe that, if you agree with those values, as I think Speaker BOEHNER must agree with President Obama on that vision of America, you couldn't possibly vote for any of the legislation that the Republicans are bringing to the floor in these few days—you couldn't possibly—because they do undermine the education of our children, the financial and health security of our seniors. The deep cuts early on hurt the economic recovery and the creation of jobs. This isn't done in a fiscally sound way as we've taken revenue off the table. Fifty-seven percent of the American people at least think we should have a balanced, bipartisan agreement to end this default and to do so in a way that doesn't take us down this path again.

So let's be clear. What is on the floor today is a balanced budget. Balanced in what way? Balanced in whose favor? It looks like a seesaw to me in favor of the ''haves'' at the expense of a great middle class in our country. It must be rejected.

For every day that we waste on another Republican ideological ploy or scheme is another day that we are not creating jobs. Since the Republicans took office, which is over 200 days ago—last Saturday it was 200 days, going on 207—the only bills that they have brought to the floor which they claim to be jobs bills are not job creators; they are job losers. H.R. 1 loses about 700,000 jobs—H.R. 2, a similar number; H.R. 34, a similar number with nearly 2 million jobs lost. Almost 10,000 jobs a day they're losing. Their infrastructure bill that they have brought in to committee—they haven't voted on it yet, thank God—is estimated to lose another 700,000 jobs when it's supposed to be the big job creator. Even the Chamber of Commerce has rejected it as something that will not only not create jobs but will lose current jobs.

So let's get on with the business of job creation. Let's really be honest about what we're here to do in terms of deficit reduction and not use it as an engine for the destruction of the public role that is so important in the defense of our country, in the health of our children, in the security of our seniors and their retirements, and in the vitality and innovation of our economy—and again, do it in a way that is fiscally sound. I don't want to go into how we got here in the first place. Whatever it is, we have to go forward, and we must go forward in the way the American people want us to do: bipartisan, balanced, and with an eye to job creation.

Reject what is on the floor now and support the American people. We owe it to honor the sacrifices of our Founders, the vision of our Founders, the sacrifices of our men and women in uniform, the aspirations of our children and our families. This budget should be a statement of values that honors all of that, and if we are to honor that, we must reject what is being proposed here today.

Mr. DREIER. I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I think the consequences of this bill are so dire and the circumstances of this constitutional amendment are so far-reaching and damaging that I implore everybody in the House of Representatives, in the name of the Founding Fathers, in the name of our soldiers fighting for our Nation, for people who kept the economy the envy of the world, for the sake of our children and generations yet unborn, to vote against this rule. I have never felt this way before. The process and everything about this is wrong. They are making it absolutely impossible the next time for us to meet our obligations, and we really should not besmirch the reputations that we have as thoughtful legislators by voting for this.

I urge a ''no'' vote on the rule and the underlying bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

□ 1710

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire of the Chair how much time I have remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BASS of New Hampshire). The gentleman from California has 15 minutes remaining.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, we began this debate at 4:01. It's now 5:11.

I urge my colleagues to support this rule and the underlying legislation so that as August 2 approaches, we will be able to say that we have reduced the size and scope and reach of government and we have not allowed our country to go into default.

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in complete opposition to this rule and the underlying legislation.

I have never witnessed such a legislative and political travesty. The Republican majority is threatening to take the entire economy hostage unless we write their draconian budget—which would end Medicare and Medicaid—into the Constitution.

Throughout this week, the Republican leadership and Republican caucus have been operating in a world of unreality. The Speaker and his team have persisted in passing legislation that everyone in the real world knows is dead on arrival in the Senate.

Today, we have moved from unreality to fantasy.

We are being told that if we do not pass a constitutional amendment to end Medicare and Medicaid, then the debt limit will not be raised—the United States of America will default—and the American people will suffer grievously.

I want to remind the House why the underlying Boehner legislation is so unacceptable. At its heart, this bill is a mortal threat to Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security and the protections of the Affordable Care Act.

The Boehner legislation will end Medicare as we know it by turning it into a voucher program and raising premium costs to beneficiaries by thousands of dollars per year.

Medicaid will be eviscerated, throwing women and children and seniors in nursing homes into great distress.

Social Security will be on the chopping block. The retirement age will be raised and benefits will be cut.

And under a balanced budget amendment, Congress will be placed in a straightjacket and the government will not be able to respond to compelling humanitarian and public health needs in times of economic downturns.

This is not the moment to engage in fantasy. This House must take its responsibilities seriously and do its proper duty for the nation.

The bill before us, with the poison pill of a balanced budget amendment, is a vicious assault on Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security, along with public health, scientific research and environmental protection.

I urge the defeat of this rule and the terrible consequences that will flow from it.

Mr. DREIER. I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The previous question was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the resolution.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ''ayes'' appeared to have it.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 239, nays 187, not voting 6, as follows:

[Roll No. 675]

YEAS—239

Adams
Aderholt
Akin
Alexander
Amash
Austria
Bachmann
Bachus
Barletta
Bartlett
Barton (TX)
Bass (NH)
Benishek
Berg
Biggert
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Bonner
Bono Mack
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brooks
Broun (GA)
Buchanan
Bucshon
Buerkle
Burgess
Burton (IN)
Calvert
Camp
Campbell
Canseco
Cantor
Capito
Carter
Cassidy
Chabot
Chaffetz
Coble
Coffman (CO)
Cole
Conaway
Cravaack
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Davis (KY)
Denham
Dent
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Dold
Dreier
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers
Emerson
Farenthold
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Flake
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
Gardner
Garrett
Gerlach
Gibbs
Gibson
Gingrey (GA)
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (MO)
Griffin (AR)
Griffith (VA)
Grimm
Guinta
Guthrie
Hall
Hanna
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings (WA)
Hayworth
Heck
Hensarling
Herger
Herrera Beutler
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurt
Issa
Jenkins
Johnson (IL)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jones
Jordan
Kelly
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Labrador
Lamborn
Lance
Landry
Lankford
Latham
LaTourette
Latta
Lewis (CA)
LoBiondo
Long
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
Lungren, Daniel E.
Mack
Manzullo
Marchant
Marino
McCarthy (CA)
McCaul
McClintock
McCotter
McHenry
McKeon
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
Meehan
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller, Gary
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Myrick
Neugebauer
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Nunnelee
Olson
Palazzo
Paul
Paulsen
Pearce
Pence
Petri
Pitts
Platts
Poe (TX)
Pompeo
Posey
Price (GA)
Quayle
Reed
Rehberg
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rigell
Rivera
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross (FL)
Royce
Runyan
Ryan (WI)
Scalise
Schilling
Schmidt
Schock
Schweikert
Scott (SC)
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Southerland
Stearns
Stivers
Stutzman
Sullivan
Terry
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Turner
Upton
Walberg
Walden
Walsh (IL)
Webster
West
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Wolf
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Young (AK)
Young (FL)
Young (IN)

NAYS—187

Ackerman
Altmire
Andrews
Baldwin
Barrow
Bass (CA)
Becerra
Berkley
Berman
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Blumenauer
Boren
Boswell
Brady (PA)
Braley (IA)
Brown (FL)
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cardoza
Carnahan
Carney
Carson (IN)
Castor (FL)
Chandler
Chu
Cicilline
Clarke (MI)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly (VA)
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Costello
Courtney
Critz
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
DeFazio
DeGette
DeLauro
Deutch
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Donnelly (IN)
Doyle
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Farr
Fattah
Filner
Frank (MA)
Fudge
Garamendi
Gonzalez
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutierrez
Hahn
Hanabusa
Hastings (FL)
Heinrich
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Hirono
Hochul
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hoyer
Inslee
Israel
Jackson (IL)
Jackson Lee (TX)
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kildee
Kind
Kissell
Kucinich
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lee (CA)
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren, Zoe
Lowey
Luján
Lynch
Maloney
Markey
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (NY)
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McIntyre
McNerney
Meeks
Michaud
Miller (NC)
Miller, George
Moore
Moran
Murphy (CT)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Olver
Owens
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor (AZ)
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Peterson
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rahall
Rangel
Reyes
Richardson
Richmond
Ross (AR)
Rothman (NJ)
Roybal-Allard
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Schwartz
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell
Sherman
Shuler
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Stark
Sutton
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tierney
Tonko
Towns
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz (MN)
Wasserman Schultz
Watt
Waxman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Woolsey
Wu
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—6

Baca
Giffords
Hinchey
Pingree (ME)
Speier
Waters

□ 1735

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California changed his vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

Messrs. NEUGEBAUER and FLEMING changed their vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

So the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 1(c) of rule XIX, proceedings will now resume on the bill (S. 627) to establish the Commission on Freedom of Information Act Processing Delays.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. When proceedings were postponed on Thursday, July 28, 2011, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. RYAN) had 1 minute of debate remaining on the bill.

Pursuant to House Resolution 383, the further amendment printed in House Report 112–187 is adopted.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

In section 301, in the matter proposed to be inserted as section 3101A(a)(2)(A) of title 31, United States Code, strike ''is greater than

$1,600,000,000,000'' and insert ''is greater than $1,600,000,000,000 and the Archivist of the United States has submitted to the States for their ratification a proposed amendment to the Constitution of the United States pursuant to a joint resolution entitled 'Joint resolution proposing a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution of the United States' ''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. RYAN).

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I yield the balance of my time to the Speaker of the House, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BOEHNER).

Mr. BOEHNER. My colleagues, I would like to cut through all the fog here rather quickly.

Today's GDP figures remind us that our economy is still not creating enough jobs. Americans are worried about finding work. They are worried about our economy, and they are worried about the mountain of debt that is facing them and their children.

Today, we have a chance to end this debt limit crisis. With this bill, I think we are keeping our promise to the American people that we will cut spending by more than the amount of the increase in the debt limit. The Congressional Budget Office has certified this commonsense standard, and it has been backed by more than 150 distinguished economists from across the country.

We are also imposing caps to restrain future spending to stop the expansion of government while giving our economy a chance to grow and create jobs, and we are advancing the great cause of a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution.

What this bill now says is that before the President can request an additional increase in the debt limit, two things have to happen: A joint committee of the Congress must produce spending cuts larger than the increase in the debt limit, and both Houses of the Congress must send to the States a balanced budget amendment.

Listen, the balanced budget amendment, it's time for this to happen. It enjoys support in both Houses of this Congress, and it enjoys bipartisan and widespread support across our country.

The bill also ends this crisis without raising taxes, which would cripple our economy, and there are no gimmicks. There are no smokescreens here that represent the old and comfortable way of doing things.

Now, the bill before us still isn't perfect. No Member would argue that it is. It's imperfect because it reflects an honest and sincere effort to end this crisis by sending a bill over to the Senate that at one time was agreed to by the bipartisan leadership of the United States Senate.

And to my colleagues in the Senate, if they were here, I would say this, if this bill passes, this House has sent you not one, but two different bills to cut spending by trillions of dollars over the next decade while providing an immediate increase in the debt limit. And to the American people, I would say, we have tried our level best. We have done everything we can to find a commonsense solution that could pass both Houses of Congress and end this crisis.

□ 1740

We have tried to do the right thing by our country, but some people continue to say ''no.''

My colleagues, I have worked since the first week of this session when we were sworn in in January to avoid being where we are right this moment, but 2 days after we were sworn in, the Treasury Secretary sent us a letter asking us to increase the debt ceiling. I immediately responded by saying we would not increase the debt ceiling without serious cuts in spending and serious reforms to the way we spend the people's money.

We passed a budget. The other body spent over 800 days and still no budget, no plan. This will be the second bill we send over to the Senate, and yet not one piece of legislation out of the Senate has passed that deals with this crisis.

And my colleagues, I can tell you that I have worked with the President and the administration since the beginning of this year to avoid being in this spot. I have offered ideas. I have negotiated. Not one time, not one time did the administration ever put any plan on the table. All they would do was criticize what I put out there. I stuck my neck out a mile to try to get an agreement with the President of the United States. I put revenues on the table in order to try to come to an agreement to avert us being where we are, but a lot of people in this town can never say ''yes.'' A lot of people can never say ''yes.''

This House has acted, and it is time for the administration and time for our colleagues across the aisle to put something on the table. Tell us where you are.

Yes, people can be critical of what we've done, but where are the other ideas? At this point in time, the House is going to act and we're going to act again, but it is time for our colleagues across the aisle to tell us what they're for, tell us how we can end this crisis.

Ronald Reagan has been quoted throughout this debate over the last few weeks, and Ronald Reagan would probably be flattered, I'm sure, if he were here. But Ronald Reagan, on his desk, had a little placard, and that placard was real simple. It said: ''It can be done.'' I have a replica of that placard on my desk, and let me tell you, Members of this House, it can be done, it must be done, and it will be done if we have the courage to do the right thing.

So for the sake of our economy, for the sake of our future, I'm going to ask each of you, as representatives of the people of the United States, to support this bill, to support this process and end this crisis now.

Mr. COSTELLO. Mr. Speaker, we have reached a critical point in our months-long debate over the best approach to addressing our country's deficit and debt and raising the statutory debt limit. It is important to be clear, that the decision to raise the debt limit is about paying the bills we have already accumulated. The debt limit has been raised over 70 times since 1960 by Republicans and Democrats, in fact, more times under a Republican president. In 11 years, we have gone from a $5.6 trillion surplus to a $1.4 trillion deficit. We can argue about how we got here—and I would argue the Bush tax cuts in 2001 and 2003 and the Wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, all of which I voted against, are the primary reasons—but there is enough blame to go around, and the critical point now is to avoid the first default in the history of the United States of America.

The good news tonight is that we can see the outlines of a final agreement. Both the Boehner plan and the Reid plan seek to enact at least $2.4 trillion in budget cuts with a similar increase in our debt limit. Both would set up a lawmaker committee to decide which programs to cut with a vote on the package without amendment by both the House and Senate. The key differences are the time-frame for raising the debt limit and the requirement that a Balanced Budget Amendment (BBA) to the Constitution is passed in Congress and sent to the states. The Boehner plan calls for an immediate debt limit increase of $900 billion which lasts only through the end of this year. The Reid plan would raise the debt limit through the end of 2012. Moreover, while I have voted for a BBA in the past, it is very unlikely it will receive the two-thirds vote necessary in both Houses to be sent to the states, guaranteeing a future default. I believe the Reid plan is the better approach and will vote against the Boehner plan for this reason.

We have heard a great deal in recent weeks about the potential, dire consequences of a default, notably a lowering of our country's credit rating that would cause a rise in interest rates—raising costs for people at every income level—and a likely drop in the stock market, affecting pensions and crippling our economic recovery. One thing that should be clear is that we don't want to go through this again just a few months from now. Financial markets want certainty so businesses can invest and create jobs, and I believe we will be better served to raise the debt limit through the end of next year.

Mr. Speaker, this has been a very tough process. While I will not vote for the Boehner proposal today, I believe we are closer to reaching a final product that represents a workable compromise. And at the end of the day, that is what the American people expect us to do.

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, it has been one week since bipartisan discussions over the $4 trillion ''grand deal'' broke down yet we have seen little progress toward a smaller package of spending cuts that would allow us to raise the debt limit and begin getting our fiscal house in order.

It's easy to point fingers and cast blame—and there's certainly plenty to go around—but fundamentally I believe the reason we have seen so little progress is that the American people aren't looking for a short-term solution or a small gesture. They want a ''grand deal'' that will put us on a fiscally responsible path today and for the future.

We all have our own ideas about our nation's fiscal priorities, but what is missing in today's discussion is a bipartisan, centrist approach to addressing our nation's fiscal health, such as the recommendations by the Simpson-Bowles National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform.

No one party has all the answers, and no one party can do this alone. It's time to put our economy back on the path to fiscal sustainability, and this House should consider the Simpson-Bowles recommendations that aim to accomplish that goal by reducing spending by $4 trillion over 10 years, lowering tax rates, ensuring the solvency of entitlements such as Medicare and Social Security and stabilizing the debt.

To compliment the $4 trillion Simpson-Bowles plan the House should also consider a clean balanced budget amendment. H.J. Res. 2, is identical to legislation that passed the House in 1995 with 300 votes and I plan to support it if the House take it up. It is a commonsense approach to ensuring long-term fiscal responsibility by operating the federal government's finances in the same way every American family and even all 50 states must do.

This clean balanced budget amendment, coupled with the Simpson-Bowles recommendations and a debt limit increase to get us through the next 18 months, is a package I believe would find broad bipartisan support in both Chambers of Congress.

Yesterday the House debated Speaker BOEHNER's debt limit proposal, which was yet another example of the partisanship that has paralyzed Washington and disgusted the American people. Leading credit rating agency Standard & Poor's has said the Speaker's two-step approach to the debt limit could still result in a downgrade of our nation's credit rating because of the uncertainty it would create. I simply cannot bring myself to vote for legislation that would yet again call into question the full faith and credit of the United States.

With the possibility of a credit downgrade by national and international bond rating agencies looming over our head, kicking this can further down the road could mean a greater burden on the American people and American businesses in the form of higher interest rates, higher mortgage payments, negative impacts on retirements savings and higher student loans. This is unacceptable and—more importantly—completely avoidable.

It's time for cooler heads to prevail in order to resolve this economic crisis. A balanced approach that includes the Simpson-Bowles deficit reduction recommendations, a clean balanced budget amendment and a one-step, 18-month increase of our nation's debt limit could be the bipartisan solution that has been elusive through all of the partisan rhetoric. With the clock ticking down to our nation's first ever default we cannot afford to wait a minute longer.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, as the clock ticks down toward default, we are debating a bill that will not solve the debt problem. It will make life worse for 98 percent of Americans—to protect the wealthiest 2 percent of our society. Meanwhile nearly $1.6 trillion would be cut from programs like Social Security and Medicare.

Yet, despite these cuts, under this bill, we would face the exact same crisis just six months from now. We often hear about the need for ''certainty'' in the business community. With financial markets ready to tumble and our credit on the brink of a downgrade, how does kicking the can down the road for six months provide certainty?

Failing to resolve this crisis will be disastrous for our economic recovery. Capital that is already hard to come by for entrepreneurs will be even further out of reach for our nation's small businesses. That's some jobs plan.

Working families will pay $250 more in credit card interest. Mortgage payments will rise by $1,000. Older workers could lose thousands of dollars in retirement investment.

Mr. Speaker, the American people expect us to act swiftly and responsibly. The bill before us fails on both counts. Let's reject this measure and develop a real solution.

Mrs. LOWEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to this legislation.

The Republican majority has pushed our economy to the brink of default through its refusal to work with Democrats on a balanced plan to end the default crisis. Despite the fact that this legislation cannot pass the Senate and would be vetoed by President Obama, the Republican majority chose to continue their political gamesmanship rather than bring to the floor a legitimate plan to prevent default.

By presenting a short-term fix rather than a long-term solution, the majority's plan puts our economy at greater risk of a credit downgrade and higher interest rates. American families and businesses cannot afford a higher cost of borrowing, which will raise the price of mortgages, loans, and credit card debt.

Defaulting on the federal debt is not an option. Congress should deliver a balanced plan that ends the default crisis; reduces spending responsibly; and prioritizes the health and security of hard-working middle-class families, senior citizens, and vulnerable Americans.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak in opposition to the bill being considered S. 627, The Budget Control Act. This bill should be called the Boehner Default Act because it is just another attempt for Congressional Republicans to hold the American economy and jobs hostage while they relentlessly pursue an extreme partisan agenda that seeks to balance the budget on the backs of seniors and the middle class. This approach has been met with widespread rejection by the public and it should be rejected by the House now.

This bill is not a serious attempt to deal with the national debt limit and it is not responsible legislation. House Republicans need to go back to the drawing board and show real leadership by crafting a plan that does not threaten the United States with a credit downgrade and higher interest rates while providing only a short-term debt limit increase.

It is inexcusable for Congress to have set up yet another partisan standoff on this issue just a few months down the road. It is unacceptable to slash Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security from our nation's seniors while asking nothing in return from the nation's most wealthy corporations and individuals.

It is time for Republicans to stop trying to score points with their political base and start legislating on behalf of the American people. As the majority party in the House of Representatives, the American people are owed better.

Ms. HAYWORTH. Mr. Speaker, I submit the following:

On July 27, Carol Augias from Mahopac, New York wrote to me:

''Representative Hayworth, I have never written to a Congressperson before, however, I am deeply troubled by the debt ceiling stalemate. While I firmly believe that the massive debt we carry in this country needs to be reduced (I personally curtail my spending when my debt exceeds my comfort level), I am very concerned about what may happen if we default on our loans. Please find a way to get this issue resolved prior to the August deadline. Some compromises must take place. Once we have taken care of the immediate issue we, as a Nation, must evaluate our financial position so that our country will continue to flourish and children will also be able to purchase a home, afford a college education.''

Mr. Speaker, Carol is right. We need to resolve the debt limit crisis for the sake of future generations. Just as the American people—like Carol—pay their bills, the federal government must do the same, so we are obligated to raise the Treasury's debt ceiling. But we must do so responsibly because our nation has another critical and painful problem that is related to our enormous debt: 14 million Americans need jobs.

We can make our economy grow, and create jobs, by assuring that the dollars Americans work so hard for are theirs to spend and save and invest. To do this, the federal spending juggernaut has to stop.

And, as Carol pointed out, there is a need for cooperation. We can reform our tax code and close loopholes, as the President has urged, and we can do so without raising net taxes. We cannot, in good conscience, increase the burdens on Americans who need a vigorous economy.

Our nation didn't reach the point of fiscal crisis overnight, and we aren't going to get out of it overnight either—but we can make progress in the right direction now, and continue doing our utmost together to bring this federal government to the right size, and empower our citizens to enjoy the freedom and dignity that is their birthright as Americans.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, many concerned Americans are fed up with a Washington system that doesn't solve the underlying problems facing the nation, including the ongoing debt crisis.

This ongoing debt debate represents not just a crisis, but a crossroads.

In the past few decades, Congress raised the national debt limit more than 70 times, usually with little or no debate. Each time very few people batted an eye and this history has been used by liberal extremists as a reason to continue with the status quo, Now things have changed.

Over the last five years our national debt has increased by more than 50 percent. In just the past three years the debt increased by more than $4 trillion dollars. Even worse, the debt has increased by $9.2 trillion since a Balanced Budget Amendment failed by one vote in the Senate 15 years ago. As a result, the total national debt is now nearly equal to our entire economic output.

The independent Congressional Budget Office warns that the federal government's current path of borrowing is unsustainable and could lead to slower economic growth as debt

payments consume more and more of our economic output. Add to this that the private-sector agencies like S&P that grade government debt have stated that if Congress doesn't do something to halt the rapid growth of debt they will downgrade the U.S. debt rating, likely driving up interest rates,

The bottom line is simple: the government can pile up only so much debt before it becomes impossible to make the payments without destroying its ability to fund priorities like national defense or Social Security, As the national debt accumulates at a record clip we are quickly approaching that point.

If we don't cut spending now, America will face a painful national reckoning in the coming years. This reckoning will make today's high stakes debate look quaint. That's why this debate is so critical. The longer Congress puts off making tough decisions, the more pain the nation will experience when the music stops.

So when people ask me if I favor increasing the debt limit my response is, ''it depends.'' Any status quo increase in the debt limit is absolutely out of the question.

However, we have to consider what happens if Congress doesn't increase the debt limit. Someone will not get paid.

We cannot ignore that the government is currently borrowing more than 40 cents of every dollar that it spends. As a result, if Congress does not raise the debt ceiling the federal government would have to slash spending immediately by more than 40 percent. That would endanger America's ability to keep its promises to those who have paid into programs like Social Security for years.

Consider these facts.

If Congress completely eliminated foreign aid the budget would be reduced by only 2%.

If Congress funded only Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid as well as the national defense budget there would be no money left to pay for anything else—not even the interest payments on the national debt.

If Congress prioritized spending that is on auto-pilot, such as unemployment benefits, Social Security, interest payments and the like, there would be nothing left for the defense budget, or any other spending, including education and transportation.

That's why I'm in favor only of drastic spending cuts accompanied by a smaller increase in the debt limit, And for the first time ever, Speaker BOEHNER's bill does just that, by proposing deficit reductions of $2.7 trillion—including $22 billion next year. Large reductions like this that protect Social Security and Medicare for current retirees will stop the reckless accumulation of debt and help us avoid the sort of catastrophic debt crisis we will face if Washington continues with business as usual.

It's not news that no one wants to raise the debt limit. The real news is the old way of raising the debt limit is over. Raising the debt limit, as Congress has done in the past, without accompanying spending cuts would be a disaster with severe economic consequences. Washington is in debt because it has a spending problem. It's past time we addressed that and today's bill does just that.

Due to chronic overspending, Washington is at a crossroads. I'm confident that Congress can find a way to tackle this issue responsibly. It will not be without difficult or unpopular decisions. But refusing to make tough decisions today will result in even tougher ones tomorrow. For the sake of future generations of Americans we need to make the right call today and put dramatic, permanent spending cuts in place and pass a Balanced Budget Amendment before raising the debt limit.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time for debate has expired.

Pursuant to House Resolution 375, the previous question is ordered on the bill, as amended.

The question is on the third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be read a third time, and was read the third time.

MOTION TO RECOMMIT

Ms. HOCHUL. Mr. Speaker, I have a motion to recommit at the desk.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is the gentlewoman opposed to the bill?

Ms. HOCHUL. Yes, I am opposed to this bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the motion to recommit.

The Clerk read as follows:

Ms. Hochul moves to recommit the bill (S. 627) to the Committee on Rules, with instructions to report the bill back to the House forthwith, with the following amendment:

Amend section 401(b)(3)(B) by adding at the end the following new clause:

(vi) PRIORITIZE DEFICIT REDUCTION FROM CORPORATE SUBSIDIES BEFORE CUTTING EDUCATION.—The joint committee shall first consider the elimination of—

(I) oil and gas subsidies for the major integrated oil companies, and

(II) subsidies for corporate use of aircraft,

before cutting essential education programs that are necessary for the creation of jobs, economic recovery, and investment in America's future.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I reserve a point of order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. A point of order is reserved.

Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. HOCHUL) is recognized for 5 minutes in support of her motion.

Ms. HOCHUL. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Well, here we are. The eyes of the world are upon us. The eyes of the American people are upon us, but, most importantly, the eyes of the people who put their faith in us in sending us to this institution are certainly upon us.

As we engage in this debate, I will say there is one thing that is clear to me: that everyone in this room loves this great country. America has stood the test of time and risen above disasters as one people.

In the last decade alone, we've been rattled by wars, unprecedented natural disasters, and the longest recession since World War II. As we approach the 10th anniversary of 9/11, we are reminded of what we can do when we pull together. We are a resilient people. But, Mr. Speaker, never, never in our history has there been an intentional disaster perpetrated by the very people who are sent here to be the caretakers of this country. That is exactly what will happen if we refuse to take action to prevent default and pay our Nation's bills now, not 6 months down the road.

I understand a spirited debate in defense of one's viewpoints certainly, but when I look down at the copy of the Constitution that I keep on my desk, I thank God that our Founding Fathers found it in their hearts to give and take—and, yes, compromise for what is in the best interests of this country.

I can't go back to the Hillview restaurant on Transit Road in Lancaster and look into the eyes of my early-bird seniors and tell them that we didn't get this job done, that we decided to continue this game of political chicken, to dangle default cruelly over the heads of our citizens and our businesses and our economy and hold it hostage while we, as you've heard so many times, kick this can down the road again.

Mr. Speaker, am I really supposed to tell the Greatest Generation that when they passed us the torch, we dropped it because we couldn't compromise? That is why my amendment is a simple statement of America's priorities. It says, before we cut our education for our children, we first must cut subsidies to Big Oil and corporate jets.

This amendment is one of our last chances to reaffirm the values that bind us as a Nation. I know one of these shared values is our sense of obligation to create a better world for our young people to inherit, that we give these young people a better chance at achieving their dreams than even we had. The next generation will be more prosperous and more secure, but only if we invest in it now, in the human capital whose creativity, innovation, and work ethic can ensure this country remains the world's leader and the beacon of hope to others.

But, Mr. Speaker, I feel this is all at risk. Speaker BOEHNER's plan results in consequences I can't imagine anyone in this room really wants.

On top of the unconscionable uncertainty and instability we leave our economy in with this temporary fix, we're putting at risk the investments in education that are so critical for our young people to compete with China, India, and Europe on the global stage.

My amendment is about priorities, the priorities of the people we represent. Slashing programs for seniors, young people, and the middle class all because we're afraid of the influence of Big Oil, that is wrong on so many levels.

I come from a family of entrepreneurs. My mom started a small business. My father helped grow a business of four people to 3,200. I get it. I know what it takes, and I have tremendous respect for companies that have grown to be that size. And if they have a chance to have a corporate jet, I don't begrudge them; that's great. But in this time when we all agree that our deficit must be reduced, tell me why we can't ask them—Big Oil and people who have corporate jets—to give us a hand

and help this great country that made them what they are today.

□ 1750

You know, little Seaman's Hardware Store in Genesee County run by generations of the Seaman family, how is it that they pay more in taxes than the big companies that are shipping jobs overseas? I can't explain this to the Seaman family. I don't know about you, but I cannot do that.

And you know what, my constituents are hurting in upstate New York. Some of them, at a time of huge corporate profits, can barely afford to fill the gas tank to get to their minimum wage jobs at the dollar store.

There is one value we share, and that's fairness. This bill is fundamentally unfair.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I withdraw my reservation, and I rise in opposition to the motion to recommit.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, this doesn't prioritize Social Security. It doesn't prioritize Medicare. It doesn't prioritize veterans. It doesn't propose one item that would cut spending. All it does is engage in class warfare and increase taxes. Vote against the motion to recommit.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the motion to recommit.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to recommit.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the noes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Ms. HOCHUL. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 183, noes 244, not voting 5, as follows:

[Roll No. 676]

AYES—183

Ackerman
Altmire
Andrews
Baldwin
Bass (CA)
Becerra
Berkley
Berman
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Blumenauer
Boswell
Brady (PA)
Braley (IA)
Brown (FL)
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cardoza
Carnahan
Carney
Carson (IN)
Castor (FL)
Chandler
Chu
Cicilline
Clarke (MI)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly (VA)
Conyers
Cooper
Costello
Courtney
Critz
Crowley
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
DeFazio
DeGette
DeLauro
Deutch
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Donnelly (IN)
Doyle
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Farr
Fattah
Filner
Frank (MA)
Fudge
Garamendi
Gonzalez
Green, Al
Grijalva
Gutierrez
Hahn
Hanabusa
Hastings (FL)
Heinrich
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Hirono
Hochul
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hoyer
Inslee
Israel
Jackson (IL)
Jackson Lee (TX)
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Jones
Kaptur
Keating
Kildee
Kind
Kissell
Kucinich
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lee (CA)
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren, Zoe
Lowey
Luján
Lynch
Maloney
Markey
Matsui
McCarthy (NY)
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McIntyre
McNerney
Meeks
Michaud
Miller (NC)
Miller, George
Moore
Moran
Murphy (CT)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Olver
Owens
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor (AZ)
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Peterson
Pingree (ME)
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rahall
Rangel
Reyes
Richardson
Richmond
Ross (AR)
Rothman (NJ)
Roybal-Allard
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Schwartz
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell
Sherman
Shuler
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Stark
Sutton
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tierney
Tonko
Towns
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz (MN)
Wasserman Schultz
Watt
Waxman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Woolsey
Wu
Yarmuth

NOES—244

Adams
Aderholt
Akin
Alexander
Amash
Austria
Bachmann
Bachus
Barletta
Barrow
Bartlett
Barton (TX)
Bass (NH)
Benishek
Berg
Biggert
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Bonner
Bono Mack
Boren
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brooks
Broun (GA)
Buchanan
Bucshon
Buerkle
Burgess
Burton (IN)
Calvert
Camp
Campbell
Canseco
Cantor
Capito
Carter
Cassidy
Chabot
Chaffetz
Coble
Coffman (CO)
Cole
Conaway
Costa
Cravaack
Crawford
Crenshaw
Cuellar
Culberson
Davis (KY)
Denham
Dent
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Dold
Dreier
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers
Emerson
Farenthold
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Flake
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
Gardner
Garrett
Gerlach
Gibbs
Gibson
Gingrey (GA)
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (MO)
Green, Gene
Griffin (AR)
Griffith (VA)
Grimm
Guinta
Guthrie
Hall
Hanna
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings (WA)
Hayworth
Heck
Hensarling
Herger
Herrera Beutler
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurt
Issa
Jenkins
Johnson (IL)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jordan
Kelly
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Labrador
Lamborn
Lance
Landry
Lankford
Latham
LaTourette
Latta
Lewis (CA)
LoBiondo
Long
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
Lungren, Daniel E.
Mack
Manzullo
Marchant
Marino
Matheson
McCarthy (CA)
McCaul
McClintock
McCotter
McHenry
McKeon
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
Meehan
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller, Gary
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Myrick
Neugebauer
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Nunnelee
Olson
Palazzo
Paul
Paulsen
Pearce
Pence
Petri
Pitts
Platts
Poe (TX)
Pompeo
Posey
Price (GA)
Quayle
Reed
Rehberg
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rigell
Rivera
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross (FL)
Royce
Runyan
Ryan (WI)
Scalise
Schilling
Schmidt
Schock
Schweikert
Scott (SC)
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Southerland
Stearns
Stivers
Stutzman
Sullivan
Terry
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Turner
Upton
Walberg
Walden
Walsh (IL)
Webster
West
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Wolf
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Young (AK)
Young (FL)
Young (IN)

NOT VOTING—5

Baca
Giffords
Hinchey
Speier
Waters

□ 1809

Mr. JOHNSON of Illinois changed his vote from ''aye'' to ''no.''

So the motion to recommit was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the passage of the bill.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, this 15-minute vote on passage of the bill will be followed by 5-minute votes on motions to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 2213 and H.R. 789, if ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 218, noes 210, not voting 5, as follows:

[Roll No. 677]

AYES—218

Adams
Aderholt
Akin
Alexander
Austria
Bachus
Barletta
Bartlett
Barton (TX)
Bass (NH)
Benishek
Berg
Biggert
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Boehner
Bonner
Bono Mack
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brooks
Buchanan
Bucshon
Buerkle
Burgess
Burton (IN)
Calvert
Camp
Campbell
Canseco
Cantor
Capito
Carter
Cassidy
Chabot
Coble
Coffman (CO)
Cole
Conaway
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Davis (KY)
Denham
Dent
Diaz-Balart
Dold
Dreier
Duffy
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers
Emerson
Farenthold
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Flake
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
Gardner
Garrett
Gerlach
Gibbs
Gibson
Gingrey (GA)
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Granger
Graves (MO)
Griffin (AR)
Griffith (VA)
Grimm
Guinta
Guthrie
Hall
Hanna
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings (WA)
Hayworth
Heck
Hensarling
Herger
Herrera Beutler
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurt
Issa
Jenkins
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jones
Kelly
King (NY)
Kingston
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Labrador
Lamborn
Lance
Landry
Lankford
LaTourette
Latta
Lewis (CA)

LoBiondo
Long
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
Lungren, Daniel E.
Manzullo
Marchant
Marino
McCarthy (CA)
McCaul
McCotter
McHenry
McKeon
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
Meehan
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller, Gary
Murphy (PA)
Myrick
Neugebauer
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Nunnelee
Olson
Palazzo
Paulsen
Pearce
Pence
Petri
Pitts
Platts
Poe (TX)
Pompeo
Posey
Price (GA)
Quayle
Reed
Rehberg
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rigell
Rivera
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross (FL)
Royce
Runyan
Ryan (WI)
Scalise
Schilling
Schmidt
Schock
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Stearns
Stivers
Stutzman
Sullivan
Terry
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Turner
Upton
Walberg
Walden
Webster
West
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Wittman
Wolf
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Young (AK)
Young (FL)
Young (IN)

NOES—210

Ackerman
Altmire
Amash
Andrews
Bachmann
Baldwin
Barrow
Bass (CA)
Becerra
Berkley
Berman
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Blumenauer
Boren
Boswell
Brady (PA)
Braley (IA)
Broun (GA)
Brown (FL)
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cardoza
Carnahan
Carney
Carson (IN)
Castor (FL)
Chaffetz
Chandler
Chu
Cicilline
Clarke (MI)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly (VA)
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Costello
Courtney
Cravaack
Critz
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
DeFazio
DeGette
DeLauro
DesJarlais
Deutch
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Donnelly (IN)
Doyle
Duncan (SC)
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Farr
Fattah
Filner
Frank (MA)
Fudge
Garamendi
Gonzalez
Gowdy
Graves (GA)
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutierrez
Hahn
Hanabusa
Hastings (FL)
Heinrich
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Hirono
Hochul
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hoyer
Huelskamp
Inslee
Israel
Jackson (IL)
Jackson Lee (TX)
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (IL)
Johnson, E. B.
Jordan
Kaptur
Keating
Kildee
Kind
King (IA)
Kissell
Kucinich
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latham
Lee (CA)
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren, Zoe
Lowey
Luján
Lynch
Mack
Maloney
Markey
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (NY)
McClintock
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McIntyre
McNerney
Meeks
Michaud
Miller (NC)
Miller, George
Moore
Moran
Mulvaney
Murphy (CT)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Olver
Owens
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor (AZ)
Paul
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Peterson
Pingree (ME)
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rahall
Rangel
Reyes
Richardson
Richmond
Ross (AR)
Rothman (NJ)
Roybal-Allard
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Schwartz
Scott (SC)
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell
Sherman
Shuler
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Southerland
Stark
Sutton
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tierney
Tonko
Towns
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walsh (IL)
Walz (MN)
Wasserman Schultz
Watt
Waxman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Wilson (SC)
Woolsey
Wu
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—5

Baca
Giffords
Hinchey
Speier
Waters

□ 1825

So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated against:

Mr. BACA. Mr. Speaker, had I been able to attend today's floor proceedings, I would have voted "no" on S. 627—Speaker BOEHNER's Short Term Default Act.

SERGEANT JASON W. VAUGHN POST OFFICE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the question on suspending the rules and passing the bill (H.R. 2213) to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 801 West Eastport Street in Iuka, Mississippi, as the ''Sergeant Jason W. Vaughn Post Office''.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. LANKFORD) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. TERRY. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 420, noes 0, not voting 12, as follows:

[Roll No. 678]

AYES—420

Ackerman
Adams
Aderholt
Akin
Alexander
Altmire
Amash
Andrews
Austria
Bachmann
Bachus
Baldwin
Barletta
Barrow
Bartlett
Barton (TX)
Bass (CA)
Bass (NH)
Becerra
Benishek
Berg
Berkley
Berman
Biggert
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blumenauer
Bonner
Bono Mack
Boren
Boswell
Boustany
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Braley (IA)
Brooks
Broun (GA)
Brown (FL)
Buchanan
Bucshon
Buerkle
Burgess
Burton (IN)
Butterfield
Calvert
Camp
Campbell
Canseco
Cantor
Capito
Capps
Capuano
Cardoza
Carnahan
Carney
Carson (IN)
Carter
Cassidy
Castor (FL)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Chandler
Chu
Cicilline
Clarke (MI)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coble
Coffman (CO)
Cohen
Cole
Conaway
Connolly (VA)
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Costello
Courtney
Cravaack
Crawford
Crenshaw
Critz
Crowley
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
Davis (KY)
DeFazio
DeGette
DeLauro
Denham
Dent
DesJarlais
Deutch
Diaz-Balart
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Dold
Donnelly (IN)
Doyle
Dreier
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
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Edwards
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Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxx
Frank (MA)
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
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Gingrey (GA)
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Goodlatte
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Graves (GA)
Graves (MO)
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Griffin (AR)
Griffith (VA)
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Hultgren
Hunter
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Jackson (IL)
Jackson Lee (TX)
Jenkins
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Johnson (IL)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
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Lewis (CA)
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Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Long
Lowey
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Luján
Lummis
Lungren, Daniel E.
Lynch
Mack
Manzullo
Marchant
Marino
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Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (CA)
McCarthy (NY)
McCaul
McClintock
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McCotter
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McGovern
McHenry
McIntyre
McKeon
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
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Meehan
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Miller (FL)
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Miller (NC)
Miller, Gary
Miller, George
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Price (GA)
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Ross (AR)
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Rothman (NJ)
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Runyan
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Ryan (WI)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Scalise
Schakowsky
Schiff
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Schweikert
Scott (SC)
Scott (VA)
Scott, Austin
Scott, David
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Wasserman Schultz
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Whitfield
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Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Wolf
Womack
Woodall
Woolsey
Wu
Yarmuth
Yoder
Young (AK)
Young (FL)
Young (IN)

NOT VOTING—12

Baca
Gallegly
Giffords
Gohmert
Grijalva
Hinchey
Lofgren, Zoe
Maloney
Paul
Speier
Waters
Waxman

□ 1839

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

SERGEANT MATTHEW J. FENTON POST OFFICE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the question on suspending the rules and passing the bill (H.R. 789) to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 20 Main Street in Little Ferry, New Jersey, as the ''Sergeant Matthew J. Fenton Post Office.''

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. LANKFORD) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

BALANCE THE BUDGET

(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, just tonight we passed the debt ceiling vote, and it had a very critical feature, a feature that requires accountability in our House—a balanced budget amendment.

Every day, millions of Americans sit at their kitchen tables, trying to figure out how they pay their bills. But before they write that check and determine how much they're going to have to spend out of that checking account, they first balance that checking account to know how much money is in it. But we, in the United States Congress, don't do that. We don't balance our account. We don't know how much money's in there. We just spend money.

The American public expects accountability from us. In order to have that accountability, we need to do what 49 States in America do, and that's pass a balanced budget amendment. The first of that series of steps was accomplished tonight. Now it's the Senate's turn to pass that balanced budget amendment provision, have both Chambers pass it, and have a majority of the States ratify it. This is what the American public wants. They want us to balance our checkbook, just as they do theirs.

EVERYONE SHOULD SACRIFICE FOR OUR COUNTRY

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

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, there's something missing in this entire debate. Over the course of the last 30 years, in the 1970s, if you would have seen the real income for the top 1 percent, it accounted for about 9 percent of real income. Today the top 1 percent accounts for 25 percent of real income. The top 400 wealthiest people in the United States of America pay a tax rate of 17 percent, while the fellow in Youngstown, Ohio, is paying a much higher tax rate.

The sky is falling, and the Republican Party wants to make all these huge decisions about how we need to fix our country. We need the wealthiest in our country to become patriots and step up to bat and help us solve this problem. Everyone here is being asked to sacrifice. The military, the middle class, the parents trying to send their kids to college with Pell Grants, the schools that get title I, all are being asked to sacrifice but for the top 1 percent of the wealthiest people in this country. It is absent from this debate.

It is irresponsible for us to continue this process without asking the wealthiest in the United States of America, who have been blessed to live in this country, to help us solve this problem.

PERMANENT ACCOUNTABILITY FROM WASHINGTON

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

Mr. HARRIS. Mr. Speaker, this evening is a moment in history. Very few times does this House vote to advance an amendment to the United States Constitution, but we did it today. And the gentlelady from Ohio, she just talked about what Americans talk about at home. It's about balancing your checkbook. It's about not spending more than you take in. We don't have a problem with too few taxes here in Washington. We have a problem with too much spending. Mr. Speaker, we still borrow 41 cents out of every $1, and we're borrowing a lot of that money from the Chinese.

What this bill we passed tonight will do is put us on a track to pass a balanced budget amendment—what Americans are calling for: permanent accountability from Washington. No more spending tricks, no more budget gimmicks. Just do what every American family and business has to do. Just balance our budget.

□ 1850

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CRAWFORD). The Chair would remind all persons in the gallery that they are here as guests of the House and that any manifestation of approval or disapproval of proceedings is in violation of the rules of the House.

AMERICAN ECONOMY IS NOT SAFE

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

Mr. MCDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, the House has acted. No time for celebration—it's not over yet. Until it passes both houses, the American economy is not safe.

Standard & Poor's and Moody's announced to the University of Washington and to Seattle and to King County that if there is a default on Tuesday, these institutions in my State go on the credit watch list for downgrade because they received money from the United States Government, and there is no certainty that the United States Government is going to pay its debts. This is a question about whether the United States is going to be viewed in the world as being responsible and paying their debts.

It's not about the future; it's about what we have already contracted, and this House, led by the Republicans, has put every State, every county, every city, every university that writes bonds for their financing at risk.

It's going to cause people to pay more in the State of Washington and in every other State because of this foolishness. We need a clean lifting of the debt limit.

DEBT LIMIT

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

Mr. GARAMENDI. Thank you very much. This evening I am going to be joined by several of my colleagues. And as they come to the microphone, let me just lay down some of the facts.

Not more than an hour ago this Chamber voted on Speaker BOEHNER's proposal to deal with the debt limit. Very interesting comments that he made prior to the speech—and while I can't quote them precisely—he did say

that his whole strategy started way back in January when he told the President that he was going to use the debt limit as a way of getting his way.

Well, we saw what his way is, and that's what was voted on today without any support at all from the Democrats and a lot of Republicans saying that it was not the right way to go.

So what did he propose? We have two very, very basic paths that are facing the American public today. One of those paths is a path that we voted on, which is a path to basically unravel most of the things that America holds dear.

In order to carry out the caps and the $2.5 trillion in reductions that are in that legislation, we would have to decimate Medicare. There is no way it could possibly continue to provide the services to our seniors and similarly Medicaid, of which 70 percent of that money goes to seniors who are in nursing homes. And so those two critical parts of the foundation of the American society—that is providing health care to our seniors and the aged, blind, and disabled—are going to get unraveled as a result of the legislation that passed.

Similarly, there is no way to meet those spending reductions without going after Social Security. The other path is one that we have suggested on the Democratic side, and we are going to spend some time talking about these two today, and that is the path that maintains these pillars of the society of America that basically express the values of our country, that our country is one that cares deeply about our citizens, whether they are aged, seniors who may need medical care and who need an income, Social Security and Medicare, or whether they are young children that need an education and those in between that need jobs.

That's the path that the Democrats have offered in the budget that we put forth on this floor that we voted on, that was our recommendation on how to move forward. It failed without any Republican support, but it was a path that basically spoke to the values of this Nation that we have held dear for these many, many years.

I would like to turn now to my colleagues here. I would like to start with my colleague from Oregon, PETER DEFAZIO.

PETER, I know that you have some remarks that you would like to share with us this evening.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Thanks, JOHN. Thanks for helping organize this response to the Republicans.

We do have one real and prevailing crisis in America. It's been with us now since 2008, and that's a jobs crisis. There are probably 20 million Americans who are unemployed, underemployed in this country when you get to the real numbers.

Now, credible economists say if we could find a way to put those people or most of those people back to work and get unemployment down from 9.6 nationally to, say, 4.5 or 5 percent, that would solve a quarter, a quarter of this deficit and debt crisis. That would be $2.5 trillion over 10 years.

Now, the Republicans here have proposed $2.7 trillion of cuts over 10 years. So if we could put people back to work, we would have about the same savings.

Then, you know, if we got people back to work and healed the economy a bit, all we have to do, and I talked about this earlier this week, is nothing. Let the Bush tax cuts expire. Go back to the bad old days of Bill Clinton, 3.8 percent unemployment, paying down debt, the rich paying a fair share. Those were the bad old days, according to the Republicans, because those job creators were paying some taxes.

Oh, my God, billionaires required to pay taxes at the rate equal to or higher than their secretaries and the janitors. Can you imagine that? Oh, what disaster. So, now, they are not only cutting programs and ignoring the jobs crisis, they are making the jobs crisis worse.

Last week, they ended the Federal Aviation Administration construction program for safety and security. They stopped collecting the tax. The Republicans stopped collecting the tax. It's a user paid-for system on airline tickets. That's $30 million a day. Most airlines have taken it as a windfall. So the Republicans' mantra that if we lower taxes on corporations they will pass it through to the consumers—no, sorry suckers. They keep the money and you pay the same.

But then the other mantra is, well, if we get rid of taxes, we will create jobs. That's how you create jobs, by cutting programs and cutting taxes.

Interesting. We have cut taxes on the airline industry by $30 million a day, $210 million a week. That's well over—you know, that's a lot of money on a year's basis, over a billion dollars. And guess what? We have lost 94,000 jobs; 4,000 jobs of people in the FAA who oversee the safety and security construction program to make sure taxpayers get a fair value for their dollar and 90,000 private-sector construction jobs across America.

And guess what? The American public doesn't know it yet, but this could well lead to either, you know, opening the door to terrorist attack because we don't do some of the security programs, or causing a runway incursion because we don't finish the runway incursion program before the bad weather in the winter, or I don't get my instrument landing system in Coos Bay, North Bend, before the winter and a plane goes awry, we could have people die because of that. But to them this is all good—we are giving people back their money, or we are giving the corporations the money, and don't worry.

We need to focus on jobs. There is nothing that they have been doing here for the last 6 months, 8 months, 7 months, however long they have been in power—it seems like 10 years—that has created a single job. In fact, they have cost us jobs. They are costing us jobs at an ever accelerating rate, and now they want to cut one other, just one other point. They want to cut all investment in transportation by 35 percent. That's an immediate loss of 600,000 private-sector jobs.

It means we won't deal with the 150,000 bridges of the national highway system that need rebuilding. We won't deal with the half of the payment on the national highway system that needs redoing. We won't deal with the $70 billion backlog for new equipment for our transit systems, transit systems that are so decrepit in places like the Nation's Capital that people are being killed. We won't deal with any of that.

□ 1900

We won't put millions of people to work building new transit vehicles or new buses or bridges with steel and all those things with Buy America.

The Republicans say, well, we'll just give the corporations the money and the rich people the money and they'll trickle down on the rest of us. Well, we've been pretty well trickled down upon for way too long. It's time for new priorities. And I would reject the Republican agenda.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. DEFAZIO, thank you very much. You clearly pointed out the dichotomy between the Democratic proposal, which is one of building and creating and putting together a society and an economy that actually works, and the Republicans seem to be just dismantling time after time.

I would like now to turn to Congresswoman BETTY SUTTON, our colleague from the State of Ohio, who has seen the effect of the cuts and what they mean in her district.

So, Ms. SUTTON, if you would care to share with us your thoughts.

Ms. SUTTON. I thank the gentleman for his leadership. You have been a stalwart; and, boy, do we need leadership at this point.

Here we are, it's been 29 weeks, more than 200 days since the Republicans took over the majority of the House, and not only have they not done anything to create jobs or help working families. Here we are today looking at what they have done.

What have they done? After walking away from the table five times in negotiations to restore our Nation's fiscal health, House Republicans have passed a bill today to kick the can down the road so we can continue to have this debate over again in a matter of months. But make no mistake, this is a political dodge. Republicans could not agree on a long-term solution within their own ranks, so they just decided to take a vote on a bill that kicks the can down the road that they know there is not support for, and it's a part of this pattern.

What have they been doing in this over 200 days? They have an agenda that aims to end Medicare, that guts

Medicaid, that has threatened Social Security, and at the same time they have even targeted energy-efficient light bulbs. They have used time in this body to do all of these things, while at the same time fighting to preserve tax breaks for the wealthy, for Big Oil, and for companies that ship jobs overseas when at this time we know that we have a jobs deficit in this country.

There is nothing more important that we can do than to, of course, make sure that America pays its bills, but the most important priority facing our Nation is to get America back to work because we can't solve that long-term deficit problem without people having jobs. And, frankly, the American Dream doesn't live if we don't have opportunities for families out there to go to work and take care of those that they love, to send their kids to college. That's another thing that the Republican agenda has targeted, to put college out of reach again of so many middle class families.

Well, I'm glad to be here with the gentleman from California and my other colleagues to make sure that we explain to the American people that there are people who get it, people who know that the number one priority is to put people back to work, to focus on building our infrastructure, to strengthening U.S. manufacturing, because we know that we have to be a country that makes things, that makes things made out of American iron and steel and manufactured goods; that every time you have a manufacturing job, that there is a ripple effect of four more jobs, or if it's in the auto industry, it's 10 more jobs. We know that if we are not a country that manufactures things, then we are at the mercy of those who do. It is incumbent upon us to stand up to make sure that we focus the agenda.

We've got to stop this political theater, deal with getting the debt ceiling issue dealt with for the long term, not for 6 months, not for 6 months and be right back at this again, leaving the American people to wonder, seniors to wonder whether they're going to get what they need in their Social Security checks, veterans to wonder whether they're going to get what they need. We really, really know that the priority has to be on jobs, and we implore our Republican colleagues to join us.

Two hundred days is too long; 200 days is more than the American people and the American families that I am so honored to serve can take. We must focus on getting people back to work.

Mr. GARAMENDI. It is about jobs. There are very few economists—except maybe some that supported the proposal that the Republicans put together today—but nearly every economist in this Nation said the only way we will ever get this Nation back to a balanced budget is with full employment, putting people to work. And that is the Make it in America agenda.

Let me now turn to Mr. PERLMUTTER from the great State of Colorado, who has some concepts and ideas he would like to share with us this evening.

Mr. PERLMUTTER. I thank my friend from California and Ms. SUTTON from Ohio.

And as they've said, the best way to pay the debt that this Nation has incurred is for people to work. All of a sudden you've got revenue coming in, and you don't have to pay unemployment, you don't have to pay a lot of Medicaid, you don't have to pay COBRA and all these other things. You have revenue coming in and less expense going out.

One of the things about this Nation is that it has always provided to those people who really are prepared to work, who are prepared to play by the rules, who take responsibility for their lives and the lives of their family members, a chance to get ahead. That's what America has meant to millions and millions and millions of people throughout our history.

And one of the reasons this country was able to provide that kind of a setting for all of us is because 235 years ago or so, this Nation went through a war. And after that war, the States banded together and said, you know what, we as a country will pay the debts of our Revolutionary War. And this young Nation paid its debts and became a strong Nation overnight because it paid its bills. And so for 235 years now we've been paying our bills. You bet. And that's why we have had the strongest credit, the full faith and credit of the United States of America for two centuries.

My friends on the Republican side of the aisle, for the last 3 months or more, have been putting that credit at risk. And I'd like to say there was a real reason for them to do that, but there is no reason. When you have incurred a bill, you pay that bill. You don't say, you know what, we're not going to pay the bill unless some things happen in the future. You pay the bill, and you deal with the future separately.

But not in this Congress, not with this Republican leadership. They tie it all together and say if we don't get our way, we're not going to pay our bills. Well, baloney, that isn't how it works. And so what we've got to do is come together. The President has proposed a balanced approach to getting this country's fiscal house in order.

Now, let's not forget how we got here. Ten years ago, we had a surplus; revenues exceeded expenses. So in these last 10 years we had two big tax cuts—that's a couple trillion dollars under George Bush. We had a couple big wars, which instead of everybody being patriotic and really assisting the country, we would borrow and do it on a credit card—that's a couple trillion dollars. And then we had a crash on Wall Street—another $2 trillion or $3 trillion. That's where the debt came from.

Now, I can lay the blame at the feet of the Republican leadership and administration, but we are where we are and we've got to deal with it. And it's got to be done in a balanced way, both the revenue side of the ledger and the expense side of the ledger. If our goal is to pay down the debt, you need more revenue and you need less expense. And it's both sides. And you can't just say we're going to cut, cut, cut. We're going to take it out of Medicare, we're going to privatize Social Security. We're going to eliminate early childhood education. You've got to deal with the expenses, and we know that; but you've got to have revenue.

In this instance, the Republicans say, you know what, we're not going to have additional taxes for millionaires and billionaires and some corporations with loopholes, no, that's off limits. But we are going to go after Medicare, we are going to go after Social Security, we are going to go after early childhood education. That's just not right, and this country knows it.

□ 1910

Every American knows that, so we have to get busy, ladies and gentlemen, because we have work to do. If we are going to restore the American Dream, we have a lot of work to do. And that is what Democrats are going to do. We have a lot of work to do, and it is time to get busy.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. PERLMUTTER, you are so very correct. The American Dream, you laid it out there so well—job, family, home, ability to take care, kids off to school, good health care—the American Dream. When you get old, you've got Medicare, you have Social Security. That's really the foundation.

However, what happened on this floor not more than an hour and a half ago will destroy that dream. Now, we have work to do; indeed, we do. And now I would like to turn to my friend and colleague on the floor, sometimes we call it the East Coast/West Coast show, my friend from New York, Mr. PAUL TONKO.

Mr. TONKO. Representative GARAMENDI, it is a pleasure to join with you, speaking for your base in California, joining with our colleagues from Colorado and Texas and Connecticut and Ohio and Virginia, myself from New York, across this country, we are speaking for the American public. The great populous of this Nation are asking: Where are the solutions? Where is the responsiveness to a job situation, a jobs deficit, a jobs crisis?

The solution here, well, last night we saw it. We saw the drama unfold, not here on the House floor, but behind closed doors. We moved into recess. The Republican leadership of the House said we are going to move to recess. We were fully anticipating a vote last night in short order, but we waited for hours and hours. They didn't have the votes. So what happened? Today they moved for a measure that moved further from the center, took us to the extreme edge in order to get just by a

vote to amass sufficient support for a very extreme solution that really kicks the can down the road, as the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. SUTTON) indicated. It means that we don't have this long-term solution that builds confidence in the economy but, rather, a political response, a political solution that bought enough votes, that puts into play measures that we know will not find support as negotiations need to come to conclusion in just a matter of hours.

And so this has been a disingenuous approach to a very serious issue. But what they are doing is destroying jobs, because as you kill the confidence within our economy by threatening this economy with credit ratings that could be reduced, that call for greater interest payments, from car loans to mortgages to student loans to savings to pension plans, we're putting the people of this country, every household, regardless of income strata, economic strata, at risk. But an assault certainly on the middle class of this country.

And is that the right thing to do when we have this looming dark cloud of a jobs crisis, and how do we solve that? We do it by investing in programs that create jobs and undo the programs that are outmoded, don't create jobs. And we make certain that there is an investment made in innovation, in clean energy, in manufacturing, making things here in America, taking ideas, moving them along, embracing the pioneer spirit of the people of this great land. That's not being done.

What they do is move to destroy some 700,000 jobs. They kill the confidence factor for the economy. They move forward with harmful measures that destroy our economic growth and end Medicare, because with their proposal, we see it clearly, they would end Medicare and transition Social Security into a privatized format.

These are the things that our phones have been ringing off the hook about. We have heard, through the President's encouragement, from several constituents, routinely through this debate of several weeks and months now but enhanced over the last couple of days, and people are very clear, couldn't be clearer: Why do we become a lesser priority than Big Oil and millionaires and billionaires? People are asking that question, and they have every right to.

This is an assault on the values of the middle class of this country. It is a neglectful response to the jobs crisis of this country, and it has moved us further away from the deficit situation with the debt ceiling discussion by moving it to the extreme, because the extreme of their party, in order to get their support, said over the last several hours, the last half day: You want my support, move extreme. Don't move to the moderate zone. Don't build a consensus. And so now the consequences of their action puts this economy at risk and does nothing but reduce jobs rather than promote the investments that will create jobs.

Representative GARAMENDI, it's aggravating. It is ignoring what the public's wishes are, and it's not responding to the challenges of the moment. This is a tipping point moment for the Nation. This is a chance to reengineer the economy after a long and deep and painful recession, and they are risking that by perhaps pushing us back into a recession, if not a full-blown depression.

Mr. GARAMENDI. What took place here on the floor, Mr. TONKO, over the last couple of hours was really a charade. It was theater. It had no sense of reality. There is no way that piece of legislation is going to move forward. You said it so very well: It became more and more radical with each iteration over time.

It seems as though there is a small group within the Republican Caucus that really doesn't want government at all. Almost an anarchist attitude about government is bad, get rid of it in every way.

And then there is group in that same caucus that actually published a piece of paper, it came from the leadership, and one of the things that they said that they wanted to do was to bring down the President. Well, we have an election coming up, to be sure. But to use the full faith and credit of the United States, that is the honor and really the dignity, to say nothing of the financial strength of this Nation, to bring down the President seems to be unconscionable.

Mr. TONKO. Our goal here should be to build up a Nation rather than to bring down a President, and it is shameful to even have that acknowledged.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Earlier this afternoon before we started this 1-hour, one of our colleagues on the Republican side brought up a nice little picture of a woman balancing her budget, presumably at home, and a checkbook. She said that 40-some States have a balanced budget amendment, and they balance their budget.

Earlier this afternoon, I was talking to my friend from the great State of Virginia, and he said: Let me share with you how one State balances their budget.

I yield to BOBBY SCOTT.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. I would like to bring that up because the legislation that we considered earlier today had a provision that required a constitutional amendment that is mislabeled. It is called the Balanced Budget Amendment.

Well, if you look at the provisions of the bill, not just the title, the provisions, you will see that it requires a three-fifths vote to pass a budget that is not in balance. Every budget that we have considered for the last 9 years and every budget that we will consider for the foreseeable future will be unbalanced in the first year. So all you've done is increase the threshold for any budget to be balanced.

The Republican Study Committee budget, which is probably the most conservative budget in terms of spending on the table, other budgets would probably cut the deficit just as much, but all of those severe deficit reduction bills would require a three-fifths vote.

Now remember, when the Clinton budget passed, it passed by the thinnest of margins. We balanced the budget and were on course to paying off the national debt, created a record number of jobs. The Dow Jones Industrial Average almost quadrupled. Fifty Democrats lost their seats when they voted for that bill. When you vote for deficit reduction, a lot of people will be casting career-ending votes. Increasing the threshold to three-fifths will just make it harder or even more impossible to pass.

What you can get three-fifths for, once you need three-fifths, any kind of budget can pass. You can have more tax cuts, and we got three-fifths votes from the $800 billion tax cut back in December. But a three-fifths vote, you can pass new tax cuts and new spending. You can make the deficit worse under the balanced budget amendment and probably will.

Also consider that it had the provision of two-thirds vote to increase taxes. That will obviously make it more difficult to balance the budget. Two-thirds vote to spend more than 18 percent of GDP, a number we haven't seen since Medicare was enacted. That means you're going to have pressure on Medicare and Social Security.

Interestingly, if you put all of these things together, you'll notice that you can cut Medicare benefits or Social Security benefits with a simple majority. But to save those programs with new taxes, a two-thirds vote in the House and a two-thirds vote in the Senate. And then to add insult to injury, it requires a three-fifths vote to increase the debt ceiling.

□ 1920

As if the drama that we've been through in the last few days and last few weeks isn't enough of a spectacle, they wanted to make that kind of thing routine, where we'd have to go through this every year. We've had to increase the debt ceiling on average once a year for the last 50 years. They want to go through this spectacle with a supermajority so that we can have these kinds of problems all along.

Now, we heard during consideration of the balanced budget amendment when we were in committee about Arizona's balanced budget amendment and how well it works. And we kept hearing this over and over again. So I thought, I wonder how they do that? So I Googled it.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Excuse me. You said that Arizona has a balanced budget amendment in their Constitution and somehow they balance their budget.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. And I couldn't figure out how they have done it over the past few years. I figured there must be something in there. So

we Googled it, thanks to Google. And we found out. The first thing I found out is, with 6.3 million people, they got $6.4 billion of stimulus money that the Federal Government borrowed and then sent to them. A thousand dollars for every man, woman, and child—$4,000 for every family. That helped them balance the budget.

But that wasn't enough. You know what else they did? They sold their State capitol and supreme court building. Did you hear what I said? They sold the State capitol building for $735 million and sold the supreme court building for $300 million and leased it back. That extra billion dollars in the budget was necessary for them to balance their budget.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Excuse me for a second, if I might interrupt. One of the proposals coming from some of the Republicans was to sell America's assets. Do you suppose they intended to sell the U.S. Capitol?

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Well, the Arizona State capitol was sold and leased back. So there's no telling what they might want to do. But the really regrettable part of this is the process that we're in. Because we just passed a bill that provides for trillions of dollars in unspecified cuts. They slapped the thing together behind closed doors. The final version was developed this morning after the bill had been debated. There was only 1 minute left in the debate, and they changed the bill. They added in the balanced budget amendment and some other kinds of changes and sprung it on the House.

We finished the debate this afternoon. Vote it up or down, no amendments. We took all that time doing it on a bill that 53 Senators have signed a letter saying that they're going to oppose it as soon as it gets over there.

Now, I said unspecified amendments because they don't cut anything in their bill. There are no cuts. There are caps. So we don't know what the cuts will be because they're just spending caps. We will find out next month what they have in mind because that's when we'll try to appropriate under the caps, and then we'll figure out what actually has to be cut.

But we'd have an idea of what they might cut because earlier this year they had a bill of about $66 billion. Annualized, that would be about a hundred billion for the full year. In 10-year costs, that would be about a trillion. So if you want to know what a trillion-dollar 10-year cut would look like, we can see it.

Look at what they cut. They cut safety net programs like community action agencies, legal aid, energy assistance for low-income seniors, community health centers, WIC nutrition. All cut. They had investments in our future, education. All kinds of education programs, including Head Start and Pell Grants. Cut. Job training programs in the middle of an economic downturn. Cut. NASA and other scientific research, energy research. Cut. High-speed rail, investments in our future. Immunizations and AmeriCorp. Cut.

Then routine functions of government that you would hope would not have to get cut, like air traffic controllers. They're working so hard, they're falling asleep on the jobs. Cops and firefighters. Cut. FBI agents. We spent the last couple of days in the Judiciary Committee talking about trying to chase down cases involving child pornography, and we don't have enough FBI agents to chase them down. And what do they do? Cut FBI agents.

Clean Water grants, poison control, aid to small shipyards. We have a lot of shipyards in my district. National parks. OSHA—Occupational Safety and Health Administration—personnel cut. FEMA. With all the problems we've got all over the country now, floods and everything, FEMA is cut. They talk about border security. Border protection and border security. Cut. Food inspection.

That's just a small sample of what they had in that. Then in the next bill they're cutting Medicare. All of those cut. And that's just the first trillion.

I yield to the gentleman from Colorado.

Mr. PERLMUTTER. I was going to say to my friend, over the course of the last 10 years we know where the debt really came from. It wasn't in early childhood education. It wasn't in national parks. It was in two tax cuts—a couple trillion dollars or more. It was in two wars—at least a couple trillion dollars. And it was in a crash on Wall Street when people were laid off and had to have some kind of assistance.

Obviously, you said Arizona needed assistance—$6.4 billion and they still sold their capitol.

I would yield to my friend from Connecticut because he has the chart that describes this.

Mr. COURTNEY. Thank you, Mr. PERLMUTTER and Mr. GARAMENDI, for holding this.

As John Adams, our second President once famously said, Facts are stubborn things. This chart here, which is a chart which is using the Congressional Budget Office facts and figures in terms of what happened to this country since 2002, which as my friend indicated, was the last time we had a balanced budget in this country. This chart shows that we have accumulated about $7.5 trillion in debt. And $5 trillion of that was due to the policies of the last administration, starting with the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, two wars which, again, lots of debate about whether it was in our national interest. In any case, what is not debatable is that we never paid a penny for either one of those conflicts.

The Bush tax cuts, $1.8 trillion; nondefense discretionary spending, $608 billion. TARP, the Wall Street bailout, which a lot of people forget occurred under the last administration; a Medicare drug benefit which was passed in 2005 and was never paid for. Not a nickle of that benefit was ever paid for with either offsetting revenue or other spending reductions.

And the 2008 stimulus bill which the Bush administration had presented. A lot of people don't remember the check that people got sent during that time. Again, none of those expenditures were paid for. Many of those expenditures, such as the Bush tax cuts and the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, are still recurring expenses, which are still accumulating bills and debts which this country is obligated for.

When the Obama administration took office in January of 2009, they faced an economy that was in free fall. There were 800,000 jobs lost in January of 2009. Obviously, a crisis that needed to be addressed in terms of counter-recessionary policies such as extending unemployment benefits and some stimulus, which is to get work out there in terms of road and bridge construction projects, sewer treatment facilities. I'm cutting a ribbon on Monday morning in my district for a plant which provided a lot of work for people. Again, nonrecurring expenses to deal with the emergency that we faced as a Nation.

When you look at, again, the comparative cost of the policies and the Bush administration and the Obama administration and you think about the fact that we have these bills and expenses which have been accumulated by our Nation since 2002, and yet we had a default debate here an hour and a half ago, where the Speaker, who, by the way, voted for every single one of those Bush policies from 2002 up until President Bush left office, stood on this floor, blamed the debt crisis that we face in our Nation just on one administration, which, again, CBO clearly documents was far less culpable in terms of what the numbers show.

Again, it just shows how really corrosive the partisan debate that's occurred under the 112th Congress since this new majority took office, completing omitting the fact that eight times during the Bush administration they voted to raise the debt ceiling to avoid default. Under Ronald Reagan, 18 times. We've had clean debt limit increases. Yet this administration, the Obama administration, for the first time in American history is being held to a different standard in terms of trying to deal with the debts and obligations of this country.

The rating agencies have spoken loud and clear in terms of the bill that was just voted on here an hour and a half ago. A short-term extension of 6 months is thumbs down from the rating agencies because they see that as just an invitation this coming December to go through the same political and economic instability that we saw this past week. And that's not what our economy needs today.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. It's in that context that the actions of this Congress have to be taken into consideration because last December we passed

an $800 billion, 2-year tax cut—not new tax cuts—extending the ones that were there.

□ 1930

Had we let them expire, which I think would have been better judgment, we would not be in the situation we're in. We passed $400 billion a year tax cuts. We now have a general consensus that we need, in the next 10 years, $4 trillion worth of savings, deficit reduction, about $400 billion a year, exactly the same as what we did in tax cuts last year. All of these cuts we're talking about are necessary to partially offset the fact that we extended the tax cuts last year. And the process was all up or down. You had to vote it all up or down, one vote, without any choices. We didn't need to extend all of the tax cuts. Maybe if we extended some but not all, we could have avoided cuts in Head Start, in food inspectors, firefighters and those kinds of things. We didn't make the choice step by step. It was, we have to extend the tax cuts, and in order to preserve those tax cuts, we're making the cuts in Medicare and Social Security and Pell Grants and Head Start, clean water grants, poison control, and on and on. It's in that context that these cuts are so regrettable.

Mr. GARAMENDI. If I might, my good colleague from Virginia, on the floor today it was perfectly clear that the Republicans are refusing to even consider any increases in taxes or the elimination of tax breaks, on oil, on corporations that send jobs overseas, it's no. On the high end, the hedge fund managers that have a billion dollars of income, no, they're going to keep those tax breaks.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. On that point, if we do nothing and let them expire—we're not talking about new tax cuts—if we just let them expire, we have enough deficit reduction on the table to match Simpson-Bowles.

Mr. GARAMENDI. There you have it. Our colleague from Ohio, if you could comment. We're going to do this kind of moving along more rapidly. We've got several different comments. Our colleague from Texas is back.

Please, if you would, and then I'll turn to our colleague from Texas.

Ms. SUTTON. I just want to say one more time, because I know that the people that I represent in northeast Ohio, they don't want government on their backs but they do want government on their side, and how do we show that we're on their side? We focus on the issue that matters to them the most, and all they want is a chance. They want a chance at that American Dream.

How do we do that? We do that by focusing on jobs, and we do that by focusing on this agenda to Make It in America. What does that mean? It means policies that make sense regarding trade, that instead of fighting to protect companies as the Republicans are through this whole default debacle, instead of protecting those companies that ship jobs overseas, we want to level the playing field, to allow our manufacturers and our workers to fairly compete because we know that they are the best in the world and given a chance, a fair chance, they will not only compete, they will out-compete anybody in the world. We need tax policies that make sense. We need to focus on not only manufacturing but building our infrastructure. The world is working on building their infrastructure, and here we are, we heard the cuts that are going on aimed at our infrastructure.

It is time, it is past time, that we turn to the hard work of putting America back to work, because while we have a jobs deficit, we don't have a deficit of work that needs to be done. Let us get away from this risk of default, let us settle the matter, allow America to pay its bills, because if we don't, we're going to lose even more jobs. Economists tell us we're going to lose 700,000 more jobs if America defaults. We don't want to go in that direction. We want to go in the direction that allows our workers, our companies and our country to make it—Make It in America.

Mr. GARAMENDI. And there's the voice from the central part of the heart of America from the great State of Ohio.

We know that America can make it. This is still the greatest manufacturing center in the world, and part of our job agenda on the Democratic side is what we call Make It in America.

The gentlewoman from Ohio very quickly pointed out several elements in that. I put this up while she was talking so we could think about it.

Trade policy. We can't give away our jobs on trade policy.

Taxes. We talked about the tax issues, corporations getting tax breaks for going offshore.

Energy. We need energy security. We can't afford to continue to pay all of our hard-earned dollars to the petrodictators of the world and the most dangerous places of the world. We need a domestic energy policy, a green energy policy, a clean energy policy, with the tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands of jobs there.

Labor policies. We talked about educating our kids. BOBBY SCOTT from Virginia talked about the cuts that are in the Republican budget when we need to educate, re-educate and prepare our labor force.

Education. In this budget that they just put forward are tremendous cuts to the Pell Grants that allow kids to go to school.

Research. Again, BOBBY, you talked about the research cuts, and the infrastructure we've talked about several times. This is all part of our agenda. This is how we're going to build America, how the American Dream can become a reality once again by making the critical investments on the public side, bringing the private side along.

I know that Texas likes to say everything is great in Texas, but I have talked to our colleague, SHEILA JACKSON LEE, many times we've talked to her on the floor, and it's not all perfect.

Could you share with us the view from Texas?

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. The gentleman from California is very kind for leading this effort, and I'm delighted to be here. We've really got a regional, national perspective here: the gentlemen from Colorado, from Connecticut, the gentlelady from Ohio, and, of course, the gentleman from New York, and the gentleman from Virginia, and Texas.

Texas is a big State. I heard a colleague on this side of the aisle say that Texas has got all kinds of articles to talk about how great a State it is. It's a great State, but when you don't spend money on people, you wind up like Texas, being 43rd in education, or you wind up having the State with the largest number of individuals without health insurance, and so I have joined my colleagues today because I truly believe, standing on this side of the Chamber, that there is an opportunity for bipartisanship. But yet we have individuals who have been influenced by signs that say No Surrender. No Surrender. Those words were more appropriate for our Founding Fathers as they stood against oppression. No Surrender. But these words are not appropriate against the American people, that we won't surrender, no matter what happens to the American people, we in this Congress are so influenced by voices that truly do not have the concept of invest and grow, and they don't have the concept of Make It in America. What a wonderful statement about the greatness of America. Not No Surrender but Make It in America, because America is not broke, and the voices of negativism that would propose legislation that would have us cut without investment, cut without revenue, means that we surrender on the American people.

I wanted to mention that we haven't said what is happening to local government. Here is a major headline that says States Feel Pain Over Debt Impasse. We all come from the people, outside of the Beltway, and what is happening to the States is that the markets are being troubled. I had a press conference and a meeting with my city comptroller whose investments are in Treasury notes. It's not just what we do here on the floor of the House. Our cities will have a troubled economic infrastructure if the Treasury notes that they have invested in all of a sudden drop with severe, if you will, losses.

And so I wanted to say that this is more than just us, it is more than one person in a leaky boat, it is many of us in a leaky boat. Just in the last 48 hours, to the gentleman, the Dow went down 200 points. In the last 12 hours coming in today, the Asian markets

and our markets have seen a dramatic drop, and as you well know, we were here until 11 o'clock at night trying to wait until the conference, in essence, got itself together.

So let me just say that the debt ceiling from my perspective should be a clean one, but we should go forward with innovation, investment, and balanced cutting. We should preserve our Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security.

Finally let me say this. If the States are being troubled now and people are being influenced by the language or the words No Surrender, can you imagine what happens when 6 months from now the bill that passed with no Democrats, we would come back again to the American people, tell them to be fearful about Medicaid, Medicare, Social Security, tell our students they might not have Pell Grants for the second semester, tell people in the midst of buying a house their interest rates will skyrocket, because we'll be back again trying to debate the debt ceiling, and if various draconian measures are not passed such as balanced budget amendments by three-fifths, two-thirds, we will have another default.

□ 1940

We need to be focusing on what is good about America. Make it in America. Invest, innovate and grow, and have mutually balanced sacrifice. That's what will make us great.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Ms. JACKSON LEE, thank you so much.

We have about 10 minutes left here, and I'd like to do lightning rounds.

My colleagues, you've been so eloquent and have really brought these issues to bear, but why don't we all do a wrap—we'll do about a minute—and we'll just pass it around.

Let's start with the great State of New York. So we'll go to the east coast first.

Mr. TONKO.

Mr. TONKO. Thank you, Representative GARAMENDI.

Let me just say that the challenge for America to pay her bills, many of those bills that were accrued before this administration, is not a Republican challenge; it's not a Democratic challenge. It's an American challenge. The default crisis that is challenging our economy, threatening our economy is not a Republican crisis; it's not a Democratic crisis. It's an American crisis. The jobs crisis is not a Republican crisis or a Democratic crisis. It's an American crisis.

You get the message. We need to come together, not pull farther apart.

I represent what I'd like to call the original Tech Valley. The Erie Canal/Barge Canal were hosted in the 21st Congressional District. It provided for a westward movement. It embraced the pioneer spirit of America. Mill towns became the epicenters of invention and innovation. That same pioneer spirit is in our DNA at the very present day, today. If we invest as we know we should, we will grow jobs; we'll respond to the jobs crisis; we'll create revenues and they'll grow; we'll cut spending required when unemployment rises; and we will solve many crises.

I have seen the region I represent grow per capita, in per capita measurement, to be the number one green-powered job growth region in the country. That happened because of Federal investment and State investment. Let's just make it in America and do sound policy that is bringing us together and not dividing us as the leadership of this House has done with their approach.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Thank you, Mr. TONKO.

Let's move to the great State of Virginia, down in the tidewater country.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Thank you very much, and I appreciate your doing this.

As our friend from New York has said, we need to be focused on jobs. The other side of the aisle is quick to say that you cannot raise taxes in the middle of an economic downturn, and then the next thing they say is we need to cut spending. Spending cuts have a much larger impact on employment because, when you have an agency and when you cut the budget, people get fired immediately. There is a more immediate effect than tax cuts, which you don't pay until later on. It has a larger effect. So, when we start talking about the jobs, these cuts will have an adverse effect on jobs. We need to focus on jobs first.

We wouldn't be going through this kind of attack on our economy, on Medicare, on the education programs if it had not been for the threat to shut down the economy. This threat is unprecedented. We need to pay our obligations. We cannot default. It's actually manufactured, because never in American history has there been any serious effort to fail to pay our obligations as we've been going through in just these past few days.

We need to increase the debt ceiling in the same way we've done it every year, sometimes twice a year—on average about once a year, sometimes twice a year—over the last 50 years. Just increase the debt ceiling. We should not be jeopardizing. We should not be having all this uncertainty in the markets with what's going on here today. As that saying goes, ''Just do it.''

Mr. GARAMENDI. Indeed, we do. If we're going to have the American Dream continue to be a reality, we've got lot of work to do. We've got to put the American people back to work, and we're going to have to deal with the deficit, and it will take us a while to do it.

Mr. COURTNEY, you very well and eloquently pointed out how we got into the deficit. Please, your final thoughts.

Mr. COURTNEY. Sure. Tonight, I know and every one of us here knows there are a lot of older Americans who are watching this debate extremely closely who are worried about their Social Security checks at the beginning of next month, and they're worried about whether their Medicare is going to be there.

What I would just say—and I know all of us agree—is we all understand that it is our solemn duty to protect a program that just celebrated its 45th anniversary, Medicare, which has made a difference to every single one of us in terms of our parents and our grandparents. We understand that we are not going to allow this political bullying effort, using the tool of the default as a device, to butcher the Medicare program. That is a solemn pledge which I know every single one of us believes in, and we are going to fight until this episode is over in order to make sure that we protect the basic components of retirement security for seniors in America, which is Social Security and Medicare.

Mr. GARAMENDI. How about the view from Colorado?

Mr. PERLMUTTER. I thank my friend from California.

I would say the view from Colorado is, there's a lot of pushing and pulling back here, and I would call upon my moderate friends in the Republican Party, if there are any anymore, to stop this tomfoolery.

No longer can we put the full faith and credit of the United States at risk. I mean, we do have a duty to preserve and protect our Constitution, and the full faith and credit of this country is referred to at least three times in the article about the Congress in the ''full faith and credit'' section of the Constitution and then in the 14th Amendment. We pay our debts. We pay our bills. So I'd just say that the President has proposed a solid, long-term fiscal plan. It took us 10 years to get into this financial mess from the time we had a surplus under Bill Clinton, and it will take us several years to right ourselves, but we can do it. This is America.

Then as we're doing that, we really do have to focus on making sure that people who play by the rules, who are responsible and hardworking, have a shot at getting advanced in this world. The best way to do that is through a good job and through making things in America.

For Democrats, really our formula is to innovate, educate, rebuild this economy, and rebuild our infrastructure. That will make this country strong, and it will make Colorado strong. We love our clean energy industry. That's a good place to start.

Mr. GARAMENDI. And from Texas, SHEILA JACKSON LEE.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. I thank the gentleman.

First of all, thank you for allowing us to really talk about how great America is—I agree with you—and we are not broke. Chairman Bernanke said fast, undefined cuts will hamper the economy, and he is nonpartisan as Chairman of the Federal Reserve.

So what do we need to do?

We need to look at our history. Twenty million jobs were created

under the Democratic Presidency of William Jefferson Clinton—and then this President, with the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act that we supported, 3 million jobs. We know how to do this.

What I would say to my friends is that we have the responsibility to be not ''any'' party, but Democrats are here to be for the American people, and this weekend, Democrats will be the ones standing in the gap for the American people. I am proud of that.

My last point is, there is no shame in taking care of the vulnerable. The last thing we want to do as we leave this place in these next couple of days with the debt ceiling in place, as it should be, is to leave behind us seniors who may be thrown out of nursing homes because we didn't do what was right. So I say we can do it, and we can do the debt ceiling in the way that creates jobs and protects the American people.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Thank you.

I'll do a wrap here, and we'll be finished for this evening.

Unfortunately, the work has not yet been completed. We do need to lift the debt ceiling. We can, and it will be done one way or the other. The President has the ultimate authority under the 14th Amendment of the Constitution to simply order the Treasury to pay the bills.

All that has gone on here today will devastate the United States. It will devastate it. We've talked about that part of this is the requirement that no more debt ceilings will be lifted until there is a constitutional amendment that requires a two-thirds, or a 60 percent, vote to do anything. That is guaranteed gridlock. The only thing that could take place on a majority vote would be cuts. Think about that, America. In order to raise taxes, in order to end the tax breaks given to the oil companies or the rich barons on Wall Street, it takes a two-thirds vote. But to cut Medicare?—a majority vote. We're not going to let that happen.

There is one place that the Democratic Party is going to stand, and that is: Keep your hands off Social Security and Medicare. No way. Nohow. I don't care about all of this talk that goes on here. The bottom line is: That is a fundamental building block foundation of this Nation. It brought every senior out of poverty.

□ 1950

There's not a family in America that doesn't depend upon Social Security and Medicare for their parents. Now, if you want that cut, you stay there with what the Republicans are talking about because there's no way that you could possibly carry out what they're proposing unless you go after Medicare and Social Security and Medicaid.

We will not let it happen. This is where we stand. It's not a line in the sand. It is etched into the very heart of the Democratic Party.

With that, I thank my colleagues for joining me this evening, and I yield back the balance of my time.

HOUR OF MEETING ON TOMORROW

Mr. WEST. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at noon tomorrow, and further, when the House adjourns on that day, it adjourn to meet at 1 p.m. on Sunday, July 31, 2011.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

There was no objection.

THE TRUTH ABOUT THE DEBT CEILING

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

Mr. WEST. Mr. Speaker, free markets, free enterprise, innovation, and entrepreneurship are the foundation for economic growth and job creation in America.

For the past 4 years, Democrats in Washington have enacted policies that undermine these basic concepts which have historically placed America at the forefront of the global marketplace. As a result, most Americans know someone who has recently lost a job, and small businesses and entrepreneurs lack the confidence needed to invest in our economy. Not since the Great Depression has our Nation's unemployment rate been this high for this long.

Enough is enough. More taxation, regulation, and litigation will not create more jobs. Government takeovers of the economy have failed while the size and scope of the Federal Government has exploded. Washington has tied the hands of small business owners and job creators with onerous regulations and backward fiscal policies that have stalled the economy, slowed innovation, and destroyed jobs.

We need commonsense growth policies to give small businesses and entrepreneurs renewed confidence in our economy and to remove Washington as the roadblock to job creation.

America is at a crossroads, and House Republicans are committed to taking every possible step to spur private sector job creation and get our economy back on track so that Americans can do what they do best: create, innovate, and lead.

Tonight, my colleague and I will convey the frustrations of small business owners and those who have received the bad end of the stick of horrible policies created by the Obama administration.

At this time, I yield to the gentleman from Arizona, my friend and colleague, Mr. SCHWEIKERT.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. I thank the gentleman from Florida.

One of my reasons for asking you for a little bit of your time this evening is one of these days I'm supposed to come here to the floor, and we're putting together an actual presentation of the Medicare actuary report to walk people through, both our citizens and our fellow Members here, the reality of the numbers. But there was so much rhetoric on the floor today, and even within the last couple of hours, that it became one of those ''it was time to come back here to the floor.''

These are some slides that we used about a week ago. And it was my great frustration, because how do you manage your government? How do you engage in this political process when we're operating under mathematical folklore? We're living in a fantasy land when you see Members walk up to that microphone, look the public in the eye through that camera and say, If we would just get rid of those incentives to buy corporate jets, if we would just tax Big Oil, if we would just tax those millionaires and billionaires.

So one more time, we're going to actually walk through a little bit of mathematical reality so we might be able to start having an argument, a debate, a discussion that has some basis in fact instead of basis in, I'm going to say whatever is necessary from this microphone to get reelected. And it breaks my heart, but in my 7 months here, I think that happens an awful darn lot.

A quick sample of where we are at today. That's a dollar bill. Do you see this first part? That's 42 percent. So 42 pennies of every dollar this Federal Government is spending today is borrowed. That's why this debate that we're going through right now is so much more than just the debt ceiling and how much more our borrowing capacity is. It is the fact we're buried in debt and we are crashing, being crushed under that weight.

If you go and read the S&P letters and the Moody's letters, it's so much more than, Raise the debt ceiling or you might get downgraded. It is, You are going to get downgraded unless.

There is a credible plan to demonstrate how you intend to bend this debt curve. That's the real debate around here. That's what you are seeing the Republicans passionately try to discuss with the American people and with our brothers and sisters from the other side that this was so much more than raising the debt ceiling. It was a discussion about saving this Republic.

So if you have a Republic, this government borrows 42 pennies out of every dollar we spend. How long do you think that's going to last?

So what sort of rhetorical things do we get to hear around here? Well, let's actually, now, do a little analysis on a couple of them.

How many of you in the last 24 hours, both either in the gallery or here on the floor with me or my good friend Mr. WEST, have heard Members walk up to microphones, shake their hands and say, No more subsidies for those corporate jets?

Okay. Maybe they're right. But let's actually do the math.

We borrow about $4.7 billion every single day. And that whole piece of rhetoric, which I know has been tested through polling and focus groups so it is all about politics and campaigning and not the truth to the American people, is 15 seconds of that borrowing every day.

So one more time. We borrow $4.7 billion every single day, and the rhetoric you hear about the depreciation on the corporate jets, we're going to need to take that away, even if it were something sensible, it's 15 seconds a day. So you nod your head and say, All right. What if we got rid of it? Great. But it's 15 seconds a day.

So let's go on to the next bit of rhetoric we were hearing today.

Big Oil, we need to take away those subsidies, those incentives to go out and find more oil. Well, let's do this. What if the math were we're going to take away those subsidies from all oil, all fossil fuels, not just Big Oil. Well, we borrow $4.7 billion a day. It's $2.44 billion a year. Well, that equates to a good 2.2 minutes of borrowing a day.

So let's see. So far the two prime bits of rhetoric we heard here today equal 15 seconds, 2.2 minutes of borrowing, and this is the type of solution we keep getting from the left. And the reason we're getting those types of solutions is because it's tested through polling. It's easy for the public to understand, even though it's horribly untruthful to the public that's actually trying to get their heads around the scale of this problem.

So let's actually go on to one of the other ones we heard today.

How about those millionaires and those billionaires? You know, those Bush tax extensions. All right. But let's first be honest. They're the Bush tax extensions—they're actually the Bush-Obama tax extensions, because remember President Obama did sign the extension in December.

If you were to take away those tax extensions for every American, not just those millionaires and billionaires, what does it buy you? Remember, once again, we're borrowing $4.7 billion a day. It would buy you a good 28 minutes of borrowing.

So this rhetoric we hear from the President and around here, I know it may politically be wonderful and it's politically easy to digest, but mathematically, it just isn't the truth, and it doesn't lead you to a solution.

Because think of this one more time. The depreciation on jets, the incentives to find fossil fuels, ending the Bush-Obama tax cut extensions, and assuming—which we did in our math—that every single dime came in, that you didn't slow the economy down, you didn't raise unemployment, we used a magical fantasy number that every dime came back in and was applied straight to the deficit and to the debt, all three of the rhetorical points we heard over and over and over today add up to a half-hour of borrowing.

□ 2000

I turn to my brothers and sisters on the left one more time—and this is starting to become a habit here—what would you like to do with the other 23.5 hours?

I thank the gentleman for yielding.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair reminds Members not to refer to occupants of the gallery.

Mr. WEST. Mr. Speaker, we must empower small business owners and reduce regulatory burdens. Job creators are being bogged down by burdensome regulation from Washington that prevents job creation and hinders economic growth. These regulations are particularly damaging for the real job creators in the country, our small business owners. We must remove onerous Federal regulations that are redundant, harmful to small businesses, and impede private-sector investment in job creation.

The Small Business Administration has reported that government regulations are estimated to cost our economy over $1.75 trillion a year. To make matters worse, in 2009, the administration considered adding another 184 regulations that are estimated to cost the economy in excess of $100 million each and are likely to cause more Americans to lose jobs.

At this time, I yield to my friend and colleague from Colorado.

Mr. TIPTON. Thank you, Congressman WEST.

Tonight we're talking about small business in America, the number one job creator in America. I'm a small businessman. I'm not a career politician. It seems to me that once you come to this place and you're surrounded by pillars of marble, vast expanses of grass, and glorious monuments, that it seems to kind of cloud your vision from what's really going on back at home. We're seeing businesses right now—they aren't the megacorporations that are often talked about by our colleagues; they are small businesses trying to provide jobs, trying to be able to build a future.

I live in western Colorado. My district encompasses a good portion of the entire State of Colorado, the eighth-largest congressional district in the United States, 54,000 square miles. The number one employer there, small business. Traveling through that district, I found it remarkable. As I have stopped into those small businesses, visited with the owners, sole proprietorships, Sub S corporations, LLCs, people just trying to make a living, as I visited in those communities with county commissioners, with city council members, one message comes through loud and clear: Government is overregulating America. It is hurting our ability to truly be able to get Americans back to work.

Congressman WEST just mentioned a very important figure. In this country, we are paying $1.75 trillion a year in terms of regulatory cost. That is impeding America's ability to be able to get back to work. Now some of our friends always want to take that to the extreme, saying that we want to eliminate all regulations. It's not the case.

When we go back to the beginning of the 20th century, when we were starting to build cars in this country, in New York City, there were two automobiles, two cars. They ran into each other. So stoplights are not a bad idea. But the government has overreached. It is hurting small business and our opportunity to truly be able to grow America.

Let me tell you a story about a constituent of mine. He started out with nothing. He and his wife invested and they scraped together dollars and worked hard. And over the course of the years, they've been able to build a small car dealership in western Colorado. He called me up the last few days, and he said, Washington simply doesn't get it. They seem to believe that they need money more than we do here at home. And that brings us back to a lot of the conversations which we have been having over these last few days in terms of the debt and the deficit in this country. We currently have a debt in this Nation of $14.3 trillion. Come the end of September, we're going to be adding on another $1.4 trillion on top of that national debt, a crushing burden on the promise of America.

His granddaughter, she isn't old enough really to know how much she owes. But her portion of that national debt is now well in excess of $45,000. If our grandchildren are going to inherit the promise of America, we have to restrain, we have to slow down, we have to reduce the spending in Washington, D.C. We simply can't afford it. The numbers are too high. Our colleagues will tell us that taxes are the answer. They like to call it a balanced approach. We need more of your money because Washington needs it more. They failed to point out that through the bills that they have passed through this Chamber—Congressman WEST and I, we weren't here. We didn't help create the problem, but we are certainly here to try to help solve the problem.

They increased the debt on the backs of the American people when they passed ObamaCare, the government-run health care. I'm concerned about that because it is hurting jobs in America. That small businessman who started that business from nothing and was able to grow that car dealership is afraid to hire because he doesn't know what the costs are going to be from the government-run health care. Well, we've got a pretty good idea—at least the upfront costs. It's costing us better than $1 trillion. Our senior citizens, indeed, are worried about that. Through the actions of our counterparts, we saw that $562 billion was cut out of Medicare to be able to fund that program. And starting in January this coming year, the President will appoint his 15-member commission to start rationing

health care for senior citizens. We're fighting to stop that.

Connectivity which we see in our economy. Between government regulations, excessive taxation, and having too many people in Washington who have never gotten dirt under their fingernails, they've never met a payroll, they've never created a job, they've never worked in the private sector. That's the disconnect between here and at home. We have people right now that are gathering around their kitchen tables. They are looking at the resources that they have coming in and know that they can't spend more than they take in. Tomorrow morning those small businesses are going to unlock the doors. They know that they have to spend within the limitations of the income that they have.

Forty-nine of our States live under a balanced budget requirement, just like the men and women who live in the communities of those States. Isn't it about time, isn't it about time that Washington applied the same principles that they expect out of every American, every American family, to apply to Washington, D.C.? Some will say ''no.'' But that's a challenge—more importantly, that is the opportunity that we truly face right now in this country. We have an opportunity to change the course of American history for the better, to embrace, once again, the values that truly made this country the freest, the richest, and the greatest nation on the face of the Earth, and that the Earth will truly ever see. American entrepreneurship, American know-how, but we have to have the freedom, the resources, and the opportunity to do that. The government is no longer the steppingstone to success in this country but has, indeed, become a stumbling block.

□ 2010

This is our chance. This is our opportunity. We have many votes here, had a vote today.

This is not the end of the debate, but it is the beginning of a solution. If we embrace that opportunity, that special and unique thing that it is to truly be an American, American exceptionalism, and allow Americans to do what they do best, to innovate, to create and to build, we will be able to get this country back on the right course, but it will not come as long as we continue to build government, protect programs, and forget about the people who sent us to Washington.

Let's stand up once again for the American people, for the small business people who truly make America work and are the number one job creators in our country.

Mr. WEST. I thank my colleague from Colorado.

Mr. Speaker, we know that not all regulations are bad, but so many of them are obstacles to job creation. A recent study by the Heritage Foundation found that an unprecedented 43 major regulations were imposed in fiscal year 2010 with a total economic cost of $26.5 billion, the highest total since at least 1981.

The cost of regulations is a big obstacle for American job creators. But when you think about regulations, here are examples of some of the ones that can make you laugh.

The Department of Energy requires microwave makers to measure the amount of energy their products use in the ''off'' position.

The Environmental Protection Agency wants stricter regulations on the amount of dust on American farms.

The Department of the Interior wants to impose a fee on Christmas tree sales to promote Christmas tree sales.

When you think about how government regulations destroy American jobs, these are the statistics that will make you cry. According to a Louisiana State University professor, the Department of the Interior's de facto moratorium of exploration in the Gulf of Mexico could cost 36,137 jobs. In addition, more than 80,000 jobs could be lost due to the EPA regulations targeting the cement industry; and, finally, EPA greenhouse gas regulations could cost $1.4 million jobs.

The American people placed an upper limit on the damage that Washington Democrats could inflict on the economy by firing House Democrats in the last election.

In January, we began to implement the Pledge to America, which is focused on providing an environment for economic growth and job creation. We voted to repeal the government takeover of health care, roll back costly Obama administration regulations, cut job-destroying spending and change the culture of Washington, D.C., from one which talks about how much more they can spend, to one which now talks about how much we can cut in spending.

The United States Congress in 2009 passed the President's almost $800 billion stimulus package, which we now have convincing proof it did nothing to reduce unemployment. Today the House of Representatives has sent nine real-life job creating bills to the U.S. Senate, yet those bills continue to sit, waiting to be voted on, similar to the Cut, Cap, and Balance that we sent over that the Senate majority leader tabled.

I have introduced my own piece of legislation to do my part to try to reduce unemployment, The Small Business Encouragement Act, H.R. 1663.

The President continues with an economic policy based on job-killing overregulation, the specter of increased taxes and the implementation of ObamaCare. How many more months are we going to see this stagnant job growth? We are now at 29 months of unemployment in the United States of America being at or above 9 percent.

The President has to realize his policies have failed. They have failed the American people, and it is time to go in a different direction. The solution lies in economic taxation and regulatory policies which incentivize long-term private sector growth. We must restore confidence, provide access to capital which will create economic certainty. Now is not the time for more rhetoric on spending, borrowing, and raising taxes. Our country is in a crisis, and time is running out.

We must remember that it is those same mom and pop stores on Main Street back in our respective districts that create the jobs for our teenagers during these summer months. It is the local hair salon back home that my wife and my two daughters visit often that would be affected by the uncertainty that persists throughout this Nation.

Economic uncertainty created by our massive Federal debt, burdensome regulatory environment on small businesses, and uncertain tax policy for 2012 is slowing commerce; and we must turn the corner. Today's somber GDP announcement in the last quarter of 1.3 percent growth and the previous quarter, 0.5 percent growth, is further proof that President Obama's administration's economic strategy is not working.

Unemployment still remains above 9 percent, at 9.2 percent nationally; in the inner city and our black communities is at 16.2 percent; and, unfortunately, for our veterans, of which I am one, that unemployment rate is 13 percent.

We just talked about our quarterly GDP growth. That is unacceptable for the most powerful economy in the world. Providing certainty for America's small businesses should be the number one priority for Washington, considering they are the backbone of our Nation's workforce and the engine of our economy.

In May, House Republicans put forth a plan for America's job creators. That includes commonsense policies to remove uncertainty by reducing regulatory burdens, lowering business tax rates to 25 percent, spurring exports by quickly passing the pending free trade agreements, and introducing a budget that gets our Nation's fiscal house in order. The sooner we enact policies like these into law, the sooner our small businesses will be able to lead us out of this economic downturn.

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

□ 2020

SENATE SHENANIGANS ON DEBT LIMIT BILL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 5, 2011, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) is recognized for the remainder of the hour as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. GOHMERT. It's been quite an eventful day here on the House floor, a lot of scurrying, a lot of things going

on in committee rooms, different meeting rooms around the Capitol today. And actually, last night, when I finished talking and meeting with folks around midnight or so, it appeared that Republicans would start today with basically not much change to the bill we had yesterday.

But we had a conference this morning, the Republican Members of Congress, and added to the Boehner bill was the requirement that before the President would get the full tranche of the debt ceiling being lifted there had to be a balanced budget amendment passed from the House—with two-thirds vote, of course—and from the Senate with two-thirds vote and be sent to the States by the Archivist of the Capitol for their ratification.

Now, it's a shame that a balanced budget amendment is needed, but if there could have been a piece of legislation that were prepared and passed that were tight enough to require always that a balanced approach be taken—no more money spent than money coming in—then we wouldn't have had to worry about a balanced budget amendment. But what we've seen over the last 100 years or so in this country has been runaway spending. And I think of the line Jim Carey had in one of his movies, ''Somebody stop me,'' and Congress needed somebody to stop Congress. But the only way to do that, constitutionally and legally, was to change the Constitution so that Congress could be stopped from spending more money than it took in.

I was going to vote ''no'' on the Boehner bill as of yesterday, as of last night, but this morning, I found out that the Speaker, as he said he would, had listened to the Conference and put back in the balanced budget amendment requirement. It already had a requirement in there that there would be a vote, but we knew that the Senate had already voted 51 votes to table the balanced budget amendment. They didn't even want to debate it. And now tonight, as I speak, the Senate has wasted no time, with the Majority Leader of the Senate, a Democratic Party leader—I would bet that he has not bothered to read the bill, that he has not bothered to see what's there, and perhaps Majority Leader REID does not know that 70 percent or so of all American adults would like to see a balanced budget amendment passed.

Tonight, again, he is working against the will of the American people, just like he and then-Speaker PELOSI did in pushing for ObamaCare to be passed though a majority of Americans did not want that kind of government intrusion into their lives. Well, Democrats still control the Senate, so once again they're working their private will against the will of the American people.

So as I speak, I don't know what the tally is. It was being taken as I walked onto the floor. But I would imagine that Leader REID would not have brought the Boehner bill, with the requirement of having a balanced budget amendment passed by two-thirds, to the floor of the Senate unless he knew, once again, he had the 51 Democratic Senators who were willing to vote to table the bill that has required so much sweat—I don't know that there were any tears, but there was a lot of sweat and a lot of frustration. I know I've had plenty, anger at times, frustration. But we came together and got the bill done. And I ended up being a ''yes'' for a number of reasons, but the most important was that the balanced budget amendment was going to be required to pass two-thirds of the House and Senate before the President got the debt ceiling increase that he so desperately wants.

To table that—it's bad enough that the Senate all this time has been trashing things that we've been fighting for and getting accomplished in the House, but to table it? You're not even going to let Republicans who want to speak on this issue come to the floor of the Senate and have a fair debate simply because one party controls the majority? You want to keep the other side from coming to the Senate floor and having a fair debate over a balanced budget amendment. It is just staggering to think that, once again, just like when ObamaCare was crammed down the throats of Americans, not with any sugar, it was a sour piece of medicine, and now, not even to allow debate over a balanced budget amendment to be brought to the Senate floor, I don't think the Founders intended that. I don't think the Founders intended that when 70 percent or so of Americans felt something was critical for the ongoing and good of the country, that you would have one group in either House who would prohibit even discussing, debating a bill, using the rules and 51 Senators to prevent debate. I mean, that's one of the things that helped make this country great.

This was the one place you used to be able to say whatever you wanted. It has been credited to different people, ''I disagree with what you say, but I'll defend to the death your right to say it,'' and now it appears the Senate is operating under the rule, ''I disagree with what you say, so I am going to use procedural maneuvers and prevent you from saying what you want to say.''

And I'll say this about Speaker JOHN BOEHNER, too. He knows that I have not been happy with many of the things that have gone on, but unlike the Majority Leader in the Senate, he has made no effort to prevent me from coming to the House floor and speaking my mind, such as it is, here on this floor. We're supposed to have freedom of speech, but the Senate will not allow the working of the people's will on the Senate floor.

Now, I've heard some people say, Mr. Speaker, that the fact is that by our passing this bill today in the House that we have provided a vehicle for the Senate to use to completely strip out and put some contorted piece of legislation on and send back down here. Well, the fact is that the Senate did not need this bill today to have a vehicle to send a contorted piece of legislation back to us. Now, the Constitution makes clear, anything that produces revenue has to originate in the House. That's the Constitution. But it is also important for people to understand, Mr. Speaker, the lengths to which the rules have been twisted—and I think misused—in order to make something happen that never should have.

A good example is this monstrosity some call ObamaCare. It's got different names, but the original name of this bill was H.R. 3590, and it calls it: the Bill from the House of Representatives.

So this was a Senate bill—ObamaCare was a Senate bill, started in the Senate, derived in the Senate. Well, then, since the Democrats raised revenue in ObamaCare, created new taxes, introduced taxes, well, that's a revenue-generating bill, then how in the world could the Senate originate the bill since it generated revenue, because the Constitution makes very clear they can't do that.

□ 2030

Well, what the Senate did was take H.R. 3590 entitled, ''an act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to modify the first time home buyer's credit in the case of members of the Armed Forces and certain other Federal employees, and for other purposes.'' That's ObamaCare.

And I would humbly submit that any bill that starts as a lie, because this bill was a lie, a bill that starts as a lie can't be a very good bill in the end.

We know that any building that has a proper foundation can weather a lot of storms. This bill has a lie for a foundation. The ObamaCare bill, H.R. 3590, ''an act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to modify the first time home buyer's credit in the case of members of the Armed Forces.'' And they had to do double page, and this paper is very, very thin so they could get all of this stuff in here.

But it is interesting. You know, the bill started as a bill to help veterans and our military. But this bill, to help veterans and our military, those who are putting their lives at risk for our liberty, for our benefit, that was stripped out and this ObamaCare bill begins with page 1, line 1 of the bill to help our veterans and military, and strikes every single word, deleting every single word in the bill to help veterans and our military, and substitutes therefore ObamaCare.

That bill started as a lie. They took a bill that had nothing to do with health care, and they stripped every word that would help our military and made it ObamaCare. That is phenomenal, just incredible.

So the Senate didn't need us to pass a bill today for them to do the same thing, to take some well-intentioned bill, some bill that did some great things for America, deleting beginning

on line 1, page 1, and substituting therefore whatever contorted mess that the Senate is going to send down here.

But the thing is, although some of the Senate leadership has been taking their shots in the media at the House, they have not passed anything. They have fought now today makes twice as the Nation moves toward not having enough money while the House has been embroiled in serious debate and discussions trying to put together a bill. And we did that, and it had 234 votes. And the Senate immediately tabled it.

The truth is, I thought we should wait for the Senate to do anything. And I disagreed with the Speaker's strategy. The Speaker's strategy was if they won't take that, then let's try again. We will compromise on the things that we want and send a bill that is clearly a compromise of the things that we want, so surely the Senate will take it up and surely they will pass it.

We heard from Majority Leader REID that he was going to make sure that it was dead on arrival, but those kinds of things have been threatened before, too. We know that the President has drawn many lines in the sand that have kept moving. And we have heard the President talk about his bill. I can recall sitting back there during the September speech by the President in here on health care in which he kept talking about his bill, my bill, this bill, and don't misrepresent my bill or I'll call you out. And he was the first one to use the lie word here on the House floor talking about what he believed to be misrepresentations of his bills.

I asked the HHS Secretary a couple of weeks after that, the President keeps talking about my bill, this bill, where can I get a copy of the President's bill? And Secretary Sebelius said: I think he was talking about a set of principles.

So I was right. The President talked about this bill, my bill, this bill, my bill, but he had no bill. People talk about how beautiful his clothes were, but the fact was the emperor was naked. There was no bill. There was no bill then; and now as the President talks about his bill, his ideas, there is no bill. As HARRY REID talks about his bill, there is no bill. Maybe they will finally get around to passing something. There is something filed in the Senate, and as I understand it, Chairman DREIER has filed it down here so that we can take it up. We will see what happens.

But the phenomenal thing is how badly off track this Congress has gotten when one of the Houses, in this case the Senate, will not even allow debate over something that the vast majority of Americans want. Forget Democrat, forget Republican, forget red, forget blue. Let's get responsible.

Mr. Speaker, there is $160 billion in deficit spending. My second year here, 2006, was not responsible; and Democrats won the majority as the result because they promised we will eliminate that $160 billion deficit spending. Man, oh, man, were they right. They eliminated $160 billion in deficit spending. And now this year as a result of their actions, the last four, we will have $1.6 trillion in spending deficit this year. Bringing in around $2.2 trillion.

We find out today the numbers from the first quarter of this year, which was very little growth at all in our economy which people got depressed about when the original numbers came out, was about a third of what they originally thought it was. Things aren't looking good. This is President Obama; it's his economy. With the changes that Speaker PELOSI and Majority Leader REID made in the first 2 years of this President's tenure, they set us on a track that is leading to a major crash.

Now, we have already heard in recent days that the August 2 deadline that the President set, just like I said some weeks back, that was not a particularly special day. It did happen to be the day before the President's big birthday celebration, but otherwise it was not a particularly significant day. I know that the group that Tom Daschle helped start, the Bipartisan Policy Center, whatever it is, that they were echoing whatever the President said, that August 2 was going to be the day.

And they lumped in Social Security with everything else. The law is very clear, Social Security gets paid. It is on automatic pilot. Just like in 1985 and just like in 1996, when there was a shortfall 1 month, the Treasury Secretary is supposed to sell off some of the Treasury notes. There is $2.6 trillion in Treasury notes, sell off enough to pay the benefits and expenses of Social Security. So there is no risk of that failing.

We also know there are many times more than enough money to pay our debts as they come due in August; and so we have been told, well, actually it is not August 2. Maybe it is like a couple of weeks or a couple of weeks beyond that. We are not sure, but sometime in the future. Well, in the House it has been taken seriously even though August 2 was not particularly a magic date. We have passed two bills, and the Senate has passed zero. That's irresponsible. Absolutely irresponsible. That invokes no confidence that this government will ever be able to do what it needs to.

So I know, I have gotten emails, calls, and letters. Members of Congress all over the floor on both sides of the aisle have gotten calls and letters and emails. The majority in my office have encouraged me to stand firm. It is great to represent a district that understands not to cave in to fear-mongering.

□ 2040

It has been rough in recent days because you never like to be chided by friends who don't like the position you're taking on a bill. But I'm ever so grateful that the bill was made eminently better this morning by adding the requirement that the Balanced Budget Act pass. And not only that, talking through the day, I do appreciate Speaker BOEHNER face-to-face, eye-to-eye. He has been very gracious all week. It's others that have made it kind of tough at times. He realized something needed to be done. He wants to do something. So, in talking with him and also talking with Chairman PAUL RYAN, the chairman of the Budget Committee, I'm also satisfied that we've got a number of wonderful things coming.

We can perhaps figure at some point the Senate will get concerned about going against the will of the majority of the Senate. At some point they're going to realize: We should not keep going against 70 percent of the American public because a lot of us have got elections next year. So, gee, maybe we better do something that the majority of Americans want.

Well, one of the things that I heard Rush Limbaugh talking about in the nineties when Congress was not even a blip on my radar was the zero baseline budget. And it didn't make any sense to me as he explained it. I thought, that's strange. As it was explained, we have automatic increases in every agency's budget in the Federal Government. Every agency has automatic increases every year. Well, citizens don't get automatic COLAs but their agencies sure get an automatic increase every year. All those budgets, they get automatic increases. Why? We ought to have a zero baseline budget every year so nobody gets an automatic increase in the government agencies. If they want an increase, they ought to have to come in and prove it. And we can save trillions of dollars if we just required every budget in the Federal Government to start out and prove what they need for the year. A zero baseline budget. No automatic increases.

Well, when I got to Congress and was sworn in in January of 2005 and started looking at the things that would make America stronger, a zero baseline budget made sense. During that Congress I filed a bill to require a zero baseline budget. No automatic increases every year. And then back in those days it didn't make sense the Republicans wouldn't bring that to the floor because any time you slowed the automatic increase as a Congress, there were people that called you a draconian fool, you're making draconian cuts, when you weren't making cuts, you were just slowing the rate of growth. It wasn't a cut. The only way to fix that was just say: No automatic increases.

And I pushed for that in my first Congress in 2005 and 2006, and Republicans were in the majority. And our leadership at that time, particularly in 2006, when I talked with some of our

leadership then, and I was pushing it, and I was told we just can't do that. We should have. We didn't. We should have had major tax reform. Well, now is the time. This is a great time to push for a flat tax or a simplified tax that's fair, simpler, and so that everybody has their fair share.

I don't want a mega-rich person paying a 10 or 12 percent income tax. Everybody ought to have some interest financially in what happens here—and not because they make lots of money and don't put anything in. People need to have a vested interest in this Congress by paying income tax in. And the lowest rate is down, I believe, around 15 percent. It may be 5 percent. I've forgotten now. But the top rate has been 39 percent. Some people want it to go higher. And even though the top rate is 39 percent, there are some mega-rich that don't pay 39. Well, why not have a tax that's a fair tax cut across the middle that will be a flat tax. Everybody pays the same amount of tax. That ought to be fair. Everybody ought to have the same thing.

Art Laffer, a great economist that helped revive the dismal economy coming out of the Carter administration, was just saying this week—I agreed with what he said. I have been talking about this, and I appreciate that man's opinion so much. He said we ought to have a flat tax. And he said, I believe you could get there and have the same amount of revenue if you were to have a 12, 13 percent flat tax, and even allow for mortgage interest deduction and to allow for deductions to charitable contributions. That was the main part of the tax. There was another aspect. But, boy, that would be so much more fairer. No mega-rich would get out without paying nothing. GE shouldn't have to pay nothing or, get away with paying nothing just because they're a friend of the administration and get lobbying and all that kind of stuff.

Everybody ought to have to pay something. I'm okay with reducing corporation tax because when you do that, you're reducing the tariff we're putting on our own products. And if you took off the 35 percent tariff we put on every corporate American good produced, there's no telling how many markets around the world would just be begging for American products that would have 35 percent less of a tariff on those goods. We could compete anywhere if we keep the tariff down on our own goods. People talk about putting tariffs on other people's goods. We ought to get it off our own. And then you would see massive amounts of economic boom going on, and people would be hired, and more people would pay the 12, 13 percent income tax. You would have more revenue than ever coming into the American coffers in the Federal Government. That would create jobs. And as people know, the best form of welfare is a job. You feel good about yourself. But it's hard to feel too good about what is going on down there.

As I have said before, down in the Senate, above the door from the President's sitting position, above the left door are the words ''Annuit Coeptis.'' He, God, has smiled on our undertaking. It's part of our Great Seal on the back of every dollar bill. It's hard to believe that God could be smiling on people that will not allow debate on a responsible balanced budget amendment.

In the time I have left, let me just say we've got so many calls, emails, letters, encouragement. And so many of them say, We're praying for you in Washington that you will do the right thing. Some of us happen to believe—and I won't try to push my religious beliefs on others—but some of us happen to believe that as we're told in the Old Testament, the Lord is the source of all wisdom. That there is no wisdom outside of that. Ben Franklin apparently believed that, as he said in 1787, ''I have lived, sir, a long time, and the longer I live, the more convincing proofs I see of this truth: that God governs in the affairs of men.''

Mr. Speaker, Peter Marshall was Senate Chaplain back in the 1940s, and a constituent gave me this book with many of the prayers that he prayed there on the Senate floor. I want to finish, Mr. Speaker, with a prayer prayed by Peter Marshall, U.S. Chaplain for the United States Senate in the 1940s. On the Senate floor, as the Senators are down there. It makes a wonderful prayer.

Peter Marshall prayed:

''We pray to Thee, O Christ, to keep us under the spell of immortality.

''May we never again think and act as if Thou wert dead. Let us more and more come to know Thee as a living Lord who hath promised to them that believe: 'Because I live, ye shall live also.'

''Help us to remember that we are praying to the Conqueror of Death, that we may longer be afraid nor be dismayed by the world's problems and threats, since Thou hast overcome the world.

''In Thy strong name we ask for Thy living presence and Thy victorious power. Amen.''

Mr. Speaker, may that be our prayer also tonight.

I yield back the balance of my time.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 8 o'clock and 50 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Saturday, July 30, 2011, at noon.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

2650. A letter from the Deputy Director, Food and Community Resources, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule — Competitive and Noncompetitive Nonformula Federal Assistance Programs — Administrative Provisions for Biomass Research and Development Initiative (0524-AA61) received June 20, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

2651. A letter from the Chief Counsel, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Changes in Flood Elevation Determinations [Docket ID: FEMA-2011-0002] received July 14, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

2652. A letter from the Chief Counsel, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Suspension of Community Eligibility [Docket ID: FEMA-2011-0002] [Internal Agency Docket No.: FEMA-8187] received July 14, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

2653. A letter from the Chief Counsel, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Final Flood Elevation Determinations [Docket ID: FEMA-2011-0002] received July 14, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

2654. A letter from the General Counsel, National Credit Union Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Prompt Corrective Action; Amended Definition of Low-Risk Assets (RIN: 3133-AD81) received July 11, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

2655. A letter from the Assistant Deputy Secretary for Innovation and Improvement, Department of Education, transmitting the Department's final rule — Promise Neighborhoods Program (RIN: 1855-ZA07) received July 12, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

2656. A letter from the Director, Office of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Interim Enforcement Policy for Certain Fire Protection Issues [NRC-2008-0486] (RIN: 3150-AG48) received July 14, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

2657. A letter from the Director, Office of Personnel Management, transmitting the Office's final rule — Federal Employees Health Benefits Program: New Premium Rating Method for Most Community Rated Plans (RIN: 3206-AM39) received July 14, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

2658. A letter from the Senior Program Analyst, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Marking Meteorological Evaluation Towers [Docket No.: FAA 2010-1326] received July 7, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2659. A letter from the Senior Program Analyst, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Bell Helicopter Textron, Inc. Model 205A, 205A-1, 205B, 212, 412, 412CF, and 412EP Helicopters [Docket No.: FAA-2011-0561; Directorate Identifier 2010-SW-001-AD; Amendment 39-16715; AD 2011-12-08] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received July 12, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2660. A letter from the Senior Program Analyst, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Bombardier, Inc. Model CL-600-2C10 (Regional Jet Series 700, 701, & 702), Model CL-600-2D15 (Regional Jet

Series 705), and Model CL-600-2D24 (Regional Jet Series 900) Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2011-0159; Directorate Identifier 2010-NM-246-AD; Amendment 39-16713; AD 2011-12-06] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received July 12, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2661. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Determining the Amount of Taxes Paid for Purposes of the Foreign Tax Credit [TD 9535] (RIN: 1545-BK25) received July 14, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

2662. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Update for Weighted Average Interest Rates, Yield Curves, and Segment Rates [Notice 2011-59] July 14, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

2663. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Suspension of Reporting Requirements Under Sections 6038D and 1298(f) [Notice 2011-55] received July 14, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

2664. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Notice and Request for Comments Regarding the Community Health Needs Assessment Requirements for Tax-exempt Hospitals [Notice 2011-52] received July 14, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. SMITH of Texas: Committee on the Judiciary. H.R. 2076. A bill to amend title 28, United States Code, to clarify the statutory authority for the longstanding practice of the Department of Justice of providing investigatory assistance on request of State and local authorities with respect to certain serious violent crimes, and for other purposes; with amendments (Rept. 112–186). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. DREIER: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 383. Resolution providing for further consideration of the bill (S. 627) to establish the Commission on Freedom of Information Act Processing Delays (Rept. 112–187). Referred to the House Calendar.

Mr. SMITH of Texas: Committee on the Judiciary. H.R. 1002. A bill to restrict any State or local jurisdiction from imposing a new discriminatory tax on cell phone services, providers, or property; with an amendment (Rept. 112–188). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. SMITH of Texas: Committee on the Judiciary. H.R. 1059. A bill to protect the safety of judges by extending the authority of the Judicial Conference to redact sensitive information contained in their financial disclosure reports, and for other purposes (Rept. 112–189). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. CULBERSON (for himself, Mr. POE of Texas, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. MCKINLEY, Mr. MCCAUL, Mr. PAUL, and Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas):

H.R. 2694. A bill to firewall the Medicare Trusts Funds by restoring to those Trust Funds funds transferred by the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committees on Energy and Commerce, and Rules, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS (for herself, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, and Mr. SESSIONS):

H.R. 2695. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to expand and intensify programs of the National Institutes of Health with respect to translational research and related activities concerning Down syndrome, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS (for herself, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, and Mr. SESSIONS):

H.R. 2696. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to expand and intensify programs of the National Institutes of Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention with respect to translational research and related activities concerning Down syndrome, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Ms. JENKINS (for herself, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. BRADY of Texas, and Mr. BLUMENAUER):

H.R. 2697. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on certain footwear, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. REICHERT (for himself and Mr. BLUMENAUER):

H.R. 2698. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to broaden the special rules for certain governmental plans under section 105(j) to include plans established by political subdivisions; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN (for herself, Mrs. SCHMIDT, Mr. POE of Texas, and Ms. BUERKLE):

H.R. 2699. A bill to establish policies and procedures in the Peace Corps to provide for the safety and security of volunteers from rape and sexual assault, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. SMITH of New Jersey (for himself and Mr. DOYLE):

H.R. 2700. A bill to establish a health and education grant program related to autism spectrum disorders, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. CONYERS (for himself, Mr. WELCH, and Mr. SHULER):

H.R. 2701. A bill to promote simplification and fairness in the administration and collection of sales and use taxes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. GIBSON:

H.R. 2702. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to clarify the scope of the provision commonly referred to as the ''Wire Act'', and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. LARSON of Connecticut (for himself and Mr. ROONEY):

H.R. 2703. A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to ensure that members of the uniformed services are entitled to refractive eye surgery; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Ms. LEE:

H.R. 2704. A bill to reduce the spread of sexually transmitted infections in correctional facilities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mrs. LOWEY (for herself and Mr. REICHERT):

H.R. 2705. A bill to amend the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 to provide assistance for developing countries to promote quality basic education and to establish the achievement of quality universal basic education in all developing countries as an objective of United States foreign assistance policy, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. MILLER of Florida (for himself, Mr. ROSS of Arkansas, Mr. SHULER, Mr. LATTA, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mr. WITTMAN, Mr. BOREN, Mr. MICHAUD, and Mr. BONNER):

H.R. 2706. A bill to prohibit the sale of billfish; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. NUNES:

H.R. 2707. A bill to establish trade negotiating objectives of the United States with respect to the application of sanitary and phytosanitary measures to agricultural products to facilitate trade in agriculture, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. TONKO:

H.R. 2708. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the limitation on the imposition of employment taxes on wages in excess of the contribution and benefit base; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. TONKO:

H.R. 2709. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend the payroll tax relief under the HIRE Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. TONKO:

H.R. 2710. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal certain tax cuts extended for high income individuals; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. TONKO:

H.R. 2711. A bill to provide relief payments for non-COLA years to recipients of social security, supplemental security income, railroad retirement benefits, and veterans disability compensation or pension benefits; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committees on Transportation and Infrastructure, and Veterans' Affairs, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Mr. CULBERSON:

H.R. 2694.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 1 of section 8 of article I of the Constitution

By Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS:

H.R. 2695.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I, Section

8, clause 3 to regulate Commerce among the several States.

By Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS:

H.R. 2696.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I, Section 8, clause 3 to regulate Commerce among the several States.

By Ms. JENKINS:

H.R. 2697.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The Congress enacts this bill pursuant to Clause 3 of Section 8 of Article I of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. REICHERT:

H.R. 2698.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

''The constitutional authority of Congress to enact this legislation is provided by Article 1, section 8 of the United States Constitution, specifically clause 1 (relating to providing for the general welfare of the United States) and clause 18 (relating to the power to make all laws necessary and proper for carrying out the powers vested in Congress), and Article IV, section 3, clause 2 (relating to the power of Congress to dispose of and make all needful rules and regulations respecting the territory or other property belonging to the United States).''

By Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN:

H.R. 2699.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article One, Section Eight

By Mr. SMITH of New Jersey:

H.R. 2700.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority on which this bill is based is Congress's power under Article I, Section 8, Clauses 1 and 18 of the Constitution.

By Mr. CONYERS:

H.R. 2701.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8, clause 3.

By Mr. GIBSON:

H.R. 2702.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

By Mr. LARSON of Connecticut:

H.R. 2703.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 16

The Congress shall have Power To provide for organizing, arming, and disciplining, the Militia, and for governing such Part of them as may be employed in the Service of the United States, reserving to the States respectively, the Appointment of the Officers, and the Authority of training the Militia according to the discipline prescribed by Congress.

By Ms. LEE

H.R. 2704.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I of the United States Constitution and its subsequent amendments, and further clarified and interpreted by the Supreme Court of the United States.

By Mrs. LOWEY:

H.R. 2705.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I of the Constitution

By Mr. MILLER of Florida:

H.R. 2706.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8.

By Mr. NUNES:

H.R. 2707.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 3 of section 8 of article I of the Constitution of the United States.

By Mr. TONKO:

H.R. 2708.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 1,

All legislative Powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States, which shall consist of a Senate and House of Representatives.

By Mr. TONKO:

H.R. 2709.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1

The Congress shall have Power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States.

By Mr. TONKO:

H.R. 2710.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1

The Congress shall have Power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts nd Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defense and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States.

By Mr. TONKO:

H.R. 2711.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 1,

All legislative Powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States, which shall consist of a Senate and House of Representatives.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions as follows:

H.R. 10: Mr. FINCHER.

H.R. 23: Mr. LOEBSACK, Ms. SPEIER, Mr. COSTA, Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California, Mr. NUGENT, and Mr. FRANKS of Arizona.

H.R. 25: Mr. BRADY of Texas.

H.R. 58: Mr. ROGERS of Michigan and Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS.

H.R. 110: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.

H.R. 190: Ms. DELAURO.

H.R. 191: Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD.

H.R. 303: Mr. MCGOVERN.

H.R. 361: Mr. GOODLATTE, Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California, and Mr. WILSON of South Carolina.

H.R. 363: Ms. KAPTUR.

H.R. 399: Mr. QUIGLEY.

H.R. 420: Mr. GIBSON, Mr. SHIMKUS, and Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS.

H.R. 436: Mr. WEBSTER.

H.R. 452: Mr. BARTLETT, Mr. WEST, Mr. RIGELL, Mr. DIAZ-BALART, Mrs. SCHMIDT, and Mr. GIBSON.

H.R. 456: Mr. PASCRELL.

H.R. 458: Ms. BASS of California and Mr. ELLISON.

H.R. 459: Mr. ROSKAM.

H.R. 469: Mr. PAYNE.

H.R. 493: Mr. COURTNEY and Mr. FORBES.

H.R. 539: Mr. KILDEE.

H.R. 652: Mr. MCGOVERN.

H.R. 667: Mrs. CHRISTENSEN.

H.R. 674: Mr. FORBES.

H.R. 675: Mr. HIMES.

H.R. 718: Mr. LANCE, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. ROHRABACHER, and Ms. MCCOLLUM.

H.R. 719: Mr. SHIMKUS.

H.R. 721: Mr. SHIMKUS.

H.R. 735: Mr. RIGELL.

H.R. 751: Mr. PASCRELL, Mr. MILLER of North Carolina, and Mr. CLEAVER.

H.R. 763: Mr. PERLMUTTER.

H.R. 805: Mr. BOREN.

H.R. 860: Mr. MARKEY, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Mr. LONG, and Mr. PETRI.

H.R. 894: Mr. HONDA.

H.R. 912: Mr. MICHAUD.

H.R. 942: Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California.

H.R. 972: Mr. RIGELL.

H.R. 1031: Mr. OWENS and Mr. ANDREWS.

H.R. 1041: Mr. GONZALEZ.

H.R. 1092: Mr. BRALEY of Iowa and Mr. SCHOCK.

H.R. 1093: Mr. MILLER of Florida, Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS, Mr. ROGERS of Michigan, Mr. KINGSTON, and Mr. PENCE.

H.R. 1195: Mr. SIRES.

H.R. 1219: Mr. SIRES and Ms. SCHWARTZ.

H.R. 1234: Mr. DICKS.

H.R. 1236: Mr. CAPUANO.

H.R. 1244: Mr. CARNAHAN and Mr. DAVIS of Illinois.

H.R. 1259: Mr. BILBRAY, Mr. RIGELL, and Ms. HAYWORTH.

H.R. 1283: Mr. PETERSON, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. SCHIFF, and Mr. MARINO.

H.R. 1293: Mr. POLIS and Ms. WATERS.

H.R. 1318: Mr. DOGGETT.

H.R. 1327: Mr. LOEBSACK.

H.R. 1420: Mr. JOHNSON of Illinois.

H.R. 1452: Mr. BLUMENAUER and Mr. LANGEVIN.

H.R. 1463: Mr. MARCHANT.

H.R. 1533: Mr. RIBBLE.

H.R. 1543: Ms. CHU.

H.R. 1546: Mr. BOREN, Mr. BARROW, and Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD.

H.R. 1558: Mr. COSTELLO, Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas, and Mr. GUTHRIE.

H.R. 1574: Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts, Mr. HOLT, Mr. KILDEE, and Ms. CASTOR of Florida.

H.R. 1639: Mr. CARDOZA.

H.R. 1648: Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, Mr. RANGEL, and Mr. WALZ of Minnesota.

H.R. 1704: Mr. RYAN of Ohio.

H.R. 1724: Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, and Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California.

H.R. 1744: Mr. GIBSON.

H.R. 1776: Mr. BISHOP of New York.

H.R. 1792: Mr. LARSON of Connecticut.

H.R. 1802: Mr. CICILLINE and Mr. WELCH.

H.R. 1821: Ms. PINGREE of Maine and Mr. STARK.

H.R. 1834: Mr. HANNA.

H.R. 1848: Mrs. BONO MACK, Mr. PEARCE, and Mr. GRAVES of Missouri.

H.R. 1880: Mr. CAPUANO.

H.R. 1897: Mr. LEWIS of Georgia.

H.R. 1898: Mr. BROUN of Georgia, Mr. BISHOP of Utah, and Mr. BOREN.

H.R. 1940: Mr. LANCE, Mr. SENSENBRENNER, Mr. RIVERA, Mr. HINCHEY, Mr. MILLER of Florida, and Mr. ROTHMAN of New Jersey.

H.R. 1955: Mr. BARTLETT.

H.R. 1969: Mr. POMPEO.

H.R. 1981: Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas.

H.R. 2005: Mr. KISSELL, Mr. ISRAEL, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, and Mr. PAULSEN.

H.R. 2036: Mr. GUTHRIE.

H.R. 2054: Mr. PITTS.

H.R. 2057: Mr. BENISHEK, Mr. BROOKS, Mr. KING of Iowa, and Mr. LANKFORD.

H.R. 2059: Mr. JONES.

H.R. 2071: Mr. MARCHANT.

H.R. 2107: Mr. BISHOP of New York.

H.R. 2139: Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois, Mrs. MYRICK, Mrs. LUMMIS, and Mr. MCKINLEY.

H.R. 2195: Ms. BROWN of Florida and Mr. RYAN of Ohio.

H.R. 2204: Mr. MCCOTTER.

H.R. 2214: Mrs. MALONEY, Mr. BASS of New Hampshire, Mr. CRAVAACK, Mr. FLORES, Mr. HARRIS, Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan, Mr. SOUTHERLAND, Mr. SCALISE, and Mr. HURT.

H.R. 2256: Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, Mr. KEATING, Mr. WELCH, Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. DEFAZIO, Ms. MOORE, Mr. MCCAUL, Mr. HOLT, Mrs. LOWEY, Mr. DOGGETT, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. BERMAN, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Ms. WOOLSEY, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. ANDREWS, and Mr. HINCHEY.

H.R. 2257: Mr. HULTGREN.

H.R. 2280: Mr. WELCH.

H.R. 2306: Mr. HONDA.

H.R. 2312: Mr. PITTS.

H.R. 2346: Mr. LEWIS of Georgia.

H.R. 2360: Mr. LARSEN of Washington.

H.R. 2369: Mr. GERLACH.

H.R. 2402: Mr. HERGER.

H.R. 2404: Mr. ELLISON and Mr. JACKSON of Illinois.

H.R. 2412: Mr. CARNAHAN and Mr. ISRAEL.

H.R. 2414: Mr. WESTMORELAND.

H.R. 2458: Mr. HENSARLING.

H.R. 2459: Mr. BUCSHON.

H.R. 2463: Mr. OLSON.

H.R. 2485: Mr. CRAWFORD.

H.R. 2495: Mr. COHEN.

H.R. 2500: Mr. DAVIS of Illinois.

H.R. 2502: Mr. FILNER.

H.R. 2514: Ms. HAYWORTH.

H.R. 2524: Mr. STARK and Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California.

H.R. 2530: Mr. KIND, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. KISSELL, Mr. BENISHEK, Mr. HOYER, Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. CAPUANO, and Ms. BORDALLO.

H.R. 2534: Mr. FORBES and Mr. BILIRAKIS.

H.R. 2541: Mr. MCINTYRE.

H.R. 2557: Mr. POSEY.

H.R. 2579: Mr. FORTENBERRY.

H.R. 2580: Mr. GIBSON.

H.R. 2581: Mr. FORBES.

H.R. 2585: Mr. FARENTHOLD.

H.R. 2604: Mr. PETERSON.

H.R. 2644: Mr. PIERLUISI, Ms. LEE, Ms. HAHN, Mr. LYNCH, Mr. JACKSON of Illinois, Mr. PETERS, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. PASCRELL, Mr. TIERNEY, Mr. FARR, Mr. DOGGETT, Mr. KILDEE, Ms. WATERS, Ms. SCHWARTZ, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr. GONZALEZ, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. DINGELL, and Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ.

H.R. 2651: Mr. BARTLETT.

H.R. 2653: Mr. CARNAHAN, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. BILIRAKIS, Ms. SUTTON, and Mr. OWENS.

H.R. 2663: Mr. CARDOZA, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. MILLER of North Carolina, Mr. SABLAN, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, and Mr. TIERNEY.

H.R. 2664: Mr. FILNER.

H.R. 2674: Mr. KING of New York and Mr. SIMPSON.

H.J. Res. 2: Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, Mr. KISSELL, Mr. SCHWEIKERT, Mr. ROGERS of Alabama, Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina, Mr. BERG, Mr. LONG, Mr. GRIMM, Ms. HAYWORTH, Mr. ROGERS of Michigan, and Mr. WALSH of Illinois.

H.J. Res. 28: Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. CLAY, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. CLYBURN, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. FATTAH, Mr. FILNER, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. KUCINICH, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. RUSH, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mr. TOWNS, Mr. WATT, and Ms. BASS of California.

H.J. Res. 29: Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. CLAY, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. CLYBURN, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. FATTAH, Mr. FILNER, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. KUCINICH, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. RUSH, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mr. TOWNS, Mr. WATT, Ms. BASS of California, Ms. FUDGE, Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas, and Ms. LEE.

H.J. Res. 30: Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. CLAY, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. CLYBURN, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. FATTAH, Mr. FILNER, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. KUCINICH, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. RUSH, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mr. TOWNS, Mr. WATT, Ms. BASS of California, Ms. FUDGE, Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas, and Ms. LEE.

H.J. Res. 31: Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. CLAY, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. CLYBURN, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. FATTAH, Mr. FILNER, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. KUCINICH, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. RUSH, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mr. TOWNS, Mr. WATT, Ms. BASS of California, Ms. FUDGE, Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas, Ms. LEE, Mr. CONYERS, and Mr. GRIJALVA.

H.J. Res. 32: Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. CLAY, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. CLYBURN, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. FATTAH, Mr. FILNER, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. KUCINICH, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. RUSH, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mr. TOWNS, Mr. WATT, Ms. BASS of California, Ms. FUDGE, Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas, and Ms. LEE.

H.J. Res. 33: Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. CLAY, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. CLYBURN, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. FATTAH, Mr. FILNER, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. KUCINICH, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. RUSH, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mr. TOWNS, Mr. WATT, Ms. BASS of California, Ms. FUDGE, Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas, and Ms. LEE.

H.J. Res. 34: Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. CLAY, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. CLYBURN, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. FATTAH, Mr. FILNER, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. KUCINICH, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. RUSH, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mr. TOWNS, Mr. WATT, Ms. BASS of California, Ms. FUDGE, Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas, and Ms. LEE.

H.J. Res. 35: Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. CLAY, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. CLYBURN, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. FATTAH, Mr. FILNER, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. KUCINICH, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. RUSH, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mr. TOWNS, Mr. WATT, Ms. BASS of California, Ms. FUDGE, Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas, and Ms. LEE.

H.J. Res. 36: Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. CLAY, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. CLYBURN, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. FATTAH, Mr. FILNER, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. KUCINICH, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. RUSH, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mr. TOWNS, Mr. WATT, Ms. BASS of California, Ms. FUDGE, Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas, and Ms. LEE.

H.J. Res. 69: Mrs. LUMMIS.

H. Res. 229: Mr. TURNER.

H. Res. 295: Ms. MCCOLLUM.

H. Res. 332: Ms. CHU, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, and Mr. GUTHRIE.

H. Res. 333: Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. JONES, and Mr. CARNAHAN.

H. Res. 342: Ms. BORDALLO.

H. Res. 361: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Ms. EDWARDS, and Ms. RICHARDSON.

H. Res. 379: Mr. MACK, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. JACKSON of Illinois, and Mr. TOWNS.

H. Res. 380: Mr. ROGERS of Michigan, Mr. WEST, Mr. PETERSON, Mr. SHIMKUS, Mr. PLATTS, Mr. CONAWAY, Mr. REICHERT, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. CAMP, Mr. KING of New York, Ms. MOORE, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mr. CALVERT, Mr. LAMBORN, and Mr. DUFFY.

DELETIONS OF SPONSORS FROM PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were deleted from public bills and resolutions as follows:

H.R. 451: Mr. CRITZ.

AMENDMENTS

Under clause 8 of rule XVIII, proposed amendments were submitted as follows:

H.R. 2584

OFFERED BY: MR. POE OF TEXAS

AMENDMENT NO. 83: At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. ____. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used by the Environmental Protection Agency to finalize an order for the pesticide sulfuryl fluoride under section 408 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 346a) that takes into consideration aggregate exposure to other related substances pursuant to section 408(b)(2)(D)(vi) of such Act (21 U.S.C. 346a(b)(2)(D)(vi)).

H.R. 2584

OFFERED BY: MR. RIGELL

AMENDMENT NO. 84: At the end of the bill, before the short title, insert the following:

FUNDING LIMITATION RELATED TO ACQUISITION OF LAND

SEC. ____. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used to prepare, install, or manage a transit system for access to or within Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge.

H.R. 2584

OFFERED BY: MR. HASTINGS OF FLORIDA

AMENDMENT NO. 85: At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. ____. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used in contravention of Executive Order No. 12898 of February 11, 1994 (''Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations'').

H.R. 2584

OFFERED BY: MR. BURGESS

AMENDMENT NO. 86: At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. ____. None of the funds made available in this Act may be used to pay the salary of any officer or employee of the Environmental Protection Agency who is receiving special pay consideration under section 207 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 209).

H.R. 2584

OFFERED BY: MR. KING OF IOWA

AMENDMENT NO. 87: At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. ____. None of the funds made available in this Act may be used for enforcement activities under the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1251 et seq.) against the owner or operator of any concentrated animal feeding operation consisting of less than 1,000 animal units.

H.R. 2584

OFFERED BY: MR. KING OF IOWA

AMENDMENT NO. 88: At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. ____. None of the funds made available in this Act may be used to develop numeric nutrient standards for the Mississippi River basin.

H.R. 2584

OFFERED BY: MR. KING OF IOWA

AMENDMENT NO. 89: At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. ____. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used to implement, administer, or enforce the rule entitled ''National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants for Reciprocating Internal Combustion Engines'' published by the Environmental Protection Agency in the Federal Register on March 9, 2011 (76 Fed. Reg. 12863 et seq.).

H.R. 2584

OFFERED BY: MR. KING OF IOWA

AMENDMENT NO. 90: At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. ____. None of the funds made available in this Act may be used for enforcement activities under the Oil Spill Prevention, Control, and Countermeasure Program established under part 112 of title 40, Code of Federal Regulations, against an owner or operator with respect to a storage container or other facility that is located on a farm (as defined in section 112.2 of title 40, Code of Federal Regulations).

H.R. 2584

OFFERED BY: MR. GOSAR

AMENDMENT NO. 91: At the end of the bill, before the short title, insert the following:

FUNDING LIMITATION RELATED TO BORDER PATROL ACTIVITIES

SEC. ____. None of the funds made available under this Act may be used to enforce any of the following laws againt the United States Border Patrol during border patrol activities on Federal lands:

(1) The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.).

(2) The Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.).

(3) The National Historic Preservation Act (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

(4) The Wilderness Act (16 U.S.C. 1131 et seq.).

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PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 112th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 157 WASHINGTON, FRIDAY, JULY 29, 2011 No. 116

Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable CHRISTOPHER A. COONS, a Senator from the State of Delaware.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

O God, who covers the heavens with clouds and prepares the rain for the Earth, You take pleasure in those who have reverence for Your Name. Bring peace to our Nation and world as you fill us with Your spirit. Empower our lawmakers to break through stalemates with constructive action. Give them such wisdom that their challenges will be met with cooperation and competence. Lord, help them to comprehend the global repercussions of some poor decisions and the irreversibility of some tragic consequences. Energize them with Your power and guide them with truth and light. Quicken their ears to hear, their eyes to see, their hearts to believe, and their wills to obey You before it is too late.

We pray in Your merciful Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable CHRISTOPHER A. COONS led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. INOUYE).

The bill clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, July 29, 2011.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable CHRISTOPHER A. COONS, a Senator from the State of Delaware, to perform the duties of the Chair.

DANIEL K. INOUYE,
President pro tempore.

Mr. COONS thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, following any leader remarks, the Senate will recess until 11 a.m. today to allow for a Democratic caucus. At 10 a.m. we will have that caucus. At 11 a.m. the Senate will be in morning business until 12 noon. At noon I will be recognized. That is the order now before the Senate; is that right?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is correct.

DEBT CEILING

Mr. REID. Mr. President, although the House of Representatives has not yet voted on Speaker BOEHNER's plan, that plan is flawed. That is why they have struggled for days to pass this inadequate legislation without a single Democrat even being involved in the process. They have plowed forward looking only to Republicans.

But as the battle to pass the continuing resolution went forward to keep our government open for business just a few months ago, the Republican leadership realized they were unable to get the necessary votes for the CR and they reached out to Democrats. Speaker BOEHNER had to look to Democrats; he did not have enough votes. Obviously he should have looked to the Democrats again.

That is the way we need to move forward on something that is bipartisan. That is how it is supposed to work, Democrats and Republicans working together for our country. The bandaid approach to the world crisis—and it is an embarrassment—to Congress, frankly to the country and to the world—is a sad commentary.

United Senate Democrats, all 53 of us, have informed the Speaker that his legislation was doomed in the Senate because we would not vote for a short-term extension of the debt ceiling. It would put our great Nation on a path to another default extravaganza as we have experienced in the last few weeks.

Frankly, that new extravaganza would start in a matter of weeks again. Virtually every expert—economist, rating agency, market analyst—has said the kind of short-term plan the Speaker has proposed is no answer to the crisis. Republicans created the crisis, and what they want to do is no answer to it.

If we are really trying to avert the kind of financial calamity default would bring, the Republicans' plan is not a solution. I had a very sobering conversation a half hour ago with Secretary Geithner. Right now, businesses cannot borrow—big businesses, what they use to survive, moving money for bonds and other things; that is how the world economy works—they cannot

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

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borrow more money than overnight because no one knows what the interest rate will be tomorrow. So the Republican plan is not a solution. As the experts say, all too soon we would be back in the midst of partisan wrangling with our economy once again held prisoner by extremists in the Republican party lead by the tea party.

Our economy cannot bear this kind of uncertainty any longer. Congress and the White House are on lockdown, and the business of the country is not being conducted. I say no, not again, will we fight another battle such as the one in which we are now engaged. We cannot do that. That is why a short-term extension is not what we need. It is not what this Congress will do.

But default is not an option either. We cannot wait for the House any longer. It is time for Republicans to stop the political games and embrace compromise. No matter how long Republicans delay, the deadline will not move. We have hours—I repeat hours—to act. That is why by the end of today I must take action on the Senate's compromise legislation.

The legislation in point would cut $2.5 trillion from our deficit over the next decade and avert default on our national debt. It would protect Social Security and Medicare without raising a penny of revenue. The question is: Will today's Republicans break away from the shrill voice of the tea party and return to the Republican Party of Ronald Reagan?

This is likely our last chance to save this Nation from a default. I have invited Senator MCCONNELL to sit down with me and to negotiate in good faith, knowing that the clock is running down. I hope he will accept my offer. I cannot do this alone. There are only 53 of us, and under the rules that Republicans put in place—it used to be used sparingly but is used all of the time now—we will need to get 60 votes; a majority is not good enough.

I know the Senate compromise bill the Democrats have offered is not perfect in the eyes of the Republicans. It is not certainly perfect in the eyes of the Democrats. But together we must make it work for all of us, because it is the only option. The settlement on the table will never give either party everything it wants, but it already meets the Republicans' demands. JOHN MCCAIN, the Republican senior Senator from Arizona, President Obama's opponent in the Presidential election, has asked his party to compromise. He did it here on the Senate floor.

He said, it ''is not fair for the American people to hold out and say we won't agree to raising the debt limit.'' He called the radical Republican approach ''unfair'' and ''bizarro.'' It is time we listen to the markets, he said. It is time we listen to the American people and sit down and seriously negotiate.

Former Senator Fred Thompson, whom I served with here in this body, a Republican, asked Members of his own party to come to their senses. ''I respectfully suggest that you rake in your chips and stuff them in your pockets.'' That was his quote. He believes they have already won—all discretionary spending, no revenue.

I hope my friend, Senator MCCONNELL, will come to me by the end of the day and indicate what constructive ideas he has to move the process along. My door is open. I will listen to any ideas to get this done in a way that prevents a default and a dangerous downgrade to our country's credit rating.

Time is short. That is an understatement. Too much is at stake to waste even one more minute. The last train is leaving the station. This is our last chance to avert a default. The vote on this compromise will determine whether we enter the frightening world of default. A vote for the Senate compromise will be a vote on the financial obligations of this great Nation to pay the bills.

I would ask my friends, my Republican friends, break away from this thing going on in the House of Representatives. They were going to vote at 4:30 yesterday, 6:30, 7:30, 8:30, 9:30—10:30 they finally quit. Rumors flying around. Rumors flying around. The Wall Street Journal said they put too much money in for Pell grants. They were going to take that out. Rumors flying around they need a balanced budget amendment added. Rumors that the Speaker was seen in my office—which he did not come. All these rumors made no sense.

The scariest thing is, late last night, Leader CANTOR said from the House: You have three choices: Boehner, cut, cap and balance, or default. That is the second ranking Member in the Republican leadership who said that.

We need to honor the financial obligations we have with the country. So a vote against the compromise I have talked about—now listen to what my compromise is: No revenue. The Congressional Budget Office has scored it more than $2.4 trillion, which will take us to probably—not probably, it will take us to March of 2013. We can do the country's business. There is a joint committee that will be set up to see if we can do some good work on a more long-term approach and to get back to work doing our country's business.

I repeat: CBO and OMB have scored our bill for more than $2.4 trillion—not billion, trillion dollars. That is dollar for dollar, as the Speaker said he wants to reduce the debt. So a vote against this compromise will be a vote to default on the full faith and credit of the United States.

I repeat to everyone within the sound of my voice: We have the framework of a bill. We are going to change it. I have some ideas that we need to change. I want to discuss them with the Republican leader. If anyone has any other ideas, come to me. But the time has come to make a decision. The time factors are very clear. Why am I filing tonight on my bill? Why? There is no more time. I have to do it tonight. Would I like to wait until tomorrow to see if there is some good will that comes from the Republican side? Of course I would. But I would suggest to my friends on the other side of the aisle, this is a pretty good deal. They, in effect, as Fred Thompson said, have gotten everything they want and should put those chips in their pockets and walk away and declare victory.

There will be no time left to vote on another bill or consider another option in the Senate. This is our last, best chance to preserve the character and credit of our great Nation.

Mr. SCHUMER. Will my colleague, the majority leader, yield for a question?

Mr. REID. I am happy to.

Mr. SCHUMER. I thank our leader.

Mr. President, the leader outlined it well. The House, for all its machinations, delays, and struggles, is pursuing a path to nowhere because their bill will not pass, will not become law. Fifty-three of the fifty-three Democrats have signed a letter saying they will not vote for it, and the President has said he will veto it—all for a simple reason: because if we do this short term, we don't calm the markets and, at the same time, we start all over in a few weeks going through this again.

As the leader said—and it is true—the bill he will put on the floor is our only chance, and the reason it is our last chance is very simple: After tonight, anything put on the floor—is this true, Mr. Leader, that after tonight, if we were to put anything on the floor, given the rules of the Senate, nothing could be voted on before default would occur?

Mr. REID. I say to my friend from New York, under the rules we have in the Senate, if I move tonight, we cannot have the final vote until Tuesday morning. The country defaults at 12 o'clock on Tuesday on its debt.

Mr. SCHUMER. Will the leader continue to yield?

Mr. REID. Sure.

Mr. SCHUMER. That means this bill the leader will put on the floor tonight is the last train out of the station, and it also means, given the rules of the Senate, that only with bipartisan cooperation can we do it.

So we are hoping and praying that our colleagues from the other side of the aisle, led by their leader—and 15 signed a letter talking about a bipartisan compromise as part of the Gang of 6, or Gang of 8—that that group could come forward and make suggestions, not simply say the Boehner bill because that will not pass, but make suggestions on modifications to the Reid plan. That is our only hope of avoiding default, and we must act now. Is that a correct depiction of the status on the floor and of where we are headed?

Mr. REID. That is absolutely true.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I will ask one more question. If we are unable

to come to a compromise on the leader's bill, there is virtually no time, no matter what the House does, for the Senate to do anything before default is over. That means our Republican colleagues have the ball in their hands in terms of default; is that correct?

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I have been told personally by some Republicans in the Senate they will do everything they can to stop legislation from proceeding. That is not a majority; it is a handful of people on the Republican side of the aisle.

That is why I said in my remarks that I hope the Republican Party will turn back to the party of Ronald Reagan. He raised the debt ceiling 19 times during the time he was President. He was a man who compromised. That was who he was. He hated communism. Who was the man who brought down the Iron Curtain? Ronald Reagan. He was willing to compromise even with somebody he spoke of in the worst terms. He knew how to compromise, and even though he was elected as the most anti-Communist President in the history of the country, the day he was elected he sent his embassy personnel to the Soviet Union so they could work with them. That led to the great decision by our countries to bring down the Iron Curtain.

Mr. SCHUMER. I see that the minority leader is here, and I thank the majority leader for yielding.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, if the minority leader doesn't mind, I would like to ask the majority leader a question.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. During the period of time we were waiting yesterday for a decision by the House of Representatives, which they still didn't come to—during that period of time, we had an opportunity to have many personal conversations among Senators—Democrats and Republicans—and I would say that unanimously, to a person, Democratic and Republican Senators agreed that a default would be an economic disaster for the United States of America.

The majority leader has been briefed this morning by the Treasury Secretary about some of the prospects of default. We have heard only one that I know of—a Republican Senator—come to the floor and say that a default on our debt could be managed very easily.

I want to ask, since I have heard from business leaders in Illinois of closings that were literally canceled this week for multimillion-dollar investments in the city of Chicago in the State of Illinois because of what is happening in the House of Representatives, can the majority leader please tell us, as much as he can at this moment, what the prospects are if we do reach the point of default on this national debt?

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I am familiar with the situation in Illinois where a $146 million construction project was turned down at the last minute because they were so afraid of the credit.

Mr. DURBIN. I have one further question. In terms of the impact on our Nation, as the Secretary of the Treasury has told the leader, can he give us, for the record, an idea of what we face if the Republicans in the House continue to delay and hold to a strategy that has no hope of passage?

Mr. REID. Secretary Geithner said it has already started. The international community is extremely worried they could only get overnight loans. It is extremely precarious for our country.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The minority leader is recognized.

DEBT CEILING

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, it is not surprising that I have a little different take on what has been happening in the last few days than my colleague, the majority leader.

Let me explain what has been going on in Congress this week. The American people have been waiting on us to do something to prevent default. They want us to end this crisis right now. Over in the House of Representatives, we have the Speaker of the House doing his job. Speaker BOEHNER has been doing the hard work of governing, working day and night to put together a bill that can actually pass the House of Representatives and end this crisis now. He should be commended for his efforts.

What about over here in the Senate? The contrast could not be starker. Rather than working in the last few days toward a solution to the crisis the way the Republican majority in the House has, the Democratic majority in the Senate has been wasting precious time rounding up ''no'' votes to keep this crisis alive. Rather than being responsible and doing their duty and coming up with a bill that can actually pass, they have been busy signing up people for the ''not good enough'' caucus and ginning up opposition to everything else.

Lawmakers should be working a solution to the crisis, not a blocking strategy. Our Democratic friends in the Senate have offered no solutions to this crisis that could pass either Chamber—not one. Instead, all day long yesterday we got chest-thumping comments about how they are going to kill any piece of legislation that comes over from the House, that it is dead on arrival.

Democrats are out bragging about how they are going to prolong the crisis instead of doing the hard work of trying to solve it. That includes the President.

Look, if the President hadn't decided to blow up the bipartisan solution that Members of Congress worked so hard to produce last weekend, we would be voting to end this crisis today.

Instead, Democrats in Congress are still talking about blocking a solution to the crisis, and the President is rolling out new mileage standards today. Let me repeat that. Here we are a few days from when the Secretary of the Treasury says we will be in a default situation, and the President of the United States is rolling out new mileage standards today.

How about this: How about a plan from Democrats in Washington that can pass both Chambers, prevent the crisis, and protect Americans from a worsening economy?

I suggest to my friends on the other side this morning that they start taking their responsibilities as a majority party a little more seriously because at this point, the only people who are disregarding the consequences of default are Senate Democrats—not the Republicans in the House but Senate Democrats.

Republicans have been doing the hard work of governing this week. It is about time our Democratic friends join us.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I appreciate my friend's statement. I didn't hear it all, but I certainly heard the context of the statement. We are willing to work with him and his staff, as we have, to try to come up with a solution. I want the record to reflect very clearly, as I said in my remarks this morning, for my friends who didn't have the opportunity to hear it, we cannot have in this country a 6-month extension because a 6-month extension is no extension. A 6-month extension of what we are dealing with would put us back, in a matter of weeks, in the same fiscal extravaganza trying to move forward with the work of the country.

The country is locked down. Congress is inoperable. The White House is unable to do very much because they are focused on this huge problem. I want the record to be spread with the fact that I will work as closely as I can on any suggestions they have, as I have indicated. But, please, everyone, don't come to me with a 6-month extension.

The proposal I am moving forward with—and Fred Thompson said take your chips, my Republican friends, and put them in your pocket and walk away—gives the Republicans everything they have asked for: no revenues, $2.4 trillion in cuts. That is a pretty

good deal. That is not a 6-month deal; it is a solution that takes us until 2013, in the month of March.

Help me work through this. I have no pride of authorship. If somebody can figure out another way to improve that suggestion, I will work with them. I am willing to work with them. As I have said on the floor before—and I don't want anybody to consider this as a sign of weakness—I have compromised my whole life. When I practiced law, that is what I did in trying to represent people and get a result. I believed many times that I was a failure when I had to go to court. But I went to court over 100 times to try cases to juries.

I always believed that compromise was the right thing to do, even in the law. As a legislator, it is a sign of integrity and confidence when you say you will compromise. Legislation is the art of compromise.

Again, I am here indicating to the world that I have spent my whole adult life trying to compromise and build consensus.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Tennessee is recognized.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent for up to 5 minutes.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there objection?

Mr. REID. Mr. President, as long as it is in morning business, no.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Tennessee is recognized.

DEBT CEILING

Mr. ALEXANDER. As one Senator, I thank the majority leader and the Republican leader for their comments. We all know what we need to do. We have two objectives. At a time when we are borrowing 40 cents of every dollar we spend, we need to reduce the debt. We also need to honor our obligations, and we know why. There is nobody on the Republican side of the aisle I know of who thinks we should not honor our obligations.

We know that on August 3 there will not be enough money to pay all the bills. We don't want the most creditworthy Nation in the world to go to a place where it begins to pay its bills selectively out of a cigar box, which is why I am hopeful—and I believe all of us are hopeful—that we can find a way for the two leaders to recommend to us and the House a solution that the President will sign, which will reduce our debt and honor our obligations.

But to suggest that the majority leader's proposal—his bill—which he offers in good faith, I know that—is a compromise, that is a little hard to accept. It is a Democratic proposal. The other side has spent most of its time this week saying: We can get 53 of us to make sure that as soon as the Republican proposal passes the House, if it does, we will beat it in an hour. We will not even consider it. We will kill it. We are not going to vote on it. We will table it and put it away.

That is not the spirit of compromise. The proposal the Speaker is trying to pass may be about the only thing he can pass in the House of Representatives. That may not be what a Democratic Senate would like, but this is a Democratic Senate and that is a Republican House. We have to come up with something that both can pass and the President will sign. We all know that.

I hope the spirit of today, tomorrow, and Sunday is that we spend less time plotting about how we can defeat each other's proposals as quickly as possible and more time working together to come up with ways to reduce spending and honor our obligations.

The Democratic whip is on the Senate floor. I have probably undermined his support in some groups for complimenting him for his courage. I support the same thing he does. For example, the work of the Gang of 6 is supported by one-third of the Senate, a very good example for the rest of us in the Senate about what can be accomplished when we work together.

I hope we will recognize the Speaker is trying as hard as the majority leader to come up with something that can pass the House. The majority leader wants something that can pass the Senate, but it must pass both and be signed by the President. We must reduce our spending and we must honor our obligations, and every single Republican Senator as well as every Democrat knows that, I think.

I thank the Chair, and I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

RECESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will stand in recess until 11 a.m.

Thereupon, at 10:02 a.m., the Senate recessed until 11 a.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Acting President pro tempore.

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business until 12 noon, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, with the time equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees.

The Senator from Illinois.

THE DEBT CEILING

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, this is a historic weekend in Washington, and I think those who are visiting the Capitol and following the proceedings understand the gravity of the decisions that lie before us.

On August 2, our debt ceiling expires. That has never happened in our history. One time there was a technical period of 1 or 2 days, but there has never been a long period of time when the United States of America basically defaulted on its debt. And it is a very serious matter. It is one that affects our Nation, our debt, and literally every family and business that lives within our boundaries.

Here is the reason why it is so important. In 1939, we created this law which said that a President could come to Congress periodically and ask for the authority to borrow money to pay for the things Congress has already appropriated. So, as an example, when Members of the House and Senate say to the President of the United States: We want you to continue to wage war in Afghanistan, at the cost of $10 billion a month, this President knows he will have to borrow about $4 billion a month to meet that congressional appropriation. You see, we borrow about 40 cents for every dollar we spend.

Similarly, when it comes to the payments we make to our veterans who are disabled, we have promised them: We will pay you because you served our country and you lost a limb or you were injured, and we will compensate you for that loss for the rest of your life. We understand in making that commitment we are also making a commitment to borrow the money necessary to do it.

So periodically a President will come to Congress and say: I understand our obligations which you have sent to me and I have approved, and now I ask you to extend my authority to borrow the money to meet those obligations. That has happened 89 times since 1939. Since we passed this law, Presidents of both parties have come to Congress and asked for that authority. As I mentioned, not one time did Congress say no except that one technical period in I believe 1979—89 times, 55 times by Republican Presidents and 34 times by Democratic Presidents.

When you look at the Presidents who have requested extensions of the debt ceiling I have just described, the President who holds the record for the most requests is President Ronald Reagan, who, in an 8-year period of time, asked to have the debt ceiling of the United States extended 18 times, more than twice a year. During the Ronald Reagan Presidency, the debt of the United States tripled. That is why he came to Congress so often.

The President who ranks second in terms of increasing our national debt during his 8 years is President George W. Bush. The debt of America virtually doubled during his Presidency because we waged two wars we didn't pay for; we did something we had never done in our history: cut taxes particularly for the rich in the midst of a war; and we had many programs unpaid for.

So President after President has used this statutory authority to come to Congress and ask for approval to extend the debt ceiling. President Obama has done the same. As of August 2, his authority to ask to borrow money will expire. That is a serious moment if we default on the debt. It will be the first time it has happened in our history.

What will it mean to the United States of America to default on our debt and fail to extend the debt ceiling? Well, imagine if you decided as a homeowner to stop making your mortgage payments. Within a period of time, you would receive a phone call from your creditor saying: Did you forget your check this month? And if you say: No, I am just not going to pay it, you understand the consequences—your credit status is going to be affected.

The credit status of the United States is the best in the world. We have a AAA bond rating—the highest of any nation—and because we have that high bond rating, we have the lowest interest rates that we pay to borrow money.

Well, go back to the homeowner. If you have just defaulted on your mortgage, your credit report is going to look pretty bad. The likelihood that you could turn around and borrow money the next month is in doubt, and if someone will loan you money at that point, it will be at the highest interest rate because you are a risk now; you failed to make your mortgage payment. Similarly, if the United States fails to extend the debt ceiling, our credit rating will go down from AAA, the interest rate charged the U.S. Government will increase, and what has been considered the rock-solid, best economy in the world will be jeopardized by this action.

What does it mean for the interest rate on the debt of the United States to go up? This calculation has been made by many, and I believe it is accurate. For every 1 percent increase in the interest rate the United States pays on its debt, we will add $130 billion a year to our debt—$1.3 trillion, roughly, over a 10-year period of time. So the failure to extend the debt ceiling, the default of the United States, and higher interest rates will make our debt worse. That is why what we are facing this week in Washington is so terrible, because what we are dealing with here is a politically manufactured crisis. We are dealing with a self-inflicted wound.

Because the House Republicans under Speaker BOEHNER refuse to extend the President's request for the debt ceiling when our current authority expires August 2, we could find ourselves paying higher interest rates and even deeper in debt. And it gets worse because when the interest rates paid by the U.S. Government go up, interest rates across our economy go up. What it means is that a lot of innocent people who are borrowing money to buy a car or a home or to pay for college loans or to pay off their credit card are going to pay more. It is like imposing a tax on every family and business in America at the worst possible time. We are recovering from a recession. Too many people are out of work. Businesses need to expand and borrow money. Raising interest rates stops that. This doesn't have to happen. This self-inflicted wound by the House Republicans and Speaker BOEHNER does not have to happen.

In fairness to Speaker BOEHNER, his goal is to reduce America's debt. I accept that challenge. In fact, for the last year and a half, I have engaged personally on a bipartisan basis to meet that challenge, first as a member of President Obama's deficit commission, the Bowles-Simpson fiscal commission. We sat for months and listened to testimony, and finally 11 out of 18 of us voted for the report issued. What it came up with was a 10-year plan to reduce our debt by $4 trillion—not easy. It sounds as though it would be easy when you look at all the money we spend, but when you get into the specifics, it is politically painful. But what we agreed to do was to put everything on the table. And I want to tell you, I did that with some reservation.

I am concerned about many things in our country but two things in particular. I am concerned about the most vulnerable people in America, those who are aged, poor, and sick. I want to make certain that at the end of the day, America still has a safety net, that this good and caring Nation is doing everything it can to help these people.

What programs do they rely on? Well, they rely on the earned-income tax credit under our Tax Code, the childcare tax credit, Medicaid, the health insurance that covers one-third of the children in America and many elderly people in nursing homes. So when we talk about cuts in these programs, I was very sensitive to them and determined to make sure we didn't cut any more than necessary to reach our goal.

We also put revenue on the table. We have to do that. How can we ask working families in America to pay more on their children's college student loans and be prepared to sacrifice and how can we ask the seniors in America to be willing to sacrifice when it comes to their Medicare Program and not turn to the wealthiest people in our country and ask them to join in this sacrifice? That has become the major stumbling block in this negotiation. You see, Republican Speaker BOEHNER has said: I will not accept any—underline the word ''any''—tax increases on the wealthiest people in America. I will agree, he said, to cut everything else, every other benefit for every other person, but not one penny more in taxes from the wealthiest people in America. That doesn't strike me as fair or just or reasonable, but that is where we are.

We also put spending cuts in this program, substantial spending cuts so that every single program in America would be closely inspected, reduced in spending, and move us toward a deficit-reduction goal.

Then I went a step further. I joined with five of my colleagues—three Republicans and three of us on the Democratic side—and we sat down for 6 months and worked on something called the Gang of 6 and came up with a specific plan of how to do this.

Well, Mr. President, you know we had a meeting a couple weeks ago, and we invited most of the Members of the Senate to come and listen to what we had proposed. Forty-nine Senators showed up, Democrats and Republicans, in a room not far from here and listened as we laid out what we considered a bipartisan plan to deal with the deficit. We then went back to those Senators and said: How many of you will put your name on the line to join us in a bipartisan effort to reduce the deficit? And we are now up to 36 Senators who have done that. Over one-third of the Senators have signed on to a bipartisan effort to reduce the deficit.

What a sharp contrast that is from what is going on in the House of Representatives, where right now the Speaker of the House, the Republican Speaker, is negotiating only with Republican Members to pass a plan. I don't think that is what the American people sent us here to do. I don't think they said to Democrats, come to Washington but don't speak to Republicans, or to Republicans, come to Washington but don't speak to Democrats. The bottom line is that, Democrats and Republicans notwithstanding, we are all Americans, and we all have a responsibility.

So here we are today at this impasse, and Speaker BOEHNER announced Monday night, when he had a press conference at the same time as the President's announcement to the Nation, that he had a plan—he called it a bipartisan plan—that he would pass in the House of Representatives. We expected that to happen Tuesday, and it didn't; and then Wednesday, and it didn't; and then yesterday, and he failed to pass it then, too. We waited all night until 11:00—when we finally adjourned—for the Speaker to pass what he considered to be a good plan and for us to react to it. Now we hear the Speaker may be able to get to it later in the afternoon or in the early evening hours. Mr. President, this is unacceptable.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator has used 10 minutes.

Mr. DURBIN. I ask unanimous consent for 5 additional minutes.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, that is unacceptable. By my calculation, we have 4 days before we default on our debt, 4 days before the American economy suffers this mortal blow, 4 days before we default on America's full faith and credit for the first time in our history, 4 days while businesses across America are withholding agreements and negotiations that create

jobs, 4 days where America people have to worry that if we default on our debt, the government will have to pick and choose those who will receive government checks in August.

The Senator from Pennsylvania came to the floor for the last 2 days and said: Oh, if we default on the debt, we can manage that. Really? If we default on the debt, we will have $172 billion to spend and $306 billion in obligations.

He said: Well, of course we have to pay interest on the other debts. We don't want to default on everything. OK.

He said: Of course we have to pay everybody under Social Security. Yes.

He said: Of course we have to pay our soldiers who are in combat. Agreed. All good ideas.

Then he said: And then we will work the others out.

Whom did he leave off the list? He left every Federal employee off the list. That would be all of the people working at the Central Intelligence Agency monitoring terrorists to stop them from attacking the United States. That would be the air traffic controllers in our airline system across America. That would be the Federal prison guards working the Federal correctional facilities. That would be all of our veterans receiving disability checks.

Easily managed? Not so fast. It wouldn't be easily managed. There would be losers in that process, and many of them are innocent people who would be lost to the frustration of this political process.

There is a way through this, but the only way through it is if Members of both parties come together and do it quickly. I don't think it is going to happen in the House. The House has decided they are going to do an all-Republican, all-day approach. That isn't going to solve the problem in the House or the problem on Capitol Hill.

This morning, the majority leader, HARRY REID, standing at this desk, turned to Senator MCCONNELL from Kentucky, the Republican leader, and said: Now it is our turn. Now we have to step up. Now we have to come up with a bipartisan approach and show leadership. Senator REID is right. Senator MCCONNELL has demonstrated in the past that he has been willing to do that and now more than ever he should. I think the 36 Senators who have stepped up, joined me and others in saying we can find a bipartisan way to deal with this must be heard. Our voices must be heard but, more importantly, the spirit of compromise must be heard. That is what the American people expect of us. They didn't send each of us here to win every battle under our own terms and not give. They sent us here to govern and to respect this great country.

I would sincerely hope we will approach the next 72 hours with the spirit of humility—humility to understand that so many innocent people across America, families and businesses, are waiting on us and counting on us. We cannot fail them. No one will care at the end of the day who has the great political headline, but we will all be judged—Democrats and Republicans, House and Senate—as to whether we met our constitutional obligation to this Nation and the people who live here.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, the challenges we face are difficult. I am proud of the work the House of Representatives has done. I do not appreciate it being suggested that somehow they are unreasonable because I don't believe that is fair to say about them. They worked very hard. They complied with the congressionally mandated statutory requirement to pass a budget. They passed a 10-year budget that was honest and open. It was publicly debated in the House of Representatives. They passed it, and it would have fundamentally altered the debt trajectory of America. It would put us on a sound path. It could have gone a little farther, frankly, but it goes farther than anything else we have seen and puts us on the path to a sound economic future.

What happened in the Senate? I am ranking Republican on the Senate Budget Committee. We are required to mark up a budget in the Senate by law. It doesn't say you go to jail if you don't follow the law. It doesn't have any penalty, I will acknowledge. It is a law, but we don't have to follow it, except we certainly have an obligation to do so. Certainly we would want, I think, to have a budget in the Senate. We have not had one now for over 800 days, over 2 years. We were within a week—less than that—of commencing hearings to mark up a budget that would be moved by the Democratic majority. When they do so, it is not even subject to a filibuster. It can be passed with 50 votes, and there are 53 Democrats in the Senate. The majority party always has that obligation to move a budget. Senator REID, the Democratic leadership, decided they wouldn't do it. He said it would be foolish to have a budget so we haven't passed a budget.

The House has said it would reduce spending by up to $5 trillion or $6 trillion. Because of the Senate's objection and the President's objection, they have agreed to raise the debt limit by $1 trillion, and they have agreed to cut spending in America by $1 trillion. They have tried to reach an agreement so we wouldn't have a shutdown. Then, all of a sudden, my Democratic colleagues now come forward and say they don't want to accept that. They want the Reid amendment.

The Reid amendment has the same actual savings. We have looked at the numbers and we have seen how they have done it. There is about a $1 trillion savings in the Reid bill with a reduction in spending of about $1 trillion. He claims it is $2.7 trillion. That is almost three times what it actually achieves. Therefore, they want to continue to raise the debt limit by almost $3 trillion, the largest amount it has ever been raised. Why? Because the President said so. This is what the President said a week ago:

> The only bottom line that I have is that we extend this debt ceiling through the next election, into 2013.

The President thinks this is about him. It is all about him. This is about America and what is good for this country. It is not about the President. It is not about politics. If it were about politics, I wouldn't vote for the Boehner amendment and neither would a lot of those patriotic Members of the House because it is not enough. It does not do what we need to do. We need to do $4 trillion, $5 trillion, $6 trillion over 10 years. The debt is going to increase over the next 10 years from $9 trillion to $13 trillion, and $1 trillion is not enough. It can only be seen as a step in the right direction. So forgive me if I am a little frustrated about that.

I want to talk about something that is problematic and needs to be known. It is not being focused on, and this is Senator REID's amendment and his solution to the deficit problem. He wants to raise the debt ceiling so we can keep borrowing money and spending more than we take in. We are borrowing 40 cents of every dollar we spend. The President this morning said he liked the Reid amendment and is what he wishes to see. He doesn't like the House version. I think there are some things we all ought to think about and know that are in the Reid amendment.

As I have said, we have gone 821 days without a budget. The law requires us to have a budget. A lack of a congressional budget contributes to our fiscal nightmare. Since we last passed a budget, we have spent $7 trillion. The reason we don't have a budget is because it is carefully and deliberately orchestrated that we not have one by the leadership of this Senate. They have planned for just the eventuality that is occurring. I have warned for weeks and months on the floor of the Senate that we would be at the eleventh hour with people scurrying around in secret, plotting deals to try to figure out how to deal with the crisis this Nation faces. That is exactly what is happening.

Today it was announced that the second quarter economic growth was 1.3 percent. That is anemic and well below what we were hoping to see and thought we might. We have had expert testimony that the debt we have pulls down economic growth. Had the Senate adopted a budget in a timely manner this year, as the House did, we would not be at this last-minute crisis. It was deliberately orchestrated because it gives maximum leverage to the President and the press. The question becomes not what is in the deal, but do you have a deal? Just do anything. We

are going to be in a crisis if you don't pass something. We want a deal. The House has come up with a very reasonable compromise. It looks as though some people want to have this fuss and put us through the crisis even when they get basically what they have asked for.

The Reid amendment to increase the debt limit deems two consecutive budget resolutions for fiscal years 2012 and 2013. In other words, it basically takes over the budget process and sets the basic spending numbers. Does the President think the Senate should go 2 more years without crafting or passing a budget? We have already gone 2 years. The Reid amendment sets spending allocations for most Senate committees at the Congressional Budget Office's rising baseline. These are bureaucratic members. They work hard, but they are not elected. They are not constitutionally accountable. It says we are going to deem the amount we spend by what CBO has projected our growth in spending to be, and CBO projects growth in spending. They don't set that as right for America, but they project that is what will occur under the current circumstances. This deems those higher growing numbers as what should be.

Without hearings or debates on these allocations, this provision would provide a further excuse for avoiding a budget and increase the likelihood that the Congressional Budget Act will be violated for the third straight year. This is an abrogation of the responsibilities of the Senate and of the Budget Committee of the Senate. We are not elected to the Senate and chosen to sit on the Budget Committee to see most of the budget levels automatically raised based on a set of spending growth projections by the CBO. They are not empowered to do that. They don't claim to, actually. I should not demean them. They do what their duty is. It is this kind of process that has placed the country in a financial crisis.

We keep locking in spending levels that are going up. When we reduce the growth in spending a little bit, you know what we say we are doing? We are cutting spending, and it is spending more. That is the way the budget is. When they say we are going to save $1 trillion through the House plan——

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator's time has expired.

Mr. SESSIONS. I would ask for 2 additional minutes to wrap up.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SESSIONS. The provision that takes over that and sets us on an automatic growth course is not the right one. Both the Reid amendment and the House bill say we save about $1 trillion over the next 10 years. I would note that the difference between the two is how long or how much is achieved by that. Senator REID wants almost 2 years and the House Members would do it based on a dollar-per-dollar manner. That $1 trillion in the Reid amendment does not reduce spending. It only reduces the growth in spending, and that is one of the reasons Congress is able to hide the amount of money we are spending every year. That is one reason debt is so high.

The Budget Committee should be allowed to fulfill its duties. The Budget Committee should be allowed to mark up in fiscal year 2012. It will begin October 1 of this year. We need a budget now. We are past due. Once a budget is adopted by the committee, it should be taken to the full Senate and allowed to be amended as the law provides. I am disappointed that the President doesn't seem to agree with that. He seems to have bought into the idea that the regular processes of the Senate should not be followed. He agrees with Senator REID, apparently, that if they can keep it all bottled up to an end and we come up on a crisis, they can all maneuver in secret and cut a deal. They feel that is the way we serve the American people.

I feel strongly that we are undermining the great power and responsibility of the Senate as that place where the great issues are discussed publicly and openly and where we are accountable and cast votes. Let me say again, the reason the majority leader did not want a budget to come up is because when you bring a budget up, you have to vote, people have alternatives, they offer amendments, and the Members go on record. He is protecting his Members from having to do the primary responsibility of Senators who are before the world to cast their vote and to be accountable to the people who sent them there.

It is not good for this body. This body should be engaged in a historic debate about the threat the debt poses to our future, and we have been unengaged. The discussions are being taken in secret without the American people being able to hold their representatives accountable. I object.

I thank the Chair, and I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Missouri.

Mrs. MCCASKILL. Mr. President, I try to listen very carefully to folks at home. I would not quarrel with my friend from Alabama in saying that it is very clear to me—and it has been clear to me for a long time—that Missourians are very worried about spending in the Federal Government. In fact, my friend from Alabama and I started work on this before, if one can say—we were trying to cut spending before cutting spending was cool. He and I were working this floor for votes to try to do something about spending long before last November's election.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, will the Senator yield?

Mrs. MCCASKILL. Yes.

Mr. SESSIONS. I thank the Senator for recalling that event. I know the Senator continued working across the aisle on another proposal that has the potential to be more effective than even the one we worked on together last year. So I thank the Senator for being willing to work in a way that could be effective to do better.

Mrs. MCCASKILL. Mr. President, I thank my friend from Alabama. There is nothing wrong with walking across the aisle and finding common ground. Frankly, it is what I thought would be common when I came to the Senate. It is kind of what I learned in the history books; that it would be common.

I have been watching what is developing, knowing my folks at home want us to cut spending. I certainly have been part of wanting to cut spending. I have watched this debt ceiling approach. It is like watching a movie and watching a car driving along, and you are in a camera above it and you see what is ahead, and you see this cliff and you see this car driving toward this cliff, and you are thinking, as you start tensing—Oh, surely, you are not going to go over the cliff.

Well, they have an opportunity to avoid going over the cliff. They are not going to go over the cliff. We are not going to see these people die. They are not going to drive over that cliff. They are not going to knowingly drive over a cliff. I have been thinking for the last several weeks: There is no way people who are elected—because they love their country—are going to let the car go over the cliff. I have to tell my colleagues, I am worried.

What do we have to do to keep from going over the cliff? Make no mistake about it. It is a cliff. It is a historic moment for our country. Never before in the history of our country have the world markets been worried about whether the United States of America will pay its bills. Never has that happened before in our history. So what does it take?

Well, it is not complicated what it takes. It takes one basic ingredient: compromise. To keep from going over the cliff, all we have to do is compromise.

I will tell my colleagues, reading my mail and listening to phone calls that have come in on the answering machine—and I am going to take phone calls myself over the weekend—what Missourians are now saying: Please don't go over the cliff. Please compromise. I am confident that is what most Missourians want.

Compromises have already occurred—big compromises. Most of us on this side of the aisle believe the way we get at our long-term debt structure is a responsible approach that includes some revenues. I advocate cleaning out the goodies in the Tax Code so we can lower tax rates. I don't understand how we can vote to gut the Medicare Program and at the same time vote to continue writing checks to Big Oil. I cannot conceive how a Member votes that way. I cannot imagine I would vote to keep writing a taxpayer check to the most wealthy and profitable corporations in the history of the world at the same time I was voting to put Medicare

on a voucher program. That would be saying to seniors, if they are 83 and they have three chronic illnesses, and they run out of Medicare coverage, they are on their own. I can't imagine doing that.

But we compromised. We compromised and said: OK, we will set revenues aside, for now. You will not vote for revenues, Republican Party. Members of the House in the Republican Party, you will not vote for revenues.

So we took revenues off the table. By the way, some people in my party were not happy with that. I got those phone calls: Why did you capitulate? Why did you give in? We gave in because we care about our country, and we don't want to go over the cliff. That is why we gave in. So we gave in on revenues.

The Republicans wanted us to cut spending by more than we raised the debt ceiling. It is a political thing we need to do, not required by the economics, but we have done that. So now we put revenues aside—compromise. We have said we are going to cut spending by more than the rise in the debt ceiling.

Now the only thing we have not compromised on, the only thing—which I think is, really, when we think about it—I didn't think, frankly, this may have been as big of a deal until I stand here today—is to do this again in 6 months, to leave this loaded gun on the table. We are going to leave this loaded gun on the table for our economy?

People can talk to small businesses right now and learn they are scared about what is going to happen next week. Will they be able to borrow money? Will people be able to afford to borrow money to buy cars? Will they be able to afford to borrow money to buy homes?

We talk about the economy going in a tailspin, and we want to keep that loaded gun on the table for another 6 months? There is no way we can provide the certainty in this kind of economic climate if we leave the loaded gun on the table.

So the only thing we have not agreed to that is in the Boehner plan—well, it depends on which plan it is. They keep changing it to try to get enough votes. I don't know what it is today. But the only thing we are not going to budge on is saying to this country and our business community and our job creators: We are going to kill job creation for sure for the next 6 months by telling you we want to repeat this ridiculous exercise in 6 months. We are not going to do that.

The irony is, the people who want us to do that are the people who have been preaching certainty: We have to have certainty. By the way, let's do this again in 6 months. We have to have certainty. It is important we do this again in 6 months.

I know the leader is working on trying to get a compromise today, and I am confident that before the day is over there will be some kind of compromise that will be before this body that we will have a chance to vote on.

I will tell my colleagues this: People will never hear me brag about refusing to compromise. Some of my colleagues from Missouri who serve in the House of Representatives are willing right now to brag about refusing to compromise. They are willing to say it is a good thing to go off the cliff. I will never brag about refusing to compromise because I don't think that is what we do here. When we look back in history, America's brightest moments usually happened around the table of compromise. The most difficult questions this country has wrestled with through the years, we have forged a way forward through compromise, and that is what we needed to. That is what we need tomorrow. That is what we need as we approach the edge of the cliff.

So my last message I will leave with my colleagues across the aisle is this: We have shown our willingness to compromise. Please show us yours. Please show us yours and allow us to vote. Allow us to vote on the compromise. If my colleagues don't want to vote for the compromise, then don't vote for it. But allow us a chance to vote for it. Is that too much to ask, just to allow us an opportunity to move to a vote, to avoid this country having a permanently diminished status in the world? I don't think that is too much to ask.

So let us vote, and if my colleagues can't compromise on the substance of the compromises that will be put forward, at least allow our voices to be heard by allowing a vote.

Mr. President, I yield the floor, and I ask unanimous consent that the quorum call be equally divided.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

EXTENSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that morning business be extended until 3:30 this afternoon, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each; further, that at 3:30 p.m. the majority leader be recognized.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 15 minutes.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

FREE TRADE AGREEMENTS WITH SOUTH KOREA, COLOMBIA, AND PANAMA

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I want to remind my colleagues that this work period was supposed to be our opportunity to finally enact, after years of delay, the Free Trade Agreements with our allies South Korea, Colombia, and Panama.

These agreements were signed over 4 years ago, and this administration has had more than 2½ years to submit them to Congress for consideration, but they have failed to do so. Unfortunately, we are going to have to continue to wait at least until September before we get a vote.

Why does it matter that we pass these agreements? It matters for two reasons: first, because expanding trade opportunities creates American jobs; second, because we live in a competitive global economy and other nations are not standing still while we delay.

Economists overwhelmingly agree that expanding trade opportunities creates jobs. The Obama White House, for example, estimates that enactment of these three trade agreements will boost exports by at least $12 billion, supporting over 70,000 American jobs.

The fact that lowering barriers to U.S. exports will create jobs for American workers is common sense. Consider that our market is already largely open to foreign imports, including those from Korea, Colombia, and Panama. Without trade agreements to ensure similar treatment for our exporters, American businesses will continue to face high tariff and nontariff barriers abroad.

Consider one example: the market for agricultural products in Korea, which is the world's thirteenth largest economy. Korea's tariffs on imported agricultural goods average 54 percent, compared to an average 9-percent tariff on these imports into the United States. Mr. President, 54 percent added on for us to get our agricultural products into Korea; only 9 percent for them to get those same products into the United States, that is a 45-percent differential.

Passage of the Korea Free Trade Agreement will level this playing field. Yet this administration continues to delay sending the agreements to Congress. The Obama White House would prefer to hold these agreements hostage because of a desire to expand the Trade Adjustment Assistance Program rather than improve the competitive position of American producers.

At a time of near record unemployment and slow economic growth, this

delay is unacceptable. I want to put a fine point on that by saying that just this morning the numbers came out. The Bureau of Economic Analysis released its advance estimate of growth in the inflation-adjusted gross domestic product, GDP, for the second quarter. According to the advance estimate, annualized GDP growth in the second quarter was 1.3 percent.

They went back and revised the first quarter of 2011. They revised it downward to .4 percent, down from a reported rate of 1.9 percent. So they have adjusted downward the first quarter growth rate from 1.9 percent down to .4 percent, and we now know, according to the advance estimate at least, that second quarter GDP growth is only 1.3 percent—way under what the assumptions have been, way under what the estimates have been, and way under what it is going to take for us to get the economy turned around and growing again and get people back to work.

Couple that with the job-crushing regulations, the taxes that have come since this administration has taken office, and it is making it very difficult for our economy to recover and to grow and to get back on track. So the administration wishes to hold these agreements hostage because of their desire to expand the Trade Adjustment Assistance Program rather than get these producers back access to these markets we should have access to in some of these countries, and we cannot afford to wait any longer to do that.

The reasons are very clear. We have an economy that is sluggish, that is struggling to get back on its feet. We have three free trade agreements that have been hanging around here languishing literally now for 4 years that would open up export opportunities and, as I said, even according to the President's own estimates, add 70,000 jobs to our economy.

The position of Leader MCCONNELL and Republican Senators has been consistent from the beginning. We are happy to have a debate on the merits of expanding trade adjustment assistance and to consider this bill as a stand-alone measure. But we will not hold the trade agreements hostage to consideration of trade adjustment assistance.

I want to commend my colleagues Senators PORTMAN and BLUNT for the letter they recently spearheaded with 10 other Republican Senators committing to support the necessary procedural votes to consider trade adjustment assistance as a stand-alone measure and on its own merits.

In light of this letter, it is very clear the administration has run out of excuses for not submitting the trade agreements to Congress.

I ask unanimous consent, Mr. President, to have the Portman-Blunt letter printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

U.S. SENATE,
Washington, DC, July 19, 2011.

President BARACK OBAMA,
The White House,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: as Republican Senators, we urge you to submit the Korea, Colombia and Panama trade agreements as soon as possible, with the understanding that we will support a separate Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) bill that reflects the bipartisan reforms negotiated by Chairmen Baucus and Camp and the White House.

In order to move this process forward, we commit to supporting cloture on the motion to proceed to such a TAA bill and cloture on the bill itself. We believe that the trade agreements and TAA should receive separate up or down votes on their merits.

We therefore urge you to separate the pending trade agreements and TAA, and immediately submit the three trade agreements to Congress.

Sincerely,

Roy Blunt, Scott P. Brown, Rob Portman, John Boozman, John Hoeven, Susan Collins, Lisa Murkowski, Johnny Isakson, Ron Wicker, Dan Coats, Thad Cochran, Mike Johanns.

Mr. THUNE. There is a path forward in both the House and the Senate for trade adjustment assistance, and we have bipartisan majorities in both Chambers waiting to vote for the Korea, Colombia, and Panama agreements. So why are we still waiting for the White House to do the right thing and send us these agreements?

This ongoing delay is having a real impact on American businesses, and it will only get worse. On July 1, the European Union-Korea trade agreement went into effect. According to press reports, European exports to Korea rose 16 percent in the first 13 days after the Korea-EU Free Trade Agreement entered into force.

Let's be clear about what this means. Korean consumers are choosing to buy German, French, and British cars, electronics, and agricultural products rather than American-made products because these European products now have a price advantage. This was entirely preventable if we had acted on the U.S.-Korea agreement sooner.

Likewise, the Canada-Colombia agreement will go into effect on August 15. This will result in an advantage for Canadian goods, such as construction equipment, aircraft, and a range of other industrial and agricultural products. Much as with Korea, the United States businesses will find themselves at a competitive disadvantage because we have failed to act.

Again, this did not have to happen. The administration finalized its labor action plan for Colombia back in April. We have had plenty of time to consider these agreements over the past several months. Instead, we are facing a situation where United States wheat producers are likely to be completely shut out of the Colombian market once the agreement with Canada has gone into effect.

This is amazing, when you think about it, when you consider that just a few years ago American wheat producers dominated the market in Colombia with a 73-percent market share. That was as of 2008.

In 2010, for the first time in the history of United States-Colombia trade, the United States lost to Argentina its position as Colombia's No. 1 agricultural supplier.

Consider the story of three crops we grow in South Dakota: soybeans, corn, and wheat. The combined market share in Colombia for these three U.S. agricultural exports has decreased from 81 percent in 2008 to 19 percent as of 2010—a decline of 62 percentage points in a 2-year period; an 81-percent to a 19-percent market share in corn, wheat, and soybeans, for American agricultural producers. Think about that. That is a staggering collapse, which was totally avoidable, totally preventable, if we had simply acted on these trade agreements much sooner. This is the real cost of our delay while our trading partners continue to pursue new regional and bilateral trade agreements.

We are living in a global economy where America cannot afford to stand still on trade. As Senator BAUCUS noted at a recent Finance Committee hearing, in 1960, exports accounted for only 3.6 percent of our entire U.S. GDP; today, exports account for 12.5 percent of our GDP. Exports of U.S. goods and services support over 10 million American jobs.

It is long past time we get back in the game by passing the three pending trade agreements. America's manufacturers, America's farmers, and America's service providers cannot afford to wait any longer. So I call upon the administration to submit the trade agreements to Congress before the August recess. We are not going to be able to consider these agreements until September, but sending them to Congress now will send a strong signal that this administration is finally serious about getting them done. It would also be an important show of good faith to our close allies, South Korea, Colombia, and Panama. These job-creating, market-opening trade agreements should be at the top of the agenda when we get back in September.

Again, I want to reemphasize the importance of that in light of these economic numbers, the data that is coming out that points out that in the second quarter of this year our economic growth was a sluggish 1.3 percent, and that the revised estimate now for the first quarter of this year was .4 percent.

We will never get the unemployment rate down, we will never get America's economy expanding and back on its feet, we will never start dealing with these massive debt issues we have, one, if we do not cut spending—which is the other issue we are debating today—but also if we are not growing and expanding the American economy.

We can do that. There are so many things these trade agreements would do not only for agricultural exporters but for other producers of American goods, and we ought to be doing that.

It is high time we at least do some of the things we can do to get the economy growing again. I cannot emphasize enough the lost market opportunities, the lost chance at economic growth, the lost jobs that are associated with the fact that this administration has delayed now, since they have been in office—2½ years—in submitting these three free trade agreements to Congress, three free trade agreements that have broad bipartisan support from Congress, which we as Republicans have been waiting to act upon now for almost the 4 years since these agreements were negotiated in the first place.

So it is high time we change that. It is one thing that we can do to affect the economy in this country, among the other things. I would simply add as sort of a final point, the debate we are having about the debt limit is also one that needs to be dealt with if we are going to get serious about growing the economy and creating jobs.

If we look at the economy, we look at this President's economic record, and we look at the data, almost every metric we can measure, he has made this economy much worse. The President has said repeatedly—and he said it in his speech the other night—he blames the previous administration for where we are today. I do not think anybody here will dispute the fact that he inherited a difficult set of economic circumstances. But there is no question, if we look at every metric, that he has made the situation much worse.

Whether that is unemployment, which is up 18 percent—there are 2.1 million more people unemployed today than there were when he took office—whether it is the debt, which has grown by 35 percent since he took office; whether it is the number of Americans who are receiving food stamps, which has gone up by 40 percent since he took office—and I might add in my State of South Dakota, a 58-percent increase in the number of people receiving food stamps.

The cost of health care in this country is up 19 percent since this President took office. The cost of gasoline has gone up almost 100 percent—99 percent—since this President took office. The amount of the debt per person in this country has gone up by $11,000. Every American now owes $11,000 more as their share of our Federal debt since this President took office.

The economic record of this administration is abysmal. It is high time we took the steps to do something about that. It strikes me at least, as I look at the policies they have been putting in place, that they seem to want to make it more difficult and more expensive for people in this country to create jobs. We see that in regulations coming out of all of these various agencies. We see it in the massive runup in the growth, in the size of government, the new mandates that have been imposed on a lot of our small businesses as a result of the new health care bill, the new taxes that have been imposed on our small businesses as a result of the new health care legislation.

At every turn American small businesses, which create the jobs that will get this economy growing again, tell us the economic uncertainty, the job-crushing policies that are coming out of this administration have been a major inhibitor, a major impediment to them creating jobs and getting people back to work in this country.

The trade agreements are just something I would add on to that list. We have three trade agreements that have been teed up. It has been almost 4 years since they were negotiated. This administration has been in office now for 2½ years. The President continually gets up, as he did at the State of the Union, and talks about wanting to double the trade in 5 years, talks about supporting these three trade agreements. Yet it is a very simple thing. All he has to do is submit them to Congress. The trade agreements are negotiated. All he has to do is send them here. We are ready to act to put Americans back to work, to open up export opportunities to American producers, to get the economy growing again, and create jobs.

I hope in addition to dealing with the issue of runaway spending and debt, which, in my view, is the predominant issue we need to deal with—and, clearly, between now and Tuesday we have to get a solution in place that will avert the economic adversity we could be dealing with, the adverse circumstances if we do not deal with that. But that needs to be accompanied by serious reductions in spending, spending reforms. Then we have to be putting in place policies that will enable economic growth in this country, that will make it less expensive, less difficult for small businesses to create jobs, not more difficult.

Unfortunately, that is the record to date of this administration. I hope we can change that and start today by sending these trade agreements to the Congress so we can act on them and get these things approved and get American businesses exporting to these three countries.

I yield the floor.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. CONRAD. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

THE DEBT CEILING

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, we are now reaching a critical hour in the Congress of the United States on the question of extending the debt limit of the Nation and of fundamentally dealing with the debt of the Nation. I don't think there is any serious person in either body who does not understand that we must deal with the debt itself as we extend the debt limit. We are borrowing 40 cents of every dollar we spend. The gross debt of the United States will reach 100 percent of our GDP by the end of this year. The best economists in the country, of whatever philosophical stripe, are telling us we are on an unsustainable course that must be changed.

Mr. President, in the midst of this, we have had the House so far unable to send us a package. Now, we are told they do have the votes because they have added a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution as part of their package. The balanced budget amendment they previously proposed in the House of Representatives can never pass the Senate—at least as this body is currently constituted—and it should not pass this body. It is deeply flawed. To attach that to a measure that has to pass both Houses before Tuesday of next week, frankly, is an indication of a lack of seriousness on the part of our colleagues in the House of Representatives.

Ultimately, there has to be a bipartisan agreement. Our friends in the other party control the House of Representatives, the Senate is controlled by my party, the Democratic Party, and we have a Democrat in the White House. No serious person can fail to understand that putting an amendment to the Constitution of the United States that is deeply flawed into that package absolutely guarantees it cannot pass in this Chamber. That would take a two-thirds vote. I don't believe it would even command a simple majority here, much less a two-thirds vote.

So here we are at the eleventh hour, and people in the other body seemingly are still not serious about coping with the challenge of both extending the debt limit to avoid a default, which would be catastrophic, and dealing with the debt itself. I understand ideological rigidity. The time for that is past. The time now is to work together in some reasonable way so we advance legislation that both extends the debt limit to avoid the catastrophic consequences of a default and deals with the debt threat itself.

The New York Times on Wednesday had this story: ''On All Levels of the Economy, Concern About the Impasse.'' What they were talking about is the rating agencies saying that if we don't do both, if we don't extend the debt limit and deal effectively with the debt itself, they are going to downgrade the rating of our credit as a country. The story goes on to say:

> Economists and analysts are trying to gauge the costs to the economy and consumers if the United States loses its solid-gold credit rating—a move that appears more likely now that the stand-off in Washington over government spending has calcified. Some economists say the effects of lowering the Federal Government's credit rating

to AA from AAA can be measured in the billions of dollars in increased borrowing costs for the government and in the billions more that consumers, corporations, states, and municipalities will have to pay for their credit. It also could erode consumer and business confidence, slowing even further the economy and job creation.

It has started already. We have just learned the latest numbers on economic growth. They were a tepid 1.3 percent. This uncertainty being created by a failure to deal with our debt and with an extension of the debt limit is creating a headwind for our economy, reducing economic growth, slowing job creation, and costing us a stronger recovery.

I want to remind colleagues that every 1 percentage point increase in interest rates adds $1.3 trillion to the deficits. So kicking this can down the road and not facing up to it has enormous consequences: $1.3 trillion added debt for every 1 percent increase in interest rates. This is just the effect on the Federal Government. Trillions more would be the effect on consumers, on companies, and on other levels of government with an increase in interest rates.

The proposal by the Speaker that apparently the House is now prepared to send us has fatal flaws, and here they are:

First of all, it would repeat the default crisis in just 6 months. That would continue the uncertainty and put the economy at further risk. Our friends on the other side have repeatedly said how uncertainty is hurting this economy, and now they themselves want to create more uncertainty. It makes no sense.

The Boehner plan includes significantly less deficit reduction than does the Reid plan. The Boehner plan, as I understand it—we have not been able to calculate his newest version fully—was in the range of $1 trillion of savings. Majority Leader REID's plan is well over $2 trillion of savings.

Third, the Boehner plan provides no firewall between security and nonsecurity spending. That means even deeper cuts on the domestic side of the ledger because we all know what happens if you don't have a firewall.

Finally, it requires an irresponsible balanced budget amendment approach that has been clearly rejected here and will be rejected again. That is certain.

Standard & Poor's has warned against repeated debt ceiling debates. Here is what they said on July 26:

> We would be concerned if we thought that the debt ceiling debate would come back and be open and we'd have to go through all this again and again and again. That would be a negative, in our view.

This is the rating agency that determines what the interest rates will be on the debt of our country—not directly but indirectly because if they rate down our creditworthiness, that will increase interest rates. So they are sending a very clear signal: Don't do the Speaker BOEHNER plan that has only a 6-month extension and repeat this whole process and create more uncertainty and put the economy further at risk. To avoid a U.S. credit rating downgrade, S&P wants to see a bipartisan debt-reduction effort, not the totally partisan approach Speaker BOEHNER has for the moment chosen to pursue. I don't know what could be more clear.

The other body is in control of our friends in the other party; this body is in control of the Democrats. At the end of the day, we have to come together. We have to work together.

Now, I have been part of two efforts to work together.

Last year, the fiscal commission—18 of us were given the responsibility to come up with a plan to get our debt under control. At the end of the day, 11 of the 18 agreed on a plan—5 Democrats, 5 Republicans, and 1 Independent—fully bipartisan. I was proud to be part of the 11 who agreed to that plan.

This year, I have been part of the Group of 6—3 Democrats, 3 Republicans—who were asked by about 30 of our colleagues to see if we could find a way to implement the findings of the commission because for the commission's findings to be implemented, they had to have a super-supermajority. They had to have 14 of the 18 agree, and even though we had 11 of 18, it wasn't enough. So about 30 Senators met at the beginning of this year, the end of last, and asked a group of us—6, 3 Democrats and 3 Republicans—to see if we could come up with a bipartisan plan. We worked all year, hundreds of hours, and we have agreed. We have laid out a plan for our colleagues. It is the only bipartisan plan before either Chamber.

Speaker BOEHNER at this late hour is still pursuing a plan only on the Republican side of the aisle and only in one Chamber. That can't possibly be a recipe for success.

David Beers, Standard & Poor's global head of sovereign ratings, said this on July 26:

> We will measure the deal on a number of parameters. One is, is it credible? And credibility, among other things, means to us that there has to be some buy-in across the political divide, across both parties, because politics can and will change going forward. And if there's ownership by both sides of the program, then that would give us more confidence. It's not just about the number. It's about the all-in intent.

Mr. President, are our colleagues listening? The solution cannot be found on just one side of the aisle in one Chamber. This is going to require bipartisan, bicameral cooperation. We are going to have to act like adults, not like kids in a schoolyard pointing fingers, spreading rumors, spreading blame. That will not lead to success.

Here is the circumstance we face. The red line is the spending line of the United States going back 60 years, and the green line is the revenue line of the United States going back 60 years. What you can see is that the revenue of the United States as a share of our national income is the lowest it has been in 60 years. Spending as a share of our national income is the highest it has been in 60 years. Revenue is the lowest, spending is the highest—that is why we have record deficits. Clearly, you have to work both sides of the equation to get a solution.

Some of our friends on the other side are saying: Don't touch revenue. Some of our friends on both sides are saying: Ah, and don't touch entitlements. Don't touch Medicare, don't touch Social Security, don't touch Medicaid.

If you can't touch revenue and you can't touch the entitlements, you can't solve the problem by definition. When you are borrowing 40 cents of every dollar and you exclude all revenue—that is half the equation—and you exclude 60 percent of Federal spending—if you eliminated all the rest of Federal spending, every dime for defense, for nondefense discretionary, if you eliminated every dime, it wouldn't solve the problem. At some point we have to get serious and real with the American people. The balanced budget amendment our colleagues in the House sent us previously, that has already been rejected here once. Now they are putting it in the package to send to us again at the eleventh hour—it is a balanced budget amendment that is as deeply flawed as any amendment I have seen in 25 years in this Chamber.

Let me review what our friends on the other side sent us in a balanced budget amendment that was rejected here just in the last few weeks:

No. 1, it would restrict the ability to respond to economic downturns—meaning we would compound the decline. That is bad economics, and it is not going to pass.

No. 2, it uses Social Security funds to calculate balance and subjects that program to the same cuts as other Federal spending even though Social Security has its own trust fund and is separately funded.

No. 3, it shifts the ultimate decisions on budgeting to unelected and unaccountable judges.

No. 4, it requires a State ratification process that could take years to complete. We don't have years to wait for a State ratification process for a constitutional amendment. We need to make these spending and revenue decisions ourselves, and do it now. It is our responsibility. Let's not wait for the States to ratify a constitutional amendment before we take the action that is necessary.

The balanced budget amendment the House previously sent us has the risk of turning a recession into a depression. Why do I say that? There is no provision in the amendment they sent us for an economic downturn as being an exemption from the balanced budget requirement. That is Hoover economics all over again. How many times do we have to learn the harsh lesson that when we are in an economic freefall, the only entity big enough to pull us out is the collective organization of

our government? That is the only place that has the muscle to prevent a recession from turning into a depression. The balanced budget amendment our colleagues sent us before would absolutely lock down the Federal Government's ability to respond. That would be a profound mistake and contradict all we have learned in economics since the Great Depression.

This is what Norman Ornstein, a scholar at the American Enterprise Institute, said about this constitutional amendment. He called it a ''really dumb idea.''

This is what he said:

> Few ideas are more seductive on the surface and more destructive in reality than a balanced budget amendment.
>
> Here is why: Nearly all our States have balanced budget requirements. That means when the economy slows, States are forced to raise taxes or slash spending at just the wrong time, providing a fiscal drag when what is needed is countercyclical policy to stimulate the economy. In fact, the fiscal drag from the states in 2009–2010, was barely countered by the Federal stimulus plan. That meant the Federal stimulus provided was nowhere near what was needed but far better than doing nothing. Now imagine that scenario with a federal drag instead.

The Washington Post ran an editorial about the House balanced budget amendment headlined, ''A Bad Idea Returns.''

> Rewriting the Constitution is the wrong way to deal with the debt.

Here is what they said in their editorial:

> Worse yet, the latest version would impose an absolute cap on spending as a share of the economy.
>
> It would prevent Federal expenditures from exceeding 18 percent of the Gross Domestic Product in any year. Most unfortunately, the amendment lacks a clause letting the government exceed that limit to strengthen a struggling economy. No matter how shaky the State of the Union, policymakers would be prevented from adopting emergency spending such as, the extension of unemployment insurance and other countercyclical expenses that have helped cushion the blow of the current economic downturn.

It doesn't stop there. This is what Senator MCCAIN said on the Republican balanced budget amendment proposal on July 27:

> What is amazing about this, some members are believing we can pass a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution in this body with its present representation, and that is foolish. That is worse than foolish. That is deceiving many of our constituents. . . . That is not fair to the American people to hold out and say we will not agree to raising the debt limit until we pass a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution. It is unfair. It is bizarro. Maybe some people who have only been in this body for 6 or 7 months or so believe that. Others know better. . . . It is time we listened to the markets. It is time we listened to our constituents. Most of all, it is time we listened to the American people and sit down and seriously negotiate something. . . .

Senator MCCAIN had it exactly right. Sending us a deeply flawed balanced budget amendment to the Constitution of the United States at the eleventh hour is not designed to achieve a result. It is designed to achieve a headline, a bumper sticker slogan that will not help us solve the problem.

Here is what a top economic adviser to former President Reagan said about the House balanced budget amendment. This is Bruce Bartlett, a former Reagan administration top economic adviser. He said:

> I have previously explained the idiocy of right wing advocates . . . of a balanced budget amendment. However, the new Republican balanced budget proposal is especially dimwitted. . . . In short this is quite possibly the stupidest constitutional amendment I think I have ever seen. It looks like it was drafted by a couple of interns on the back of a napkin. Every Senator cosponsoring this balanced budget amendment should be ashamed of themselves.

That is from a former top economic adviser to Ronald Reagan. Is anybody listening? Is anybody paying attention to how far off base things have slipped in the other body to send us at this moment, at this critical juncture, a plan that has absolutely no chance of passing in this body, and should not?

What is so deeply flawed is—in addition to the other points I have made—the balanced budget amendment the House Republicans sent us earlier set a spending cap of 18 percent of GDP. Well, let's add up what that would mean.

We can see Social Security is the red band. That is about 5 percent of GDP. If we add defense and all other nonhealth care spending, that takes us up to about 16.5 percent of GDP. Interest on the debt takes us to over 18 percent of GDP.

Do you notice what is missing? Medicare. In the Republican plan they sent to us with a spending cap of 18 percent of GDP, if we fund Social Security, if we fund defense and other nonhealth spending, and we fund interest on the debt, there is no money left. There is no money for Medicare. There is no money for Medicaid. There is no money for any health care spending. That is what the House of Representatives sent us in the last several weeks as a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution of the United States.

When some on our side called it cut, cap, and kill Medicare, they were not kidding. If we add it up, it does not add up. Not only that, the balanced budget amendment our colleagues in the House sent us in the last few weeks also said it would take a two-thirds vote to get any additional revenue even though revenue is the lowest it has been in 60 years. They would apply a two-thirds requirement to get more revenue. Really? So they would protect with a two-thirds vote requirement every tax scam, every offshore tax haven, every abusive tax shelter that is currently being used by some to avoid and evade the taxes they owe our country.

I have shown this picture on the floor of the Senate many times. This is a little building in the Cayman Islands. It is a little five-story building that claims to be home to 18,857 companies. They all say this is their business headquarters. I have said that is the most efficient building in the world. A little five-story building down there, and it is the headquarters of 18,000 companies. Anybody believe that? Anybody believe that 18,000 companies are operating out of that little building down in the Cayman Islands? They are not operating their businesses out of there. They are engaged in a giant tax scam to make all the rest of us pick up their responsibilities.

All of us who pay what we owe are getting stuck by the companies that are hiding out in this little building down in the Cayman Islands avoiding the taxes they owe our country. There are no taxes down in the Cayman Islands, so they operate out of this little building down there, five-story building, 18,000 companies. They avoid paying the taxes they owe and stick all the rest of us with the responsibility. That is not right.

The constitutional amendment our colleagues in the House of Representatives sent us would protect that behind a wall of a two-thirds vote, which means we would have an impossible time ever fixing this problem. It is hard to get a 60-percent vote much less two-thirds. They would protect every offshore tax haven, every abusive tax shelter, every unfair tax preference that is in the current code because they would require a two-thirds vote to change it. That flawed amendment is not going to pass the Senate—not now, not later this year, not next year because it, itself, would require a two-thirds vote. It is not going to happen. So I would say to our colleagues in the other Chamber that sending us a totally partisan approach with a deeply flawed constitutional amendment is not going to work. It is not going to help solve the problem.

Now is the time for us to join in a serious dialogue about solving the problem—solving the debt threat overhanging the country which will require not a $1 trillion package as is in the House offering but a $4 trillion package. The occupant of the chair well knows of what I speak. He was Governor of West Virginia. He dealt with a fiscal crisis in his State, and he guided his State through that crisis not by operating just on one side of the aisle but by working together with people on both sides to come up with solutions, not political slogans.

We are way beyond that. We are within days of a default on the debt of the United States that would have catastrophic consequences for the economy of our country.

It is time. It is time, I say to my colleagues, to come together to do something that can pass—to deal, yes, with the debt limit but also to deal with the debt itself. It will be an empty gesture if we just extend the debt limit and we don't deal with the debt itself.

Our leader, to his credit, has put something together that begins to take ideas from both sides of the aisle to try

to resolve this crisis. It would save the Nation from an immediate economic crisis. It would provide a significant downpayment on deficit reduction—more than $2 trillion—and it would put in place a special joint congressional committee, equally divided, Democrats and Republicans, to find additional savings. Also, there is no new revenue in this plan. Our friends on the other side have thus far said—at least in the House of Representatives—they can accept no new revenue, none, not a penny. So our leader has said: OK. I don't like that, but if that is your line in the sand, for right now we will accept it so we can find a solution both sides can support. So no new revenue, more than $2 trillion of spending cuts, and a special joint committee to come up with a plan to achieve even greater savings. That is a pretty good offer to the other side to say: We hear you. We want to work with you because we need a solution.

We are just days away from a true crisis, one that would be self-inflicted. I say to my colleagues, let's not go there. Let's come together. We have shown we can do it in the past. We need to do it now—not with blame, not with finger-pointing, but by saying this is a time to join together, to stand shoulder to shoulder to prevent irreparable damage being done to our country.

I say to my colleagues: Now is the time, this day, we have to find a way to come together.

I thank the Chair and yield the floor. I note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MANCHIN). The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the looming August 2 deadline for raising the debt ceiling and making reforms, or budget cuts at least, that would allow us to show we are not going to have business as usual in Washington but that we are going to raise the debt ceiling with the necessary reforms.

Despite the differences in this body, we are all here to share three concerns:

First, we do know at this point, because of the time it has taken us to cobble together something that could be put through both of our Houses and signed by the President, that we have fundamental differences in the principles of how we should run our government. I think it is very clear that Republicans have stood for no taxes, especially in this economic environment. We believe piling taxes on top of the cost of the Obama health care system that is in the process of being implemented would keep our businesses from hiring people and getting this 9.2-percent unemployment rate down. I think we all agree we need to bring that unemployment rate down, but we have fundamental differences about what is causing it and how we can solve it.

No. 2, we all agree, I believe, or 95 percent of us agree, that we cannot default on the debt in our country. I do believe in both Houses the vast majority believe we should not go into default. The costs of a default are not being considered nearly enough. The costs of a default, of interest rates going up, of having to give backpay, having to correct some of the many issues we will face by having some of the people who are owed money but not paid, and having to pay interest and extra interest if we are in default. We cannot allow that to happen. I think we all agree on that.

We are all troubled with the delay in resolving this issue. The delay I think has been caused for many reasons. Of course, our fundamental differences are one. But I believe that although Members of Congress and leaders in Congress have been talking for a long time, the President has never put forward a real plan.

The Senate majority leader and the House Speaker have put forward plans. I believe there is a common ground that can be found between these two proposals. But they are not the same. In fact, I think the Republican leader in the Senate has also put forward a plan, and I think we are seeing the different pieces of the plans that have been put forward now starting to come together.

I believe the Boehner plan is a good one. I believed in the cut, cap, and balance legislation, where you cut spending now to make your downpayment, you cap spending every year for the next 10 years at a level that brings down the overall deficit, and you send a balanced budget amendment to the States for ratification. I feel so certain if we could pass a balanced budget amendment from this Congress and send it to the States, it would be ratified and it would put us on the real course for fiscal responsibility, the course that would assure that Social Security is sound, that Medicare works, and that our children and grandchildren will not inherit a debilitating debt that hurts our economy. So I do believe that cut, cap, and balance legislation was the right way forward. But Congress is split. We have a majority of Democrats in the Senate and Republicans in the House. Therefore, we are not going to get everything that any one of us believes is right. Certainly we are not going to get the Boehner plan in the Senate. But it is the right approach, and we will have to take a few steps at a time and I hope we will be able to come to terms on a way forward with the principles of cutting spending, putting a cap on spending, and not raising the debt ceiling any more than the cuts that can be counted.

That is what concerns me about the Reid plan. Senator REID is calling for $2.7 trillion in an increase in the debt ceiling. The purpose, as the President has stated, is to get through the next election in 2012 and not deal with this again. But the next election should not be the focus. The focus should be, how do we show that our country is on the right track to get this enormous debt whittled down by whittling down the deficits and having sound budget principles.

This $2.7 trillion would be the largest debt ceiling increase in the history of America. The previous largest debt limit increase was $1.9 trillion, which President Obama signed into law in February of last year.

This debt ceiling increase in Senator REID's proposal is not paid for. It offers $1 trillion in cuts for a $2.7 trillion increase. Many of those cuts are illusory. They are not cuts that can be counted. To say we are going to label $1 trillion of cuts savings from leaving Afghanistan and Iraq is not credible. We don't know what the obstacles are going to be in Afghanistan and possibly Iraq. We also don't know what we might have to do in the Middle East going forward. Afghanistan is not settled. We have to have a certain level of stability on the ground in Afghanistan or we will have wasted the billions we have already spent and the lives of our military personnel in Afghanistan because it will go back to the way it was before, a center for terrorism that will or can come to our country. It did once already. We have been over there to try to wipe out al-Qaida and the Taliban. We have been over there losing American lives and spending American taxpayer dollars to protect our country from another 9/11. To say we are going to cut $1 trillion in the future over the next 10 years when we aren't placing the emphasis on what are the conditions on the ground is not sound policy, and it is certainly not sound national security policy. So that is illusory.

Then the other parts of the cuts that I think are very hard to decipher are cutting waste, fraud, and abuse, which we all want to do, but we don't have the guarantee of those cuts.

I think it is important for us to look at the cuts and try to make sure that if we are going to raise the debt ceiling, we raise it only the amount of the actual cuts that we can produce.

In Majority Leader REID's legislation there is a joint committee. There is also one in the Boehner bill. In the majority leader's legislation the committee has to report, but its product doesn't have to be passed and enacted before the debt ceiling is lifted. That is the real problem in Senator REID's proposal. The bill would lose its expedited status, and the joint committee would dissolve on January 13, 2012 under Senator REID's proposal and then we would still have the lifting of the debt ceiling that has already been enacted. That is not the way to go forward.

The joint committee proposed in the Boehner plan is forced to produce savings, and the forcing mechanism in this

case is the fact that the debt limit can't be increased unless the cuts are enacted. So you will keep the governor on the debt increase by assuring that there have to be cuts in spending dollar for dollar.

Third, there is no balanced budget amendment included in the Reid proposal and, in fact, there is no requirement that we even vote on a balanced budget amendment.

I know that it would be very difficult to pass a balanced budget amendment right now out of Congress, but I do believe it is the best thing we could do for the long-term security of our country. So I would hope as we come together—because we know the reality here. The Reid bill is not going to pass the House and the Boehner bill is probably not going to pass the Senate. So we have got to come together with a plan. Maybe it is a short-term plan that has a dollar-for-dollar cut along with the raising of the debt ceiling or maybe we can get more after we dispatch the two bills that are now before the Congress, and try to put something together that has the best parts of both.

I could not support the Reid plan as it is today and I do support the Boehner plan, but I also know that neither of them is going to pass the other House. So I think it is incumbent on us to now go forward and let's quickly start doing the work that could produce results, and that is to try to get the best of both of these before the August 2 deadline. I think we have got to be open to what can work that stays within the principles of no tax increases and no debt ceiling increase without the same amount of dollars at least to be cut from spending, with real cuts that can be assured. I think the American public is looking not for promises but for the assurance in the law that we will not be able to raise the debt ceiling without some cutting of spending and reforms that would equal the amount the debt ceiling has increased. We can go forward with those principles which I think both sides would agree to at this final few days we have before that debt ceiling is reached. It is time to vote on these bills and then get down to the real work of determining what is the best in both that we can pass in both Houses.

Thank you.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

Mr. BARRASSO. I ask unanimous consent that the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BEGICH). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BARRASSO. I ask unanimous consent that I be permitted to engage in a colloquy with my Republican colleagues for up to 30 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I come to the floor today as the Nation watches the activities in the Capitol and on Capitol Hill as someone from the State of Wyoming, where we live within our means and balance our budget every year, and as a result we actually have a surplus in the State. Contrast that to what is happening in Washington with an incredible debt—$14 trillion—more than people can actually fathom.

But people understand spending more than they have or more than comes in, and families all around the country realize they can't do that. Well, in America, as a nation we have been doing that for many years—spending money we don't have, sending out more than comes in, to the point we have had to borrow and borrow and borrow and borrow. Each time we borrow too much, which continues to happen, we have to raise the debt ceiling—the amount of money that can be borrowed.

The President has now asked that we raise the debt ceiling again, but he has asked that it be raised the largest amount in the history of our country—in the history of this great land. That has an impact on people and families all around the country. They are concerned because they know they can't spend more than they bring in, they can't spend more than they have.

They think back to the days of John Kennedy saying: ''Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country,'' and people in Wyoming are concerned that it may switch one day to: Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what your country must do for China because last year, of every dollar we spent in this country, 41 cents of it was borrowed, half of it from overseas, and a lot of it from China.

So how do we stay a great and strong nation, the leader of the world, when we owe that kind of money to another country—a country that does not necessarily have our own best interests at heart?

That is why as this debate and discussion is going on about the debt ceiling, the debt limit, people in Wyoming tell me their biggest concern is not the debt limit, it is the debt. The debt is the threat. It is a threat to our own national security. Those aren't just my words; those are the words of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff who said the greatest threat to our national security is our debt.

So I am so pleased to be joined on the floor of the Senate by my colleague from Nebraska, a neighbor, a next-door neighbor, a former Governor of Nebraska, who, as a Governor, lived with a system where he had to balance the budget every year, and the buck stopped with him.

So I ask my colleague from Nebraska, a former Cabinet Member who has run a major Cabinet and a department within the U.S. Government, perhaps he could share with us what was involved in having to make those tough decisions and actually being held to make those decisions.

Mr. JOHANNS. I thank the Senator from Wyoming. It is my pleasure to be on the Senate floor with him and to talk about my experience in dealing with the reality of a balanced budget amendment.

As I said a couple of weeks ago when I spoke on the floor about this issue, I heard many come to the floor who said: This is a bad idea. This is bad policy. Some have even gone so far as to describe it as almost kind of a radical approach. I have lived with a balanced budget amendment. I have to say I did not find it to be a radical approach whatsoever.

In the State of Nebraska where I was Governor for 6 years, and actually prior to that when I was mayor of the State capital, the community of Lincoln, I had to balance the budget. I had no choice whatsoever about that. In fact, in Nebraska, we had an additional provision. Decades and decades ago, when those who wrote the Nebraska Constitution started thinking about what kind of State they wanted, I think they wisely realized that at some point the politicians would try to hand off or give away the State treasury and promise everything to everybody for obvious reasons: to get elected, to get reelected.

So in the State constitution they said we can't borrow over $100,000. So we had two requirements. One was that on an annual basis the budget had to be balanced, and the spending could not exceed the revenues. The second requirement was that we couldn't issue any bonds or debt to balance that budget and, in fact, we go so far as to not have any debt whatsoever, really. We have a few lease-purchase agreements on some equipment, but that is it. We don't even have debt for our highways. We don't lay a mile of concrete for a highway if we don't have the money to pay for it.

So for those who have described this as sort of a radical approach, let me describe to them how this approach has worked in our State.

Today in our State, our unemployment rate is 4.1 percent—4.1 percent. I will go across the State very soon and do townhall meetings in large communities—from the largest, Omaha, to some of our very smallest. I can almost assure my colleagues that one of the comments I will hear in our rural communities where they are working hard to be business friendly and grow jobs and opportunities for their residents, they will say to me: One of the challenges we have, MIKE, is finding the skill of labor we need to fill the jobs we are creating.

I will also share with my colleagues that this experiment—this radical approach that some have described—has resulted in a legislative session that ended early this year, that balanced the budget, and did not borrow any money. I will also share with my colleagues that our pensions are funded. There are no stories about Nebraska pensions are underfunded; that they

have been borrowing out of the pensions so someday when somebody retires the pension will not be there for them.

I will wrap up my comments by drawing the contrast. The contrast with the government that I find here is this: For over 800 days we haven't had a budget. Under the leadership of my friends on the other side of the aisle, the Democrats, we have not had a budget for now going on 3 years. We are being asked to approve the largest debt increase in our Nation's history. That is what this debate is all about.

In addition, we are closing in on $15 trillion worth of debt. The projection is that in about 4 or 5 years from now we will owe $20 trillion of debt.

My colleague mentioned I was in the Cabinet. When I came to join the President's Cabinet as the Secretary of Agriculture and I shook the Lieutenant Governor's hand who has now been the Governor for 8 years—he is now the President of the National Governors Association—I wished him well. I did not have to say to him: I am very sorry about all the debt I have taken on, because there was none. The bills were paid, the budget was balanced, the pensions were funded, the unemployment rate was low, and he has continued that conservative legacy.

By comparison, when Barack Obama leaves the Presidency, he will tell his successor: I ran up the largest debt in our Nation's history—larger than any President in front of me. That is the legacy he will leave behind for his children and his grandchildren and ours, and that is the sobering reality of today's debate.

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I appreciate the comments of the Senator from Nebraska. I think about the fact that he had to use honest figures, honest accounting.

I see now a proposal by the majority leader that, to me, seems to be full of accounting gimmicks, tricks, things such as using money as savings that was never intended to be spent at all, saying we will save all of this money by not being at war in Iraq or Afghanistan for the next 10 years and counting $1 trillion in savings when there was never even an intention to spend that in the first place. I don't think anyone in this body or on Capitol Hill believes we will be at surge levels for the next 10 years in 2 wars, Afghanistan and Iraq.

So I ask my colleague from Nebraska—and we are also joined by our colleague from South Dakota—he couldn't have done something like that in balancing his budget in Nebraska?

Mr. JOHANNS. Mr. President, we would never have done that. Had I walked into the unicameral for my State of the State Address and done things such as are being proposed here today, I literally would have been run out. The State senators would have looked at the Governor and said: We need a new Governor. And I think they would have joined in a very bipartisan response to that kind of approach.

My colleague is absolutely right. I looked through the proposal, and I have to say, in all due respect to the majority leader, this isn't going to get the support I think he hopes for. It isn't going to happen. It is going to be voted down. It will not go to the finish line because people just can't support it.

This idea that somehow we are going to get a savings because we are not going to be funding the surge levels in Afghanistan, well, no one was going to do that. The President wasn't asking for it. That money was never requested. So to grab that out, as somebody pointed out—and I wish I could remember who—in a column today, they said that is like trying to grab a savings based upon the fact that we will not be invading Canada this year.

Well, yes, we are not going to invade Canada, but that is not budget savings, and it is not a budget savings to somehow claim we are not going to fund the Afghanistan war for the next 10 years at surge levels because that was never anticipated.

I want to solve this problem, but we have to be real with the American people about how we are solving this problem—with real savings. I know it is painful. My goodness, I have been there. I have cut budgets before. I have had to lay off people. But I think we have to just be straight with the American people and say this is what it is going to take to get there.

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, my colleague from South Dakota is here, and he has been a Member of this body longer than I have. To me, this debt ceiling increase seems to be the largest in history by any standard, whether we include inflation or not. I think the previous largest one was $1.9 trillion, and that was also with this President.

So when we think about this President and what he inherited and where we are now, it seems to me—I would ask my colleague from South Dakota to respond—it just seems he is making it worse.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I certainly echo what has been said by my neighbors, my colleagues from Nebraska and Wyoming. Their States, as well as mine, all have a balanced budget amendment that requires our States to live within our means. Our States do it. They do it the old-fashioned way. They do it by—in our case, in the State of South Dakota, this year—having to make some hard decisions about spending. But they balanced their budget, and they did it without raising taxes, which I think is a great model for what we ought to be doing in Washington, DC.

As the Senator from Wyoming has pointed out, this is the largest requested increase in the debt ceiling in history. At $2.4 trillion—and, of course, I think we are going to be asked at some point to vote on the Democratic leader's proposal, which, as both of my colleagues have pointed out, doesn't get us there.

If we even use the standard I think everybody realizes makes a lot of sense—and that is if we are going to increase the debt limit by $2.4 trillion, we also ought to look at how we reduce spending by $2.4 trillion. That way we are getting a dollar-for-dollar reduction in spending, and we are fundamentally addressing the real issue, which isn't the debt limit, it is the debt.

We all talk about the debt limit, and it is looming, looking us right in the eye right now. But the real issue is the fact that year over year over year we continue to spend more than we take in.

We are not living within our means. Both Senators have talked about a balanced budget amendment. I was here as a freshman Congressman in 1997, the last time that was voted on. It was voted on in the Senate. It never made it to the House because it needed a two-thirds vote, and it got 66 votes in the Senate. Had it been able to pass here and come to the House, I think we would have passed it.

I cannot help but think how much better our fiscal situation would be today had we been able to do that back in 1997, because at that time the overall Federal debt was $5 trillion. Today it is $14 trillion. So there has been a $9 trillion increase in the Federal debt in that short amount of time.

It is important we tackle this issue. It is important we do it in a way so the American people know we are serious—that this is not gimmicks, this is not smoke and mirrors and all the things that I think make people in this country so cynical about the way Washington, DC, operates.

As the Senator mentioned, the Reid proposal on the debt limit essentially counts over $1 trillion in savings that were never going to be spent in the first place. So it is a gimmick and it is not real. It is phony. We all know that.

We have to get real. We have to put forward a serious effort if, one, we are going to convince the American people we are serious about this, but, more importantly, if we are going to do something meaningful about getting this spending and debt situation under control.

I hope we will be able to defeat that when it comes to the floor and actually do something, if we can get the House bill over here, which has not only spending cuts in the near term but also a process whereby we can get some entitlement reform that deals with the big drivers of Federal spending; that is, Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security, and then also get a vote on a balanced budget amendment such as all of our States have on the books and which has enabled our States to live within their means, not spend money they do not have, and continue to, in spite of this down economy, perform above the average.

I think of all of our States, probably in terms of unemployment, in terms of economic performance—if you look at them relative to other areas around

the country—living within their means. It is a good model if you want to have a good, strong economy and create jobs for the people in your States. That is something we ought to be doing at the Federal level, and that is why it is so important we take the right approach. The bill that will come over from the House of Representatives does that. The bill that has been proposed by the Senate Democratic leader does not.

Mr. BARRASSO. It is interesting because my colleague from South Dakota mentioned this figure, this two point some trillion dollars. People in Wyoming last week said: How do they come up with that number? Like the Senator, I agree that for every $1 they want to increase the debt limit, they should say we should find $1 of real savings, honest savings, savings you can point to, as the Senator needed to do as Governor, and as we believe here.

That is what the approach they are dealing with in the House does. They have come up with a way to raise the debt ceiling, deal with avoiding a default, and they extend this for a number of months.

People say: Well, how do you get this $2.4 trillion number? The President had a White House press conference last week, on July 22, and he said—it is astonishing. The President of the United States told the country:

> The only bottom line that I have is that we have to extend this debt ceiling through the next election, into 2013.

Not extend the debt ceiling so we can avoid default, not so we can focus on jobs and the economy and the overall debt and the spending, but so that—as he said, his bottom line, the only bottom line, is that we have to extend it beyond the next election.

Then the Treasury Secretary was on one of the television shows on July 24, and he said:

> Most important, we have to lift this threat of default . . . for the next 18 months. We have to take that threat off the table through the election. . . .

This debt is the threat. This debt of nearly $15 trillion, going to over $20 trillion in the next couple years, to me is the threat. The elections can take care of themselves. I think the American people will be shocked, astonished, and disappointed to hear that is the President's only bottom line.

I do not know what the Senator's comments or thoughts are on that, but I am expecting better.

Mr. THUNE. If you think about what this debate ought to be about, it ought to be about America's economic security. It ought to be about making sure we are putting the country on a sustainable fiscal path and creating the conditions for economic growth, and I would argue there is a direct correlation between those two. If we do not get spending and debt under control, I think we are going to bankrupt the country, we are going to increase interest rates, we are going to make it more difficult and more expensive for businesses in this country to create jobs. So clearly there is a direct correlation between the issue of spending and debt and the economy. But the economy and the implications of what we do here on the economy ought to animate everything we do. We ought to be thinking about: How is this going to impact the economy? We should not be thinking about politics. That is why it was disturbing to hear the President say his prerequisite in all this is that we get through the next election. To me, that was a statement that was profoundly about politics and certainly not about America's economic security, which ought to be first and foremost in our minds.

Subsequent to that, even yesterday, you had members of the President's team suggesting this might somehow disrupt the Christmas vacation. I thought: You know, of all the things we ought to be thinking about right now, the next election, the next holiday—those probably are not going to be consequential if we do not take steps to address the issue before us today; that is, this massive increase in our Federal debt, the year-over-year deficits we continue to run, the fact that we continue to live way outside of our means. That is what I think the American people want to see us focused on. I think that is what the people of South Dakota certainly want to see us focused on as well.

Mr. JOHANNS. That is exactly what the people of Nebraska want to see us focused on.

The debate that is occurring now absolutely is one of the most important debates we have had literally in the history of this country. It was encapsulized in a statement in a column today that I read from a man I have a lot of respect for, Charles Krauthammer. He said this about this debate. He said:

> We're in the midst of a great four-year national debate on the size and reach of government, the future of the welfare state, indeed, the nature of the social contract between citizen and state. The distinctive visions of the two parties—social-democratic vs. limited-government—have underlain every debate on every issue since Barack Obama's inauguration: the stimulus, the auto bailouts, health-care reform, financial regulation, deficit spending. Everything. The debt ceiling is but the latest focus of this fundamental divide.

He could not be more right. This is a debate that must occur, as uncomfortable as it may be. Think of where we have been as a nation in the last year and a half. Literally, when the President came to office, the first thing he wanted us to do was to pass a trillion-dollar stimulus plan, if you factor in the interest that was going to be paid, on promises that it was going to fix the economy and employ people, that unemployment would not go over 8 percent.

What happened? Unemployment shot beyond that. Today we see the growth of our economy is literally pitiful. There is no way this economic growth can deal with employing more people.

Then what was the next thing? A health care bill that, quite honestly, the vast majority of Americans did not want. And by the day, story after story, analysis after analysis comes out and says all the promises made during this health care debate by the President and the Democrats will not be fulfilled. There was a story yesterday that this is not going to bring health care costs down. This increases health care costs, and it is one thing after another thing after another thing.

The American people spoke loudly and clearly in November. They said: Get the fiscal condition of the United States under control. I will say this. I do not think anybody is expecting miracles. It took us decades to get in this position. It is going to take concerted, conservative effort to get out of this position over a period of time. But it is on debates such as this where this must start. It is on debates such as this where we must force this government to be smaller, to be more efficient; otherwise, the legacy we leave behind for our children and our grandchildren is $20 trillion of debt in 4 more short years. They will have their own wars to fight. I wish they would be free of war. But they will have their own wars to fight, their own flu pandemics to deal with, their own items on their agenda—education or health care, whatever, that they want to improve—and where will they begin? They will begin with a $20 trillion debt in 4 years. That, as a nation, should be unacceptable to us. That is why we need to do everything we can at every stage to turn this around and start this Nation on the right course.

Mr. THUNE. I also had the opportunity to read the very column the Senator from Nebraska is referring to, the Krauthammer column this morning, and I was struck by many of the same things the Senator observed. I think it is important to note that we are a nation historically that has believed in a limited role for the government. That is what distinguishes us in many respects from some of our European allies. I think what this debate on the debt limit does, with the broader debates we need to be having here about spending and debt and budgets—that is, if we ever had a debate on a budget. As the Senator said, we have not had now a budget in 821 days. April 29, 2009, was the last time this Senate passed a budget. So it is hard to talk about these big issues we need to be focused on when you do not even get a budget on the floor of the Senate to have an opportunity to debate and vote upon.

In fact, when you think about the fact that we spend $3.7 trillion annually of the American people's tax money, you would think you would have some idea, some blueprint, some path of how you are going to spend that. Yet we have not had that here. So we have not had an opportunity to debate that budget.

But this does get at the heart of a very big philosophical difference. Our friends on the other side of the aisle have a view of government that is much more expansive, which is why I think they can explain passing the multitrillion dollar health care bill a year ago and the trillion dollar stimulus bill and the new CLASS Act, which is going to be another entitlement program that will end up running huge deficits into the future.

I do not think that is what the American people have as a vision for this country. I think we need to get back to a role, a size for our government that is consistent with the historical average, the historical norm. It might surprise some of my colleagues to know, if you go back to the formative stages of our Nation's history, in the year 1800, we only spent 2 percent of our GDP on our government—2 percent. This year, we are going to spend over 24 percent. Arguably, life has gotten a lot more complicated. There is a lot more going on in this country, and certainly there is a responsibility that government has. But we have gotten away from the concept that I think is the foundation of this great country; that was a belief in a limited role for the Federal Government, not this expansive, sort of Western European social democracy type approach which the Senator from Nebraska alluded to.

I certainly think the people in my State of South Dakota, and I would argue in Wyoming and Nebraska, as I said before, have a history and a tradition and a heritage of living within their means. Also, I think they have an understanding of what government should and should not do. I certainly believe the people whom I represent want us to get back to that. And it starts here. It starts now. It starts by getting spending under control, by putting Federal spending on a downward trajectory instead of this consistent incline we have seen. In the last 2 years, we have seen non-national security discretionary spending increase by over 24 percent. If you add the stimulus spending in there, it was 84 percent. That is how much spending has increased in the last 2 years of this administration.

That has to stop. I think the American people sent a loud, clear message in November of last year, and it is incumbent upon us to have listened to that message and to do everything we can to get this train turned around. I think we are going to have a big fight over that because the other side believes the way you fix this debt crisis is to increase your revenues, to raise taxes, which would be a huge mistake, particularly now in the middle of an economic downturn.

It starts by getting spending under control. It starts by keeping tax rates and regulations low on our job creators in this country, and creating conditions that are favorable to economic growth and job creation, as opposed to what we are seeing now, which is more and more regulation, higher taxes, more mandates—all the things that make it more difficult for our job creators to do what they do the best; that is, to get people in this country back to work.

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the column that has been referred to, the Charles Krauthammer column from this morning's Washington Post called ''The Great Divide.''

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Washington Post, July 29, 2011]

(By Charles Krauthammer)

THE GREAT DIVIDE

We're in the midst of a great four-year national debate on the size and reach of government, the future of the welfare state, indeed, the nature of the social contract between citizen and state. The distinctive visions of the two parties—social-democratic vs. limited-government—have underlain every debate on every issue since Barack Obama's inauguration: the stimulus, the auto bailouts, health-care reform, financial regulation, deficit spending. Everything. The debt ceiling is but the latest focus of this fundamental divide.

The sausage-making may be unsightly, but the problem is not that Washington is broken, that ridiculous ubiquitous cliche. The problem is that these two visions are in competition, and the definitive popular verdict has not yet been rendered.

We're only at the midpoint Obama won a great victory in 2008 that he took as a mandate to transform America toward European-style social democracy The subsequent counterrevolution delivered to that project a staggering rebuke in November 2010. Under our incremental system, however, a rebuke delivered is not a mandate conferred. That waits definitive resolution, the rubber match of November 2012.

I have every sympathy with the conservative counterrevolutionaries. Their containment of the Obama experiment has been remarkable. But reversal—roll-back, in Cold War parlance—is simply not achievable until conservatives receive a mandate to govern from the White House.

Lincoln is reputed to have said: I hope to have God on my side, but I must have Kentucky. I don't know whether conservatives have God on their side (I keep getting sent to His voice mail), but I do know that they don't have Kentucky—they don't have the Senate, they don't have the White House. And under our constitutional system, you cannot govern from one house alone. Today's resurgent conservatism, with its fidelity to constitutionalism, should be particularly attuned to this constraint; imposed as it is by a system of deliberately separated—and mutually limiting—powers.

Given this reality, trying to force the issue—turn a blocking minority into a governing authority—is not just counter-constitutional in spirit but self-destructive in practice.

Consider the Boehner Plan for debt reduction. The Heritage Foundation's advocacy arm calls it ''regrettably insufficient.'' Of course it is. That's what happens when you control only half a branch. But the plan's achievements are significant. It is all cuts, no taxes. It establishes the precedent that debt-ceiling increases must be accompanied by equal spending cuts. And it provides half a year to both negotiate more fundamental reform (tax and entitlement) and keep the issue of debt reduction constantly in the public eye.

I am somewhat biased about the Boehner Plan because for weeks I've been arguing (in this column and elsewhere) for precisely such a solution: a two-stage debt-ceiling hike consisting of a half-year extension with dollar-for-dollar spending cuts, followed by intensive negotiations on entitlement and tax reform. It's clean. It's understandable. It's veto-proof. (Obama won't dare.) The Republican House should have passed it weeks ago.

After all, what is the alternative? The Reid Plan with its purported $2 trillion of debt reduction? More than half of that comes from not continuing surge-level spending in Iraq and Afghanistan for the next 10 years. Ten years? We're out of Iraq in 150 days. It's all a preposterous ''saving'' from an entirely fictional expenditure.

The Congressional Budget Office has found that Harry Reid's other discretionary savings were overestimated by $400 billion. Not to worry, I am told. Reid has completely plugged that gap. There will be no invasion of Canada next year (a bicentennial this-time-we're-serious 1812 do-over). Huge savings. Huge.

The Obama Plan? There is no Obama plan. And the McConnell Plan, a final resort that punts the debt issue to Election Day, would likely yield no cuts at all.

Obama faces two massive problems—jobs and debt. They're both the result of his spectacularly failed Keynesian gamble: massive spending that left us a stagnant economy with high and chronic unemployment—and a staggering debt burden. Obama is desperate to share ownership of this failure. Economic dislocation from a debt-ceiling crisis nicely serves that purpose—if the Republicans play along. The perfect out: Those crazy Tea Partyers ruined the recovery!

Why would any conservative collaborate with that ploy? November 2012 constitutes the new conservatism's one chance to restructure government and change the ideological course of the country. Why risk forfeiting that outcome by offering to share ownership of Obama's wreckage?

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, how much time do I have remaining?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Time has expired.

Mr. BARRASSO. I ask unanimous consent to speak for an additional 4 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BARRASSO. I wanted to do that because I also want to have printed in the RECORD—and I will read just a couple of paragraphs—a letter that appeared in today's Casper Star Tribune by Eric Mitchell. It is titled ''Smarter than you think.'' He says:

I think they think I'm not so smart because I'm too young to know what they're doing, like raising the national debt. Don't they know that I owe the country about $45,000? I'm only 10 years old. I could buy a lot with $45,000. I could almost buy a home, I could buy property, I could buy a boat and get fish for family and friends.

He is from Crowheart, WY, a small community.

He said:

I would buy guns and ammunition to hunt for food for my family. I could buy books so I could learn more. Forty-five thousand dollars could buy a lot of stuff. That's more than may dad earns. But it wouldn't buy everything.

This is a 10-year-old. He said:

Government shouldn't try to buy everything. It is my job and the people's job to buy the things we need. I don't want the government to think for me. They don't know that I'm a little brother who doesn't like it when my big brothers tell me what to do, because they aren't always responsible for their own things. I don't tell my brothers what to do with their money. I'm smarter than they think I am. They should follow the rules.

Here you have a youngster in Wyoming who knows of values, who is raised in a family where they live within their means, lives in a State where we balance our budget every year, and I think the lesson Eric has for the people of Wyoming and the people of this country is one we should listen to: We should live within our means, not spend more than we have, not continue to borrow. And the threat to our Nation, our greatest threat to our national security continues to be the debt, and it is incumbent upon this institution to deal with that.

I ask unanimous consent the letter be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Casper Star Tribune, July 29, 2011]

SMARTER THAN YOU THINK

(By Eric Mitchell)

What does the government think of me?

Money. Like the banking commercials, I'm not a name, I'm a number.

I think they think I'm not so smart because I'm too young to know what they're doing, like raising the national debt. Don't they know that I owe the country about $45,000? I'm only 10 years old. I could buy a lot with $45,000. I could almost buy a home, I could buy property, I could buy a boat and get fish for my family and friends.

I would buy guns and ammunition to hunt for food for my family. I could buy books so I could learn more. Forty-five thousand dollars could buy a lot of stuff. That's more than my dad earns. But it wouldn't buy everything.

Government shouldn't try to buy everything.

It is my job, and the people's job, to buy the things we need. I don't want the government to think for me. They don't know I'm a little brother who doesn't like it when my big brothers tell me what to do, because they aren't always responsible for their own things. I don't tell my brothers what to do with their money.

I'm smarter than they think I am. They should follow the rules.

EXTENSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I have a unanimous consent request that has been cleared by the Republican leader. I ask unanimous consent that morning business be extended until 6 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each during that period of time; further, that at 6 p.m. I be recognized.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be recognized for whatever time I shall consume as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, there is a simple reason we are all talking about the debt limit increase. It is the fact that this President has spent more money than I ever believed would be possible. So far, he has spent over $10 trillion in 3 years, and next year, if he has his way, he will spend another $3.5 trillion.

I remember so well back during the Clinton administration—I think it was 1995—I was outraged. I came down to this podium. I said: Can you believe a President has a budget of $1.5 trillion? And this President has spent $10 trillion in this short period. If he had not spent all of this money, then we would not be here talking about a debt limit increase right now. I hate to sound so partisan about it, but it is truly a partisan issue.

The Democrats have supported his spending, and the Republicans have not. The Boehner plan we are going to vote on—they are going to vote in the House today, and I think we may have an opportunity to vote here later on tonight—may not be perfect. None of the stuff around here is perfect. But it is good. It has dramatically improved over the last 12 hours. It allows the debt limit increase but only after we significantly cut spending. Never before have we tied—in the history of this country—a debt limit increase to spending cuts, but it is something we have to do now that we are so far into this mess.

The first step to this plan cuts spending by over $900 billion in exchange for a $900 billion increase in the debt limit. That will last the President until around February. I think it is a fair deal. I would like to cut the spending more, but we can only do so much when we only control the House.

The second step of this plan is also good. It establishes a mechanism to quickly consider $1.8 trillion in additional spending cuts between now and the end of the year.

It also requires Congress to pass a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution and send to it the States for ratification. This is something that just happened in the last 12 hours. People were talking about, well, do we really want to do something? A balanced budget amendment is the only way it is going to be good for now and for the future.

We have been talking about this for many years. I remember so well, way back in the 1970s, I was in the State Senate in Oklahoma when Carl Curtis, a very wonderful gentleman from Nebraska—he was a Senator, had been a Senator for quite some time. He was the perennial author of the balanced budget amendment, but he never could get it through. He had an idea. He came to me in the State of Oklahoma and he said: You know, Inhofe, we have been trying to get this balanced budget amendment for a long time, and they excuse they use is, you are never going to get the required number of States to ratify it.

He said: I have come up with an idea. We will get three-fourths of the States to preratify a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution.

Well, that is kind of ingenious.

He said: Why don't you be the first State?

So I did. We passed, by resolution in my State of Oklahoma, in 1975 I believe it was, a ratification of a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution that did not exist. That is kind of neat. We actually got up to almost three-fourths of the States, and some of the other forces knocked it down. But that is how long we have been doing this.

But in the intervening years, there hasn't been 1 year where we have talked about a balanced budget amendment that it has not come up for discussion. Well, this is probably the first time it is a possibility because we have never been in the spending situation we are in right now—as I said, $10 trillion just 3 years.

So right now, we have added that in the last 12 hours. If that legislation passes, the President will get an additional debt limit increase. So we are tying it to behavioral patterns in spending and austerity. That is a smart way to do it.

This proposal would keep the debt limit and the spending debate at the forefront of the national conversation. We must have this conversation. If we do not, we will be worrying about things a lot worse than an increase in the debt limit. The President wants nothing to do with it. He just wants a blank check to increase the debt so he can continue to raise the deficit. Why do I think this? Well, if we undid all of his policies today, the policies that so rapidly increased spending and are killing our economy, then we would not need a debt limit increase.

The President's spending addiction is the only reason we are here talking about a debt limit increase. This is unilateral. This is the President—his budget. It is not a group of people, it is him. A lot of people are asking: Does anyone in Washington really care? One guy doesn't—the President of the United States. His actions are what we are talking about today. We are looking at failed policies.

Referring to the chart, first is ObamaCare. We are talking right now about trying to get something like $800 billion in these negotiations so we can increase the debt limit. In one fell swoop, ObamaCare was $1.5 trillion. This plan costs over the current decade, when fully implemented—the 10-year cost nearly doubles to $2.5 trillion. This law dramatically expands government's influence in the health care sector, and together with Medicare and Medicaid, it will result in the financial ruin of this great country.

Second, we have the failed stimulus plan. We all know it didn't meet any of

President Obama's expectations. It met all of mine because I didn't expect much. It didn't help the economy. It expanded the size of government. Even though we were opposed to it—I am among the most conservative Members, and Senator BOXER is a very proud liberal. She and I together tried to have an amendment to take some of the $800 billion and put a large amount into infrastructure.

Right now, we have to have roads and highways and bridges. We are supposed to do that here. Of course, they didn't do it. Only 3 percent of the $800 billion went for that type of infrastructure. Over $1 trillion of this amount, once you add in the costs, that is how we get up to $1 trillion, the cost of interest we have to pay for extra spending. That is a total of $2.5 trillion.

So we have the stimulus of $1 trillion and ObamaCare of $1.5 trillion. Then there is the President's relentless pursuit for regulation. Whatever the President hasn't been able to do legislatively, he is attempting to do through regulation—most of it through the EPA. Cap and trade is a good example. We have debated that since the Kyoto Treaty was up. Clearly, the votes are not there. Right now, in this Chamber, we would not get 25 votes for cap and trade. Yet everybody is talking about how it is important to have cap and trade. Now he is trying to do it through regulation. That alone would cost the American people $300 trillion to $400 trillion a year—not just one shot; that is a year.

There is the boiler MACT legislation, which is maximum attainable controlled technology. In other words, what can we do? What do we have the technology to do to stop emissions? We don't have it. But he has that, and that was billions of dollars a year.

Ozone regulations: He was going to announce this week a tightening of the ozone regulations that would put 608 of our counties in America out of attainment. I am from Oklahoma, and it would put 15 of our counties out of attainment. They cannot recruit industry in those counties, and they cannot hire people, and many will have to go out of business because of the ozone regulations. It is not, in my opinion, legal the way he is doing it because he is supposed to address it every 5 years. It was done in 2008 on new technology, which is a requirement. Today, he is trying to do it using the same 2008 technology. Again, it is extremely expensive. That casts a tremendous cloud of uncertainty over the business sector, and that is a key reason they announced today that the economy is growing at 1.3 percent a year. That is terrible, especially when we consider the recession we are in.

As a general rule, economies recover rapidly when coming off of a financial recession. It is not unusual for countries to grow at 4, 5, 6 percent for the years following a recession. But we can't even get around 2 percent. That has a huge negative effect on the economy and the government. The President's regulatory agenda is the reason our unemployment rate is above 9 percent, and it is the reason our economy is growing so slowly. Because of this, our tax receipts are way off their historic levels. If we can get the economy to grow faster at a sustained period of time, the effect on tax revenues is unbelievable. This is pretty well accepted. I always said that every 1 percent increase in the economy equals about $50 million in new revenue. That is the way to grow revenue.

Certainly, President Kennedy knew it, President Reagan knew it, and so the best way to increase revenue and get the economy moving again is, of course, to increase growth. If the economy grows at a rate that is 1 percent faster than presently forecast for the next decade, Federal tax revenues will grow by $3 trillion.

I conservatively estimate that the cost to Federal revenues of the President's regulatory agenda has been $1 trillion. So we have, through his regulatory behavior, another $1 trillion. That brings our total to $3.5 trillion.

Then in there is an increase in nonsecurity discretionary spending, which has added up to $500 billion in spending.

There is the expanded and increased spending on unemployment benefits, which is also a consequence of his regulatory policies that have killed the economic recovery, and the cost of that is another $500 billion.

Together, all these failed policies add up to a $4.5 trillion contribution to the Federal deficit.

Since Inauguration Day, the debt has increased by $3.7 trillion. It is on pace to increase by more than $5 trillion by the end of the President's first term. If we undid all of these failed policies, we would not find ourselves in the situation we are in today. We would not be debating this because it would not be necessary. It is because of the President that we are even talking about raising the debt ceiling. If we could undo the President's policies, we would not need to raise the debt ceiling at all.

Where is the President? He has been totally absent from this entire debt conversation. Today, he is meeting with terrorists from Cote d'Ivoire, and he is probably going to play golf in the afternoon—I don't know. But he is not participating. He doesn't seem to care about debating the debt ceiling. He wants to raise the deficit. If he did care, he would see the need for the Boehner plan, endorse it, and sign it into law. I guess that is too much to ask.

We are going to have a chance to do that tonight. They are going to have a vote in the House around 6 o'clock on the Boehner plan, and it will come over here, and we will have an opportunity to do that. If the Democrats support us—a handful of them—we will be able to get that passed. We will wait until tonight to see what happens.

HOUSE MEETING

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, there is a terrorist visiting with the President right now. I will elaborate. So many people are looking the other way and don't know what is going on in Africa. I have been on this floor nine different times talking about the atrocities that have been committed in Cote d'Ivoire.

They had a President there named Laurent Gbagbo. He and his wife are great people, friends of this country. An election took place, and I stood here and showed how it was fraudulent, and the guy who won is named Alassane Ouattara.

Right now, as we speak, at this very moment, President Obama is meeting with the rebel leader and potential war criminal Alassane Ouattara in our Nation's Oval Office. This is an unwise and grossly misguided decision on behalf of President Obama. It is, in fact, an outrage that our President would welcome with open arms a man who is responsible for the deaths of at least 3,000 people and the displacement of a half million refugees in Cote d'Ivoire.

Ouattara is an illegitimate usurper who has scandalized Cote d'Ivoire's electoral system and wrongfully ousted democratic incumbent Laurent Gbagbo.

Beginning late last year, Ouattara fraudulently won Cote d'Ivoire's Presidential election, and after Gbagbo revealed the fraud he led a rebel army that violently overthrew the Gbagbo government, with the support of the French military, which wrongly intervened in this former French colony.

This is a picture that depicts one of Ouattara's death squads murdering, maiming, raping. This is happening as we speak.

Who is in the President's office? Alassane Ouattara. As a result, Amnesty International reported on July 28 that half a million Ivorians are displaced in postelection violence and are prevented from returning home because of a ''climate of fear'' that continues to reign in this country. Amnesty International specifically singles out Ouattara's security forces and his state-sponsored militia composed of Dozos—they are called—who continue to target pro-Gbagbo ethnic groups.

Dozos, traditional hunters, are a mercenary group that both Amnesty International and the International Committee of the Red Cross blame for carrying out a massacre in April of at least 220 people in the western town of Duekoue.

Here they are in this photo. You can see the charred bodies of those murdered by Ouattara, who is in the President's office right now. There are executions going on. There is a photo of a person who was burned and beaten on the back—from the political opposition. That is what is happening today.

Amnesty International alleges that these forces under Ouattara's command are continuing to engage in ''documented crimes under international law and human rights violations and

abuses, including extrajudicial executions and other unlawful killings, rape, and other sexual violence, torture, other ill treatment and arbitrary arrest and detention, as well as the consequences of a high level of displacement, pervasive insecurity, and intentional destruction of homes and other buildings not justified by military success.''

They are talking about this. We can see that this person was being tortured. This photo is of someone from the cabinet—the Gbagbo cabinet. He tried to make a statement—Ouattara said he is trying to keep some of those people, but here he is in the middle of killing him. He died after this. Here they are executing another person they found as a Gbagbo supporter.

This is happening today as we speak. Ouattara's bloodletting seems unabated, and he doesn't seem to be interested in restraining his forces from eliminating perceived pro-Gbagbo supporters. He does not deserve an invitation to our White House or an audience with the President in the Oval Office.

Instead of participating in our Nation's debt crisis, President Obama is meeting with this killer and human rights abuser. Even today, while Ouattara is in the President's office, his death squads are roaming the streets of Abijan. It is an outrage, and maybe now we understand where some of the priorities are.

With that, I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LIEBERMAN). Without objection, it is so ordered.

THE DEBT CEILING

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. President, too many Ohioans are struggling—as are people all over the Nation—in this economy. They are watching Washington with disgust as some politicians are risking economic catastrophe. The House of Representatives continues to waste time as our Nation stands just 4 days away from a catastrophic default. Instead of working with us on a bipartisan basis in the Senate on a compromise measure to prevent a crisis, House Republicans are cutting closed-door deals to find votes on a bill that has no chance of becoming law. We are simply running out of time for these kinds of games.

Only a bipartisan bill coming out of the Senate, negotiated with Republican Leader MCCONNELL and Democratic Leader REID, provides hope for a way out of this impasse. As the majority leader moves forward, I ask my Republican colleagues across the aisle to proceed with its work and not delay the resolution with filibusters and procedural tricks.

In the spirit of compromise, Majority Leader REID has come forth with a plan to reduce the deficit by $2.2 trillion. It is truly a compromise because it meets the Republicans' main criteria. It incorporates some of Senator MCCONNELL's language. It contains spending cuts to roughly match the debt ceiling increase through 2012—the spending cuts in the Reid plan are ones Republicans had previously agreed to and, in many cases, advanced—and it contains no revenue increases, all criteria and demands from overwhelming numbers of Senate Republicans.

The majority leader's plan is not perfect. It is not the balanced approach I hoped it would be. But most importantly, right now, it prevents a default, it reduces the deficit—a critical imperative for our children and grandchildren—and it protects Medicare and Social Security and Medicaid.

My office is being swamped with calls and e-mails from Ohioans who cannot believe we are so close to default. I can't either. Let me read a couple letters from Ohio voters. Both of these individuals self-identify as Republicans when they write to me. The first one is from Representative MARCY KAPTUR's district, which is in northern Ohio, along the lake. He says:

> I am a 40-plus-year-old Republican who has tried to work to eliminate the tax money we use that is now paid to oil and gas companies as tax subsidies. I don't like my tax money being given to these companies with Senators' blessings. I would like to ask both of you—

He sends this, apparently, to myself and my colleague, Senator PORTMAN—

> to support a balanced approach being proposed by the President and put debt and deficit to bed until an election can be held and the American people can determine who should be in Congress. We should have listened to Ronald Reagan when he said this should not have been undertaken.

Meaning the debt limit issue.

> The debt limit is on past bills and should not be raised and not be used as a political volleyball and upset our financial institutions.

Another letter writer—again, a Republican—says:

> I did not vote for our current President, but I have to side with him on the debt ceiling issues. I am exhausted by the political bickering that goes on in Washington. Quit the child-like fighting and get this thing done. The American people are tired of it all.

A default would risk what amounts to a permanent tax hike on all Americans. Interest rates could rise for anyone applying for a home mortgage, a car loan or a college loan. Credit costs for all borrowers would climb. Governments at every level, businesses, not for profits, homeowners, credit card holders, even several States have already been placed on a credit watch. Every State would be hurt by a Federal default, which is why Governors of both parties are calling for a deal.

There could be repercussions for pension funds and money market funds that guard the retirement savings of middle-class families. A default on our obligations would be a knockout blow to the financial security of the Ohio Public Employees Retirement System. These are public employees who have spent their lives working in Ohio's courts and schools and many other public positions in local and State government. That is why the Director of OPERS—the Ohio Public Employees Retirement System—sent a letter with nine of her colleagues pleading:

> America is now a debtor nation and must show the world the nation's word is its bond. It is critical that the debt ceiling be raised to avoid a default.

The Ohio Public Employees Retirement System, obviously, represents Republicans and Democrats alike.

As a member of the Senate Banking Committee, I heard Chairman Ben Bernanke, a Republican appointee, speak in March, and he said default would be ''an extremely dangerous and very likely recovering-ending event.''

Just today, several mayors of Ohio's large- and medium- sized cities—for example, the cities of Hillsboro, South Euclid, Chillicothe, North Royalton, Lancaster, Akron, Middletown, Shaker Heights, Reynoldsburg, Dayton, Steubenville, Solon, Newark, Fairfield, and other cities, Republicans and Democrats alike—wrote:

> As Mayors, we rely on the partnership of the federal government to help us create jobs and grow our communities. Uncertainty surrounding the federal budget puts key programs like Community Development Block Grants and Community Oriented Policing Services in jeopardy. Job-creating infrastructure projects would come to a halt without the full support of our federal partners. Inaction on the debt ceiling threatens programs like Social Security that our citizens rely on to survive.

I have heard the Presiding Officer—in a meeting today, in fact—talk passionately about the uncertainty this would inject into our economy—to follow the House lead—and do this again in 6 months and the irresponsibility of that proposal. As difficult as this has been for people on all sides and the contentiousness and anger, it doesn't matter whether we are angry or it is contentious around here, but what does matter is the message it sends to main street—Main Street Connecticut, Main Street Hartford, Main Street Columbus, Main Street New Haven and Toledo. When businesses are thinking about expansion, when they are thinking about taking a loan out or thinking about borrowing money, they are not going to do it when we are in the midst of a financial crisis such as we are in now. If we were going to do this again in 6 months, you can bet we would have the same kind of divisions, the same kind of arguments.

The assistant majority leader told the story today about a Chicago businessperson who is terrified of this and what would happen if we didn't raise the debt ceiling, if we went into default; what might happen 6 months from now if we went through it again.

So the responsible position is for this body, on a bipartisan basis, to work on

the McConnell-Reid plan, to pass this, send it to the House of Representatives, and for them to pass it. We can then focus on job creation and on deficit reduction, but we will have moved forward together in a way that we have not for far too long a period of time.

Mr. DURBIN. Will the Senator yield for a question?

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Of course.

Mr. DURBIN. There have been Members of the Senate and House who have gone before the cameras and come to the floor in each of those bodies and argued that defaulting on the national debt is really not a big deal, although we have never done that one time in our history—we had one technical default for a few days but never really defaulted on our debt one time in our history.

I ask the Senator from Ohio, in the response he is getting back from Ohio and I am getting back from Illinois from people who are genuinely concerned about a default on the national debt, I wonder if he has been hearing from Social Security recipients who are asking whether they will be receiving their checks after August 2 if we default on their debt. I wonder if he is getting calls from disabled veterans whom we promised to stand by the rest of their lives who receive monthly checks for their medical care and other things. Has he heard from small business leaders in Ohio, as I have in Illinois, who are suggesting that an increase in interest rates at this moment in time is exactly wrong when it comes to job creation?

I would like to ask the Senator from Ohio, when one of our colleagues from Pennsylvania comes to the floor and says defaulting on the national debt can be easily managed and no one will notice—I would like to ask the Senator from Ohio whether that is his impression.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. That is surely not my impression. I appreciate the comments from the assistant majority leader from Illinois.

I listen to the words, as I have read, that Ronald Reagan said. The debt limit was raised 18 times in the 8 years of the Reagan administration, and each time it was, there were people who didn't like doing it. Nobody likes to vote for that. But there was never this: let's go up to the edge and take a chance. President Reagan always preached—as Presidents have since in both parties—that this is not a risk we can take, and I know this.

I hear from Social Security beneficiaries, I hear from veterans, I hear from small businesspeople, and I hear from contractors around Wright-Patterson Air Force Base that they don't think we should take this risk, that they are—some use the word ''terrified'' getting this close to default, and most can't really believe we are this close. I can't, either.

The Senator from Illinois and I have talked about this many times over the last few months, that we figured there would not be these lines in the sand and this belief that it doesn't matter if we default and we would get to a solution. But we haven't been able to.

But no responsible people in elected office that I can think of in the last 30 or 40 years have wanted to go this close to default and play chicken and just think, well, maybe it won't hurt us much. We know what happens with interest rates. We know what might happen with Social Security checks and veterans' benefits and prison guard pay and airport safety and food inspectors—all of those functions that matter. I don't know why any responsible leader in this body or the other body would want to take that risk.

Mr. DURBIN. I would like to ask through the Chair if the Senator from Ohio would yield for this question.

He may recall the time not that long ago when we closed down the government of the United States for a period of time, and there were some radio talk show hosts who argued that America wouldn't notice, just as they are arguing now that America won't notice if we default on our national debt. I know the Senator from Ohio can recall that and the fact that America did notice, and those who engineered that crisis paid a heavy political price.

What I am really getting to at this point, though, is to ask the Senator from Ohio—Monday night, when the Speaker of the House, JOHN BOEHNER, went on national television with the President of the United States and announced he had a bipartisan plan, he called it, that he could pass in the House of Representatives, many of us had the impression that was going to be done on Tuesday. Well, it wasn't done on Tuesday or Wednesday or Thursday. It is only today that they are voting on it, some 5 or 6 days later.

I would like to ask the Senator from Ohio, losing that 4- or 5-day period of time when we could have been moving forward to a compromise—the impact that has as we face this looming deadline of a default on our national debt on August 2.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. I thank the Senator for that comment and question. This is clearly more dangerous for our economy and our country, from Wall Street to Main Street, than what happened when they closed the government down 15 years ago or threatened to a few months ago. That was troubling, and that was damaging to our country, but we don't know what exactly would happen here. We are almost sure interest rates would go up. We are almost sure many people who benefit from government services directly would see those benefits go away. Whether it is a Social Security check or whether it is food safety or running the airports safely, all of those things would be at risk.

I have heard a lot of sort of brouhaha or a lot of strong words out of the House and a lot of promises, but there seems to be too many people in that Chamber who don't really see the seriousness of this, don't see that this really does put our economy in jeopardy.

You know, it is not just our economy. That is the most important part, but it is also our reputation around the world. It is the strength of the dollar. It is the blot on our national reputation. I haven't been to Europe in a long time, but I hear reports from people around the world that they are saying: What is going on in the United States of America that you can't even agree on raising the debt ceiling so you can really focus on things such as jobs?

I had a meeting just last week—Senator ROCKEFELLER and I, earlier this week—and there were eight or nine Senators who joined us to talk about focusing on a jobs agenda and what we need to do to restore American manufacturing. In a State such as Illinois, and in Connecticut—the other Senator from Connecticut was in our meeting and talked about Bridgeport and New Haven and all the manufacturing that is done in this country. We are still a major manufacturing country. This is going to hurt manufacturers. It is going to mean they can't borrow to meet payroll or borrow to expand or borrow to create more jobs.

Why would we risk any of this instead of getting this done by focusing on job growth, and focusing on getting our budget in order? We know how do this. In the 1990s—and the Presiding Officer and the assistant majority leader were very much part of it—in the 1990s, we got to, one, a balanced budget and, second, we got to 21 million private sector jobs net increase because we passed a responsible budget. It had some tax increases for upper income people. It also had some tax breaks in it for middle-income people. It also had major cuts and major investments. And we did all of that because we wrote a thoughtful budget—didn't get a lot of help from the other side, but put that aside, we did it right, we got to a budget surplus, and we created 21 million jobs. We know how do this. But we didn't see anybody playing these kinds of games: Maybe we just let the debt ceiling go and go into default. We just could not take this chance.

I thank the Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I wish to thank my colleague from Ohio for talking about this issue because it is on the minds of everyone here on Capitol Hill and across the Nation. We are getting a lot of e-mails and phone calls and letters, and it is understandable because this is the first time in our Nation's history that we face default on our national debt.

I received a letter from Amy in Germantown, IL, downstate. We have a lot of German families in our State, and we have a town named ''Germantown.'' Amy contacted me and said:

> Please do your utmost to compromise on a budget solution before the deadline expires. Our family has already weathered multiple economic downturns due to the dot-com bubble burst, 9/11, and most recently the subprime mortgage crisis. We are responsible

with our income, saving for our children's education and our retirement. However, we are extremely nervous about our savings and investments once again. If the United States of America defaults on its loan obligations, it is likely we will see a significant reduction in the value of our 401K and 403B investments, as well as the investments we have made for our children and grandchild's education.

. . . I cannot stand by another day and listen to all the elected officials in Washington talk about their convictions. Please remember your constituents and their situations.

Another letter from Scott in Bloomington, IL:

Dear Senator, I thought I'd offer you a real life personal example of what you are doing to common Americans by dragging out to the last minute the resolution of the Federal debt limit. Ironically, every August 1st, I receive a distribution from a tax-deferred retirement account. That account includes a variety of investments, not the least of which are equity mutual funds. The failure to provide leadership in Congress, along with the President and House leaders, will probably cost me about $5,000 this year. I will never see this money again. The recent fall in the equity markets is a direct result of the nervousness you are creating by failing to resolve the Federal debt limit issue, playing the usual political games. I respectfully request that you share this message with all of your colleagues as a reality check. Stop your games played for your own personal advantage, and start thinking about the people you are supposed to be serving.

A letter from David in Casey, IL:

I am retired and don't look forward to having my Social Security or veterans benefits cut. Why is it the rich get by with no additional taxes and we are taxed and our benefits in jeopardy? So why don't you elected officials wake up, start living like the rest of the population, put politics aside and do what is right for the country.

From the Lincoln Courier newspaper:

''From what I'm hearing, interest rates would go up,'' said Jim Muschinske, revenue manager for the Illinois Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability. ''Some people may be more hesitant to buy big-ticket items they would have to finance.''

As a result, sales tax revenues are going to suffer for local governments. ''That could start a ripple effect,'' the newspaper went on to write.

''If the consumer pulls back, corporations would be more hesitant to add to their payroll,'' Muschinske said. ''They may cut or, at the very least, not hire. At this stage of the recovery, we would hope hiring would be further along.''

What troubles me the most is this is a manufactured political crisis. This is a self-inflicted political wound. Eighty-nine times since 1939 we have routinely—except for one little glitch—extended the debt ceiling. We have done it under Republican Presidents 55 times and Democratic Presidents 34 times. It is bipartisan.

All the President is asking for is the authority to borrow the money to pay for what Congress has spent. Members of Congress who come to the floor and pledge ''I will never vote to extend the debt ceiling'' are the same Members of Congress who just weeks ago said to the President: Stay in Afghanistan, stay the course, spend the money. We have got to do it. Mr. President, $10 billion a month in Afghanistan. For every dollar we spend, we have to borrow 40 cents. So for President Obama to keep the promise made by these same Members of Congress, he has to borrow funds to do it. Now that he has asked for authority to borrow it, they are saying: Oh, no, we want nothing to do with borrowing the money. And that is why we are here today.

Mr. President, let me say a word about the other issue that is being debated; that is, the deficit. And I know you feel as seriously about it as I do. The deficit in this country has to be addressed. We are leaving a debt to our children that is unimaginable, and we have to change it.

I have been working for a year and a half with the deficit commission the President created and with a group called the Gang of 6, and we have come up with a bipartisan approach to deal with this. It is sensible. It spreads the pain—and there will be pain—to everyone across America and puts everything on the table—everything. We don't spare anyone except the poorest and most vulnerable in our Nation.

We basically said to people: We have to raise revenue, and we have to start by increasing the tax burden of those in the highest income categories. I think it stands to reason. If we are asking for sacrifice from working families who are paying for college student loans, why wouldn't we ask the wealthiest people in America to pay a little more on their taxes?

Secondly, we put all of the Federal spending on the table, and we make dramatic cuts in Federal spending—not just on the side of the ledger that deals with nondefense but also in the Defense Department. There are some Members of Congress who argue that you cannot cut a penny from the Department of Defense.

When I was on the deficit commission, we had experts who came in from the Pentagon, and we learned that the Pentagon and the Department of Defense is the largest Federal employer in America.

But then Senator CONRAD of North Dakota asked an important question. He said: Beyond those Federal employees in the Department of Defense, how many contractors, how many contract employees work for the Department of Defense?

The expert said: I have no idea.

Senator CONRAD said: Well, give me a range.

Well, he says, between 1 million and 9 million.

That is quite a range. I think it is evidence that we ought to look at every single contract in the Department of Defense. Believe me, there are some of them that shouldn't be there where we are paying too much money and not getting the security we expect for our Nation.

So we need to look at both sides of the ledger—the defense side and the nondefense side—and save the money. Keep our troops safe and keep America safe, but don't waste money on that which doesn't make us safe.

Finally, the entitlement programs—and this is where many people across America do get nervous. I believe in Social Security and Medicare and Medicaid. I particularly believe we have a commitment to seniors who paid their entire working lives into these programs expecting them to protect them when they reached the age of retirement.

This year, on January 1, 10,000 Americans reached the age of 65, qualifying for Social Security and Medicare. On January 2, another 10,000; January 3, again. And for 19 more years, every day 10,000 more people will qualify for Social Security and Medicaid. Welcome to the baby boomers. Those who were born after World War II are now reaching retirement age and with that expect, because they paid in for a lifetime, to receive Social Security and Medicare. Now we need to look at those programs and ask, What can we do to make them stronger longer? We may have some disagreement about exactly how that is done, but we both agree that if we don't touch Medicare and leave it as is, in a matter of 6, 7, or 8 years, it will be insolvent, unable to pay its bills. That is unacceptable. We need to find ways to make Medicare a strong, viable program that will pay the medical bills of seniors and the disabled when they need them.

Social Security, the same. There is good news in Social Security; it is solvent for 25 years. We cannot say that about many programs, if any, in Washington. But the bad news is at the end of 25 years, benefits would have to be cut 22 percent. That is tough. A lot of people have no other source of income.

What I have suggested, and I hope people will listen carefully: Small changes we make today in Social Security will play out over 25 years to buy the solvency we need in this program for decades to come. Every penny of savings in Social Security needs to be reinvested right back into Social Security so we do not take the savings from Social Security for general deficit reduction—not at all. Whatever savings are there, put them back into the Social Security Program.

There are ways to do this. We could do it in a sensible fashion, and the only way I can say that with some confidence is I have done it. When I first got elected to Washington in 1983, they said: Welcome to Washington. Social Security is broke.

We sat down and fixed it. We bought over 50 years of solvency at that time. We can do it again. We have to think about this in thoughtful terms, preserve the basic benefits of these programs but give them a longer life so they will be there when they are needed in the future. Our Gang of 6 came up with a bipartisan agreement to deal with this. Thirty-six Senators of both parties have agreed to join us in this

effort, and I hope it becomes the basis for us addressing our deficit crisis and that we avert what clearly is a manufactured political crisis coming August 2 and that we extend this debt ceiling so we do not hurt our recovering economy. We cannot hurt the innocent businesses and families across America who count on us for leadership.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PEACEFUL AND JUST RESOLUTION IN GEORGIA

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the Senate proceed to Calendar No. 113, S. Res. 175.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 175) expressing the sense of the Senate with respect to ongoing violations of the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Georgia and the importance of a peaceful and just resolution to the conflict within Georgia's internationally recognized borders.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. President, I know of no further debate. I ask the Senate to vote on the adoption of the resolution.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Hearing no further debate, the question is on the adoption of the resolution.

The resolution (S. Res. 175) was agreed to.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. I ask unanimous consent the preamble be agreed to, the motion to reconsider be agreed to, with no intervening action or debate, and any statements be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 175

Whereas, since 1993, the territorial integrity of Georgia has been reaffirmed by the international community and 36 United Nations Security Council resolutions;

Whereas the United States-Georgia Strategic Charter, signed on January 9, 2009, underscores that ''support for each other's sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and inviolability of borders constitutes the foundation of our bilateral relations'';

Whereas, in October 2010, at the meeting of the United States-Georgia Charter on Strategic Partnership, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton stated, ''The United States will not waiver in its support for Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity.'';

Whereas the White House released a fact sheet on July 24, 2010, calling for ''Russia to end its occupation of the Georgian territories of Abkhazia and South Ossetia'' and for ''a return of international observers to the two occupied regions of Georgia'';

Whereas Vice President Joseph Biden stated in Tbilisi in July 2009 that the United States ''will not recognize Abkhazia and South Ossetia as independent states'';

Whereas, according to the Government of Georgia's ''State Strategy on Occupied Territories,'' the Government of Georgia has committed itself to a policy of peaceful engagement, the protection of economic and human rights, freedom of movement, and the preservation of cultural heritage, language, and identity for the people of Abkhazia and South Ossetia;

Whereas the August 2008 conflict between the Governments of Russia and Georgia resulted in civilian and military causalities, the violation of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia, and large numbers of internally displaced persons;

Whereas large numbers of persons remain displaced as a result of the August 2008 conflict as well as the earlier conflicts of the 1990s;

Whereas the August 12, 2008, ceasefire agreement, agreed to by the Governments of Russia and Georgia provides that all troops of the Russian Federation shall be withdrawn to pre-conflict positions;

Whereas the August 12, 2008, ceasefire agreement provides that free access shall be granted to organizations providing humanitarian assistance in regions affected by violence in August 2008;

Whereas the recognition by the Government of Russia of Abkhazia and South Ossetia on August 26, 2008, was in violation of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia;

Whereas Human Rights Watch concluded in its World Report 2011 that ''Russia continued to occupy Georgia's breakaway regions of South Ossetia and Abkhazia and strengthened its military presence in the region by establishing a military base and placing an advanced surface-to-air missile system in Abkhazia'';

Whereas the parties have taken some constructive steps in recent months, including the resumption of direct flights between Russia and Georgia, Russian troop withdrawal from the Georgian village of Perevi, and regular participation in the Incident Prevention and Response Mechanism;

Whereas these positive steps neither adequately address the humanitarian situation on the ground nor constitute full compliance with the terms of the August 2008 ceasefire agreement;

Whereas, on November 23, 2010, before the European Parliament, Georgian President Saakashvili declared that ''Georgia will never use force to restore its territorial integrity and sovereignty'';

Whereas Secretary of State Clinton stated in Tbilisi on July 5, 2010, ''We continue to call for Russia to abide by the August 2008 cease-fire commitment . . . including ending the occupation and withdrawing Russian troops from South Ossetia and Abkhazia to their pre-conflict positions.'';

Whereas the Russian Federation blocked the extension of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) Mission to Georgia and the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia, forcing the missions to withdraw from South Ossetia and Abkhazia;

Whereas troops of the Russian Federation stationed in Abkhazia and South Ossetia continue to be present without the consent of the Government of Georgia or a mandate from the United Nations or other multilateral organizations;

Whereas, at the April 15, 2011, meeting in Berlin between the foreign ministers of Georgia and NATO, Secretary of State Clinton stated, ''U.S. support for Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity remains steadfast. . . . We share Georgian concerns regarding recent Russian activities that can negatively affect regional stability.'';

Whereas, on April 25–26, 2011, Foreign Minister of Russia Sergei Lavrov made a high-profile visit to Abkhazia and South Ossetia, which was immediately criticized by the Department of State as ''inconsistent with the principle of territorial integrity and Georgia's internationally recognized borders'';

Whereas the Senate supports United States efforts to develop a productive relationship with the Russian Federation in areas of mutual interest, including non-proliferation and arms control, cooperation concerning the failure of the Government of Iran to meet its international obligations with regard to its nuclear programs, counter-terrorism, Afghanistan, anti-piracy, and economics and trade; and

Whereas the Senate agrees that these efforts must not compromise longstanding United States policy or United States support for its allies and partners worldwide: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) affirms that it is the policy of the United States to support the sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity of Georgia and the inviolability of its borders, and to recognize Abkhazia and South Ossetia as regions of Georgia occupied by the Russian Federation;

(2) calls upon the Government of Russia to take steps to fulfill all the terms and conditions of the 2008 ceasefire agreements between Georgia and Russia, including returning military forces to pre-war positions and ensuring access to international humanitarian aid to all those affected by the conflict;

(3) urges the Government of Russia and the authorities in control in the regions of South Ossetia and Abkhazia to allow for the full and dignified return of internally displaced persons and international missions to the territories of Abkhazia and South Ossetia;

(4) supports peaceful, constructive engagement and confidence-building measures between the Government of Georgia and the authorities in control in South Ossetia and Abkhazia and encourages additional people-to-people contacts; and

(5) affirms that finding a peaceful resolution to the conflict is a key priority for the United States in the Caucasus region and that lasting regional stability can only be achieved through peaceful means and long-term diplomatic and political dialogue between all parties.

ENCOURAGING WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION IN SAUDI ARABIA

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the Senate proceed to the consideration of Calendar No. 114, S. Res. 216.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 216) encouraging women's political participation in Saudi Arabia.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution (S. Res. 216) encouraging women's political participation in Saudi Arabia, which had been reported from the Committee

on Foreign Relations, with an amendment and an amendment to the preamble.

(Strike the parts in boldface brackets and insert the parts shown in italics.)

S. RES. 216

[Whereas, on September 22, 2011, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is scheduled to hold its first nationwide municipal elections since 2005, with voter registration open as of April 23, 2011;

[Whereas the Government of Saudi Arabia has announced—as it did in 2005—that women will be unable to run for elective office or vote;

[Whereas, on March 28, 2011, president of the general committee for the election of municipal council members Abd al-Rahman Dahmash stated, ''We are not prepared for the participation of women in the municipal elections now.'';

[Whereas Foreign Minister of Saudi Arabia Prince Saud Al Faisal stated in an interview after the 2005 election that he assumed women would be allowed to vote in future elections, and that this would benefit the election process because women were ''more sensible voters than men'';

[Whereas the decision by the Government of Saudi Arabia to continue to disenfranchise women in the September 2011 municipal elections is inconsistent with a series of commitments made by the Government of Saudi Arabia;

[Whereas, in January 2003, Saudi Arabia proposed to the League of Arab States the ''Covenant for Arab Reform,'' resulting in the adoption of the ''Tunis Declaration'' at the May 2004 Arab Summit, which declared, among other things, a ''firm determination'' to ''pursue reform and modernization'' by ''widening women's participation in the political, economic, social, cultural and educational fields'';

[Whereas these declarations were reaffirmed at the Arab Summit in Algiers on March 23, 2005, and at the Riyadh Summit held in Saudi Arabia on March 28, 2007;

[Whereas, in April 2009, Saudi Arabia ratified the Arab Charter on Human Rights, which states in article 24(3), ''Every citizen has the right . . . to stand for election or choose his representatives in free and impartial elections, in conditions of equality among all citizens that guarantee the free expression of his will.'';

[Whereas, on June 10, 2009, the Government of Saudi Arabia accepted the majority of the recommendations put forward by the United Nations Human Rights Council's Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review including to ''[a]bolish all legislation, measures and practices that discriminate against women . . . In particular, to abolish legislation and practices which prevent women from participating fully in society on an equal basis with men,'' and to ''end the strict system of male guardianship and give full legal identity to Saudi women'';

[Whereas the Government of Saudi Arabia has indicated that it is supportive of the human rights of women;

[Whereas, in November 2010, Saudi Arabia was elected to the Executive Board of UN Women, emphasizing the commitment of the Government of Saudi Arabia to the rights of women;

[Whereas 'Abd al-Rahman Dahmash, the president of the general committee for the election of municipal council members, has stated that Saudi women will be granted the right to vote in the next municipal elections scheduled to be held in 2015; and

[Whereas, while the United States Government acknowledges the deep cultural and religious traditions and sentiments within Saudi society, without the right to vote on par with men, women in Saudi Arabia are denied not only a fundamental human right but also the ability to contribute fully to the economic development, modernization, and prosperity of their own country: Now, therefore, be it**]**

Whereas, on September 29, 2011, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is scheduled to hold its first nationwide municipal elections since 2005;

Whereas the Government of Saudi Arabia has announced—as it did in 2005—that women will be unable to run for elective office or vote;

Whereas, on March 28, 2011, president of the general committee for the election of municipal council members 'Abd al-Rahman Dahmash stated, ''We are not prepared for the participation of women in the municipal elections now.'';

Whereas the Foreign Minister of Saudi Arabia, Prince Saud Al Faisal, stated in an interview after the 2005 election that he assumed women would be allowed to vote in future elections, and that this would benefit the election process because women were ''more sensible voters than men'';

Whereas, on June 6, 2011, the Majlis Al-Shura Consultative Council adopted a resolution recommending that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Ministry of Rural and Municipal Affairs take the necessary measures to include female voters in future municipal elections;

Whereas the decision by the Government of Saudi Arabia to continue to disenfranchise women in the September 2011 municipal elections is inconsistent with a series of commitments made by the Government of Saudi Arabia;

Whereas, in January 2003, Saudi Arabia proposed to the League of Arab States the ''Covenant for Arab Reform,'' resulting in the adoption of the ''Tunis Declaration'' at the May 2004 Arab Summit, which declared, among other things, a ''firm determination'' to ''pursue reform and modernization'' by ''widening women's participation in the political, economic, social, cultural and educational fields'';

Whereas these declarations were reaffirmed at the Arab Summit in Algiers on March 23, 2005, and at the Riyadh Summit held in Saudi Arabia on March 28, 2007;

Whereas, in April 2009, Saudi Arabia ratified the Arab Charter on Human Rights, which states in article 24(3), ''Every citizen has the right. . . to stand for election or choose his representatives in free and impartial elections, in conditions of equality among all citizens that guarantee the free expression of his will.'';

Whereas, on June 10, 2009, the Government of Saudi Arabia accepted the majority of the recommendations put forward by the United Nations Human Rights Council's Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review including to ''[a]bolish all legislation, measures and practices that discriminate against women. . . In particular, to abolish legislation and practices which prevent women from participating fully in society on an equal basis with men,'' and to ''end the strict system of male guardianship and give full legal identity to Saudi women'';

Whereas the Government of Saudi Arabia has indicated that it is supportive of the human rights of women;

Whereas, in November 2010, Saudi Arabia was elected to the Executive Board of UN Women, emphasizing the commitment of the Government of Saudi Arabia to the rights of women;

Whereas 'Abd al-Rahman Dahmash, the president of the general committee for the election of municipal council members, has stated that Saudi women will be granted the right to vote in the next municipal elections scheduled to be held in 2015; and

Whereas, while the United States Government acknowledges the deep cultural and religious traditions and sentiments within Saudi society, without the right to vote on par with men, women in Saudi Arabia are denied not only a fundamental human right but also the ability to contribute fully to the economic development, modernization, and prosperity of their own country: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, **[**That the Senate—

[(1) calls on the Government of Saudi Arabia to allow women to participate, both as voters and candidates for elective office, in the September 2011 elections;

[(2) supports the women of Saudi Arabia as they endeavor to exercise their human rights; and

[(3) believes that it is in the interest of Saudi Arabia and all nations to permit women to run for office and vote in all elections.**]**

That the Senate—

(1) urges the Government of Saudi Arabia to allow women to fully participate, both as voters and candidates for elective office, in the September 2011 elections;

(2) supports the women of Saudi Arabia as they endeavor to exercise their human rights and participate equally in society; and

(3) believes that it is in the interest of Saudi Arabia and all nations to permit women to run for office, receive civic education, and vote in all elections.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. I ask unanimous consent the committee-reported substitute amendment be agreed to; the resolution, as amended, be agreed to; the committee-reported amendment to the preamble be agreed to; the preamble, as amended, be agreed to; the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate and any statements be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment in the nature of a substitute was agreed to.

The resolution (S. Res. 216), as amended, was agreed to.

The amendment to the preamble was agreed to.

The preamble, as amended, was agreed to.

The resolution, as amended, with its preamble, as amended, reads as follows:

S. RES. 216

Whereas, on September 29, 2011, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is scheduled to hold its first nationwide municipal elections since 2005;

Whereas the Government of Saudi Arabia has announced—as it did in 2005—that women will be unable to run for elective office or vote;

Whereas, on March 28, 2011, president of the general committee for the election of municipal council members 'Abd al-Rahman Dahmash stated, ''We are not prepared for the participation of women in the municipal elections now.'';

Whereas the Foreign Minister of Saudi Arabia, Prince Saud Al Faisal, stated in an interview after the 2005 election that he assumed women would be allowed to vote in future elections, and that this would benefit the election process because women were ''more sensible voters than men'';

Whereas, on June 6, 2011, the Majlis Al-Shura Consultative Council adopted a resolution recommending that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Ministry of Rural and Municipal Affairs take the necessary measures to include female voters in future municipal elections;

Whereas the decision by the Government of Saudi Arabia to continue to disenfranchise women in the September 2011 municipal elections is inconsistent with a series of commitments made by the Government of Saudi Arabia;

Whereas, in January 2003, Saudi Arabia proposed to the League of Arab States the

''Covenant for Arab Reform,'' resulting in the adoption of the ''Tunis Declaration'' at the May 2004 Arab Summit, which declared, among other things, a ''firm determination'' to ''pursue reform and modernization'' by ''widening women's participation in the political, economic, social, cultural and educational fields'';

Whereas these declarations were reaffirmed at the Arab Summit in Algiers on March 23, 2005, and at the Riyadh Summit held in Saudi Arabia on March 28, 2007;

Whereas, in April 2009, Saudi Arabia ratified the Arab Charter on Human Rights, which states in article 24(3), ''Every citizen has the right . . . to stand for election or choose his representatives in free and impartial elections, in conditions of equality among all citizens that guarantee the free expression of his will.'';

Whereas, on June 10, 2009, the Government of Saudi Arabia accepted the majority of the recommendations put forward by the United Nations Human Rights Council's Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review including to ''[a]bolish all legislation, measures and practices that discriminate against women . . . In particular, to abolish legislation and practices which prevent women from participating fully in society on an equal basis with men,'' and to ''end the strict system of male guardianship and give full legal identity to Saudi women'';

Whereas the Government of Saudi Arabia has indicated that it is supportive of the human rights of women;

Whereas, in November 2010, Saudi Arabia was elected to the Executive Board of UN Women, emphasizing the commitment of the Government of Saudi Arabia to the rights of women;

Whereas 'Abd al-Rahman Dahmash, the president of the general committee for the election of municipal council members, has stated that Saudi women will be granted the right to vote in the next municipal elections scheduled to be held in 2015; and

Whereas while the United States Government acknowledges the deep cultural and religious traditions and sentiments within Saudi society, without the right to vote on par with men, women in Saudi Arabia are denied not only a fundamental human right but also the ability to contribute fully to the economic development, modernization, and prosperity of their own country: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) urges the Government of Saudi Arabia to allow women to fully participate, both as voters and candidates for elective office, in the September 2011 elections;

(2) supports the women of Saudi Arabia as they endeavor to exercise their human rights and participate equally in society; and

(3) believes that it is in the interest of Saudi Arabia and all nations to permit women to run for office, receive civic education, and vote in all elections.

RESOLUTIONS SUBMITTED TODAY

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration en bloc of the following resolutions, which were submitted earlier today: S. Res. 242, S. Res. 243, S. Res. 244.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolutions en bloc.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent the resolutions be agreed to, the preambles be agreed to, the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table en bloc, without any intervening action or debate, and any statements be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolutions were agreed to.

The preambles were agreed to.

The resolutions, with their preambles, read as follows:

S. RES. 242

Supporting the goals and ideals of National Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month

Whereas ovarian cancer is the deadliest of all gynecologic cancers;

Whereas ovarian cancer is the 5th leading cause of cancer deaths among women in the United States;

Whereas almost 21,000 women will be diagnosed with ovarian cancer in 2011, and 15,000 will die from the disease;

Whereas these deaths are those of our mothers, sisters, daughters, family members, and community leaders;

Whereas the mortality rate for ovarian cancer has not significantly decreased since the ''War on Cancer'' was declared 40 years ago;

Whereas all women are at risk for ovarian cancer, and 90 percent of women diagnosed with ovarian cancer do not have a family history that puts them at a higher risk;

Whereas some women, such as those with a family history of breast or ovarian cancer, are at a higher risk for the disease;

Whereas the pap test is sensitive and specific to the early detection of cervical cancer, but not ovarian cancer;

Whereas there is currently no reliable early detection test for ovarian cancer;

Whereas many people are unaware that the symptoms of ovarian cancer often include bloating, pelvic or abdominal pain, difficulty eating or feeling full quickly, urinary symptoms, and several other symptoms that are easily confused with other diseases;

Whereas in June 2007, the first national consensus statement on ovarian cancer symptoms was developed to provide consistency in describing symptoms to make it easier for women to learn and remember the symptoms;

Whereas there are known methods to reduce the risk of ovarian cancer, including prophylactic surgery, oral contraceptives, and breast-feeding;

Whereas, due to the lack of a reliable early detection test, 75 percent of cases of ovarian cancer are detected at an advanced stage, making the overall 5-year survival rate only 45 percent;

Whereas there are factors that are known to reduce the risk for ovarian cancer and that play an important role in the prevention of the disease;

Whereas awareness of the symptoms of ovarian cancer by women and health care providers can lead to a quicker diagnosis;

Whereas, each year during the month of September, the Ovarian Cancer National Alliance and its partner members hold a number of events to increase public awareness of ovarian cancer; and

Whereas September 2011 should be designated as ''National Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month'' to increase public awareness of ovarian cancer: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate supports the goals and ideals of National Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month.

S. RES. 243

Promoting increased awareness, diagnosis, and treatment of atrial fibrillation to address the high morbidity and mortality rates and to prevent avoidable hospitalizations associated with the disease

Whereas atrial fibrillation is a cardiac condition that results when the usual coordinated electrical activity in the atria of the heart becomes disorganized and chaotic, hampering the ability of the atria to fill the ventricles with blood, and allowing blood to pool in the atria and form clots;

Whereas an estimated 2,500,000 people in the United States are living with atrial fibrillation, the most common ''serious'' heart rhythm abnormality that occurs in people older than 65 years of age;

Whereas atrial fibrillation is associated with an increased long-term risk of stroke, heart failure, and all-cause mortality, especially among women;

Whereas people older than 40 years of age have a 1-in-4 risk of developing atrial fibrillation in their lifetime;

Whereas an estimated 15 percent of strokes are the result of untreated atrial fibrillation, a condition that dramatically increases the risk of stroke to approximately 5 times more than the general population;

Whereas atrial fibrillation accounts for approximately 529,000 hospital discharges annually;

Whereas atrial fibrillation costs an estimated $3,600 per patient for a total cost burden in the United States of $15,700,000,000;

Whereas better patient and health care provider education is needed for the timely recognition of atrial fibrillation symptoms;

Whereas an electrocardiogram is an effective and risk-free screen for heart rhythm irregularities and can be part of a routine preventive exam;

Whereas there is a dearth of outcome performance measures that focus on the management of atrial fibrillation; and

Whereas evidence-based care guidelines improve patient outcomes and prevent unnecessary hospitalizations for individuals with undiagnosed atrial fibrillation and for patients once atrial fibrillation is detected: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That it is the sense of the Senate that the Secretary of Health and Human Services should work with leaders in the medical community to explore ways to improve medical research, screening and prevention methods, and surveillance efforts in order to prevent and appropriately manage atrial fibrillation, including by—

(1) advancing the development of process and outcome measures for the management of atrial fibrillation by national developers;

(2) facilitating the adoption of evidence-based guidelines by the medical community to improve patient outcomes;

(3) advancing atrial fibrillation research and education by—

(A) encouraging basic science research to determine the causes and optimal treatments for atrial fibrillation;

(B) exploring development of screening tools and protocols to determine the risk of developing atrial fibrillation; and

(C) enhancing current surveillance and tracking systems to include atrial fibrillation; and

(4) improving access to appropriate medical care for patients suffering from atrial fibrillation by encouraging education programs that promote collaboration among the Federal health agencies and that increase public and clinician awareness of atrial fibrillation, including risk assessment, screening, treatment, and appropriate clinical management.

S. RES. 244

Congratulating Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. for 100 years of service to communities throughout the United States and the world, and commending Omega Psi Phi for upholding its cardinal principles of manhood, scholarship, perseverance, and uplift

Whereas Omega Psi Phi is the first international fraternal organization to be founded on the campus of a historically black college;

Whereas Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. was founded at Howard University in Washington, District of Columbia, on November 17, 1911, by undergraduates Oscar James Cooper, M.D., Frank Coleman, Ph.D., and Edgar Amos Love, D.D., and their faculty advisor Ernest Everett Just, Ph.D.;

Whereas, on November 17, 2011, Omega Psi Phi will celebrate 100 years of service to communities throughout the United States and the world in many diverse fields of endeavor;

Whereas, in 2011, Omega Psi Phi has more than 700 chapters throughout the United States, Bermuda, the Bahamas, the Virgin Islands, South Korea, Japan, Liberia, Germany, and Kuwait;

Whereas Omega Psi Phi has maintained a commitment to the betterment of mankind, the enhancement of the community, and the enrichment of collegiate men through dedication to its cardinal principles of manhood, scholarship, perseverance, and uplift;

Whereas Omega Psi Phi chapters participate in activities that uplift their communities, including voter registration, illiteracy awareness, Habitat for Humanity, health awareness programs, and youth mentoring;

Whereas the men of Omega Psi Phi have distinguished themselves in the field of science, including Dr. Ernest Everett Just, an internationally known biologist, Dr. Charles Drew, who perfected the use of blood plasma, Dr. Ronald E. McNair, an astronaut and member of the flight team aboard the Space Shuttle Challenger, Charles Bolden, an astronaut and the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, and Dr. Fred Drew Gregory, an astronaut and graduate of the United States Air Force Academy;

Whereas the men of Omega Psi Phi have distinguished themselves in the field of sports, including Dr. Robert M. Screen, the tennis coach at Hampton University and the coach with the most wins in the history of the National Collegiate Athletic Association, Michael Jordan, who was inducted into the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame in 2009, Charlie Ward, the winner of the Heisman Trophy in 1993 and a former guard with the New York Knicks of the National Basketball Association, Dr. LeRoy Walker, a former president of the United States Olympic Committee, and Terrance Trammell, a world champion hurdler;

Whereas the men of Omega Psi Phi have distinguished themselves in the field of government, including William Hastie, the first Governor of the Virgin Islands, Lawrence Douglas Wilder, the first black Governor of Virginia, Togo West, a former Secretary of the Army, James E. Clyburn, a Member of the House of Representatives from South Carolina and the 26th Majority Whip of the House of Representatives, Jesse Jackson, Jr., a Member of the House of Representatives from Illinois, and Hank Johnson, a Member of the House of Representatives from Georgia;

Whereas the men of Omega Psi Phi have distinguished themselves in the field of the arts, including Langston Hughes, the poet laureate who excelled as a poet, playwright, novelist, lyricist, and humorist, and William ''Count'' Basie, an internationally known pianist, composer, arranger, and band leader; and

Whereas Omega Psi Phi will commemorate its history and promote its continued success at its centennial celebration to be held July 27 through July 31, 2011, in Washington, District of Columbia: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) congratulates Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. for 100 years of service to communities throughout the United States and the world; and

(2) commends Omega Psi Phi for upholding its cardinal principles of manhood, scholarship, perseverance, and uplift.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. HOEVEN. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

THE DEBT CEILING

Mr. HOEVEN. Mr. President, I rise once again to urge my colleagues to come together and address this debt ceiling to reduce our deficit and debt. We are at the 12th hour, and it is vitally important to the American people we move forward. I believe there is opportunity to do that. I think it is important we move forward in a way that makes sure we address the root of the problem. The problem is, we have a deficit and a debt that is out of control. As we work together to reach agreement on this very important debt ceiling issue, we need to be mindful that we have taken a big step forward in reducing the deficit and debt that our country faces.

Let's start by taking just a minute to look at the numbers. Today this country has total revenues coming into the Federal Government at about $2.2 trillion. At the same time, we have expenses of $3.7 trillion, leaving an annual deficit of more than $1.5 trillion. Our debt is now in the range of $14.5 trillion. It is hard to even imagine what $1 trillion is, let alone $14.5 trillion. We are borrowing 40 cents of every dollar we spend, and our debt is growing $4 billion a day—$4 billion a day. The unemployment is 9.2 percent, and the latest GDP growth came out for the second quarter for this year. It was an anemic 1.3 percent.

We need to get our economy growing. We need to get people back to work. We need to get people working, and at the same time we have to control our spending. It is time to act.

We are faced with two different pieces of legislation at this point. One is the Boehner plan, or the Budget Control Act of 2011, that the House will be voting on very soon, I believe. Also, there is another plan, the Reid plan, in the Senate. Although they have some similarities, as configured now they are different plans and different approaches.

One, very importantly, gets us on the road to recovery. The other one doesn't. Let's take just a minute to talk about each of those respective plans to make sure we understand them. As they vote on them in the House, and as we face those important votes this evening or tomorrow or, hopefully, very soon, we can understand the differences between these approaches so we can find a way to come together on an approach that we can pass in this Chamber and also in the House, and, of course, that truly moves our country forward.

Under the Boehner proposal there is $917 billion in savings that must be provided in order to raise the debt ceiling, and that allows the first tranche of increase in the debt ceiling in the amount of $900 billion. Those savings have to be identified first—in fact, more than the amount of the debt ceiling increase.

Then the second tranche to increase the debt ceiling beyond that $900 billion, an additional $1.8 trillion in savings, has to be identified and provided—$1.8 trillion in savings. That is $2.7 trillion in savings to get this country back on the road to financial health in order to raise the debt ceiling. That is fundamentally important because that is the fundamental issue. It doesn't fully solve the problem, but it gets us on the right path, and we have to get going on the right path.

The second tranche of savings is done by a committee of six Members of the Senate—three Democrat, three Republican—and six Members of the House—three Republican, three Democrat—in a bipartisan committee. I think that committee offers us real opportunity. Here is why: The committee has to come up with recommendations for real savings by November. It is bipartisan, and it is a straight up-or-down vote in the House or the Senate to put those savings in place, and those savings must be identified before we raise the debt ceiling further. So it is something we have to do.

Let's think about that committee for a minute. That is a committee that can bring in the ideas of the Gang of 6. That is the committee that can bring in the Simpson-Bowles concept. That is a committee that can bring in tax reform. That is a committee that can bring in entitlement reform. These are the things we are going to need to address to get this economy going and get control of our spending. I know we have put together many pieces of legislation that have been bipartisan and have been very important for this country, and I think this committee truly offers us that opportunity. I hope it is something we in the Senate can find a way to come together on and that we can get our colleagues in the House to join us.

In my view, I do think we need to engage in tax reform. I think the right kind of progrowth tax reform—some of the concepts brought forth by the Gang of 6—can truly help us to stimulate

economic activity. I think the real way to get revenue for this country is through economic growth—not higher taxes, through economic growth. Expand the pie, the rising tide that lifts all boats.

If we can engage in tax reform to stimulate economic growth, we reduce that unemployment rate by more than 9 percent. That is good for every American, but it is also the way we create revenue to get us out of this deficit and debt at the same time that we control spending.

I absolutely believe it can work, and I think that we need to convince our Members we need to come together and make it happen.

The Boehner proposal also includes a balanced budget amendment, and I know that has been an issue of great debate in this Senate. I believe we need a balanced budget amendment. I have said it many times before. I come from a background in my State, as a Governor, where we balanced our budget every year. There are 49 States that either have a constitutional or statutory priority to balance their budget. We need that fiscal discipline in Washington, DC. I think we need it to make sure we don't get ourselves into this situation in the future years for ourselves or for these young people we see here today with us.

When we compare the approach of the Boehner plan, it is different from the Reid plan. It is important that we understand that. The Reid plan does provide that we identify $900 billion in savings, but that provides that once we have identified that $900 billion in savings, we raise the debt ceiling by $2.7 trillion, unlike the Boehner proposal where we are finding significantly more savings than we are increasing the debt ceiling. This is just the opposite. We are increasing the debt ceiling $2.7 trillion but only requiring $900 billion in savings. That doesn't get at the root of the problem. That continues the underlying problem of too much spending and too much debt. Like the Boehner proposal, the Reid proposal does provide for a committee. That is important. That is good. Unlike the Boehner proposal, it doesn't require that committee bring back the savings and that we put those savings in place before the debt ceiling is increased. It doesn't have the teeth we need to make sure we get this job done for the American people, and that is a problem. They are different approaches, and it doesn't include a balanced budget amendment.

There has been talk that we must work together to find a way to bridge the gap and the differences, and I think that is true. We have to find ways to come together. Time is growing short. We need to get it done now. I think it is the approach identified in the Boehner plan that we need to take. We need to get our colleagues in this Chamber to join with us to do it. It is the only piece of legislation that can pass the House, but, more importantly, it is a big step forward. It is a big step in the right direction for our country.

I thank the Chair.

I note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. GRASSLEY. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. GRASSLEY. I would ask to speak for 20 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, while we are waiting for people to decide what the rest of us can vote on in regard to cutting down on the national debt and what we can do about being able to continue our government to function tomorrow, all of this is about uncertainty, and we read about the uncertainty every day in the newspaper because people don't know what we are going to do. That then causes businesses, small and large, not to hire, and it seems as though they have a lot of cash they would like to spend and invest wisely. Some of that would surely create a lot of jobs and get our economy moving. Of course, the situation today where the revision of the quarterly economic growth has come out even less for the second quarter than we anticipated, it brings a lot of things to mind as to what we can do to create jobs. With 9.2 percent unemployment, that has to be our concentration.

I would like to advise my colleagues that a lot can be learned from history. We must change course if we want to change jobs. The 2007 to 2009 recession was officially over during the year 2009, and here we are still with 9.2 percent unemployment.

So this month happens to be the second-year anniversary of the official start of the recovery. But what kind of a recovery, with 9.2 percent unemployment? It seems to be an unofficial recovery; in other words, a recovery in name only. We have had about 2.8 percent annual growth average per year of that 2 years; and, of course, I just said the growth of the last quarter was revised downward. When we compare what we have during this recovery from what was a very bad recession with the recovery of the last deep recession, which was in 1981 and 1982, we compare this 2.8-percent growth now with a 7.1-percent growth for the recovery after the 1981 to 1982 deep recession—of course, we can go even further because, as I said, compare 7.1-percent growth after the deep recession of 1981 and 1982 with the 2.8-percent average growth so far during this 2 years of recovery, which has now slowed down to probably 1.5-percent growth. So statistically and actually, and for the people who are unemployed, recovery has, in fact, been very stalled since its very beginning 2 years ago, as we celebrate the 2-year anniversary of a so-called recovery, and still with 9.2-percent unemployment.

I say we must change course. If we want to go back to comparing now with the 1983 and 1984 period of time when we had a much more vibrant recovery, people tend to blame the weak economy today, during this recovery, on high personal savings rates. But, in fact, people are spending more now than they did in the 1983 to 1984 recovery because, today, the savings rate is about 5.6 percent, and in 1983 to 1984, the other recovery, it was 9.4 percent. So we can't say people aren't spending enough is why we don't have a recovery.

Then they tend to blame it on weak housing, but if we look at the difference between now and 1983 and 1984, that doesn't seem to be a very good reason.

Net exports are less now than they were in the 1983 and 1984 recovery. The growth of consumption and the growth of investment is 60 to 70 percent less now than it was in the 1983 and 1984 recovery.

So what can we learn from this history that made the recovery of 1983 and 1984, the last great recession we had compared to this recession, better than the recovery now? Why have we stalled today when we didn't stall in a comparable period of recovery after the last great recession? If the above doesn't explain it, then what does explain it? Why, then, was the recovery of the 1980s so much more vigorous than the recovery now if we are, in fact, in a recovery—and people would doubt that.

That is the question where I think we can learn from history. Political leaders ought to learn from the lessons of the past. There are a lot of lessons that can be learned going back over a long period of time: mistakes made in the Great Depression of the 1930s, or let's say the gigantic inflation of the 1970s. The 1930s and the 1970s were tough decades, but during those tough times and remembering them—and maybe other tough times as well; I am just picking out the Great Depression of the 1930s and the gigantic inflation of the 1970s—but these lessons learned by political leaders in the 1980s and 1990s led us to very unprecedented growth during those two decades when 44 million jobs were created. If 44 million jobs were created during those decades, why do we have such small job growth now? I think the answer is that we went back to basic principles that this country was founded upon: political and economic freedom. The principles that dominated the decades of the 1980s and 1990s when 44 million new jobs were created aligned with the principles that are the foundation of our country: political and economic freedoms. Those were limited government, incentives to produce, incentives for entrepreneurship, emphasis upon private markets, and rule of law. These tended to be in ascendancy during the decades of the 1980s and 1990s and it led to monetary

policy that brought about price stability. It brought about lower marginal tax rates. Regulations encouraged competition and innovation. We had welfare decisions that were devolved down to the States where they could be handled more efficiently, and we had spending restraints that led to balanced budgets during the late 1990s, paying down $568 billion on the national debt.

So there was great hope that what was done during the 1980s and 1990s that brought about 44 million new jobs would extend into the 21st century and that we would continue to bring market-based principles into Social Security and other entitlement programs, bring market-based principles into education, bring market-based principles into health care. Because if these market-based principles worked during the 1980s and 1990s of the last century and created 44 million jobs, the success of that ought to carry over into other government policies so we could continue down the road of creating jobs instead of stagnating as we have now.

But sometime after 2000—and that doesn't mean just after President Obama was elected, because there was a Republican President before that—but sometime after 2000 both political parties compromised—and I want to emphasize both political parties—on the principles of limited government. They did it for a multitude of reasons. Some of these reasons were that they thought government ought to control business cycles to a greater extent, that we ought to increase home ownership, and we know how that worked out: We ought to have a policy that people ought to be able to buy a house they can't afford. Now we know that is a stupid policy, but at the time we didn't know it; also the prescription drug issue, as an example, although there were some market-based principles put into that.

But, anyway, there were a multitude of reasons why we ought to compromise the principle of limited government, but it ended up more interventionist and it made the Federal Government more powerful, and we ended up with unintended consequences: the financial crisis we still remember and we are still trying to get out of; the recession, which I have already talked about, of 2007 and 2009, of which we are celebrating 2 years of supposed recovery that isn't real recovery; we have had a great amount of expanded government debt; and now we have this nonexistent recovery with 9.2-percent unemployment.

I think, looking back, how did this happen? I was here when it happened. It reminds me of the story about—well, I guess I ought to say it and then give the story. It happened so slowly, and all of these things added up to be bad to bring about the great recession, and now not a very good recovery, because each one of them happened independent of the other and without one relating to the other. So it reminds me of the story of the frog and the water. If you throw a frog in boiling water, he will jump out and live. If you put a frog in cold water and gradually heat it up to a boil, it is going to accommodate the changes and die. So these policies slowly developed and we got into the situation we are in right now. I will say it again: Change came so slowly, it crept up on us.

Then, of course, what happened? The crash came. We had this Federal intervention in housing. I stated it before: Buy a house even if you can't afford it. We eliminated a lot of Federal Reserve accountability, particularly when they didn't have to report on monetary growth on a regular basis as they did before. Then we had these countercyclical fiscal policies that failed. We had, during periods of growth in our economy, unrealistically low interest rates by the Federal Reserve action. Then, of course, we had government bailouts. This has led to things all getting worse since 2009. We had more intervention. We had loose monetary policies, QE1 and QE2, of the Federal Reserve. We had a stimulus plan that was supposed to keep unemployment under 8 percent, and since it was passed in February of 2009, unemployment has never been below that. It has always been above 8 percent. It is 9.2 percent now, but it was even over 10 percent. We had the Cash For Clunkers Program. We had the first-time homeowners tax credit. All of these together have not brought recovery, even though the economists tell us we are in the second-year anniversary of a recovery.

What did they bring that has stalled the recovery? What they have brought is more uncertainty, and more uncertainty is bad for the economy because, as I said when I started out, there is plenty of money out there in corporations. There are plenty of small businesses that want to hire, but they do not know what we in this Congress are going to do to them so they are not moving forward. Consequently, the unemployment rate is not going down. And right this very hour, as people are trying to find something that can pass this body and the other body so we do not have default, it even brings more uncertainty, and you read it in the morning paper, this morning's paper. So you have to come to the conclusion, with all of this intervention bringing about all this uncertainty, that big government is not a very good manager.

Then, as I said, this did not happen just since President Obama became President. This happened over the period of time of this decade and maybe even going back a little bit into the other decade. But just since President Obama was elected, we have added yet more complex intervention: the health care reform bill, Dodd-Frank, the Consumer Protection Bureau.

The President this very week has been talking about increasing taxes, only he does not use the word ''taxes.'' We have to have more ''revenue'' or we have to have ''balance.'' But it still adds up, all of these things out there, that government does not know what all these rules and regulations—do you realize that in health care reform, there are 1,690 delegations of authority to the Secretaries to write regulations? And they are not going to be written for years. But that brings so much uncertainty.

So we have more uncertainty, plus unintended consequences that come out of these, like right now, rising health care costs because of the bill, deterring new investments because of Dodd-Frank and deterring risk-taking. Risk-taking is what entrepreneurship is all about, and entrepreneurship is mostly related to small businesses, where 70 percent of the new jobs are created.

Government intervention is the problem because government intervention or government not making decisions all adds up to more uncertainty. So I think the solution is to unwind government intervention in all these regulations of EPA and all the other government agencies. Every day in the newspaper, you see some new regulation coming out. If you want to get people to hire, you ought to just shut down the printing presses for a while.

One sure thing though: We can thank God we have run out of monetary and fiscal ammunition because it has not worked anyway. We are going to probably have a great deal of inflation because of what the Fed did. We have no more spending we can do because all the spending we have done has not done the good it was supposed to do. We need no more greater debt, and we do not have any more zero interest rates to put out there because that is practically where it is right now.

Instead, what we need is spending controls, and what we need is free market principles. Historical evidence shows what works and what does not. I said what works and what does not is shown from the lessons learned from the depression of the 1980s and the gigantic inflation decade of the 1970s. So people in the 1980s and 1990s changed to policies that were market-oriented, and we created 44 million new jobs. So we ought to be learning from history. Historical evidence shows what works and what does not. And right this day, in this town, interventionists in the market control today. We need to restore less intervention, the policies of the 1980s and the 1990s to restore jobs. Remember, it created 44 million new jobs.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. WHITEHOUSE). The Senator from Indiana.

Mr. COATS. Mr. President, are we under a time agreement?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has 10 minutes.

Mr. COATS. Mr. President, for several months now, I have been on the floor speaking, urging both Republicans and Democrats to listen to

Americans and take this unique opportunity we have before us to do what is right for our country's future.

Mr. President, 2010 sent an unmistakable message. Americans do not want us to spend beyond our means, more than we take in. They do not want higher taxes. They do not want budget gimmicks, and more smoke and mirrors. They want real, serious solutions to address our real, serious problem. We have worked several months to try to do that.

As I talk to Hoosiers all across the State of Indiana—businesspeople, retired workers, young people, and others—I sense the fear, frustration, disappointment and even anger in a growing number of people that started in 2010 and is accumulating as we continue to careen toward a potential budget default without a sensible or serious plan in place to get us back on the right track toward fiscal health.

American families are scared. They are scared, and they are frustrated, and I think rightfully so. They are worried about paying next month's bills. They are worried about getting a loan to buy a house or credit to help support a business. They are worried about being able to pay for their kids to go to school in the fall, just a few weeks away.

Our seniors are scared. Throughout this debate, they have been used over and over again as a political football for scare tactics. My phones are ringing off the hook with seniors basically saying: We have been told you are going to take away all of our benefits, but that is absolutely not true. We are trying to save those benefits. We are trying to take the reasonable measures necessary so those benefits for Social Security and Medicare are there for seniors in the future.

American businesses are frustrated. They are sick and tired of Washington's inability to act. The Washington Post reported this week that ''business leaders are growing exasperated with Washington. And they say dysfunction in the political system is holding them back from hiring and investing.'' The markets are jittery. We have seen a pretty good drop in the markets just this week. The dollar fell to a new low against the yen, and the yen is not doing that well. We continue to see stocks tumble.

So many have asked: Why haven't we acted yet? What are we waiting for? Why haven't we passed a bill to avoid this default? Why are we in this period of uncertainty, taking it right up as the clock ticks toward August 2?

While the President refused to even put forth a plan, House Republicans have been working to pass legislation. They passed the Cut, Cap, and Balance Act. They brought it here to the Senate floor. We were not even allowed to debate or vote on it or have amendments. For those who do not like it, there would have been an opportunity to improve it, there would have been an opportunity at least to have a ''yes'' or ''no'' vote on whether this was the path to where we needed to go. But we did not have that opportunity.

Now, even as I speak, we are moving toward another vote in the House—something similar coming forward tonight by Speaker BOEHNER and Republicans in the House. Unfortunately, it looks as if we are going to be blocked from debating that bill. There will be yet another motion to table, to deny the opportunity to move forward.

We know there are things going on behind the scenes, but this does not provide any assurance to the American people that whatever is being debated and put together is going to solve the problem. We are days away from exhausting our financial options, and we do not even allow those bills that do come before us to be debated.

Now, we have few options left in these few days remaining:

We can, No. 1, default and watch our U.S. economy be downgraded, interest rates rise, and the confidence in the United States as a place to safely invest your money deteriorate all around the world. This would be the first default in American history, except for a technical glitch some many years back.

The second option before us is we can pass legislation that is below where we need to be and where we ought to be, but we were not able to get there. Although it would avoid a default, it might not avoid a downgrade of our credit because it has not matched and met the minimal requirements of what most who have analyzed this situation have understood we need to undertake.

The third option—which has not been talked about too much, but several of us have been discussing this possibility—is to pass a short-term extension that will avert a default and allow us to continue to work for a serious fix that gets to those minimal measures necessary to make progress toward fiscal health.

That first option is not a viable option. Default has consequences we cannot begin to understand, and eventually those bills which the American people and their congressional representatives have put in place have to be paid because those promises were made.

The second measure—it may be what we are faced with, perhaps the best of the worst; is passing subpar legislation that begins the process of addressing it but is woefully short of really what needs to be done.

The third option, the short-term extension, is a way we can avoid the default and we can achieve cuts for the amount of necessary borrowing authority to get us through this period of time, whether it is 2 weeks or 4 weeks or 8 weeks. This short-term period of time would allow us to make yet one last-ditch chance to try to bring forward something that will avoid default but also put us on the road to fiscal health.

So I am urging my colleagues, if we cannot come up with something better than what we have, to give that serious consideration. What are those minimum levels? A $4 trillion cut over 10 years has been told to us over and over and over by anyone who has analyzed this situation as the minimal amount necessary to go forward. Others suggest quite a bit more. The Gang of 6 was working on, I believe, at least $4 trillion cut over that period of time. Simpson-Bowles provided for $4 trillion or more. Senator COBURN has brought out a plan, and others have suggested we need to be in the $9 trillion to $10 trillion range. But everyone has said you need to at least be at $4 trillion, and we are short of that, considerably.

We are also short of having serious commitment, plan and timetable to address the structural unraveling of our mandatory entitlement systems—Medicare and Medicaid and Social Security. This has been the political football kicked around, scaring seniors and others by saying Congress is here to try to take away their benefits, when actually we are here trying to save those benefits. But without structural changes in those programs, it is driving this deficit to a point which will be unsustainable in terms of providing benefits for those who need them.

We are going forward without a commitment to balance our budget, which I think is absolutely, ultimately the only thing that will keep us from doing binge spending here. The tendency is to want to say yes to everybody and no to nobody. We need something that will force us to be faithful to the Constitution of the United States, to have a balanced budget and not spend more than we take in.

Also, we all know we need an overhaul of our complicated Tax Code to make American businesses more competitive and to spur economic growth. After all is said and done, what this is really about is getting our fiscal house in order, getting our economy moving again—there was a terrible number this morning about the virtually small, almost nothing, lack of growth in the first and second quarters of this year—but getting the economy growing again so we can get people back to work.

That is what it is all about. We are not here to have Draconian cuts just for the fun of it. We are here to get our budget in balance so we can get our economy moving so people can have viable jobs for the future, so those kids coming out of college have a place to go, so the 55-year-old worker who is laid off and may never get back to work can get back to work, and so those who are seeking meaningful employment to pay their mortgage and raise a family and buy a home and send their kids to school will have the ability to do that. That is what it is all about. We are not doing this just for the fun of it. It is no fun to tell people we have to cut this and cut that and sacrifice here and sacrifice there. But we have put ourselves in the position where we have no other choice. To spend all of this time here, 7 months of diligent work by a lot of people——

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's 10 minutes is up.

Mr. COATS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent for 1 more minute.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. COATS. Thank you, Mr. President. And I thank my colleague, also, for her patience.

To send us here, after 7 months, and come up with something that is short of the minimum, that continues the uncertainty—are they going to be able to pull it together with this two-stage process and gathering Senators and Congressman together to put a plan together that we have not been able to do in the first 7 months but we will do it in the next 5 months? A lot of people have some real problems with that.

I want to close by saying we cannot give up on the process of getting America back to fiscal health. We have to keep working. I have proposed a way here to try to do something better than what we are going to be faced with in doing in order to avoid this default.

I am hoping we have the opportunity to do that. If not, I am hoping we have the commitment to go forward and do what we all know we need to do for the sake of the future of this country—the country we love and want to be prosperous for the sake of the future of American families and their children.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I rise during this very critical debate about the deficit crisis to talk for a few minutes about what this means for Michigan and for the families and the businesses I represent. I grew up in a small northern town of Clare, MI, where my family ran the automobile dealership, the Oldsmobile dealership, and my mom was a nurse at the local hospital.

My first job was washing the cars on the car lot. It was a time when people believed in America and the full faith and credit of America. I cannot imagine—I cannot imagine—my parents and my grandparents ever believing it would be possible for America to default on its obligations.

But here we are today, and that is a very real possibility. It is outrageous because it does not have to be this way. We have been through a lot in Michigan. I know you know that, Mr. President. We have had more people out of work than any other State in this recession. In fact, we have been hit harder, longer, deeper than any other State. We took the brunt of the recession, and people are now just starting to get back on their feet. They are the lucky ones.

When people in Washington talk about this deficit crisis as though it is just another political game, it is not a game. It is not a game to the families I represent. It is not a game to seniors I represent. It is not a game to the small businesses or to the manufacturers that have worked very hard to turn things around and move forward in our State. It is not a game to the people who are worried about what is going to happen on Tuesday if we cannot come together and create a solution, which we absolutely have to do.

There are nearly 2 million people in Michigan, senior citizens and people with disabilities, who have earned their Social Security benefits and might not receive them next week. We have 1.6 million seniors, people such as my mom, who may not be able to see their doctor and use their Medicare next week.

Michigan has 700,000 veterans, men and women who have bravely served our country, and they expect us to keep our promise to them as a country. Those are the people I am thinking about today as we are trying to find a bipartisan compromise.

We have to solve this problem and we need to get it done now and there is no reason that cannot happen. I am hearing from small business owners. I have been on the phone today talking to small business owners, the people whom we need in Michigan to turn the economy around. They are doing everything they can to grow their companies and to create jobs. But now they need customers, and they have customers who are saying they are afraid to make a purchase, they are holding onto their dollars, they are afraid to buy a house or furniture.

Today, I talked to friend of mine in northern Michigan, a prominent auto dealer, who indicated he has people who normally come in every 3 years and buy a new car, and they are just sitting because they do not know what is going to happen. They do not know what is going to happen in the economy. They do not know what is going to happen to them and their families and they are waiting. They are waiting for us. They are waiting for Washington to get its act together and to solve this problem and to move on to the other challenges in front of us, particularly to focus on jobs.

Our recovery has already taken hits. We saw that in the economic numbers that came out this morning. Families from Michigan have already taken the one-two punch of higher food prices, higher gas prices, and now we have people talking seriously about letting the country default which will lead to higher interest rates for people trying to raise their families, for small businesses trying to hire new employees.

The last thing they need—that anybody needs—is higher interest rates. A default would cripple the ability of our companies to create jobs, and it is the people who are already hurting the most, the middle-class working families, who will pay the biggest price, once again. That is wrong.

Worst of all, that scenario would be entirely self-inflicted by people on both ends of this building who are not willing to come together and work together on a bipartisan basis to resolve this. There is absolutely no reason why this country needs to default on its obligations. There is no reason.

I am hearing from seniors in Michigan who are scared that they might not get their Social Security checks next week. They are living check to check—benefits they have worked their whole lives to earn, and it is absolutely ridiculous they would have to worry about that in the greatest country in the world and all because people in Washington cannot seem to sit down and work this out.

For many seniors in Michigan, that is all they have to live on. That is all they have to pay their rent, to buy groceries, to pay for their medicine. They are worried about how they are going to live if this country goes into default.

I am hearing from veterans in Michigan, many of whom were left disabled after their service, who are angry, and rightly so, that the country they fought for might default on their payments for the first time.

I am hearing from young people who are worried about their future and the future of their generation if Congress allows the full faith and credit of the United States to come into question.

We all know it is critical to be able to cut the deficit. We also need to grow the economy. We need a full, balanced package. But we understand the critical nature and the importance of cutting this deficit that has been allowed to accumulate over the last decade. We have already cut spending. We will cut more.

The bipartisan plan that will soon come before us, and I wish to thank Senator REID for his leadership in bringing this forward and working so diligently and our colleagues across the aisle who have been working in the Senate to create a bipartisan plan. But the plan that will be before us cuts spending by nearly $2.5 trillion, and it does even more. It creates a second step that is absolutely critical if we are going to tackle the rest of the story, the rest of the country's challenges so we can create a truly balanced approach to eliminating the deficit.

People in Michigan understand that to do that, that includes cutting the special subsidies and other special interest spending through the Tax Code and creating a fairer Tax Code, so that reducing our deficit is not, once again, put on the backs of middle-class families and senior citizens who have already paid a heavy price.

This has to be balanced, long term, fair, to solve the problem and allow us to grow the economy and create jobs. I so appreciate and have worked very hard to make sure the plan in front of us protects and maintains Medicare and Social Security. This has been a top priority for our majority.

The plan Senator REID will be offering does that. Most important, the Senate plan creates certainty for the economy and the markets until 2012. People in Michigan do not want us having this debate every month. They certainly do not want us having this over

and over and over again and we know because we have heard that the plan which will come to a vote in the House, unfortunately, will not have bipartisan support, does not solve the problem, does not stop us from being downgraded in our credit rating, does not put us in a situation for long-term problem solving.

It keeps us stuck in the mud for months over and over again by only addressing the debt ceiling for 4 months or 6 months. We will be right back here again stuck when we need to be able to solve this and move on and focus on growing our economy so businesses can create jobs. People in Michigan have had enough. I have had enough. They have had enough.

One man called my office earlier today. He said: I do not want to relive this nightmare in a few months. I could not agree with him more. We cannot be in a situation where we are not creating economic certainty, solving this problem, and then moving forward as a country in a global economy. We have a lot of work to do to be able to compete around the world and make sure our businesses are creating jobs here at home.

Families and small businesses in Michigan have been through enough. It is time to get this done. We have to do it together. It is about working together. It is about creating a bipartisan plan, and it is time to get that done. I know my colleagues in the Senate on both sides of the aisle know the seriousness of this situation. I certainly know our leader does, and I am grateful for his persistence and focus in bringing people together to solve this.

We have a serious debt crisis that we can and must solve, and the House must join us in a bipartisan solution. We also have a jobs crisis in our country. We need to resolve the current impasse and then focus like a laser on growing our economy so companies can create jobs, so we can get out of debt, and we can stay out of debt.

I would strongly urge my colleagues, my colleagues on the other side of the aisle in this Chamber, to continue to work together to find a solution, to come together, to get this done in the Senate. I would urge my colleagues, on behalf of the hard-working men and women of the State of Michigan, it is time to come together to get this done. We know what needs to be done. We know it has to be bipartisan, and we know we have to work together. People in Michigan are saying enough is enough. It is time to get this done.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that morning business be extended until 6:45 p.m. today, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, and that at 6:45 I be recognized.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Utah is recognized.

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be permitted to give my full speech.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection? Without objection, it is so ordered.

THE DEBT CEILING

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, according to President Obama and Treasury Secretary Geithner, the Federal government will default on its obligations in 5 days, on August 2, 2011.

It is clear that some Democrats, including President Obama, want to use this fiscal crisis to raise taxes.

Under the guise of closing loopholes, the administration wants to set the stage for tax increases to finance historic levels of government spending.

When this President came into office, he saw himself as the second coming of Franklin Roosevelt. He was going to finish the work that LBJ was unable to complete. And a fawning media was happy to encourage his grandiose vision for national economic reordering.

I get a big kick out of this ''Time'' magazine article entitled ''The New New Deal.''

Using the financial crisis of 2008 and 2009, he was going to transform the United States into a European-style social democracy.

Businesses, and the individuals who start them, would no longer be free entities with property rights. They would be arms of the state that exist for the purpose of funding ever expanding welfare programs.

Taxation would no longer be a necessary evil, with citizens and businesses recognizing a legal duty to pay what was owed, but understanding that they were ceding their property rights to the government to provide for certain public goods.

Instead, businesses and taxpaying citizens would be obligated to share their wealth with the state.

Because the progressives running the administration do not believe in natural rights to liberty and property because they think everything a family or business makes is in fact due only to the largesse of the state paying taxes is no longer something that must be done, but something that people should want to do.

They owe it to the government to pay taxes, since that money is not really theirs anyway. In this new progressive political community that the President hopes to create, taxation becomes shared sacrifice, and taxpayers become gleeful participants in ''spreading the wealth around,'' as the President once put it.

But the President and his party have hit a brick wall. The spending part was easy. The taxing part is hard.

For all of the talk about how Republicans are divided on the issue of raising the debt ceiling, you only have to scratch the surface to see the deep divisions among Democrats.

The reason that the President has offered up no plan to reduce spending, and the reason Democrats have not passed a budget in over 800 days, is because they are badly divided.

They all want the massive levels of new spending that the President pushed through in his stimulus and ObamaCare. But not all want to pay for it.

They all want to maintain existing levels of entitlement spending. But not all want to raise the taxes necessary to pay for it.

They know that some of their constituents like all this spending, but they know that the vast majority of Americans reject the President's funding of his leviathan state through higher taxes.

So they do nothing.

The President has no plan.

I want to repeat that again.

The President has no plan.

Maybe if we shout it from the rooftops, the media will start to take notice.

The President has no plan. And Senate Democrats don't either; certainly not one that addresses our current fiscal crisis.

The critical issue we face is more than imminent default on our obligations. That is unlikely to happen. It certainly should not happen. In my opinion, it will only happen if the President wants it to happen. On Wednesday, I asked the Financial Stability Oversight Council, which is chaired by Secretary Geithner, to provide me and the rest of this institution with an assessment of the cash position of the United States. As Congress considers options for raising the debt ceiling, it needs to know precisely how Treasury plans to pay its bills, and when it is going to fall short of cash to do so.

I asked that the Secretary respond to this reasonable request by yesterday afternoon. The Secretary chose not to respond. I want to be clear that this unresponsiveness by his Treasury Secretary is unacceptable. President Obama needs to understand that this failure to provide the Senate with critical information is not tolerable and will not be forgotten.

Still, I am confident that the Nation will get through this immediate crisis, and there will be no default. But that is only part of the problem. The real issue remains. The United States cannot support the level of spending President Obama has given us and that Democrats from the New Deal onward have bequeathed to the Nation in the form of ever expanding entitlement spending programs.

That is the real issue. And the majority leader's proposal does not address this, any more than the President's White House bromides about a balanced solution address it.

The real threat to this Nation is not the threat of a downgrade due to default.

The real long-term threat is a downgrade of the Nation's credit rating because President Obama has written checks that this country can't cash.

The real threat is that interest rates will go up for businesses, families, students, homeowners and anyone who has to borrow money. The economic ramifications of a downgrade threaten to bowl over our fragile economy. Job creation remains weak. Annualized growth in real inflation-adjusted GDP was only 1.3 percent in the second quarter. This follows on the heels of .4 percent growth in the first quarter.

Along with many others, I have said that if we do not get our spending under control, we are on a glide path to Greece and other Eurozone countries whose credit ratings are destroyed and whose bonds have junk status. Those countries would not have solved their problems by allowing the government to borrow more. Their only way out was to reduce the size of their welfare states.

Yet this is what the President, and the Treasury Secretary, and congressional Democrats are suggesting as a solution. They would have you believe that everything will be set right if only we give the President the legal authority to borrow an additional $2.7 trillion.

Americans are not buying this snake oil. I know that Utahns are not buying it. They understand that our nation's fiscal problem is spending. Giving the President more power to borrow more money is not going to fix that problem. Reducing spending is going to fix that problem.

The numbers could not be more clear.

As we can see, here are the Federal taxes and spending as a percentage of GDP. The red line is the spending line. We can see it is out of control in the 2012 Obama budget. The blue line is the average of what it has been in the past. We can see it is tremendously below where the President's budget is taking us.

Federal spending, as a share of our economy is trending at a pace 15 to 20 percent greater than its historical average of 20.6 percent of GDP. If we leave in place this year's level of taxation, including the marginal rate relief of the 2001 and 2003 tax cuts, and patch the alternative minimum tax—or AMT—the Federal tax take will equal or exceed its historic share of the economy.

Liberals suggest that the deficit and debt must be addressed through tax increases.

This is either deliberately misleading or sadly delusional.

Maybe we have found the truly shovel-ready policies of my friends on the other side, and they smell like a freshly fertilized farmer's field. Or maybe my friends on the other side simply refuse to come to grips with reality. But sticking their heads in the sand is not an option here. The markets, and the American people, understand the nature of our crisis.

Non-defense discretionary spending is at historic levels. And our entitlement programs are headed for bankruptcy. This fiscal year we have a projected budget deficit of $1.5 trillion.

We have a debt of over $14.3 trillion.

President Obama's budget assumes $13 trillion in new debts. This spending needs to be brought to heel. But the proposal of the majority leader does not get the job done.

It allows for the largest debt ceiling increase in history.

This makes sense. President Obama has given us the largest deficits in our history, and his borrowing needs are historic as well.

To pay for his political science experiment to turn the United States into Sweden, he earlier required a $1.9 trillion debt limit increase. That was the largest in the Nation's history.

But now he is coming back for another $2.7 trillion.

Conservatives understand that this is not sustainable. It is one thing to raise the debt limit. It is another thing to do so without reforms that would keep us from getting into a fiscal crisis of this magnitude again. That is why I, and many others in Congress, pledged to vote against a debt ceiling increase prior to the institution of immediate spending cuts and spending caps, and sending a strong balanced budget amendment with taxpayer protections to the States for ratification.

To be clear, that commitment to cut, cap, balance passed the House with bipartisan support. The Senate could have taken up that bill last week, but Democrats chose to table it rather than debate it. And the President chose to tell us what he did not support rather than what he does support.

Any increase in the debt limit needs to be accompanied by serious spending reductions, but the bill of the majority leader does not get us there. All it does is provide President Obama with an opportunity to borrow more money to pay for more spending.

The President would get a $2.7 trillion debt limit increase but less than $1 trillion in cuts.

And most of those cuts are gimmicks. They assume savings from war spending that the President has not requested and that is unlikely to materialize.

It does not include a balanced budget amendment. And most importantly from my perspective, it assumes a massive tax increase in 2013 by allowing the 2001 and 2003 tax relief to expire, allowing the AMT to hit middle-class taxpayers, and allowing for increases in estate taxes that are a small business and job killer.

You won't see that though in the talking points. They bury the breadth of that tax hit in their baseline assumptions.

But we know that President Obama and his liberal allies are planning massive tax increases on the middle class. While their rhetoric suggests that we can fix out debt crisis just by raising taxes on the rich and closing loopholes, the reality is that they are setting the stage to roll back tax expenditures.

And cutting back tax expenditures will be a tax increase on middle income itemizers.

When Democrats talk about tax expenditures, they are talking about your ability to purchase a home, or save for retirement, or give to your church, or put away money for your children's education.

That is where the money is. It is not in bonus depreciation for corporate jets. And it is not in tax benefits for energy companies. It is not in changing the treatment of carried interest for private equity companies. It is not in repealing the deduction for mortgage interest related to yachts used as second homes.

This issue of tax expenditures is confusing and demands greater clarity. As ranking member of the Finance Committee, it is my responsibility to correct the record on what the curtailment or elimination of tax expenditures would really mean for taxpayers and families.

I have spoken about tax expenditures a number of times in the last few weeks, but given the failure of the President and his congressional allies to take on our spending crisis, I want to reemphasize the essential point—if Democrats are allowed to balance the budget their way, it will result in new tax burdens for the middle class.

Tax expenditures are not ''spending through the tax code.'' They are an opportunity for you to keep more of your own money.

And they are not, by and large, special interest benefits that disproportionately benefit wealthy taxpayers. The Democrats' rhetoric on expenditures does not jibe with the reality of our Tax Code. The data are clear. Tax expenditures tend to skew towards taxpayers below the President's definition of the rich.

Let's work through some examples of what concrete proposals to cutback tax expenditures would yield in revenue and what they will mean to middle income Americans.

I am going to take a look at the budget outline presented by our friend and colleague, the distinguished chairman of the Senate Budget Committee. The Senate Democratic Caucus outline was discussed among the larger Democratic Caucus. Republican members, including long-standing Budget Committee members, were briefed by reading the details of the outline in the Washington Post. The Senate Democratic budget called for $2.38 trillion in tax increases when measured against the current policy baseline. The current policy baseline represents the level of taxation Americans are currently paying.

According to materials released by Senate Budget Committee Democrats, they are looking at three categories of tax increases.

The first category would raise marginal rates on single taxpayers with $500,000 and over in income and married couples with $1,000,000 and over in income. For those taxpayers, including many small business owners, the marginal rates would rise by 17 percent.

According to the Tax Policy Center, the TPC, a think tank often cited by our friends on the other side—certainly not a conservative think tank—at least 38 percent of flowthrough income, much of it small business income, would be subject to the marginal rate hike.

The marginal rate on capital gains and dividend income would rise by 33 percent. Keep in mind the IRS Statistics of Income group reports that 65 percent of capital gains income would be hit by this tax hike. Add in the tax increases from ObamaCare, and in less than 18 months the marginal rates on capital gains and dividends will rise by 59 percent. Is that a positive signal for investors to move capital into projects? That tax hike represents $380 billion of tax increases in the Democratic budget.

Now, look at this chart, the Senate Democratic budget tax increases. The total tax increases needed are $2.380 trillion. They suggest, No. 1, raise the marginal rates on singles over $500,000 and married couples over $1,000,000. That would be $380 billion. No. 2, closing corporate loopholes and curtailing offshore tax evasion is $262 billion. After that, the remaining tax increases needed from tax expenditures would be $1.738 trillion.

So, again, we would take the total tax increases needed—$2.380 trillion—reduce that by the $380 billion gained from raising the marginal rates on singles earning over $500,000 and married couples over $1,000,000 and closing corporate loopholes and curtailing offshore tax evasion with $262 billion, and the remaining tax increases needed from the tax expenditures alone would be $1.738 trillion.

The second category of tax increases in the Democratic budget is a set of concepts we have heard about for years in Senate floor speeches. President Obama frequently refers to them as well. We also see these concepts mentioned in the vast left-of-center DNC think tank establishment and by liberal pundits. They fall into two groups of proposals: The first group is closing corporate loopholes, and the second group is curtailing offshore tax avoidance or evasion.

Again, as you can see, they want to increase taxes by $2.380 trillion by raising the marginal rates on singles earning over $500,000 and married couples earning over $1,000,000, which is $380 billion. Then they want to close corporate loopholes and curtail offshore tax evasion, and they think they can save $262 billion on that. That still leaves $1.738 trillion.

The Finance Committee Republican staff compiled all known, specified, and scored proposals in these two groups. Staff calculated the proposals as summing $642 billion over 10 years. The numbers are Joint Committee on Taxation scores.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD a summary of the staff calculations.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

	JCT Estimates	Treasury estimates (in billions)
Other revenue changes and loophole closers	$ 262	$ 336
Eliminate fossil-fuel preferences	40.7	46.2
Increase unemployment taxes	47.4	61.0
Simplify the tax code	(10.7)	0.4
Reduce the tax gap and make reforms	(10.1)	1.4
Modify estate and gift tax	3.1	$ 19.50
Sum	$ 332	$ 464
Total tax expenditures from Conrad budget	$ 2,380	$2,380
Substract estimates from raising marginal rates	380	19.50%
Subtract other revenue changes and loophole closers	262	
Amount needed from tax expenditures	$ 1,738	

Mr. HATCH. To President Obama's credit, he put his money where his rhetoric is. Most of the loophole closures and offshore measures were contained in his budget.

If we subtract the two categories of tax increases, there remains $1.73 trillion in tax increases the Senate Democratic budget must find by cutting back tax expenditures.

Here we go again. This is a very important chart. I will remind everyone of something I mentioned in my first discussion of tax expenditures. The Joint Committee on Taxation warns us that tax expenditure figures are not the same as revenue estimates for policy changes.

In March 2011, the CBO released a set of budget options for deficit reduction. On the revenue options, CBO and Joint Committee on Taxation estimated the proposals. There are a number of them that deal with cutbacks on tax expenditures.

If we start with the Senate Democratic budget's target of $1.73 trillion, we can see an illustration of some policy options that tax writers would have to consider. I have a chart that lists the revenue raised from some of these options.

Let's look at this chart. It may be difficult to read on a television monitor, so I will go through these. These are tax expenditure policy options from the Congressional Budget Office to raise revenue. In other words, we have a tax to take away these tax expenditures.

No. 1 would be eliminate the deduction for State and local taxes. I don't think many people are going to want that to happen.

No. 2, they will tax Social Security benefits similar to the defined-benefit distributions. That is $438 billion right there in increased taxes.

No. 3 is tax investment income from life insurance and annuities. That is $260 billion.

No. 4, curtail the deductions for charitable giving. Can you believe that? That is $219 billion.

No. 5, gradually eliminate the mortgage interest deduction. Take that away from people who buy homes?

That is $215 billion.

No. 6, eliminate the child tax credit. That is $117 billion.

No. 7, raise tax rates on capital gains. That is $49 billion.

No. 8, eliminate education tax benefits, which is $48 billion.

No. 9, reduce 401(k) contribution limits, which is $46 billion.

And No. 10, tax carried interest as ordinary income, which is $21 billion.

Well, the first one should cause some concern to my friends on the other side. It would eliminate the State and local income and sales tax deduction. The so-called blue States generally have very high local and State tax burdens. Eliminating that deduction would mean the constituents of my friends representing those States will find themselves with an effective tax increase of up to 35 percent. That is what they are doing to themselves. Eliminating this deduction would yield revenue of $862 billion over 10 years.

The second one would reduce the aftertax value of Social Security benefits received by seniors. This CBO option would tax Social Security benefits like we do employer-provided defined benefit retirement plans. Funny how much fur has flown over Social Security reform. Yet this cutback on Social Security benefits has flown under the radar. It appears not all tax expenditures are about corporate jets and yachts. That proposal would raise $438 billion over 10 years. I mean, come on, hit Social Security for something like that?

Well, let's look at the third tax expenditure cutback option. That would tax the inside buildup in life insurance. Here is an example. Under current law, if a father and mother buy a $100,000 life insurance policy and make the surviving spouse or children beneficiaries, death will trigger a tax-free benefit of $100,000. Under this option, this tax expenditure—if they get rid of that—the difference between the face amount of

the policy and premium payments would be taxable. According to the CBO option book, that new tax would raise $260 billion over 10 years. Who wants to do that?

The fourth on the list is a tax benefit near and dear to many of my fellow Utah families. It is the itemized deduction for charitable donations. Under this option, only those deductions that exceed 2 percent of adjusted gross income would be deductible. For many Utahns who tithe—and I am one of them—10 percent of our gross income, this would mean an automatic cut of 20 percent of our deduction. This would affect not just Utahns but charitable givers all over the country. This proposal would reduce the tax benefit of charitable giving by $219 billion over 10 years.

Now, the fifth one is well-known to tens of millions of our constituents. It is the home mortgage interest deduction. If a taxpayer saves up a down payment and borrows for a home, they can take the interest paid on the mortgage as an itemized deduction. This proposal would gradually eliminate the home mortgage interest deduction. In 10 years, the deduction would be gone. This proposal would raise $215 billion over 10 years.

The sixth tax expenditure cutback option involves the current $1,000-per-child tax credit. That credit drops to $500 per child in 18 months if the 2001–2003 tax relief plans are not extended. It is, by definition, limited to low- and middle-income taxpaying families. CBO tells us if we were to eliminate it, there would be $117 billion raised over 10 years.

The seventh tax expenditure cutback would partially eliminate the tax expenditure for the lower rate on capital gains and dividends. It would, in effect, eliminate 25 percent of that tax expenditure and significantly drive up capital gains and dividends rates. As I indicated earlier, the top marginal rate on capital gains and dividends is set to rise by 59 percent in less than 18 months if the President and my friends on the other side get their way. This option—though described as a cutback on a tax expenditure—would drive that rate up higher.

The marginal rate on two-thirds of capital gains income would be driven up 72 percent. It would raise $49 billion, though, over 10 years, for our tax-seeking friends.

The eighth tax expenditure cutback option would sharply curtail tax benefits for families who send their kids to college. It would eliminate the Hope Scholarship and lifetime learning credits and phase out the student loan interest deduction. For that half of the population that pays the freight in society, the 49 percent who pay income tax, our friends on the other side are telling them their load is just going to get much heavier. That would be their message to middle-income American families who want to send their kids to college. This option would raise $48 billion over 10 years.

The ninth tax expenditure cutback option would reduce limits on contributions to retirement plans. About 50 percent of American workers participate in retirement plans. They save for their own retirement. They do not look to rely only on Social Security. There is bipartisan consensus that for America to remain prosperous, families and individuals must save more during their working lives. Yet this option would go in the other direction. It would mean less in retirement savings. CBO says it would raise $46 billion over 10 years if we take that one away.

Now, the tenth tax expenditure cutback option is one we have heard much about from my friends on the other side. It would tax partnership interests—known as carried interest—like ordinary income rather than capital gain. Interestingly enough, with a solidly Democratic Senate last year, this revenue raiser did not pass. There is a lot of speculation about that. I will not join it, but it is curious that when constituencies that favor Democrats decisively raised legitimate concerns about the possible negative effects on private equity and enterprise value, this proposal didn't quite make it past the finish line. That proposal would raise $21 billion over 10 years.

If you assume no interactive effects, the list of options I walked through adds up to $2.27 trillion in tax hikes. That is a lot more than called for by the Senate Democratic budget outline. Recall that outline produced by Senate Democrats boiled down to $1.73 trillion in cutbacks on tax expenditures. But look at how broad these tax hikes are. They hit big chunks of the 49 percent of American households who pay income taxes.

Take a look at the chart again. This is a chart that confirms what many of us have suspected. Although they might not come clean about it, when you look at the code and you look at our deficits, there is only one place for Democrats to go if they are going to close the deficit their way, with no meaningful spending reductions. They are going to have to hit tax expenditures, and specifically those that benefit middle-class itemizers.

They hit residents of blue States. They hit seniors. They hit everyone who owns a life insurance policy. They hit everyone who takes an itemized deduction for giving to their church, local food kitchen, or other charities. They hit everyone with a mortgage, everyone who receives a child tax credit, and anyone with capital gains. They hit middle-income families and students who benefit from education tax benefits. They hit those who save for retirement. They hit those folks who start up businesses and take a future profits interest in the form of a capital gain. But to hear the President talk, you would think we could get there by taxing corporate jets and yachts.

I am accustomed to the media carrying the water of liberal politicians, but there has been a real dereliction of duty in allowing President Obama to get away with this. Even at this late date, he is still getting away with it. He has no plan. Tell me. He has no plan. Show it to me. He talks about his plan, but we have yet to see it in writing. In fact, there is no plan.

The press ridiculed Richard Nixon for his secret plan to end the war in Vietnam. But here we are in a catastrophic crisis, and President Obama gets a pass when it comes to his secret plan to balance the budget.

To suggest that a debt crisis triggered by $14.3 trillion in debt can be fixed by taxing the luxuries of evil rich people is so childish and lacking in seriousness that the President should have been called out on it immediately. But he wasn't. He was allowed to get away with it.

President Obama's balanced approach—he talks about a balanced approach all the time—one that includes meaningful reductions to his historic levels of spending, is a plan for economic stagnation and national ruin, and it is a plan to bankrupt seniors.

He wants shared sacrifice. From whom? We were shown that the middle class is going to get hit the hardest. I want shared prosperity by cutting back on spending and getting the Federal Government out of most of our lives in ways that are intrusive and costly, to being able to get jobs and raise jobs and do what has to be done in this country.

It is a plan to bankrupt our seniors. The President knows this, as do his colleagues in Congress. He knows his supposed plan does nothing to fix the long-term trajectory of his deficit spending. So the question folks need to ask is, what is he hiding? How does the left plan on closing the gap and balancing the budget their way? The answer is the elimination or reduction of tax expenditures. And that means middle-class tax increases. To hear my friends on the other side, you would think the only folks hit by Democratic tax increases will be corporate jet owners, yachtsmen, and millionaires. But when you peek behind the rhetorical curtain, you find that does not pan out. Most of the tax base is in the middle and upper middle income families who make up that 49 percent of Americans who are the only ones who shoulder the burden of the income tax.

We know that the recent numbers are the bottom 51 percent of all households do not pay income taxes. No, it is the 49 percent of Americans who shoulder the burden of the income tax; that is where the money is. As I have shown with the CBO and Joint Committee on Taxation options, that is where you have to go. Without a counterbalancing rate cut, this version of tax reform means fewer resources for home ownership, retirement savings, and charitable giving.

But don't say I did not warn you. Those who want to treat tax expenditures as some abstract budgetary honey pot risk having the folks who

make the honey, the taxpaying bees, to rightfully sting you. As one who hails from the Beehive State, I can tell you, you will feel the sting.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MERKLEY). The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I am here this afternoon to discuss our work toward addressing the national debt and staving off a collision with our debt ceiling or a default on our financial obligations.

First, I wish to commend Majority Leader REID for putting forward a proposal which would make a very serious $2.4 trillion downpayment on deficit reduction and, most importantly, end the impasse over the debt ceiling. I encourage my Republican colleagues to support it or offer some reasonable changes that would allow them to support it.

But let me also address some developments on the other side of the Capitol, where an extremist group of House Republicans is continuing their ''my way or the highway,'' what President Lincoln called ''rule or ruin,'' approach to these negotiations.

Amazingly, news reports indicate that Pell grants—Pell grants—may be put on the chopping block in Speaker BOEHNER's latest effort to appease the most extreme members of his party. This is getting ridiculous. Rhode Island's great Senator Claiborne Pell first proposed the grants that now bear his name. He envisioned a grant that would enable low-income students to attend our country's wonderful colleges and universities so they too could share in the American dream. Why do these far-right extremists in the House want to snuff that out?

In 1976, the first year Pell grants were fully funded, a full Pell grant paid 72 percent of the cost of attendance at a typical 4-year public college. Today, a full Pell grant covers 34 percent of those costs, and even that they are willing to attack. This vital assistance from Pell grants can often mean the difference between being able to attend college or not. With many families in Rhode Island and across America still struggling in this struggling economy, we should be looking for ways to strengthen Pell grants, not weaken them. America needs more college graduates, not fewer.

During my time in the Senate, we have taken steps to improve the Pell grant program. After 4 years of level funding under President Bush, we began to increase the maximum grant from $4,050 in academic year 2006–2007 to $5,050 for this coming academic year. We also increased the minimum family income that automatically qualifies a student for the maximum Pell grant, a change which better reflects today's economic realities.

Despite the clear need for continued investment in our future through Pell grants, a need that has long had bipartisan support and backing, a group of House Republicans this year began an outright assault on Pell grant funding. These grants are needed more than ever, as the economic downturn has led more people to seek higher education in an effort to find a job. But not to this band of extremists. The House Republican budget would have slashed Pell grants, reducing the average award by $1,775, and cutting off more than 1.3 million Americans, including nearly 5,800 students in Rhode Island.

I understand the need to find savings in the Federal budget and to make difficult choices, and Leader REID's proposal offers up $2.4 trillion worth. But we could also make bad choices in going about this, and of all the bad choices we could make, cutting Pell grants is among the worst. America needs a highly trained workforce, and Pell grants help make the promise of a college education a reality.

After America spoke out and the Senate defeated the extreme House Republican budget, I hoped the assault on the Pell grant was behind us, at least for a while. Yesterday, however, The Hill, a newspaper here in Washington, reported that some Republican House Members are opposing Speaker BOEHNER's debt ceiling increase bill over funding if it provides for Pell grants. In this article, someone called Pell grants welfare. Some welfare, helping kids afford college and pursue their dreams. Today there is talk that cuts to Pell grants are being discussed as the pound of flesh required by the most far-right Members of the Speaker's caucus as the price of supporting his bill. Remember that these House Republicans continue to protect every tax giveaway to special interests, every one, while they want to cut off access to college for regular kids.

The simple fact is Pell grants help lower income people achieve dreams of college and improve those young people's prospects for careers and employment. It is good for them and it is good for America. The Pell grant program doesn't give a free ride, but it does give a boost and is a wise investment in the future of our country, a future where the fates of nations will depend on the education of their people.

Earlier this week, student and education advocacy organizations, including the Education Trust, Campus Progress, the National Council of LaRaza, and the United States Student Association, joined together to ''Save Pell.'' I applaud their advocacy and commitment in fighting for Pell grants, and I am proud to join their effort. I strongly urge the far-right extremists who are pulling their party and the House of Representatives and this country over the cliff to end their reckless attack on the American middle class, take the victory you have been offered, and stop the damage.

Ronald Reagan in 8 years I believe raised the debt ceiling 18 times. The Tea Party has been here 6 months and has put the country on the brink of default days away. Instead, I ask my colleagues to work with Democrats on a bipartisan solution that does not attack the fundamental underpinnings of a successful middle class, such as Medicare, Social Security, Pell grants. Avert the looming debt ceiling collision and reduce our deficits.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

Mr. THUNE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BENNET). Objection is heard.

The clerk will continue with the call of the roll.

The legislative clerk continued with the call of the roll, and the following Senators entered the Chamber and answered to their names:

[Quorum No. 4]

Begich	Conrad	Murray
Bennet	Coons	Pryor
Blumenthal	Durbin	Reid (NV)
Brown (OH)	Johanns	Sanders
Cantwell	Lautenberg	Schumer
Cardin	McConnell	Thune
Casey	Merkley	Whitehouse

The PRESIDING OFFICER. A quorum is not present.

Mr. REID. Thank you, Mr. President. I move to instruct the Sergeant at Arms to request the attendance of absent Senators, and I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second? There appears to be a sufficient second.

The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. KYL. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 76, nays 23, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 119 Leg.]

YEAS—76

Akaka	Gillibrand	Murkowski
Baucus	Hagan	Murray
Begich	Harkin	Nelson (NE)
Bennet	Hatch	Nelson (FL)
Bingaman	Hutchison	Portman
Blumenthal	Inouye	Pryor
Blunt	Isakson	Reed
Boozman	Johanns	Reid
Boxer	Johnson (SD)	Rockefeller
Brown (MA)	Kerry	Rubio
Brown (OH)	Kirk	Sanders
Burr	Klobuchar	Schumer
Cantwell	Kohl	Shaheen
Cardin	Kyl	Shelby
Carper	Landrieu	Snowe
Casey	Lautenberg	Stabenow
Chambliss	Leahy	Tester
Coats	Levin	Thune
Cochran	Lieberman	Udall (CO)
Collins	Lugar	Udall (NM)
Conrad	Manchin	Warner
Coons	McCaskill	Webb
Corker	Menendez	Whitehouse
Durbin	Merkley	Wyden
Feinstein	Mikulski	
Franken	Moran	

NAYS—23

Alexander	Graham	McConnell
Ayotte	Grassley	Paul
Barrasso	Heller	Risch
Coburn	Hoeven	Roberts
Cornyn	Inhofe	Sessions
Crapo	Johnson (WI)	Toomey
DeMint	Lee	Vitter
Enzi	McCain	

NOT VOTING—1

Wicker

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. A quorum is present.

The majority leader is recognized.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, may we have order.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will be in order.

Mr. REID. I thank the Chair.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

ESTABLISHING THE COMMISSION ON FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT PROCESSING DELAYS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask the Chair to lay before the Senate a message from the House with respect to S. 627.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair lays before the Senate a message from the House which, the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

Resolved, that the bill from the Senate (S. 627) entitled ''An Act to establish the Commission on Freedom of Information Act Processing Delays'' do pass with an amendment.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I move to concur in the House amendment to that legislative matter, and I move to table the motion to concur and ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Will the majority leader yield for a question?

Mr. REID. Yes, without losing my right to the floor.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Is it the majority leader's intention, after we have the vote on tabling the proposal that came over from the House, to file cloture on the Reid budget?

Mr. REID. Yes.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I say to my friend, we would be happy to have that vote tonight. And I will also mention to my friend that the House of Representatives intends to vote on the Reid amendment tomorrow afternoon at 1 o'clock. In order to accommodate the schedules of Senators, we would be more than happy to accommodate the majority and have the vote on the Reid budget tonight.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, through the Chair, I say to my friend, the distinguished Republican leader, let's hope they are more timely on their 1 o'clock vote than they have been in the last few days.

I would say this very directly: We would be happy to have a vote on the Reid amendment just like the House did today, a majority vote. We have gotten into a situation that is untoward. Everything that moves is a supermajority. That isn't the way it should be. So we are happy to have a vote anytime. But it should be a majority vote just like the House had. They had a majority vote today, and they had an overwhelming extra vote of none. So we would be happy to have a simple majority vote on the Democratic proposal that we are putting forward.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Is that a consent?

Mr. REID. That is a consent that we will be happy to have a vote if it is a simple majority vote.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, let me say that this is almost an out-of-body experience to have someone suggest a 50-vote threshold on a matter of this magnitude in the Senate. I am perplexed, Mr. President—genuinely perplexed—that my friend, the majority leader doesn't want to vote on his proposal as soon as possible. I object.

Mr. REID. Let's have order. Let the Republican leader be heard.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I object.

Mr. REID. So it is obvious to the world that in the Senate this is now another filibuster. That is what this is; it is a filibuster to stop us from moving forward on legislation. This is a filibuster in any name that you want.

I am disappointed. I asked for a rollcall vote on the tabling motion. I ask that we move forward.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion to table the motion to concur.

The yeas and nays have been ordered. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BLUMENTHAL). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 59, nays 41, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 120 Leg.]

YEAS—59

Akaka	Hagan	Nelson (NE)
Baucus	Harkin	Nelson (FL)
Begich	Hatch	Paul
Bennet	Inouye	Pryor
Bingaman	Johnson (SD)	Reed
Blumenthal	Kerry	Reid
Boxer	Klobuchar	Rockefeller
Brown (OH)	Kohl	Sanders
Cantwell	Landrieu	Schumer
Cardin	Lautenberg	Shaheen
Carper	Leahy	Stabenow
Casey	Lee	Tester
Conrad	Levin	Udall (CO)
Coons	Lieberman	Udall (NM)
DeMint	Manchin	Vitter
Durbin	McCaskill	Warner
Feinstein	Menendez	Webb
Franken	Merkley	Whitehouse
Gillibrand	Mikulski	Wyden
Graham	Murray	

NAYS—41

Alexander	Barrasso	Boozman
Ayotte	Blunt	Brown (MA)
Burr	Hoeven	Murkowski
Chambliss	Hutchison	Portman
Coats	Inhofe	Risch
Coburn	Isakson	Roberts
Cochran	Johanns	Rubio
Collins	Johnson (WI)	Sessions
Corker	Kirk	Shelby
Cornyn	Kyl	Snowe
Crapo	Lugar	Thune
Enzi	McCain	Toomey
Grassley	McConnell	Wicker
Heller	Moran	

The motion was agreed to.

Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, I oppose the motion to table the motion to concur in the House amendment to S. 627, the Budget Control Act of 2011. Although I do not support the bill as written, I believe that the Senate should proceed to it in an effort to amend the bill to include greater spending cuts, caps, and provisions which will boost our economy like progrowth tax and regulatory reform.

I strongly oppose the proposal put forth by Senate Majority Leader REID. The bill is filled with accounting gimmicks and does nothing to encourage enactment of a constitutional balanced budget amendment—an essential step towards ending our unsustainable deficits and debt that enjoys bipartisan support in both Chambers of Congress. Amazingly, as our economy continues to struggle, the Reid proposal appears to assume a tax hike upwards of $3 trillion, which would kill jobs and impede efforts to grow the economy and reduce our staggering debt in the process.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

MOTION TO CONCUR WITH AMENDMENT NO. 589

(Purpose: To cut spending, maintain existing commitments, and for other purposes)

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I move to concur in the House amendment to S. 627 with an amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Nevada [Mr. REID] proposes an amendment numbered 589 to the House amendment to S. 627.

(The amendment is printed in today's RECORD under ''Text of Amendments.'')

Mr. REID. I ask for the yeas and nays on the motion.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I have a cloture motion which is at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the Reid motion to concur in the House amendment to S. 627, with amendment No. 589.

Harry Reid, Max Baucus, Barbara Boxer, Carl Levin, Tom Harkin, Benjamin L.

Cardin, Charles E. Schumer, Richard J. Durbin, Patrick J. Leahy, Mark R. Warner, Patty Murray, Christopher A. Coons, Richard Blumenthal, Sherrod Brown (OH), Kent Conrad, Mark Begich, John F. Kerry, Debbie Stabenow.

AMENDMENT NO. 590 TO AMENDMENT NO. 589

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I have a second-degree amendment which is at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Nevada [Mr. REID] proposes an amendment numbered 590 to amendment No. 589.

The amendment is as follows:

At the end, add the following new section:

SECTION ___

This Act shall become effective 5 days after enactment.

MOTION TO REFER WITH AMENDMENT NO. 591

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I have a motion to refer the House message to the Budget Committee with instructions to report back forthwith with an amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Nevada [Mr. REID] moves to refer the House message to the Senate Budget Committee with instructions to report back forthwith with an amendment No. 591.

The amendment is as follows:

At the end, add the following new section:

SECTION ___

This Act shall become effective 3 days after enactment.

Mr. REID. I ask for the yeas and nays on that motion.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 592

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I have an amendment to my instructions, which is also at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Nevada [Mr. REID] proposes an amendment numbered 592 to the instructions on the motion to refer the House message on S. 627.

The amendment is as follows:

In the amendment, strike ''3 days'' and insert ''2 days''.

Mr. REID. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 593 TO AMENDMENT NO. 592

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I have a second-degree amendment to my instructions, which is at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Nevada [Mr. REID] proposes an amendment numbered 593 to amendment No. 592.

The amendment is as follows:

In the amendment, strike ''2 days'' and insert ''1 day''.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Would the Senator withhold?

Mr. REID. If my friend the Republican leader wishes to speak, I, of course, would withhold.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican leader.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I thank the majority leader.

I wish to commend the Speaker of the House, JOHN BOEHNER, for his determination and perseverance.

It wasn't easy, but Speaker BOEHNER has been working tirelessly over the past few months and especially over these past few days to build consensus within his party and to pass a bill through the House that would end this crisis and take an important step toward getting our fiscal house in order.

While Democrats in the Senate have been over here plotting about how they can prevent a solution to this crisis, Speaker BOEHNER rolled up his sleeves and did the hard work needed to prevent the crisis. So I thank him for taking his responsibilities as a legislator, as a leader, and as a citizen so seriously and getting the job done. He and the other Republicans in the House have now passed two bills that would not only end this crisis, but would actually do something about its root cause.

They know as well as I do that Washington cannot continue to borrow 40 cents of every dollar it spends and not expect a reckoning. It may not be this Tuesday. But unless we do something to rein in our spending and our debt an even bigger crisis will come. That is why House Republicans have insisted on including a provision in the legislation they just passed that would only allow Congress to raise the debt ceiling if it also passes a law that requires Washington to balance its books.

This isn't exactly a radical proposal.

If Congress's inability to live within its means is the reason for this crisis, then why not pass a law that requires it? It makes perfect sense to almost everybody in America except a few hundred Democrats in Washington.

But that has been the story of this whole summer.

A lot of people look at Washington right now and say what they are seeing is a dysfunctional government. This isn't dysfunction. What you see in Washington right now is Democrats refusing to admit they've got a spending problem, and fighting any attempt to get it under control.

That is what this is all about.

Just take a look at what has been happening here in the Senate over the past 48 hours.

Rather than do their duty and come up with a bill that can pass, Senate Democrats have been busy ginning up opposition to everything else. Senate Democrats have not offered a single solution to this crisis that has a chance of passing either Chamber in Congress. Think about that: we have been staring at this deadline for months. And the majority party in the Senate hasn't even made the effort to come up with a solution that could pass a Chamber they control!

They have put all their energy into defeating everything else.

The majority leader claims he has a plan.

Well, here is what it does.

It asks Congress to make the largest debt ceiling increase in history, without paying for it.

It creates a committee that has no real power to generate more savings down the road.

And it doesn't require us to balance our books.

Until yesterday, the only reason Senate Democrats had for opposing the House bill was that it didn't raise the debt limit beyond the next Presidential election.

Yesterday, they came up with another excuse. They said the debt limit increase doesn't last long enough to provide certainty to the markets.

Leave aside the fact that Democrats have spent the last 2½ years perfecting the art of creating economic uncertainty.

Leave that aside.

The fact is, of the 31 times the debt limit has been raised over the past 25 years, 22 lasted less than a year. And I don't recall any of the Democrats who voted for those increases expressing any concern about economic uncertainty.

The simple truth is this: Senate Democrats have no good reason whatsoever for opposing the bill the House just passed.

This bill was actually negotiated in direct consultation with the Democrat leaders who now claim to oppose it.

You want proof? Well, ask yourself this: why does the Reid bill have the same title as the bill the House just passed? Coincidence? Why do the two bills contain pages of identical text? Coincidence? Look through it yourself.

Look at the Democrat priorities that are in there. How do you think they got in there?

I will tell you how: because they put them in there.

So it is an absolute mystery to me why any Democrat in the Senate would have opposed that bill.

There isn't an argument against it that is left standing. And we would all be voting to approve it right now if President Obama hadn't told Democrats to oppose it last weekend. The only reason—the only reason—we are

even still talking about this crisis is because the President of the United States doesn't want to have another debate about his own fiscal recklessness before his next election.

One more thing.

Just so there is no doubt that Democrats in Congress have abdicated their responsibility by failing to produce a solution of their own, I have a suggestion. Let's test out the Reid bill. Let's call it up and vote on it tonight. See how it does. Let's see the fruits of the Democrats' labors. Let's see what they came up with as this crisis approached.

The Speaker has sent over two bills that could end this crisis now. Let's call up the majority leader's bill and see if it will fly. And if it doesn't, then let's take up the House bill, pass it, and end this crisis now.

But Republicans have done our job.

Mr. President, I just wanted to ask my friend one more time. We have here a situation where the Senate has voted to table, in effect, the House-passed measure and the majority leader has filled up the tree and filed cloture on his proposal. As I indicated earlier, every single member of my conference here in the Senate would be happy to move up that vote.

As we all know, the markets are waiting to see if we are going to act. It strikes me that it might make sense for all of us on a bipartisan basis to go on and act as rapidly as possible. I believe every Member of the Senate has pretty well determined how they would vote on cloture on the motion to proceed to my friend's measure. Therefore, I would again ask consent that we immediately proceed to a vote on invoking cloture on the Reid amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, it is very obvious there should be a vote on my amendment and it should be with a simple majority. That is the way it has traditionally been in this body until the Republicans have tried to establish a supermajority, which doesn't work. This is a filibuster. This is something that should not be filibustered. They should back off the filibuster and let us vote. Let us vote. That is where we are. We feel very strongly on this side that if the House can pass something with a simple majority, so can we.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. REID. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is noted.

The Republican leader.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I don't want to belabor this. I would just finally point out that we are in the rather curious position that the House of Representatives tomorrow at 1 p.m. will vote on the Reid proposal before my friend and his conference are willing to let us vote on his proposal.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, we know that if the legislation in the House of Representatives had required a supermajority, we would not be dealing with the Boehner—I am trying to say a nice word—the Boehner legislation. We wouldn't be doing that.

We are here now. We have tried our utmost to come up with a fair proposal that deserves an up-or-down vote. It is fair. It reduces the debt by $2.4 trillion. In fact, most every bit of it includes material that the House has voted on before, the Senators have voted on before. It is something we should do. It is fair.

We have tried to compromise. That is not a bad word. I had a tentative meeting set with some Republican Senators this afternoon. The meeting didn't come to be. I have asked my friend the Republican leader to negotiate, and he has chosen not to do that. That is too bad.

I want to move forward. And if my friend wants to negotiate with others, fine. My door has been open all day. But we are doing the right thing. We will not agree to a 6-month extension, putting our country in jeopardy in just a few weeks. The Ryan budget has been out there whacking Medicare, whacking Medicare fraud. The cut, cap, and whatever it was does the same thing.

What I have put forward is a fair proposal. It is something we should do. It would get rid of the disaster that is facing us. It is the right thing to do.

The American people want us to work this out, and we have tried. We have given. We have compromised. There has just been no give on the other side. In fact, Mr. President, it has been quite the opposite.

We had a wonderful agreement set up here between the two people who ran the Budget Committee for years, Senators CONRAD and GREGG, a wonderful proposal to move forward expedited procedures. What happened? When we moved to it, seven Republicans who sponsored the legislation didn't vote for it. Then we moved forward with the Biden group. What happened with that? The Republicans walked out of that meeting. We had a situation where meetings were going on with the President. Leader CANTOR from the House walked out on that meeting. Speaker BOEHNER walked out on the President twice. The Gang of 6, trying to work something out, one of the leaders—the most vocal leader of that group took a sabbatical leave and stepped back in just a few days ago.

We have tried our utmost to negotiate something in fairness. We are where we are. We want an up-or-down vote on my proposal.

If the Republicans continue to filibuster this, they are going to have to show at 1 o'clock Sunday morning or thereabouts that they are going to continue the filibuster. We are not going to give up on this.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican leader.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I think we all agree it is fairly routine to have the 60-vote threshold in the Senate, particularly on a matter of enormous significance such as this. It is almost unheard of to suggest that a matter of this magnitude would be dealt with at a 51-vote threshold.

Where are we? It is an interesting history lesson my friend gives us about various debates we have had in the past, but this is where we are right now. Where we are right now is our good friends on the other side do not want us to move forward with a vote on what they are advocating.

Mrs. BOXER. Yes, we do.

Mr. DURBIN. Majority vote.

Mr. MCCONNELL. We just heard the majority leader talk about—could we have order in the Senate, Mr. President?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will be in order.

Mr. MCCONNELL. We just heard the majority leader making the arguments on the merits for his proposal. That is what we wish to move forward with. We would be happy to have the vote on cloture on his measure tonight so we could move forward and finally get a resolution here. We have the curious position the majority is in effect stopping action on its own proposal and the House of Representatives tomorrow will vote on the Reid proposal, apparently before the Senate will vote on the proposal of the majority leader.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. REID. Finally, the Republican leader said we don't need to carry this on forever. I agree with my friend. This legislation is of utmost importance. It has great significance, as he said. All the more reason there should not be a filibuster being conducted on this legislation. Our country is in the throes of an economic disaster. To think that they would filibuster this, they are not negotiating, and that is why we are at the last—we waited as long as we could to come forward with something that we would try to get through here. But we have not been able to do it because they have not negotiated in good faith. All the negotiation has been with ourselves.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, this evening, the Senate is considering S. 627, as amended by the House of Representatives—the bill now called the Budget Control Act of 2011. Earlier this week, the House Republican Leadership used a procedural maneuver to strip from this bill bipartisan provisions to strengthen the Freedom of Information Act, FOIA, that unanimously passed the Senate. I urge the Senate to restore the bipartisan Leahy-Cornyn Faster FOIA Act of 2011, as originally and unanimously passed by the Senate in May, when the Senate considers its budget bill.

The Faster FOIA Act enjoys broad bipartisan support from across the political spectrum. The Senate unanimously passed this bill in May, after the Judiciary Committee favorably reported the bill by voice vote. Recently, more than 35 transparency organizations urged the House Committee on

Oversight and Government Reform to act on this legislation. On Tuesday, the Washington Post editorialized that the House should promptly enact this bipartisan bill to improve the FOIA process.

Senator CORNYN and I first introduced the Faster FOIA Act in 2005, to address the growing problem of excessive FOIA delays within our Federal agencies. During the intervening years, the problem of excessive FOIA delays has not gone away. We reintroduced this bill in 2010, and the Senate unanimously passed it last year. The current bill is the most recent product of our bipartisan work to help reinvigorate FOIA.

The Faster FOIA Act would establish a bipartisan Commission on Freedom of Information Act Processing Delays to examine the root causes of excessive FOIA delays. The Commission would recommend to Congress and the President steps that should be taken to reduce these delays, so that the administration of the FOIA is more equitable and efficient.

The Faster FOIA Act will help ensure the dissemination of government information to the American people, so that our democracy remains vibrant and free. This is a laudable goal that we all share. Neither Chamber of Congress should allow partisan politics to obstruct the important goal of this bill.

The ongoing debate in Congress about the national debt has made clear that we must find ways to work together, across party lines and ideologies, to address the many challenges facing our Nation. This bipartisan spirit is at the core of the Faster FOIA Act. I have said many times that open government is neither a Democratic issue, nor a Republican issue it is truly an American value and virtue that we all must uphold. I urge the Senate to include the Faster FOIA Act in its budget bill, and I urge the Congress to promptly enact this good government measure.

I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the letters in support of reinstating the Faster FOIA Act in the final debt ceiling package.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

SUNSHINE IN GOVERNMENT INITIATIVE,
Arlington, VA, July 29, 2011.

Hon. HARRY REID,
U.S. Senate.
Hon. MITCH MCCONNELL,
U.S. Senate.
Hon. JOHN BOEHNER,
U.S. House of Representatives.
Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
U.S. House of Representatives.

DEAR MAJORITY LEADER REID, MINORITY LEADER MCCONNELL, SPEAKER BOEHNER, AND MINORITY LEADER PELOSI: We urge the Congress to reinstate the bipartisan, uncontroversial language strengthening the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) that was removed from S. 627, the Faster FOIA Act, as it was amended to address the unrelated issue surrounding the debt limit. The original language would create a bipartisan commission to recommend concrete ways to strengthen transparency in the federal government and has broad, bipartisan support.

The Sunshine in Government Initiative is a coalition of media associations promoting government transparency, especially focusing on FOIA. SGI members include the American Society of News Editors, the Associated Press, Association of Alternative Newsweeklies, National Newspaper Association, Newspaper Association of America, Radio Television Digital News Association, Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press and Society of Professional Journalists.

Especially in this fiscal environment, the Faster FOIA Commission would help the public understand how taxpayer dollars are being spent by bringing together experts inside and outside the government to look ''under the hood'' of agency FOIA operations and to propose within a year the most realistic, effective and cost-efficient improvements to improve government transparency.

The Freedom of Information Act is the vital law that helps ensure the public can see what its government is up to while protecting personal privacy, national security, trade secrets and other important interests. The Commission's work should provide timely insight to help inform next steps that Congress with your leadership might undertake to strengthen transparency in the federal government.

Sincerely,

RICK BLUM,
Coordinator.

JULY 28, 2011.

Hon. HARRY REID,
Majority Leader, U.S. Senate, The Capitol, Washington, DC.
Hon. JOHN BOEHNER,
Speaker, U.S. House of Representatives, The Capitol, Washington, DC.
Hon. MITCH MCCONNELL,
Minority Leader, U.S. Senate, The Capitol, Washington, DC.
Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
Minority Leader, U.S. House of Representatives, The Capitol, Washington, DC.

DEAR MAJORITY LEADER REID, MINORITY LEADER MCCONNELL, SPEAKER BOEHNER AND MINORITY LEADER PELOSI: On behalf of the undersigned organizations concerned with government openness and accountability, we are writing to urge you to restore the bipartisan Faster FOIA provisions in S. 627, now known as the Budget Control Act of 2011.

This week, Speaker Boehner took S. 627 as a vehicle for his budget bill. This procedural maneuver could shave a few days off of Senate consideration, should the House pass the Boehner budget control bill. However, in doing so, the Speaker unnecessarily stripped the Faster FOIA Act from S.627, completely replacing the language with the budget bill. If the Faster FOIA language is not restored in S. 627, the bipartisan progress made by the Senate on the legislation will be wiped out. This is a setback for openness and accountability in the executive branch, and bipartisan action in Congress.

The Senate unanimously passed the Faster FOIA Act, authored by Senator Leahy (D-VT) and Senator Cornyn (R–TX) in May. The legislation would establish the Commission on Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Processing Delays (the Commission) to examine several thorny issues that create unreasonable bars to public access under the FOIA and recommend to Congress and the President steps that should be taken to reduce delays and make the administration of the FOIA equitable and efficient throughout the federal government.

The Faster FOIA Act enjoys strong support among a broad range of non-governmental organizations. Recently, more than 35 organizations joined to urge the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform to act on the legislation. A recent editorial in the Washington Post also called on the House to embrace the bill in the same bipartisan spirit as the Senate in the interest of improving the FOIA process.

We urge you to advance openness and accountability to restore the bipartisan Faster FOIA provisions in S. 627. We thank you in advance for your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,

American Library Association, Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington—CREW, Electronic Frontier Foundation, Freedom of Information Center at the Missouri School of Journalism, Fund for Constitutional Government, National Freedom of Information Coalition, National Security Archive, OMB Watch, OpenTheGovernment.org, Project On Government Oversight—POGO, Public Citizen, Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press.

MORNING BUSINESS

BROWN UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I believe libraries are critical institutions to our Nation and our democracy. Today, I recognize one library in particular, Brown University Library, for its 150th anniversary as Rhode Island's oldest Federal Depository Library.

The Federal Depository Library Program was established by Congress to ensure that the American public could access government records and information locally. The 10 depository libraries in Rhode Island are part of a network of more than 1,200 libraries nationwide that provide free access to Federal Government materials, both in print and online.

In 1861, under a newly enacted law granting each Senator the authority to assign one depository in their State, Senator James F. Simmons designated the Brown University Library as an official depository to receive U.S. Government publications. While Brown University had been receiving government documents through various channels since revolutionary times, this designation established Brown as the first depository library in Rhode Island and one of the earliest so designated libraries in the Nation.

For the past 150 years, the Brown University Library has helped students, faculty, and residents throughout Rhode Island find and use government information. The collection at Brown contains a wide variety of government documents that reflect the rich history of Rhode Island and the Nation as a whole, including historical debates surrounding the adoption of the 13th amendment abolishing slavery and legislation authored by my predecessor Senator Claiborne Pell establishing the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities. It is also home to a wealth of information useful to Rhode Islanders, such as demographic

data on the changing and diverse nature of the State's population; a vast array of health and wellness materials; and business and economic news and reports.

Since 1994, Brown and other Federal depository libraries have worked in partnership with the U.S. Government Printing Office to make government information in a digital format directly accessible to the public via the Internet. First, through the GPO Access online system, and now through GPO's Federal Digital System, the American public has free access to authenticated information from all three branches of the Federal Government.

Across the country, Federal depository libraries enable the public to stay informed on the workings of our government and provide free access to all types of essential information. Additionally, they play a vital role in preserving the historical record of our democracy. I congratulate Brown University Library for its 150 years of serving as a resource for the people of Rhode Island and am proud to celebrate an institution that is dedicated to informing Rhode Islanders and advancing the values of our democracy.

TRIBUTE TO DAVE JOHNSON

Mr. LUGAR. Mr. President, I rise today, with several of my colleagues to recognize the outstanding service and contribution of a fellow Hoosier and life-long public servant, Dave Johnson.

Dave first joined my staff in 1987 and he has been a brilliant resource to me over the years since then. Dave is a truly gifted individual. He is knowledgeable about all facets of agricultural and food policy and is able to see all of the potential opportunities and challenges with proposed legislation. Dave is always prepared to interact with a Member on the Senate floor during consideration of agriculture legislation, and equally at ease in dealing with Indiana constituents or farmers from anywhere in the United States. His mark can be found on countless pieces of Senate food and agriculture legislation, ranging from nutrition to biomass to conservation. Dave is always an available and willing resource to members on the Agriculture Committee, or other members from the Senate as a whole who seldom delve into agricultural policy discussions.

Dave and I have shared one true passion over our years of service—nutrition. I have long been an advocate of nutrition programs, and specifically a supporter of the school lunch program. It has been Dave's dedicated counsel and advice that has helped to shape these important programs into what they are today. I remember that on one occasion, while traveling back home in southern Indiana, I learned from my constituents of some of the deficiencies in a local summer children's nutrition program. I shared these concerns with Dave, and within a matter of days Dave responded to my request and had a bill on my desk. That legislation proposed a pilot project, which was approved by Congress, and today has been expanded to a nationwide program.

Dave has never been intimidated by the vastness of diversity in agriculture. He has always been able to determine the appropriate solution to a real problem, and then draft the implementing legislation to go along with it. He is never too busy to take the time to mentor young staff members by sharing his vast knowledge and experience, and he is always willing to reach across the aisle to contribute to more effective results for American agriculture.

Dave, I don't know how we will write a farm bill without you. You will be sincerely missed.

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, I am pleased to commend Dave Johnson for 23 years of service to the Federal Government. I am very grateful for his effective and dedicated leadership as chief counsel of the Senate Agriculture Committee during the time I served as chairman of the Committee.

He also served in important jobs at the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the U.S. Commodity Futures Trading Commission, as well as the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry. The farm bills that Mr. Johnson helped draft during his career are impressive examples of his insight and good judgment.

The far-reaching effects of his contributions to the field of agriculture are illustrated by the successes we have had as a Nation as a result of our food and agriculture policies. I congratulate Dave Johnson for his impressive career of improving the quality of life of rural America.

Mr. CHAMBLISS. I want to take this opportunity to congratulate Dave on his 23 years of service as a public servant. His career, including service in the Senate, the Department of Agriculture and the Commodities Futures Trading Commission, has led him to be one of the most influential staffers on legislation supporting farmers, ranchers and the less privileged across the country.

For those of us who have had the pleasure of knowing and working closely with him, we know Dave as a true professional and an extremely thoughtful individual. His knowledge and experience have served as a virtual encyclopedia for policy makers on this Committee and in the Executive Branch. The talent and knowledge that Dave possesses reflects a career of dedicated service that cannot be replicated or easily replaced. His well-earned departure will create a void that will be difficult to fill.

As I look back at Dave's career and the years I served as chairman of the Senate Agriculture Committee, I can say I am particularly proud of Dave's work on nutrition and food assistance programs. I know my colleagues and I can attest to Dave's care for and dedication to improving the lives of the less privileged. His tireless efforts to secure funding for the hungry and less privileged through the 1996 farm bill, the 1994 Child Nutrition Act and countless other pieces of legislation are a testament to his sense of duty and his nonpartisan approach to identifying solutions that advance the promise of our great Nation to all of our citizens. I was always honored to have his passion and advocacy for the disadvantaged on my side of the aisle.

Dave has made a real impact on the lives of all Americans and has done so with a modest approach that sought solutions over recognition. Dave is one of the most modest individuals I have ever met and I am certain his modesty is born of his upbringing. Dave's approach to work in Washington, DC, has always been governed by the lessons he learned on his family farm in rural Indiana. He does not boast of his many achievements nor lecture those who seek his counsel or advice. I have always known him to be quiet and unpretentious in spite of his achievements and station. He has sought to act as a mentor to young staffers and wise counsel to the Senators and policy makers who have called on him throughout the years.

On behalf of my former agriculture committee staff and for myself, I want to thank Dave for his service to the U.S. Senate and to our country. I wish him the best as he moves on to his next adventure.

Mr. JOHANNS. Mr. President, I rise today to echo my colleagues in recognizing Dave Johnson for his commitment to public service. Having spent 23 years working on agriculture and food policy for the Federal Government, Dave has demonstrated a rare dedication to an industry that provides food, feed, fiber and fuel to people all around the globe.

While serving as Secretary of Agriculture, I had the privilege of working closely with Dave, who was Deputy Chief of Staff at the U.S. Department of Agriculture. I fondly remember the many hours Dave spent putting pen to paper and drawing together our ideas into legislative language for Congress to consider as part of the 2007–2008 farm bill process. His knowledge of agriculture policy and his work ethic were invaluable to our efforts. The many hours we spent working on farm policy led to a friendship that I continue to appreciate.

Twenty-three years is a long time to spend as a public servant and Dave has earned our sincerest gratitude for his years of service to farmers, ranchers, conservationists, nutrition advocates, rural Americans and all those affected by USDA policies, who have directly or indirectly benefitted from his work.

I wish Dave the very best as he opens a new chapter in his life. I am confident that with his positive attitude, principled approach and genuinely kind heart, success will follow him down whatever path he chooses.

Mr. ROBERTS. I would like to take a few moments this morning to wander from regular order to recognize a long-

time staffer and public servant who will be retiring next Friday.

August 5 will be Dave Johnson's last day as a Republican staffer on the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry. It will also be the end of a 23-year career in public service—most of that right here on this committee.

Dave has served me as ranking member since March. He previously served as both the chief Republican counsel and deputy staff director of this committee. His service includes working for Chairman LUGAR from 1987 to 1991 and again from 1994 to 2003. He then served Chairman COCHRAN from 2003 to 2005 and Chairman CHAMBLISS from 2005 to 2007. And from 2007 to 2008 he served then-Secretary of Agriculture MIKE JOHANNS as a deputy chief of staff at the U.S. Department of Agriculture. He then moved to the Commodity Futures Trading Commission where he served until we convinced him to come back and help us get up and running this past spring.

Dave's record speaks for itself. But I am not sure some understand just how valuable his service has been to this Committee and agriculture and nutrition policy.

As those who know Dave can tell you, his first love has been nutrition policy. He has worked on numerous child nutrition bills and the nutrition title of no less than four farm bills, by my count. I also know that if you sit down and visit with him, he'd probably tell you that one of his proudest moments was the work he did on the 1996 Welfare Reform Act.

Dave has always been a straight shooter. He gives you the answers you need to hear. But one of his greatest strengths is reminding you of the things you haven't considered and need to think about. He has been a tremendous mentor to young staff on both sides of the aisle and he was often the first stop many of them made when looking for advice on how to learn the ropes of the committee.

Finally, Dave's attention to detail and proofing proposed legislation is legendary. If you are scrubbing a bill and making sure it is done right, his is the set of eyes you want on it. A member of my staff was once told by a former member of the Senate Parliamentarian's office that a farm bill Dave had helped write and scrub was ''among the best written bills we've ever seen come through the Senate.''

That pretty much sums up Dave's service to this committee. Dave, as a former bucket-toter myself, thank you for your years of service to our country, the Senate, the members of this Committee and our constituents. You have been a true public servant and we all wish you only the best as you head home to Indiana.

Job well done.

THE READY SCHOOLS ACT

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. President, August marks the start of a new school year for more than 1.8 million students in Ohio. It is a time of excitement and nervousness as students prepare for challenging classes, different classmates, and new teachers.

As the summer winds down, high school students are cramming in the summer reading that they pushed off in favor of a bike ride with friends or a game of baseball. Middle school students are crossing their fingers in hopes that their best friend from the last school year is in their class this year. And soon-to-be kindergarteners are practicing their numbers and letters in preparation of their first day of elementary school.

Student readiness for kindergarten is generally defined by the Ohio School Readiness Initiative as a child who has age-appropriate cognitive and social skills and a healthy mind and body. Student readiness can be fostered through a child's participation in high-quality and developmentally appropriate preschool programs like Head Start. These programs are important because if a child is not prepared for elementary school, they are more likely to fall behind their better-prepared peers and remain behind as they progress through school.

However, it is equally important that schools are prepared to accept and support all students as they arrive at the schoolhouse door. Student readiness also means school readiness.

That is why I am introducing The Ready Schools Act of 2011 with my colleague Senator KAY R. HAGAN of North Carolina. This legislation incorporates the recommendations of a report conducted by the congressionally commissioned National Education Goals Panel, which states that elementary ''school readiness'' involves not only preparing each child for school, but also preparing schools to support each child's learning and development needs.

The Ready Schools Act of 2011 would require title 1 eligible Local Educational Agencies to work with their elementary schools to develop a ready-school needs review. This review would focus on ways an elementary school can develop policies that would create a positive school environment. It would help teachers provide students with developmentally and culturally appropriate curriculums. Finally, it would empower collaboration with early childhood education providers in the school attendance area to ensure a smooth transition from preschool to elementary school.

In my State of Ohio, the SPARK Ohio partnership has led the way in an effort to make every school a ''ready'' school. Through a strong partnership comprised of the Sisters of Charity, the Ohio Department of Education, the WK Kellogg Foundation and others, SPARK Ohio has helped developed a ''ready'' school needs review that is now a national model. I am proud of these efforts, and the hard work of the students, administrators, teachers, and families that have ensured the success of the more than 40 ''ready'' schools in Ohio.

The Ready Schools Act is about more than making our schools the best they can be. It is about making Ohio, and all States in the Nation, the best they can be. By strengthening the alignment and delivery of early education, our youngest students can continue on a path of academic and life achievement. Research shows that third-grade reading skills can serve as an indicator of whether or not a student will graduate from high school. And not only is school readiness an educational imperative, it is an economic one as well. High school students dropping out from the class of 2010 alone will cause the State of Ohio over $10 billion in lower lifetime earnings, higher health care costs, and crime related costs.

The building blocks critical to a lifetime of learning are laid during the elementary school years. This is why I am proud to introduce the Ready Schools Act. It will not only improve our system of education but will ultimately lead to a stronger nation.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO HAL DAVID

• Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, today I wish to celebrate the 90th birthday of Hal David, a wonderful lyricist who has entertained the world with his delightful songs for more than half a century.

Born in Brooklyn, Hal David developed a talent for music at an early age while studying violin and playing in bands. His first hit record came in 1949 with ''The Four Winds and the Seven Seas'' by Vic Damone. During the 1950s, David began his legendary collaboration with composer Burt Bacharach, and the two created hit songs such as ''Walk on By,'' ''I'll Never Fall in Love Again,'' ''The Look of Love,'' and ''What the World Needs Now Is Love.'' Hal's talents earned him four Academy Award nominations, including an Oscar for ''Raindrops Keep Falling on My Head'' from the film ''Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid''; and an induction into the Songwriters Hall of Fame and the Nashville Songwriters Hall of Fame.

Hal David has also fought to protect and promote other songwriters. As president of the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers, ASCAP, he worked tirelessly to protect the intellectual property rights of musicians. As chairman & CEO of the Songwriters Hall of Fame, he helped create the Songwriters Hall of Fame Gallery at the Grammy Museum in Los Angeles.

Hal David's extraordinary songs will continue to touch the lives and hearts of future generations. I invite all of my colleagues to join me in honoring Hal David as he celebrates his 90th birthday.•

ISABEL, SOUTH DAKOTA

• Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota. Mr. President, today I recognize the community of Isabel, SD, on reaching the 100th anniversary of its founding. Located in Dewey County, Isabel has a strong farming and ranching tradition, which has been passed on through the generations. Isabel will celebrate its centennial August 2–7, 2011.

Isabel began its settlement in the spring of 1910 along the Milwaukee Railroad and the town became a legal corporation on March 13, 1911. Isabel was named for the daughter of President Earling of the Milwaukee Railroad. With its vast prairie, Isabel was a prime location for cattle and sheep ranching. The Homestead Act of 1908 encouraged pioneers to move West and these pioneers built the first stores and businesses in Isabel. Businesses allowed local farmers and ranchers to thrive and became hallmarks of the community.

Isabel will celebrate its 100th anniversary with an All School Reunion, a parade, two rodeos, powwows, and dances. Isabel's centennial celebration will also include a wagon train and trail ride, which will retrace an old wagon route to neighboring settlements.

Isabel's strong sense of community helped the town endure challenges in its early settlement, including the severe drought of 1911. Isabel continues to be a steadfast farming and ranching community today. I am proud to honor Isabel on its 100th anniversary. Isabel holds the virtues and values that lay at the very heart of South Dakota.•

TRIBUTE TO J. MICHAEL MILEY

• Mr. LUGAR. Mr. President, today I recognize a fellow Hoosier, Mr. J. Michael Miley, as he nears the end of his term as the 106th chairman of the Nation's largest insurance association, the Independent Insurance Agents & Brokers of America, IIABA. Mike is an executive with the Gibson Insurance Group in Plymouth, IN, and was installed as the association's chairman last September.

Mike began his insurance career in 1973 and joined the Gibson Insurance Group in 1983. His relationship with the IIABA began in 1978, when he became a member of the Marshall-Fulton-Starke Counties Independent Insurance Agents Association, ultimately climbing the ranks to serve as its president. During his affiliation with the Independent Insurance Agents of Indiana, IIAI, Mike served at numerous posts, and was elected to the executive committee of IIAI and served as president in 1995. He was elected Indiana's State national director to the board of IIABA in 1997.

Over the years, Mike has been the recipient of numerous awards, including the 1987 Chairman of the Year Award for his work on the New Products and Services Committee, Indiana Agent of the Year Award both in 1989 and 2006, Honorary Commissioner of Insurance in 1990, and in 1991 he was the first recipient of the Harry P. Cooper Public Image Award.

On the national level, he has proven his leadership capabilities by serving on the boards of Membership Services, Inc., Agency Administrative Services, Inc., and Trusted Choice, Inc. Mike also held leadership roles as a board member of Big ''I'' Advantage, as chairman of IIAA Agency Administrative Services, Inc., and as a member of the Professional Liability Committee.

Mike has also been very active in his community, including work with the United Way of Marshall County. His volunteer efforts with the group include fundraising as well as serving as a board member and president in 1998 and 1999.

Mike attended Arizona State University and lives in Plymouth, IN, with his wife Cindy and their two children, Margaret and Matthew. I would like to commend Mike's commitment to his profession, his community, and our State of Indiana, and I wish him and his family all the best in their future endeavors.•

RAPID CITY, SOUTH DAKOTA

• Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, today I recognize Rapid City, SD. Rapid City has recently been designated America's ''Most Patriotic Town'' by Rand McNally and USA Today in their inaugural Best of the Road competition, which recognizes achievements of small towns across the country. Rapid City will be one of five towns featured on USA Today's Web site, www.bestoftheroad.com, and featured in the new 2013 Rand McNally Atlas.

Rapid City is the second-largest city in South Dakota and is located on the eastern slope of the Black Hills in the western part of the State. Nearby Mount Rushmore National Memorial and Ellsworth Air Force Base make Rapid City a patriotic mecca. However, I believe it is not the location but the people of Rapid City that gave the town the honor of being named the most patriotic town in America.

The citizens of Rapid City live their lives in support of both their community and their country. This patriotic town strives for excellence while its residents live the American dream. I would like to offer my congratulations to the citizens and the community of Rapid City on this accomplishment and wish them continued prosperity in the years to come.•

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Williams, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations and withdrawals which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The nominations received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 10:05 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 2056. An act to instruct the Inspector General of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation to study the impact of insured depository institution failures, and for other purposes.

H.R. 2149. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 4354 Pahoa Avenue in Honolulu, Hawaii, as the ''Cecil L. Heftel Post Office Building''.

H.R. 2548. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 6310 North University Street in Peoria, Illinois, as the ''Charles 'Chip' Lawrence Chan Post Office Building''.

At 5:06 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 440. An act to provide for the establishment of the Special Envoy to Promote Religious Freedom of Religious Minorities in the Near East and South Central Asia.

H.R. 2244. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 67 Castle Street in Geneva, New York, as the ''Corporal Steven Blaine Riccione Post Office''.

At 7:52 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, with an amendment:

S. 627. An act to establish the Commission on Freedom of Information Act Processing Delays.

The message also announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 789. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 20 Main Street in Little Ferry, New Jersey, as the ''Sergeant Matthew J. Fenton Post Office''.

H.R. 2213. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 801 West Eastport Street in Iuka, Mississippi, as the ''Sergeant Jason W. Vaughn Post Office''.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills were read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 789. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 20 Main Street in Little Ferry, New Jersey, as the ''Sergeant Matthew J. Fenton Post Office''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 2056. An act to instruct the Inspector General of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation to study the impact of insured depository institution failures, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

H.R. 2149. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 4354 Pahoa Avenue in Honolulu, Hawaii, as the ''Cecil L. Heftel Post Office Building''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 2213. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 801 West Eastport Street in Iuka, Mississippi, as the ''Sergeant Jason W. Vaughn Post Office''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 2244. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 67 Castle Street in Geneva, New York, as the ''Corporal Steven Blaine Riccione Post Office''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 2548. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 6310 North University Street in Peoria, Illinois, as the ''Charles 'Chip' Lawrence Chan Post Office Building''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC–2710. A communication from the Chief of Planning and Regulatory Affairs, Food and Nutrition Services, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Cooperation in USDA Studies and Evaluations, and Full Use of Federal Funds in Nutrition Assistance Programs Nondiscretionary Provisions of the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, Public Law 111–296'' (RIN0584–AE20) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 28, 2011; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–2711. A communication from the Congressional Review Coordinator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Importation of Shepherd's Purse With Roots From the Republic of Korea Into the United States'' ((RIN0579–AD26) (Docket No. APHIS–2009–0086)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 27, 2011; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–2712. A communication from the Congressional Review Coordinator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Karnal Bunt; Regulated Areas in Arizona, California, and Texas'' (Docket No. APHIS–2009–0079) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 27, 2011; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–2713. A communication from the Secretary of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Effective Date for Swap Regulation'' (17 CFR Part 1) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 28, 2011; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–2714. A communication from the Secretary of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Agricultural Commodity Definition'' ((17 CFR Part 1) (RIN3038–AD23)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 28, 2011; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–2715. A communication from the Secretary of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Prohibition on the Employment, or Attempted Employment, of Manipulative and Deceptive Devices and Prohibition on Price Manipulation'' ((17 CFR Part 180) (RIN3038–AD27)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 28, 2011; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–2716. A communication from the Secretary of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Large Trader Reporting for Physical Commodity Swaps'' ((17 CFR Parts 15 and 20) (RIN3038–AD17)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 28, 2011; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–2717. A communication from the Secretary of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Business Affiliate Marketing and Disposal of Consumer Information Rules'' ((17 CFR Part 162) (RIN3038–AD12)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 28, 2011; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–2718. A communication from the Secretary of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Privacy of Consumer Financial Information; Conforming Amendments Under Dodd-Frank Act'' ((17 CFR Part 160) (RIN3038–AD13)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 28, 2011; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–2719. A communication from the Secretary of Defense, transmitting a report on the approved retirement of Lieutenant General Ted F. Bowlds, United States Air Force, and his advancement to the grade of lieutenant general on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–2720. A communication from the Chief Counsel, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Suspension of Community Eligibility'' ((44 CFR Part 64) (Docket No. FEMA–8189)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 28, 2011; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–2721. A communication from the Secretary, Division of Trading and Markets, Securities and Exchange Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Large Trader Reporting'' ((17 CFR 240.13h–1) (RIN3235–AK55)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 28, 2011; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–2722. A communication from the Secretary, Division of Corporation Finance, Securities and Exchange Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Security Ratings'' (RIN3235–AK18) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 28, 2011; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–2723. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Office of Policy, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Pennsylvania; Diesel-Powered Motor Vehicle Idling Act'' (FRL No. 9445–9) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 28, 2011; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2724. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Office of Policy, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; State of California; Interstate Transport of Pollution; Interference with Prevention of Significant Deterioration Requirement'' (FRL No. 9446–6) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 28, 2011; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2725. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Office of Policy, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Lead; Clearance and Clearance Testing Requirements for the Renovation, Repair, and Painting Program'' (FRL No. 8881–8) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 28, 2011; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2726. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Office of Policy, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Revision to the California State Implementation Plan; San Joaquin Valley Unified Air Pollution Control District'' (FRL No. 9444–3) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 28, 2011; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2727. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Office of Policy, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Revision to the California State Implementation Plan; South Coast Air Quality Management District'' (FRL No. 9437–6) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 28, 2011; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2728. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Office of Policy, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Revision to the California State Implementation Plan, South Coast Air Quality Management District'' (FRL No. 9446–7) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 28, 2011; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2729. A communication from the Director of Congressional Affairs, Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Standard Format and Content of License Termination Plans for Nuclear Power Plant Reactors'' (Regulatory Guide 1.179, Revision 1) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 28, 2011; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2730. A communication from the Chairman of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Alternative to Minimum Days Off Requirements'' (RIN3150–AI94) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 28, 2011; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2731. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Discontinuance of High-Low Method for Substantiating Travel Expenses'' (Announcement 2011–42) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 27, 2011; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–2732. A communication from the Acting Comptroller of the Currency, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Report on Credit Ratings''; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–2733. A communication from the Assistant Legal Adviser for Treaty Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to the Case-Zablocki Act, 1 U.S.C. 112b, as amended, the report of the texts and background statements of international agreements, other than treaties (List 2011–0113–2011–0120); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–2734. A joint communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Legislative and Public Affairs, U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Acting Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Joint Summary of Performance and Financial Information for Fiscal Year 2010''; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–2735. A communication from the Director of the Office of Personnel Management, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Office's Federal Activities Inventory Reform Act Inventory Summary as of June 30, 2011; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–2736. A communication from the Senior Associate General Counsel, Office of the Director of National Intelligence, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Director of the National Counterterrorism Center; to the Select Committee on Intelligence.

EC–2737. A communication from the Staff Director, United States Commission on Civil Rights, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of the appointment of members to the New Hampshire Advisory Committee; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC–2738. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries Off West Coast States; Coastal Pelagic Species Fisheries; Closure'' (RIN0648–XA554) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 28, 2011; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–2739. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pacific Ocean Perch for Catcher Vessels Participating in the Rockfish Entry Level Trawl Fishery in the Central Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Alaska'' (RIN0648–XA558) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 28, 2011; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–2740. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Northern Rockfish in the Western Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Alaska'' (RIN0648–XA557) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 28, 2011; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–2741. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Atlantic Highly Migratory Species; Inseason Action to Close the Commercial Gulf of Mexico Non-Sandbar Large Coastal Shark Fishery'' (RIN0648–XA541) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 28, 2011; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–2742. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; Snapper-Grouper Fishery of the South Atlantic; Closure of the 2011–2012 Commercial Sector for Black Sea Bass in the South Atlantic'' (RIN0648–XA552) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 28, 2011; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–2743. A communication from the Senior Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Amendment of Class E Airspace; Mosby, MO'' ((RIN2120–AA66)(Docket No. FAA–2010–0608)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 27, 2011; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–2744. A communication from the Senior Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Amendment of Class E Airspace; Madison, SD'' ((RIN2120–AA66)(Docket No. FAA–2011–0135)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 27, 2011; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–2745. A communication from the Senior Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Establishment of Class E Airspace; Campbellton, TX'' ((RIN2120–AA66)(Docket No. FAA–2010–1053)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 27, 2011; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–2746. A communication from the Senior Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Establishment of Class E Airspace; Lincoln City, OR'' ((RIN2120–AA66)(Docket No. FAA–2010–0987)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 27, 2011; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–2747. A communication from the Senior Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Establishment of Class E Airspace; Florence, OR'' ((RIN2120–AA66)(Docket No. FAA–2010–0986)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 27, 2011; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–2748. A communication from the Senior Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; BRP-Power Train GmbH and Co. KG Rotax 912 F3, 912 S2, 912 S3, 912 S4, 914 F2, 914 F3, and 914 F4 Reciprocating Engines'' ((RIN2120–AA66)(Docket No. FAA–2011–0456)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 27, 2011; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–2749. A communication from the Senior Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; L'Hotellier Portable Halon 1211 Fire Extinguishers'' ((RIN2120–AA66)(Docket No. FAA–2011–0506)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 27, 2011; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–2750. A communication from the Senior Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Schweizer Aircraft Corporation (Schweizer) Model 269A, A–1, B, C, C–1, and TH–55 Series Helicopters'' ((RIN2120–AA64)(Docket No. FAA–2011–0593)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 27, 2011; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–2751. A communication from the Senior Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Dassault Aviation Model FALCON 7X Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64)(Docket No. FAA–2011–0477)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 27, 2011; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–2752. A communication from the Senior Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Model A318, A319, A320, and A321 Series Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64)(Docket No. FAA–2011–0573)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 27, 2011; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–2753. A communication from the Senior Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Model A330–200 and –300 Series Airplanes, and Model A340–200 and –300 Series Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64)(Docket No. FAA–2010–1277)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 27, 2011; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–2754. A communication from the Senior Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Rolls-Royce plc (RR) RB211–524 Series Turbofan Engines'' ((RIN2120–AA64)(Docket No. FAA–2011–0624)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 27, 2011; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–2755. A communication from the Senior Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Dassault Aviation Model FALCON 7X Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64)(Docket No. FAA–2011–0152)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 27, 2011; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–2756. A communication from the Senior Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Model DC–9–81 (MD–81), DC–9–82 (MD–82), DC–9–83 (MD–83), DC–9–87 (MD–87), and MD–88 Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64)(Docket No. FAA–2010–1203)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 27, 2011; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–2757. A communication from the Senior Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Model A300 B4–600, B4–600R, and F4–600R Series Airplanes, and Model C4–605R Variant F Airplanes (Collectively Called A300–600 Series Airplanes); and Model A310 Series Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64)(Docket No. FAA–2010–1197)) received in the Office of

the President of the Senate on July 27, 2011; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–2758. A communication from the Senior Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Model A330–200 and –300 Series Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64)(Docket No. FAA–2009–1212)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 27, 2011; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–2759. A communication from the Senior Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Bombardier, Inc. Model DHC–8–400 Series Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64)(Docket No. FAA–2011–0260)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 27, 2011; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–2760. A communication from the Senior Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Bombardier, Inc. Model DHC–8–400 Series Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64)(Docket No. FAA–2011–0036)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 27, 2011; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–2761. A communication from the Senior Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Empresa Brasileira de Aeronautica S.A. (EMBRAER) Model EMB–120, –120ER, –120FC, –120QC, and –120RT Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64)(Docket No. FAA–2010–0546)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 27, 2011; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–2762. A communication from the Senior Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Dassault Aviation Model FALCON 7X Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64)(Docket No. FAA–2011–0259)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 27, 2011; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–2763. A communication from the Senior Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Costruzioni Aeronautiche Tecnam srl Model P2006T Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64)(Docket No. FAA–2011–0326)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 27, 2011; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–2764. A communication from the Senior Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Model 737–600, –700, –700C, –800, –900, and –900ER Series Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64)(Docket No. FAA–2010–0853)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 27, 2011; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. LEAHY, from the Committee on the Judiciary, without amendment:

S. 605. A bill to amend the Controlled Substances Act to place synthetic drugs in Schedule I.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. PRYOR (for himself, Mr. ROCKEFELLER, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. UDALL of New Mexico, and Mrs. GILLIBRAND):

S. 1449. A bill to authorize the appropriation of funds for highway safety programs and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Ms. SNOWE:

S. 1450. A bill to amend title 23, United States Code, to provide for the establishment of a commercial truck safety program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. VITTER (for himself, Mr. NELSON of Florida, Mr. MCCAIN, and Mr. WHITEHOUSE):

S. 1451. A bill to prohibit the sale of billfish; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota, and Mr. REED):

S. 1452. A bill to promote simplification and fairness in the administration and collection of sales and use taxes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. MURKOWSKI (for herself and Mr. BEGICH):

S. 1453. A bill to amend the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972 to allow the transport, purchase, and sale of pelts of, and handicrafts, garments, and art produced from, Southcentral and Southeast Alaska northern sea otters that are taken for subsistence purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. BROWN of Massachusetts, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. SCHUMER, and Mr. INOUYE):

S. 1454. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for extended months of Medicare coverage of immunosuppressive drugs for kidney transplant patients and other renal dialysis provisions; to the Committee on Finance.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Ms. STABENOW (for herself, Ms. SNOWE, Mr. INOUYE, Mr. CARDIN, Ms. COLLINS, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. CHAMBLISS, Mr. TESTER, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. LAUTENBERG, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. BENNET, Mr. LIEBERMAN, Mrs. HUTCHISON, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. UDALL of Colorado, Mr. BROWN of Ohio, Mr. WICKER, Mr. BROWN of Massachusetts, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, and Mr. SCHUMER):

S. Res. 242. A resolution supporting the goals and ideals of National Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. CRAPO (for himself, Mr. CASEY, Mr. INOUYE, Mr. AKAKA, Mr. RUBIO, and Mr. TOOMEY):

S. Res. 243. A resolution promoting increased awareness, diagnosis, and treatment of atrial fibrillation to address the high morbidity and mortality rates and to prevent avoidable hospitalizations associated with the disease; considered and agreed to.

By Ms. LANDRIEU (for herself, Mrs. HAGAN, Mr. WICKER, Mr. BROWN of Ohio, Mr. NELSON of Florida, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. CARDIN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, and Mr. CORNYN):

S. Res. 244. A resolution congratulating Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. for 100 years of service to communities throughout the United States and the world, and commending Omega Psi Phi for upholding its cardinal principles of manhood, scholarship, perseverance, and uplift; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. KERRY (for himself and Mr. DURBIN):

S. Res. 245. A resolution designating November 2011 as ''Stomach Cancer Awareness Month'' and supporting efforts to educate the public about stomach cancer; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 48

At the request of Mr. INOUYE, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. KERRY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 48, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide for the participation of pharmacists in National Health Services Corps programs, and for other purposes.

S. 362

At the request of Mr. WHITEHOUSE, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Mr. HELLER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 362, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide for a Pancreatic Cancer Initiative, and for other purposes.

S. 387

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 387, a bill to amend title 37, United States Code, to provide flexible spending arrangements for members of uniformed services, and for other purposes.

S. 409

At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the names of the Senator from Iowa (Mr. GRASSLEY) and the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) were added as cosponsors of S. 409, a bill to ban the sale of certain synthetic drugs.

S. 605

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the name of the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 605, a bill to amend the Controlled Substances Act to place synthetic drugs in Schedule I.

S. 811

At the request of Mr. MERKLEY, the name of the Senator from Missouri (Mrs. MCCASKILL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 811, a bill to prohibit employment discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity.

S. 966

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. INOUYE) was added as a cosponsor

of S. 966, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide for osteoporosis and related bone disease education, research, and surveillance, and for other purposes.

S. 1013

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. SNOWE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1013, a bill to renew the authority of the Secretary of Health and Human Services to approve demonstration projects designed to test innovative strategies in State child welfare programs.

S. 1025

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, the name of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1025, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to enhance the national defense through empowerment of the National Guard, enhancement of the functions of the National Guard Bureau, and improvement of Federal-State military coordination in domestic emergency response, and for other purposes.

S. 1058

At the request of Mr. PRYOR, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1058, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to ensure transparency and proper operation of pharmacy benefit managers.

S. 1096

At the request of Ms. SNOWE, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1096, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to improve access to, and utilization of, bone mass measurement benefits under the Medicare part B program by extending the minimum payment amount for bone mass measurement under such program through 2013.

S. 1119

At the request of Mr. INOUYE, the names of the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL) and the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. KERRY) were added as cosponsors of S. 1119, a bill to reauthorize and improve the Marine Debris Research, Prevention, and Reduction Act, and for other purposes.

S. 1144

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1144, a bill to amend the Soda Ash Royalty Reduction Act of 2006 to extend the reduced royalty rate for soda ash.

S. 1203

At the request of Ms. SNOWE, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1203, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for the coverage of home infusion therapy under the Medicare Program.

S. 1335

At the request of Mr. INHOFE, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1335, a bill to amend title 49, United States Code, to provide rights for pilots, and for other purposes.

S. 1348

At the request of Mr. BROWN of Massachusetts, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1348, a bill to amend title 36, United States Code, to encourage the nationwide observance of two minutes of silence each Veterans Day.

S. 1359

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from Missouri (Mrs. MCCASKILL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1359, a bill to make the National Parks and Federal Recreation Lands Pass available at a discount to members of the Armed Forces and veterans.

S. 1372

At the request of Mr. REED, the names of the Senator from Maine (Ms. SNOWE) and the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL) were added as cosponsors of S. 1372, a bill to amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 regarding environmental education, and for other purposes.

S. 1395

At the request of Mr. BARRASSO, the names of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN), the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH) and the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT) were added as cosponsors of S. 1395, a bill to ensure that all Americans have access to waivers from the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

S. 1417

At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1417, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to modify the credit for qualified fuel cell motor vehicles and to allow the credit for certain off-highway vehicles, and for other purposes.

S. RES. 132

At the request of Mr. NELSON of Nebraska, the names of the Senator from North Carolina (Mrs. HAGAN) and the Senator from Louisiana (Ms. LANDRIEU) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 132, a resolution recognizing and honoring the zoos and aquariums of the United States.

S. RES. 216

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the names of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON) and the Senator from Texas (Mrs. HUTCHISON) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 216, a resolution encouraging women's political participation in Saudi Arabia.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Ms. SNOWE:

S. 1450. A bill to amend title 23, United States Code, to provide for the establishment of a commercial truck safety program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

Ms. SNOWE. Mr. President, today I introduce the Commercial Truck Safety Act of 2011 to address one of my top priorities, and one of my constituents' greatest concerns in recent years, keeping trucks on the Interstate Highway System whenever and wherever possible.

Improving truck safety has been one of my key concerns for more than a decade. What seemed like a simple task so many years ago has become a long battle, fighting for common sense changes that would allow all trucks in Maine to use the Interstate system.

In 2009, Senator COLLINS and I, and our colleagues from Vermont, were able to secure a one-year pilot program that allowed 100,000–pound trucks on Interstates in Maine. The program reinforced the need for a permanent change to the outdated and inconsistent regulations that govern the weight of trucks on our Interstate highways.

During the 2009–2010 pilot program, there were 14 fewer crashes, a 10 percent improvement, involving six-axle vehicles, even with increased traffic volume on Maine's Interstate system. In fact, there were no fatal crashes on the Interstate during the pilot program, and 5 fewer injuries on secondary roads.

Maine's Department of Transportation collects fatal accident data regarding large trucks, and more than 96 percent are on secondary roads, not the Interstate, including the portion of 1–95 that has a permanent exemption. Crash rates for Maine trucks on secondary roads are 7 to 10 times higher than on Interstate highways.

Trucks belong on the highway, but Interstate highway weight limits are inconsistent across state lines, and shippers are forced to use secondary roads to move goods through states still restricted by weight limits established decades ago. In the 122 miles between Hampden and Houlton, Maine, a common route for shippers, these legal 100,000-pound trucks are forced to pass by 9 schools, 270 intersections, and more than 3,000 driveways.

The Commercial Truck Safety Act will allow states to petition the Secretary of Transportation for a waiver from current Interstate weight limits. The Secretary would have the authority to authorize a 3-year pilot program, during which time state engineers, highway users, and safety advocates would weigh the advantages and disadvantages, and report to the Secretary who could then set reasonable, permanent weight limits.

The Secretary would authorize a 3-year pilot program within a state, and require the creation of a safety committee, composed of engineers, safety advocates, and highway users. This team would report to the Secretary on whether the pilot program should be made permanent, eliminating the need

for individual States to come to Congress for special exemptions.

Under my plan, only six-axle vehicles would be eligible to carry loads over 80,000 pounds. A 2000 Federal Highway Administration study noted that these trucks cause LESS fatigue on both rigid and flexible pavements. There is no question that allowing these vehicles on the Interstate will have safety, environmental, and efficiency benefits.

A total of 27 States already have some type of permanent exemption, and 47 states allow trucks weighing over 80,000 pounds on some roads within their State. To offer a clear picture of this, if you are driving a 100,000-pound truck from Gary, Indiana, just outside of Chicago, to Portland, Maine, you would be forced to unload the additional weight to continue on the Interstate in Maine, or travel through the state on local roads, needlessly raising the risk of an accident on a local road or street. Conversely, and inexplicably, you can drive a truck weighing 90,000 pounds all the way from Kansas City, MO to Seattle, WA, exclusively on the Interstate system.

If a State's chief highway engineer can certify the safety of a route, and the condition of a road, a State should have the flexibility to change its weight limit on Interstate highways.

Pulp and paper produced in Bucksport and Lincoln, Maine, are vital to the economic health of my State, but with the return to previous weight limits, Maine is at a significant disadvantage due to the higher cost of transportation caused by this fundamental inequity. Some of my constituents noted that the pilot program increased efficiency so appreciably, it was as if the factory had been moved 200 miles closer to the customer. While at first glance this may seem insignificant, we must not forget that diesel prices are well above $4.00 per gallon, and tractor trailers operate at approximately 6 miles per gallon. Not only will this bill save fuel and costs for shippers, it will reduce costs for states. A 2004 study commissioned by the Maine Department of Transportation indicates that a permanent change would reduce the state's pavement costs by more than $1 million per year. It would also cut bridge rehabilitation costs by more than $300,000 per year.

It is critical that we maximize our current highway capacity, and ensure that freight movement is efficient and timely. The Commercial Truck Safety Act will provide states with the flexibility they need to improve freight mobility and increase safety on our highways. I urge my colleagues to support this bill, and allow States to update truck weight limits that no longer enhance safety or boost our economy.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota, and Mr. REED):

S. 1452. A bill to promote simplification and fairness in the administration and collection of sales and use taxes; to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, ''Level the Playing Field.''

When I ask small business owners what they would like the Federal Government to do to help them thrive, the answer I most frequently hear is, ''level the playing field.''

It may be a cliché, but there's truth to it. Most small businesspeople don't want a government handout. They don't want special treatment. They just want to be able to compete fairly against other businesses.

That is why I am introducing the Main Street Fairness Act.

If you are a small business owner in Peoria or Springfield or Alton, you compete against neighboring businesses down the street and, increasingly, with sellers on the internet. The businesses down the street have to collect the same State sales taxes that you do. But, many internet sellers don't.

That means internet sellers have a built-in price advantage. That isn't fair, and it's not a level playing field.

The Main Street Fairness Act would address that. The bill would give Congressional endorsement to the Streamline Sales and Use Tax Agreement, which 45 States and the District of Columbia created years ago to help make it feasible for businesses selling online to collect State and local sales taxes already owed.

Why is this Agreement necessary? The Supreme Court ruled in the early '90s that the maze of current sales tax rules and rates was too complex to expect online retailers to comply. The States worked together to address that problem.

The Main Street Fairness Act says that any State that wants to do so can require online retailers to collect the same sales taxes that Main Street businesses collect, provided that small online retailers are exempt, online retailers are compensated for any startup administrative costs associated with collecting sales taxes, and all retailers are treated equally regarding sales tax collection.

Let me be as clear as I can on one point: this bill is NOT a tax increase.

It doesn't amend the Internal Revenue Code in any way. It simply provides states the option to require all retailers to collect the sales taxes that are already owed.

The Main Street Fairness Act provides two other big benefits.

First, consumers will no longer be asked to itemize the sales taxes they owe from their online purchases on their year-end tax forms. Few consumers comply with the law today—most don't know they should—but the Main Street Fairness Act would eliminate the need to do so.

Second, State and local governments would collect taxes that are already owed.

It is no secret that many States and cities, including the State of Illinois and local governments across my State, are struggling to balance their budgets.

The State of Illinois estimates that we lose as much as $153 million each year in unpaid taxes on internet sales alone.

Passing the Main Street Fairness Act would help State and local governments balance their budgets without cutting spending or raising new taxes.

The Main Street Fairness Act is supported by the National Governors' Association, National Conference on State Legislatures, Governing Board of the Streamlined Sales and Use Tax Agreement, National Retail Federation, International Council of Shopping Centers, Retail Industry Leaders Association, and the National Association of Real Estate Investment Trusts.

The Main Street Fairness Act will level the playing field for our small businesses. I urge its passage.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 1452

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the ''Main Street Fairness Act''.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.
Sec. 2. Consent of Congress.
Sec. 3. Findings.
Sec. 4. Authorization to require collection of sales and use taxes.
Sec. 5. Determinations by governing board and judicial review of such determinations.
Sec. 6. Minimum simplification requirements.
Sec. 7. Limitation.
Sec. 8. Expedited judicial review.
Sec. 9. Definitions.
Sec. 10. Severability.
Sec. 11. Sense of Congress on digital goods and services.

SEC. 2. CONSENT OF CONGRESS.

Congress consents to the Streamlined Sales and Use Tax Agreement.

SEC. 3. FINDINGS.

Congress makes the following findings:

(1) States should be encouraged to simplify their sales and use tax systems.

(2) As a matter of economic policy and basic fairness, similar sales transactions should be treated equally, without regard to the manner in which sales are transacted, whether in person, through the mail, over the telephone, on the Internet, or by other means.

(3) Congress may facilitate such equal taxation consistent with the United States Supreme Court's decision in *Quill Corp. v. North Dakota*.

(4) States that voluntarily and adequately simplify their tax systems should be authorized to correct the present inequities in taxation through requiring sellers to collect taxes on sales of goods or services delivered in-state, without regard to the location of the seller.

(5) The States have experience, expertise, and a vital interest in the collection of sales and use taxes, and thus should take the lead in developing and implementing sales and use tax collection systems that are fair, efficient, and non-discriminatory in their application and that will simplify the process for both sellers and buyers.

(6) Online consumer privacy is of paramount importance to the growth of electronic commerce and must be protected.

SEC. 4. AUTHORIZATION TO REQUIRE COLLECTION OF SALES AND USE TAXES.

(a) GRANT OF AUTHORITY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Each Member State under the Streamlined Sales and Use Tax Agreement is authorized, subject to the requirements of this section, to require all sellers not qualifying for the small seller exception to collect and remit sales and use taxes with respect to remote sales sourced to that Member State under the Agreement.

(2) REQUIREMENTS FOR AUTHORITY.—The authorization provided under paragraph (1) shall be granted once all of the following have occurred:

(A) Ten States comprising at least 20 percent of the total population of all States imposing a sales tax, as determined by the most recent Federal census, have petitioned for membership and have become Member States under the Agreement.

(B) The following necessary operational aspects of the Agreement have been implemented by the Governing Board:

(i) Provider and system certification.

(ii) Setting of monetary allowance by contract with providers.

(iii) Implementation of an online multistate registration system.

(iv) Adoption of a standard form for claiming exemptions electronically.

(v) Establishment of advisory councils.

(vi) Promulgation of rules and procedures for dispute resolution.

(vii) Promulgation of rules and procedures for audits.

(viii) Provisions for funding and staffing the Governing Board.

(C) Each Member State has met the requirements to provide and maintain the databases for sales and use taxes and the taxability matrix described in the Agreement, pursuant to requirements of the Governing Board.

(3) LIMITATION OF AUTHORITY.—The authorization provided under paragraph (1)—

(A) shall be granted notwithstanding any other provision of law; and

(B) is dependent upon the Agreement, as amended, meeting the minimum simplification requirements of section 6.

(b) TERMINATION OF AUTHORITY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The authorization provided under subsection (a) shall terminate for all States if—

(A) the requirements contained in subsection (a) cease to be satisfied; or

(B) any amendment adopted to the Agreement after the date of the enactment of this Act is inconsistent with the provisions of this Act.

(2) LOSS OF MEMBER STATE STATUS.—The authorization provided under subsection (a) shall terminate for a Member State, if such Member State no longer meets the requirements for Member State status under the terms of the Agreement or the provisions of this Act.

(c) DETERMINATION OF STATUS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Governing Board shall determine if Member States are in compliance with the requirements of subsections (a) and (b) and whether each Member State meets the minimum simplification requirements of section 6, and shall reevaluate such determination on an annual basis.

(2) COMPLIANCE DETERMINATION.—Upon the determination of the Governing Board that all the requirements of subsection (a) have been satisfied, the authority to require a seller to collect and remit sales and use taxes shall commence on the first day of a calendar quarter at least 6 months after the date the Governing Board makes its determination.

(3) NONCOMPLIANCE DETERMINATION.—Upon a final determination by the Governing Board that a Member State is not in compliance with the minimum simplification requirements of section 6 or is otherwise not in compliance with the Agreement, that Member State shall lose its remote seller collection authority on the earlier of—

(A) the date specified by the Governing Board; or

(B) the later of—

(i) the first day of January at least 2 years after the Governing Board finally determined the State was not compliant; or

(ii) the first day of a calendar quarter following the end of one full session of the State's legislature beginning after the Governing Board finally determined the State was not compliant.

For purposes of this section, the terms ''final determination'' or ''finally determined'' shall mean that all appeals processes provided for in the Agreement have been exhausted or the time for pursuing such appeals has expired. An action before the Federal Court of Claims pursuant to section 5 shall not operate to stay a State's loss of collection authority.

(4) RESTORATION OF AUTHORITY.—Any Member State that loses its collection authority under this section must comply with all provisions of this section to have its remote seller collection authority restored.

SEC. 5. DETERMINATIONS BY GOVERNING BOARD AND JUDICIAL REVIEW OF SUCH DETERMINATIONS.

(a) PETITION.—At any time after the Governing Board has made the determinations required under section 4(c), any person who may be affected by the Agreement may petition the Governing Board for a determination on any issue related to the implementation of the Agreement or on a Member State's compliance with this Act or the Agreement.

(b) REVIEW IN COURT OF FEDERAL CLAIMS.—Any person who submits a petition under subsection (a) may bring an action against the Governing Board in the United States Court of Federal Claims for judicial review of the action of the Governing Board on that petition if—

(1) the petition relates to an issue of whether—

(A) a Member State has satisfied or continues to satisfy the requirements for Member State status under the Agreement;

(B) the Governing Board has performed a nondiscretionary duty of the Governing Board under the Agreement;

(C) the Agreement—

(i) continues to satisfy the minimum simplification requirements of section 6; or

(ii) otherwise continues to be consistent with the provisions of this Act; or

(D) any other requirement of section 4 has been satisfied; and

(2) the petition is denied by the Governing Board in whole or in part with respect to that issue, or the Governing Board fails to act on the petition with respect to that issue not later than the 6-month period beginning on the day after the date on which the petition was submitted.

(c) TIMING OF ACTION FOR REVIEW.—An action for review under this section shall be initiated not later than 60 days after the denial of the petition by the Governing Board, or, if the Governing Board fails to act on the petition, not later than 60 days after the end of the 6-month period beginning on the day after the date on which the petition was submitted.

(d) STANDARD OF REVIEW.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—In any action for review under this section, the court shall set aside the actions, findings, and conclusions of the Governing Board found to be arbitrary, capricious, an abuse of discretion, or otherwise not in accordance with law.

(2) REMAND.—If the court sets aside any action, finding, or conclusion of the Governing Board under paragraph (1), the court shall remand the case to the Governing Board for further action consistent with the decision of the court.

(3) NONMONETARY RELIEF.—In connection with any remand under paragraph (2), the court may not award monetary relief, but may award declaratory and injunctive relief.

(e) JURISDICTION.—

(1) GENERALLY.—Chapter 91 of title 28, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

''SEC. 1510. JURISDICTION REGARDING THE STREAMLINED SALES AND USE TAX AGREEMENT.

''The United States Court of Federal Claims shall have exclusive jurisdiction over actions for judicial review of determinations of the Governing Board of the Streamlined Sales and Use Tax Agreement under the terms and conditions provided in section 5 of the Main Street Fairness Act.''.

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENT TO TABLE OF SECTIONS.—The table of sections for chapter 91 of title 28, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new item:

''1510. Jurisdiction regarding the streamlined sales and use tax agreement.''.

SEC. 6. MINIMUM SIMPLIFICATION REQUIREMENTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The minimum simplification requirements for the Agreement are as follows:

(1) A centralized, one-stop, multistate registration system that a seller may elect to use to register with the Member States, provided a seller may also elect to register directly with a Member State, and further provided that privacy and confidentiality controls shall be placed on the multistate registration system so that it may not be used for any purpose other than the administration of sales and use taxes. Furthermore, no taxing authority within a Member State or a Member State that has withdrawn or been expelled from the Agreement may use registration with the centralized registration system for the purpose of, or as a factor in determining, whether a seller has a nexus with that Member State for any tax at any time.

(2) Uniform definitions of products and product-based exemptions from which a Member State may choose its individual tax base, provided, however, that all local jurisdictions in that Member State with respect to which a tax is imposed or collected, shall have a common tax base identical to the State tax base of that Member State. A Member State may enact product-based exemptions without restriction if the Agreement does not have a definition for the product or for a term that includes the product. A Member State shall relax the good faith requirement for acceptance of exemption certificates in accordance with section 317 of the Agreement, as in effect on the date of the enactment of this Act.

(3) Uniform rules for sourcing and attributing transactions to particular taxing jurisdictions.

(4) Uniform procedures for the certification of service providers and software on which a seller may elect to rely in order to determine Member State sales and use tax rates and taxability.

(5) Uniform rules for bad debts and rounding.

(6) Uniform requirements for tax returns and remittances.

(7) Consistent electronic filing and remittance methods.

(8) Single, State-level administration of all Member State and local sales and use taxes, including a requirement for a State-level filing of tax returns in each Member State.

(9) A provision requiring the elimination by each Member State of caps and thresholds on the application of sales and use tax rates and exemptions based on value, provided that this limitation does not apply to the items identified in sections 308C, 322, and 323 of the Agreement, as in effect on the date of the enactment of this Act.

(10) A provision requiring each Member State to complete a taxability matrix, as adopted by the Governing Board. The matrix shall include information regarding terms defined by the Agreement in the Library of Definitions. The matrix shall also include, pursuant to the requirements of the Governing Board, information on use-, entity-, and product-based exemptions.

(11) A provision requiring that each Member State relieves a seller or service provider from liability to that Member State and local jurisdiction for collection of the incorrect amount of sales or use tax, and relieves the purchaser from penalties stemming from such liability, provided that collection of the improper amount is the result of relying on information provided by that Member State regarding tax rates, boundaries, or taxing jurisdiction assignments, or in the taxability matrix regarding terms defined by the Agreement in the Library of Definitions.

(12) Audit procedures for sellers, including an option under which a seller not qualifying for the small business exception may request, by notifying the Governing Board, to be subject to a single audit on behalf of all Member States for sales and use taxes. The Governing Board, in its discretion, may authorize such a single audit.

(13)(A) Subject to subparagraphs (B), (C), (D), and (E), a provision requiring that in order for a Member State to require collection with respect to remote sales under section 4, the Member State shall provide compensation for expenses incurred by a seller directly in administering, collecting, and remitting sales and use taxes to that Member State. Such compensation may vary in each Member State as provided in the Agreement.

(B) Congress hereby finds that the compensation for expenses incurred by sellers required of Member States under the terms of the Agreement, as in effect on the enactment of this Act, is the minimum compensation necessary, when considered in connection with the simplification requirements contained in the Agreement on the date authority to require collection commences under section 4, to satisfy the requirement under subparagraph (A) on such date.

(C)(i) A provision requiring that the minimum compensation required of a Member State under subparagraph (A) may be modified as follows:

(I) Adjusted in relationship to changes in the size of the small business exemption adopted by the Governing Board.

(II) Decreased as additional simplifications and improvements in technology reduce collection costs.

(III) Increased if provisions of the Agreement are adopted that increase collection costs.

(ii) Any such modification in the minimum required compensation must be based on an independent review of the expenses incurred by sellers in administering, collecting, and remitting sales and use taxes and shall consider all changes impacting such expenses and take into account and be proportional to the increase or decrease in the expenses incurred by sellers in administering, collecting, and remitting sales and use taxes.

(D) The compensation required by subparagraph (A) shall be provided pursuant to the implementation schedule set out in the Agreement. Nothing in this Act shall prohibit a Member State from providing compensation greater than the amount required by this Act or the Agreement or on a date earlier than required by this Act or the Agreement.

(E) Compensation necessary to meet the requirement of subparagraph (A) may be provided to a seller or a third party service provider whom a seller has contracted with to perform the sales and use tax responsibilities of a seller.

(14) Appropriate protections for consumer privacy.

(15) Governance procedures and mechanisms to ensure timely, consistent, and uniform implementation and adherence to the principles of the streamlined system and the terms of the Agreement.

(16) A uniform rule to establish a small seller exception to a requirement to collect authorized by this Act.

(17) Uniform rules and procedures for sales tax holidays.

(18) Uniform rules and procedures to address refunds and credits for sales taxes relating to customer returns, restocking fees, discounts and coupons, and rules to address allocations of shipping and handling and discounts applied to multiple item and multiple seller orders.

(b) REQUIREMENT TO PROVIDE SIMPLIFIED TAX SYSTEMS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The requirements of this section are intended to ensure that each Member State provides and maintains the necessary simplification to its sales and use tax system to warrant the collection authority granted to such Member State in section 4.

(2) REDUCTION OF ADMINISTRATIVE BURDENS.—The requirements of this section should be construed—

(A) to require each Member State to substantially reduce the administrative burdens associated with sales and use taxes; and

(B) as allowing each Member State to exercise flexibility in how these requirements are satisfied.

(3) EXCEPTION.—In instances where exceptions to the requirements of this section can be exercised in a manner that does not materially increase the administrative burden on a seller obligated to collect or pay the taxes, such exceptions are permissible.

(c) NO REQUIREMENT TO EXEMPT FROM OR IMPOSE TAX.—Nothing in this Act or the Agreement shall require any Member State or any local taxing jurisdiction to exempt, or to impose a tax on any product, or to adopt any particular type of tax, or to impose the same rate of tax as any other taxing jurisdiction.

SEC. 7. LIMITATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Nothing in this Act shall be construed as—

(1) subjecting a seller to franchise taxes, income taxes, or licensing requirements of a Member State or political subdivision thereof; or

(2) affecting the application of such taxes or requirements or enlarging or reducing the authority of any Member State to impose such taxes or requirements.

(b) NO EFFECT ON NEXUS, ETC.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—No obligation imposed by virtue of the authority granted by section 4 shall be considered in determining whether a seller has a nexus with any Member State for any other tax purpose.

(2) PERMISSIBLE MEMBER STATE AUTHORITY.—Except as provided in subsection (a), and in section 4, nothing in this Act permits or prohibits a Member State from—

(A) licensing or regulating any person;

(B) requiring any person to qualify to transact intrastate business;

(C) subjecting any person to State taxes not related to the sale of goods or services; or

(D) exercising authority over matters of interstate commerce.

SEC. 8. EXPEDITED JUDICIAL REVIEW.

(a) THREE-JUDGE DISTRICT COURT HEARING.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, any civil action challenging the constitutionality of this Act, or any provision thereof, shall be heard by a district court of 3 judges convened pursuant to the provisions of section 2284 of title 28, United States Code.

(b) APPELLATE REVIEW.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, an interlocutory or final judgment, decree, or order of the court of 3 judges in an action under subsection (a) holding this Act, or any provision thereof, unconstitutional shall be reviewable as a matter of right by direct appeal to the United States Supreme Court.

(2) 30-DAY TIME LIMIT.—Any appeal under paragraph (1) shall be filed not more than 30 days after the date of entry of such judgment, decree, or order.

SEC. 9. DEFINITIONS.

For the purposes of this Act the following definitions apply:

(1) GOVERNING BOARD.—The term ''Governing Board'' means the governing board established by the Streamlined Sales and Use Tax Agreement.

(2) MEMBER STATE.—The term ''Member State''—

(A) means a Member State as that term is used under the Streamlined Sales and Use Tax Agreement as in effect on the date of the enactment of this Act; and

(B) does not include associate members under the Agreement.

(3) NONDISCRETIONARY DUTY OF THE GOVERNING BOARD.—The term ''nondiscretionary duty of the Governing Board'' means any duty of the Governing Board specified in the Agreement as a requirement for action by use of the term ''shall'', ''will'', or ''is required to''.

(4) PERSON.—The term ''person'' means an individual, trust, estate, fiduciary, partnership, corporation, limited liability company, or any other legal entity, and includes a State or local government.

(5) REMOTE SALE.—The term ''remote sale'' means a sale of goods or services attributed to a particular Member State with respect to which a seller does not have adequate physical presence to establish nexus under the law existing on the day before the date of the enactment of this Act so as to allow such Member State to require, without regard to the authority granted by this Act, the seller to collect and remit taxes covered by this Act with respect to such sale.

(6) REMOTE SELLER.—The term ''remote seller'' means any seller who makes a remote sale.

(7) STATE.—The term ''State'' means each of the several States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, Guam, American Samoa, the United States Virgin Islands, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and any other territory or possession of the United States.

(8) STREAMLINED SALES AND USE TAX AGREEMENT.—The term ''Streamlined Sales and Use Tax Agreement'' (or ''the Agreement'') means the multistate agreement with that title adopted on November 12, 2002, as in effect on the date of the enactment of this Act and unless the context otherwise indicates as further amended from time to time.

SEC. 10. SEVERABILITY.

If any provision of this Act, an amendment made by this Act, or the application of such provision or amendment to any person or circumstance is held to be unconstitutional,

the remainder of this Act, the amendments made by this Act, and the application of the provisions of such to any person or circumstance shall not be affected thereby.

SEC. 11. SENSE OF CONGRESS ON DIGITAL GOODS AND SERVICES.

It is the sense of Congress that each Member State that is a party to the Agreement should work with other Member States that are also parties to the Agreement to prevent double taxation in situations where a foreign country has imposed a transaction tax on a digital good or service.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. BROWN of Massachusetts, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. SCHUMER, and Mr. INOUYE):

S. 1454. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for extended months of Medicare coverage of immunosuppressive drugs for kidney transplant patients and other renal dialysis provisions; to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, today I am introducing the ''Comprehensive Immunosuppressive Drug Coverage for Kidney Transplant Patients Act'' with my colleagues Senators COCHRAN, LEVIN, CARDIN, SCHUMER, INOUYE, and BROWN of Massachusetts.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that about 13 percent of American adults, 26 million people, have chronic kidney disease. Some of these individuals can improve their condition with medication and lifestyle changes, but approximately half a million of them have irreversible kidney failure, or end-stage renal disease, ESRD. These patients require dialysis or a kidney transplant to survive.

Organ transplantation is a medical success story. Thousands of transplants are done every year, and for the patients fortunate enough to receive a donated organ, the quality and length of their lives can be dramatically improved. Of the more than 28,000 transplants performed in 2010, over 16,898 of them were kidney transplants.

A large portion of these kidney transplants were paid for by the Medicare system, which provides healthcare to aged and disabled Americans, as well as those living with ESRD. Medicare also covers dialysis for patients who have not received a donor kidney and immunosuppressive drugs for kidney transplant recipients. Organ transplant recipients must take immunosuppressive drugs every day for the life of their transplant to reduce the risk of organ rejection.

In 2000, Congress wisely eliminated the 36–month time limitation for aged and disabled beneficiaries who had Medicare status at the time of transplant. So today, for an older or disabled person on Medicare, immunosuppressive drugs are covered by Medicare for the life of the transplant.

However, we still have an unfair and unrealistic gap in coverage for people with ESRD who are neither disabled nor elderly. For those transplant recipients, Medicare coverage, including coverage of immunosuppressive drugs, ends 36 months after transplantation. Without regular access to immunosuppressive drugs to prevent rejection, many patients find themselves back in a risky and frightening place, in need of a new kidney. This is economically inefficient and morally wrong.

Since Medicare covers the cost of the transplant for end stage renal disease, it makes sense for Medicare to preserve this investment by covering anti-rejection drugs. It would be far less expensive for Medicare to cover immunosuppressive drugs at a cost of $10,000 to $20,000 a year than to pay for dialysis at $78,000 a year or another transplant at a cost of $110,000 if a patient's kidney fails and he is once again eligible for Medicare coverage.

I am pleased to introduce the Comprehensive Immunosuppressive Drug Coverage for Kidney Transplant Patients Act along with my colleagues. This legislation would allow kidney transplant recipients to continue Medicare coverage for the purpose of immunosuppressive drugs only. All other Medicare coverage would end 36 months after the transplant.

It is time to pass this legislation to provide continuous coverage for immunosuppressive drugs through Medicare. My legislation will reduce the need for dialysis and kidney re-transplants and provide reliable, sustained access to critically important, life-saving medications for thousands of Americans. In both moral and economic terms, this is the right decision.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 1454

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Comprehensive Immunosuppressive Drug Coverage for Kidney Transplant Patients Act of 2011''.

SEC. 2. EXTENDED MONTHS OF COVERAGE OF IMMUNOSUPPRESSIVE DRUGS FOR KIDNEY TRANSPLANT PATIENTS AND OTHER RENAL DIALYSIS PROVISIONS.

(a) MEDICARE ENTITLEMENT TO IMMUNOSUPPRESSIVE DRUGS FOR KIDNEY TRANSPLANT RECIPIENTS .—

(1) KIDNEY TRANSPLANT RECIPIENTS.—Section 226A(b)(2) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 426–1(b)(2)) is amended by inserting ''(except for eligibility for enrollment under part B solely for purposes of coverage of immunosuppressive drugs described in section 1861(s)(2)(J))'' before '', with the thirty-sixth month''.

(2) INDIVIDUALS ELIGIBLE ONLY FOR COVERAGE OF IMMUNOSUPPRESSIVE DRUGS.—

(A) Section 1836 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395o) is amended—

(i) by striking ''Every'' and inserting ''(a) IN GENERAL.—Every''; and

(ii) by inserting at the end the following new subsection:

''(b) INDIVIDUALS ELIGIBLE FOR IMMUNOSUPPRESSIVE DRUG COVERAGE.—Beginning on January 1, 2012, every individual whose insurance benefits under part A have ended (whether before, on, or after such date) by reason of section 226A(b)(2) is eligible for enrollment in the insurance program established by this part solely for purposes of coverage of immunosuppressive drugs.''.

(B) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Sections 1837, 1838, and 1839 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395(p), 42 U.S.C. 1395(q), 42 U.S.C. 1395(r)) are each amended by striking ''1836'' and inserting ''1836(a)'' each place it appears.

(3) ENROLLMENT FOR INDIVIDUALS ONLY ELIGIBLE FOR COVERAGE OF IMMUNOSUPPRESSIVE DRUGS.—Section 1837 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395(p)) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(m)(1) Any individual who is eligible under section 1836(b) to enroll in the medical insurance program established under this part for purposes of coverage of immunosuppressive drugs may enroll only in such manner and form as may be prescribed by regulations, and only during an enrollment period described in this subsection.

''(2) An individual described in paragraph (1) may enroll beginning on the first day of the third month before the month in which the individual first satisfies section 1836(b).

''(3) An individual described in paragraph (1) whose entitlement for hospital insurance benefits under part A ends by reason of section 226A(b)(2) on or after January 1, 2012, shall be deemed to have enrolled in the medical insurance program established by this part for purposes of coverage of immunosuppressive drugs.''.

(4) COVERAGE PERIOD FOR INDIVIDUALS ONLY ELIGIBLE FOR COVERAGE OF IMMUNOSUPPRESSIVE DRUGS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Section 1838 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395q) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(g) In the case of an individual described in section 1836(b), the following rules shall apply:

''(1) In the case of such an individual who is deemed to have enrolled in part B for coverage of immunosuppressive drugs under section 1837(m)(3), such individual's coverage period shall begin on the first day of the month in which the individual first satisfies section 1836(b).

''(2) In the case of such an individual who enrolls in part B for coverage of immunosuppressive drugs under section 1837(m)(2), such individual's coverage period shall begin on the first day of the month in which the individual first satisfies section 1836(b) or the month following the month in which the individual so enrolls, whichever is later.

''(3) The provisions of subsections (b) and (d) shall apply with respect to an individual described in paragraph (1) or (2).

''(4) In addition to the reasons for termination under subsection (b), the coverage period of an individual described in paragraph (1) or (2) shall end when the individual becomes entitled to benefits under this title under section 226(a), 226(b), or 226A.''.

(B) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Section 1838(b) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395q(b)) is amended, in the matter following paragraph (2), by adding ''or section 1837(m)(3)'' after ''section 1837(f)'' each place it appears.

(5) PREMIUMS FOR INDIVIDUALS ONLY ELIGIBLE FOR COVERAGE OF IMMUNOSUPPRESSIVE DRUGS.—Section 1839 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395r) is amended—

(A) in subsection (b), by adding at the end the following new sentence: ''No increase in the premium shall be effected for individuals who are enrolled pursuant to section 1836(b) for coverage only of immunosuppressive drugs.''; and

(B) by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(j) DETERMINATION OF PREMIUM FOR INDIVIDUALS ONLY ELIGIBLE FOR COVERAGE OF IMMUNOSUPPRESSIVE DRUGS.—The Secretary shall, during September of each year, determine and promulgate a monthly premium rate for the succeeding calendar year for individuals who enroll only for the purpose of coverage of immunosuppressive drugs under section 1836(b). Such premium shall be equal to 35 percent of the monthly actuarial rate for enrollees age 65 and over, determined according to paragraph (1), for that succeeding calendar year. The monthly premium of each individual enrolled for coverage of immunosuppressive drugs under section 1836(b) for each month shall be the amount promulgated in this subsection. Such amount shall be adjusted in accordance with subsections (c) and (f).''.

(6) GOVERNMENT CONTRIBUTION.—Section 1844(a) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w(a)) is amended—

(A) in paragraph (3), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; plus'';

(B) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(4) a Government contribution equal to the estimated aggregate reduction in premiums payable under part B that results from establishing the premium at 35 percent of the actuarial rate under section 1839(j) instead of 50 percent of the actuarial rate for individuals who enroll only for the purpose of coverage of immunosuppressive drugs under section 1836(b).''; and

(C) by adding at the end the following flush matter:

''The Government contribution under paragraph (4) shall be treated as premiums payable and deposited for purposes of subparagraphs (A) and (B) of paragraph (1).''.

(7) EXTENSION OF SECONDARY PAYER REQUIREMENTS FOR ESRD BENEFICIARIES ELIGIBLE FOR COVERAGE OF IMMUNOSUPPRESSIVE DRUGS.—Section 1862(b)(1)(C) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395(y)(b)(1)) is amended by adding at the end the following new sentence: ''With regard to immunosuppressive drugs furnished to an individual who enrolls for the purpose of coverage of immunosuppressive drugs under section 1836(b) on or after January 1, 2012, this subparagraph shall apply without regard to any time limitation, except that when such individual becomes entitled to benefits under this title under sections 226(a) or 226(b), or entitled to or eligible for benefits under this title under section 226A, the provisions of subparagraphs (A) and (B), and the time limitations under this subparagraph, respectively, shall apply.''.

(8) ENSURING COVERAGE UNDER THE MEDICARE SAVINGS PROGRAM.—Section 1905(p)(1)(A) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396d(p)(1)(A)) is amended by inserting ''or an individual who is enrolled under part B for the purpose of coverage of immunosuppressive drugs under section 1836(b)'' after ''section 1818''.

(9) PART D.—Section 1860D–1(a)(3)(A) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w–101(a)(3)(A)) is amended by inserting ''(but not including an individual enrolled solely for coverage of immunosuppressive drugs under section 1836(b))'' before the period at the end.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 242—SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF NATIONAL OVARIAN CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

Ms. STABENOW (for herself, Ms. SNOWE, Mr. INOUYE, Mr. CARDIN, Ms. COLLINS, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. CHAMBLISS, Mr. TESTER, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. LAUTENBERG, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. BENNET, Mr. LIEBERMAN, Mrs. HUTCHISON, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. UDALL of Colorado, Mr. BROWN of Ohio, Mr. WICKER, Mr. BROWN of Massachusetts, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, and Mr. SCHUMER) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 242

Whereas ovarian cancer is the deadliest of all gynecologic cancers;

Whereas ovarian cancer is the 5th leading cause of cancer deaths among women in the United States;

Whereas almost 21,000 women will be diagnosed with ovarian cancer in 2011, and 15,000 will die from the disease;

Whereas these deaths are those of our mothers, sisters, daughters, family members, and community leaders;

Whereas the mortality rate for ovarian cancer has not significantly decreased since the ''War on Cancer'' was declared 40 years ago;

Whereas all women are at risk for ovarian cancer, and 90 percent of women diagnosed with ovarian cancer do not have a family history that puts them at a higher risk;

Whereas some women, such as those with a family history of breast or ovarian cancer, are at a higher risk for the disease;

Whereas the pap test is sensitive and specific to the early detection of cervical cancer, but not ovarian cancer;

Whereas there is currently no reliable early detection test for ovarian cancer;

Whereas many people are unaware that the symptoms of ovarian cancer often include bloating, pelvic or abdominal pain, difficulty eating or feeling full quickly, urinary symptoms, and several other symptoms that are easily confused with other diseases;

Whereas in June 2007, the first national consensus statement on ovarian cancer symptoms was developed to provide consistency in describing symptoms to make it easier for women to learn and remember the symptoms;

Whereas there are known methods to reduce the risk of ovarian cancer, including prophylactic surgery, oral contraceptives, and breast-feeding;

Whereas, due to the lack of a reliable early detection test, 75 percent of cases of ovarian cancer are detected at an advanced stage, making the overall 5-year survival rate only 45 percent;

Whereas there are factors that are known to reduce the risk for ovarian cancer and that play an important role in the prevention of the disease;

Whereas awareness of the symptoms of ovarian cancer by women and health care providers can lead to a quicker diagnosis;

Whereas, each year during the month of September, the Ovarian Cancer National Alliance and its partner members hold a number of events to increase public awareness of ovarian cancer; and

Whereas September 2011 should be designated as ''National Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month'' to increase public awareness of ovarian cancer: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate supports the goals and ideals of National Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month.

SENATE RESOLUTION 243—PROMOTING INCREASED AWARENESS, DIAGNOSIS, AND TREATMENT OF ATRIAL FIBRILLATION TO ADDRESS THE HIGH MORBIDITY AND MORTALITY RATES AND TO PREVENT AVOIDABLE HOSPITALIZATIONS ASSOCIATED WITH THE DISEASE

Mr. CRAPO (for himself, Mr. CASEY, Mr. INOUYE, Mr. AKAKA, Mr. RUBIO, and Mr. TOOMEY) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 243

Whereas atrial fibrillation is a cardiac condition that results when the usual coordinated electrical activity in the atria of the heart becomes disorganized and chaotic, hampering the ability of the atria to fill the ventricles with blood, and allowing blood to pool in the atria and form clots;

Whereas an estimated 2,500,000 people in the United States are living with atrial fibrillation, the most common ''serious'' heart rhythm abnormality that occurs in people older than 65 years of age;

Whereas atrial fibrillation is associated with an increased long-term risk of stroke, heart failure, and all-cause mortality, especially among women;

Whereas people older than 40 years of age have a 1-in-4 risk of developing atrial fibrillation in their lifetime;

Whereas an estimated 15 percent of strokes are the result of untreated atrial fibrillation, a condition that dramatically increases the risk of stroke to approximately 5 times more than the general population;

Whereas atrial fibrillation accounts for approximately 529,000 hospital discharges annually;

Whereas atrial fibrillation costs an estimated $3,600 per patient for a total cost burden in the United States of $15,700,000,000;

Whereas better patient and health care provider education is needed for the timely recognition of atrial fibrillation symptoms;

Whereas an electrocardiogram is an effective and risk-free screen for heart rhythm irregularities and can be part of a routine preventive exam;

Whereas there is a dearth of outcome performance measures that focus on the management of atrial fibrillation; and

Whereas evidence-based care guidelines improve patient outcomes and prevent unnecessary hospitalizations for individuals with undiagnosed atrial fibrillation and for patients once atrial fibrillation is detected: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That it is the sense of the Senate that the Secretary of Health and Human Services should work with leaders in the medical community to explore ways to improve medical research, screening and prevention methods, and surveillance efforts in order to prevent and appropriately manage atrial fibrillation, including by—

(1) advancing the development of process and outcome measures for the management of atrial fibrillation by national developers;

(2) facilitating the adoption of evidence-based guidelines by the medical community to improve patient outcomes;

(3) advancing atrial fibrillation research and education by—

(A) encouraging basic science research to determine the causes and optimal treatments for atrial fibrillation;

(B) exploring development of screening tools and protocols to determine the risk of developing atrial fibrillation; and

(C) enhancing current surveillance and tracking systems to include atrial fibrillation; and

(4) improving access to appropriate medical care for patients suffering from atrial fibrillation by encouraging education programs that promote collaboration among the Federal health agencies and that increase public and clinician awareness of atrial fibrillation, including risk assessment, screening, treatment, and appropriate clinical management.

SENATE RESOLUTION 244—CONGRATULATING OMEGA PSI PHI FRATERNITY, INC. FOR 100 YEARS OF SERVICE TO COMMUNITIES THROUGHOUT THE UNITED STATES AND THE WORLD, AND COMMENDING OMEGA PSI PHI FOR UPHOLDING ITS CARDINAL PRINCIPLES OF MANHOOD, SCHOLARSHIP, PERSEVERANCE, AND UPLIFT

Ms. LANDRIEU (for herself, Mrs. HAGAN, Mr. WICKER, Mr. BROWN of Ohio, Mr. NELSON of Florida, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. CARDIN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, and Mr. CORNYN) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 244

Whereas Omega Psi Phi is the first international fraternal organization to be founded on the campus of a historically black college;

Whereas Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. was founded at Howard University in Washington, District of Columbia, on November 17, 1911, by undergraduates Oscar James Cooper, M.D., Frank Coleman, Ph.D., and Edgar Amos Love, D.D., and their faculty advisor Ernest Everett Just, Ph.D.;

Whereas, on November 17, 2011, Omega Psi Phi will celebrate 100 years of service to communities throughout the United States and the world in many diverse fields of endeavor;

Whereas, in 2011, Omega Psi Phi has more than 700 chapters throughout the United States, Bermuda, the Bahamas, the Virgin Islands, South Korea, Japan, Liberia, Germany, and Kuwait;

Whereas Omega Psi Phi has maintained a commitment to the betterment of mankind, the enhancement of the community, and the enrichment of collegiate men through dedication to its cardinal principles of manhood, scholarship, perseverance, and uplift;

Whereas Omega Psi Phi chapters participate in activities that uplift their communities, including voter registration, illiteracy awareness, Habitat for Humanity, health awareness programs, and youth mentoring;

Whereas the men of Omega Psi Phi have distinguished themselves in the field of science, including Dr. Ernest Everett Just, an internationally known biologist, Dr. Charles Drew, who perfected the use of blood plasma, Dr. Ronald E. McNair, an astronaut and member of the flight team aboard the Space Shuttle Challenger, Charles Bolden, an astronaut and the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, and Dr. Fred Drew Gregory, an astronaut and graduate of the United States Air Force Academy;

Whereas the men of Omega Psi Phi have distinguished themselves in the field of sports, including Dr. Robert M. Screen, the tennis coach at Hampton University and the coach with the most wins in the history of the National Collegiate Athletic Association, Michael Jordan, who was inducted into the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame in 2009, Charlie Ward, the winner of the Heisman Trophy in 1993 and a former guard with the New York Knicks of the National Basketball Association, Dr. LeRoy Walker, a former president of the United States Olympic Committee, and Terrance Trammell, a world champion hurdler;

Whereas the men of Omega Psi Phi have distinguished themselves in the field of government, including William Hastie, the first Governor of the Virgin Islands, Lawrence Douglas Wilder, the first black Governor of Virginia, Togo West, a former Secretary of the Army, James E. Clyburn, a Member of the House of Representatives from South Carolina and the 26th Majority Whip of the House of Representatives, Jesse Jackson, Jr., a Member of the House of Representatives from Illinois, and Hank Johnson, a Member of the House of Representatives from Georgia;

Whereas the men of Omega Psi Phi have distinguished themselves in the field of the arts, including Langston Hughes, the poet laureate who excelled as a poet, playwright, novelist, lyricist, and humorist, and William ''Count'' Basie, an internationally known pianist, composer, arranger, and band leader; and

Whereas Omega Psi Phi will commemorate its history and promote its continued success at its centennial celebration to be held July 27 through July 31, 2011, in Washington, District of Columbia: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) congratulates Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. for 100 years of service to communities throughout the United States and the world; and

(2) commends Omega Psi Phi for upholding its cardinal principles of manhood, scholarship, perseverance, and uplift.

SENATE RESOLUTION 245—DESIGNATING NOVEMBER 2011 AS ''STOMACH CANCER AWARENESS MONTH'' AND SUPPORTING EFFORTS TO EDUCATE THE PUBLIC ABOUT STOMACH CANCER

Mr. KERRY (for himself and Mr. DURBIN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 245

Whereas stomach cancer is 1 of the most difficult cancers to detect and treat in the early stages of the disease, which contributes to high mortality rates and human suffering;

Whereas stomach cancer is the second-leading cause of cancer mortality worldwide;

Whereas, in 2009, an estimated 21,000 new cases of stomach cancer were diagnosed in the United States;

Whereas, in 2010, it was estimated that 10,000 people in the United States would die from stomach cancer;

Whereas the estimated 5-year survival rate for stomach cancer is only 26 percent;

Whereas approximately 1 in 113 individuals will be diagnosed with stomach cancer in their lifetimes;

Whereas an inherited form of stomach cancer carries a 67- to 83-percent risk that an individual will be diagnosed with stomach cancer by 80 years of age;

Whereas, in the United States, stomach cancer is more prevalent among racial and ethnic minorities;

Whereas better patient and health care provider education is needed for the timely recognition of stomach cancer risks and symptoms;

Whereas more research into effective early diagnosis, screening, and treatment for stomach cancer is needed; and

Whereas November 2011 is an appropriate month to observe ''Stomach Cancer Awareness Month'': Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates November 2011 as ''Stomach Cancer Awareness Month'';

(2) supports efforts to educate the people of the United States about stomach cancer;

(3) recognizes the need for additional research into early diagnosis and treatment for stomach cancer; and

(4) encourages the people of the United States and interested groups to observe and support November 2011 as ''Stomach Cancer Awareness Month'' through appropriate programs and activities to promote public awareness of, and potential treatments for, stomach cancer.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 589. Mr. REID proposed an amendment to the bill S. 627, to establish the Commission on Freedom of Information Act Processing Delays.

SA 590. Mr. REID proposed an amendment to amendment SA 589 proposed by Mr. REID to the bill S. 627, supra.

SA 591. Mr. REID proposed an amendment to the bill S. 627, supra.

SA 592. Mr. REID proposed an amendment to amendment SA 591 proposed by Mr. REID to the bill S. 627, supra.

SA 593. Mr. REID proposed an amendment to amendment SA 592 proposed by Mr. REID to the amendment SA 591 proposed by Mr. REID to the bill S. 627, supra.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 589. Mr. REID proposed an amendment to the bill S. 627, to establish the Commission on Freedom of Information Act Processing Delays; as follows:

Strike all after ''Section'' and insert the following:

1. SHORT TITLE AND TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the ''Budget Control Act of 2011''.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title and table of contents.

TITLE I—DISCRETIONARY SPENDING CAPS AND ENFORCEMENT

Sec. 101. Discretionary spending limits.
Sec. 102. Senate budget enforcement.

TITLE II—OTHER SPENDING CUTS

Subtitle A—Federal Pell Grant and Student Loan Program Changes

Sec. 211. Federal Pell Grant and student loan program changes.

Subtitle B—Farm Programs

Sec. 221. Definition of payment acres.

TITLE III—JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE ON DEFICIT REDUCTION

Sec. 301. Establishment of Joint Select Committee.
Sec. 302. Expedited consideration of joint committee recommendations.
Sec. 303. Funding.
Sec. 304. Rulemaking.

TITLE IV—DEBT CEILING DISAPPROVAL PROCESS

Sec. 401. Debt ceiling disapproval process.

TITLE I—DISCRETIONARY SPENDING CAPS AND ENFORCEMENT

SEC. 101. DISCRETIONARY SPENDING LIMITS.

(a) POINT OF ORDER.—It shall not be in order in the House of Representatives or the

Senate to consider any bill, resolution, amendment, motion or conference report that includes any provision that would cause the discretionary spending limits as set forth in this section to be exceeded.

(b) LIMITS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—In this section, the term ''discretionary spending limits'' has the following meaning subject to adjustments in paragraph (2) and subsection (c):

(A) For fiscal year 2012—

(i) for the security category $606,000,000,000 in budget authority; and

(ii) for the nonsecurity category $439,000,000,000 in budget authority.

(B) For fiscal year 2013—

(i) for the security category $607,000,000,000 in budget authority; and

(ii) for the nonsecurity category $440,000,000,000 in budget authority.

(C) For fiscal year 2014, for the discretionary category, $1,068,000,000,000 in budget authority.

(D) For fiscal year 2015, for the discretionary category, $1,089,000,000,000 in budget authority.

(E) For fiscal year 2016, for the discretionary category, $1,111,000,000,000 in budget authority.

(F) For fiscal year 2017, for the discretionary category, $1,134,000,000,000 in budget authority.

(G) For fiscal year 2018, for the discretionary category, $1,156,000,000,000 in budget authority.

(H) For fiscal year 2019, for the discretionary category, $1,180,000,000,000 in budget authority.

(I) For fiscal year 2020, for the discretionary category, $1,203,000,000,000 in budget authority.

(J) For fiscal year 2021, for the discretionary category, $1,227,000,000,000 in budget authority.

(2) AUTHORIZED ADJUSTMENT TO LIMITS.—

(A) ADJUSTMENTS FOR BUDGET SUBMISSION.—When the President submits a budget under section 1105 of title 31, United States Code, OMB shall calculate and the budget shall include adjustments to discretionary spending limits (and those limits as cumulatively adjusted) for the budget year and each out year equal to the baseline levels of new budget authority using up-to-date concepts and definitions minus those levels using the concepts and definitions in effect before such changes. Such changes may only be made after consultation with the committees on Appropriations and the Budget of the House of Representatives and the Senate and that consultation shall include written communication to such committees that affords such committees the opportunity to comment before official action is taken with respect to such changes.

(B) ADJUSTMENTS FOR CONGRESSIONAL ENFORCEMENT.—For the purposes of Congressional enforcement of the limits in this section, the Chairmen of the Committees on the Budget of the Senate and House of Representatives may adjust the discretionary spending limits in amounts equal to the adjustments made pursuant to subparagraph (A) as contained in the President's budget. Any adjustment made pursuant to this subparagraph shall not constitute a repeal or change to the limits contained in this section.

(c) ESTIMATES AND OTHER ADJUSTMENTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—

(A) LIMITS AND SUBALLOCATIONS FOR CONGRESSIONAL ENFORCEMENT.—After the reporting of a bill or joint resolution relating to any matter described in paragraph (2), (3), or (4), or the offering of an amendment thereto or the submission of a conference report thereon—

(i) for the purposes of enforcement of the discretionary spending limits in the Senate and the House of Representatives, the Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of that House may adjust the discretionary spending limits in this section, the budgetary aggregates in the concurrent resolution on the budget most recently adopted by the Senate and the House of Representatives, and allocations pursuant to section 302(a) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, by the amount of new budget authority in that measure for that purpose; and

(ii) following any adjustment under clause (i), the Committee on Appropriations of that House may report appropriately revised suballocations pursuant to section 302(b) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 to carry out this subsection.

(B) OTHER ADJUSTMENTS.—For the purposes of determining an end of the year sequester pursuant to subsection (f), when OMB submits a sequestration report under subsection (f)(7) for a fiscal year, OMB shall calculate, and the sequestration report and subsequent budgets submitted by the President under section 1105(a) of title 31, United States Code, shall include, adjustments to discretionary spending limits (and those limits as adjusted) for the fiscal year and each succeeding year through 2021 upon the enactment of a bill or resolution relating to any matter described in paragraphs (2), (3), or (4).

(C) ESTIMATES.—

(i) CBO ESTIMATES.—As soon as practicable after Congress completes action on any discretionary appropriation, CBO, after consultation with the Committees on the Budget of the House of Representatives and the Senate, shall provide OMB with an estimate of the amount of discretionary new budget authority for the current year (if any) and the budget year provided by that legislation.

(ii) OMB ESTIMATES AND EXPLANATION OF DIFFERENCES.—

(I) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 7 calendar days (excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays) after the date of enactment of any discretionary appropriation, OMB shall make publicly available on the day it is issued and, on the following day, shall be printed in the Federal Register a report containing the CBO estimate of that legislation, an OMB estimate of the amount of discretionary new budget authority for the current year (if any) and the budget year provided by that legislation, and an explanation of any difference between the 2 estimates.

(II) DIFFERENCES.—If during the preparation of the report OMB determines that there is a significant difference between OMB and CBO, OMB shall consult with the Committees on the Budget of the House of Representatives and the Senate regarding that difference and that consultation shall include, to the extent practicable, written communication to those committees that affords such committees the opportunity to comment before the issuance of the report.

(D) ASSUMPTIONS AND GUIDELINES.—OMB estimates under subparagraph (C) shall be made using current economic and technical assumptions. In its final sequestration report, OMB shall use the OMB estimates transmitted to the Congress under this paragraph. OMB and CBO shall prepare estimates under this paragraph in conformance with scorekeeping guidelines determined after consultation among the House and Senate Committees on the Budget, CBO, and OMB.

(E) ANNUAL APPROPRIATIONS.—For purposes of this paragraph, amounts provided by annual appropriations shall include any new budget authority for the current year (if any) and the advance appropriations that become available in the budget year from previously enacted legislation.

(2) OTHER ADJUSTMENTS.—Other adjustments referred to in paragraph (1)(B) are as follows:

(A) CONTINUING DISABILITY REVIEWS AND SSI REDETERMINATIONS.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—If a bill or joint resolution is reported making appropriations in a fiscal year of the first amount specified in subclauses (I) through (X) of clause (ii) for that fiscal year for continuing disability reviews and Supplemental Security Income redeterminations under the heading ''Limitation on Administrative Expenses'' for the Social Security Administration, and provides an additional appropriation for continuing disability reviews and Supplemental Security Income redeterminations for the Social Security Administration, or one or more initiatives that the Office of the Chief Actuary determines would be at least as cost effective as a redetermination of eligibility under the heading ''Limitation on Administrative Expenses'' for the Social Security Administration of up to an amount further specified in that subclause, then the discretionary spending limits, allocation to the Committees on Appropriations of each House, and aggregates for that fiscal year may be adjusted by the amount in budget authority not to exceed the additional appropriation provided in such legislation for that purpose for that fiscal year.

(ii) AMOUNTS SPECIFIED.—The amounts specified are—

(I) for fiscal year 2012, an appropriation of $758,000,000, and an additional appropriation of $237,000,000;

(II) for fiscal year 2013, an appropriation of $758,000,000, and an additional appropriation of $390,000,000;

(III) for fiscal year 2014, an appropriation of $778,000,000, and an additional appropriation of $559,000,000;

(IV) for fiscal year 2015, an appropriation of $799,000,000, and an additional appropriation of $774,000,000;

(V) for fiscal year 2016, an appropriation of $822,000,000, and an additional appropriation of $778,000,000;

(VI) for fiscal year 2017, an appropriation of $849,000,000, and an additional appropriation of $804,000,000;

(VII) for fiscal year 2018, an appropriation of $877,000,000, and an additional appropriation of $831,000,000;

(VIII) for fiscal year 2019, an appropriation of $906,000,000, and an additional appropriation of $860,000,000;

(IX) for fiscal year 2020, an appropriation of $935,000,000, and an additional appropriation of $890,000,000; and

(X) for fiscal year 2021, an appropriation of $963,000,000, and an additional appropriation of $924,000,000.

(iii) DEFINITIONS.—As used in this subparagraph, the terms ''continuing disability reviews'' and ''Supplemental Security Income redeterminations'' mean continuing disability reviews under titles II and XVI of the Social Security Act and redeterminations of eligibility under title XVI of the Social Security Act.

(iv) REPORT.—The Commissioner of Social Security shall provide annually to the Congress a report on continuing disability reviews and Supplemental Security Income redeterminations which includes—

(I) the amount spent on continuing disability reviews and Supplemental Security Income redeterminations in the fiscal year covered by the report, and the number of reviews and redeterminations conducted, by category of review or redetermination;

(II) the results of the continuing disability reviews and Supplemental Security Income redeterminations in terms of cessations of benefits or determinations of continuing eligibility, by program; and

(III) the estimated savings over the short-, medium-, and long-term to the Old-age, Survivors, and Disability Insurance, Supplemental Security Income, Medicare, and Medicaid programs from continuing disability reviews and Supplemental Security Income redeterminations which result in cessations of benefits and the estimated present value of such savings.

(B) INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE TAX ENFORCEMENT.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—If a bill or joint resolution is reported making appropriations in a fiscal year to the Internal Revenue Service of not less than the first amount specified in subclauses (I) through (X) of clause (ii) for tax activities for that fiscal year, including tax compliance to address the Federal tax gap (taxes owed but not paid), and provides an additional appropriation for tax activities, including tax compliance activities to address the Federal tax gap, of up to an amount further specified in that subclause, then the discretionary spending limits, allocation to the Committees on Appropriations of each House, and aggregates for that fiscal year may be adjusted by the amount in budget authority not to exceed the amount of additional appropriations for tax activities, including tax compliance to address the Federal tax gap provided in such legislation for that fiscal year.

(ii) AMOUNTS SPECIFIED.—The amounts specified are—

(I) for fiscal year 2012, an appropriation of $7,979,000,000, and an additional appropriation of $2,519,000,000 for tax activities, including tax compliance to address the Federal tax gap;

(II) for fiscal year 2013, an appropriation of $7,979,000,000, and an additional appropriation of $3,132,000,000 for tax activities, including tax compliance to address the Federal tax gap;

(III) for fiscal year 2014, an appropriation of $8,204,000,000, and an additional appropriation of $3,542,000,000 for tax activities, including tax compliance to address the Federal tax gap;

(IV) for fiscal year 2015, an appropriation of $8,444,000,000, and an additional appropriation of $3,975,000,000 for tax activities, including tax compliance to address the Federal tax gap;

(V) for fiscal year 2016, an appropriation of $8,710,000,000, and an additional appropriation of $4,486,000,000 for tax activities, including tax compliance to address the Federal tax gap;

(VI) for fiscal year 2017, an appropriation of $9,012,000,000, and an additional appropriation of $4,538,000,000 for tax activities, including tax compliance to address the Federal tax gap;

(VII) for fiscal year 2018, an appropriation of $9,330,000,000, and an additional appropriation of $4,585,000,000 for tax activities, including tax compliance to address the Federal tax gap;

(VIII) for fiscal year 2019, an appropriation of $9,667,000,000, and an additional appropriation of $4,626,000,000 for tax activities, including tax compliance to address the Federal tax gap;

(IX) for fiscal year 2020, an appropriation of $9,989,000,000, and an additional appropriation of $4,688,000,000 for tax activities, including tax compliance to address the Federal tax gap; and

(X) for fiscal year 2021, an appropriation of $10,315,000,000, and an additional appropriation of $4,754,000,000 for tax activities, including tax compliance to address the Federal tax gap.

(iii) DEFINITION.—As used in this subparagraph, the term ''additional appropriation for tax activities, including tax compliance to address the Federal tax gap'' means new and continuing investments in expanding and improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the overall tax enforcement and compliance program of the Internal Revenue Service and fully funding operational support activities at the Internal Revenue Service. New and continuing investments include additional resources for implementing new authorities and for conducting additional examinations, audits, and enhanced third party data matching.

(iv) APPROPRIATION.—The first amount specified in subclauses (I) through (X) of clause (ii) is the amount under one or more headings in an appropriations Act for the Internal Revenue Service that is specified to pay for the costs of tax activities, including tax compliance to address the Federal tax gap.

(v) ADDITIONAL AMOUNT.—The amounts further specified in subclauses (I) through (X) of clause (ii) are the amounts under one or more headings in an appropriations Act for the Internal Revenue Service for the amount of the additional appropriation for tax activities, including tax compliance to address the Federal tax gap, but such adjustment shall be 0 (zero) unless the appropriations Act under the heading ''Operations Support'' for the Internal Revenue Service provides that such sums as are necessary shall be available, under the ''Operations Support'' heading, to fully support tax enforcement and compliance activities.

(C) HEALTH CARE FRAUD AND ABUSE CONTROL.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—If a bill or joint resolution is reported making appropriations in a fiscal year of the first amount specified in subclauses (I) through (X) of clause (ii) for program integrity or fraud and abuse activities under the heading ''Health Care Fraud and Abuse Control Account'' program for the Department of Health and Human Services for that fiscal year, and provides an additional appropriation for program integrity or fraud and abuse activities under the heading ''Health Care Fraud and Abuse Control Account'' program for the Department of Health and Human Services of up to an amount further specified that subclause, then the discretionary spending limits, allocation to the Committees on Appropriations of each House, and aggregates for that year may be adjusted in an amount not to exceed the amount in budget authority provided in such legislation for that purpose for that fiscal year.

(ii) AMOUNTS SPECIFIED.—The amounts specified are—

(I) for fiscal year 2012, an appropriation of $311,000,000, and an additional appropriation of $270,000,000;

(II) for fiscal year 2013, an appropriation of $311,000,000, and an additional appropriation of $299,000,000;

(III) for fiscal year 2014, an appropriation of $326,000,000, and an additional appropriation of $314,000,000;

(IV) for fiscal year 2015, an appropriation of $340,000,000, and an additional appropriation of $332,000,000;

(V) for fiscal year 2016, an appropriation of $356,000,000, and an additional appropriation of $350,000,000;

(VI) for fiscal year 2017, an appropriation of $373,000,000, and an additional appropriation of $352,000,000;

(VII) for fiscal year 2018, an appropriation of $391,000,000, and an additional appropriation of $354,000,000;

(VIII) for fiscal year 2019, an appropriation of $411,000,000, and an additional appropriation of $354,000,000;

(IX) for fiscal year 2020, an appropriation of $430,000,000, and an additional appropriation of $356,000,000; and

(X) for fiscal year 2021, an appropriation of $451,000,000, and an additional appropriation of $356,000,000.

(iii) DEFINITION.—As used in this subparagraph, the term ''program integrity or fraud and abuse activities'' means those activities authorized by section 1817(k)(3) of the Social Security Act and other related program integrity activities, including administrative costs, in the Medicare Advantage and the Medicare Prescription Drug Programs authorized in title XVIII of the Social Security Act, in section 1893 of the Social Security Act, in Medicaid authorized in title XIX of the Social Security Act, and in the Children's Health Insurance Program (''CHIP'') authorized in title XXI of the Social Security Act.

(iv) REPORT.—The report required by section 1817(k)(5) of the Social Security Act for each fiscal year shall include measures of the operational efficiency and impact on fraud, waste, and abuse in the Medicare, Medicaid, and CHIP programs for the funds provided by an adjustment under this subparagraph.

(D) UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE IMPROPER PAYMENT REVIEWS.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—If a bill or joint resolution is reported making appropriations in a fiscal year of the first amount specified in subclauses (I) through (X) of clause (ii) for in-person reemployment and eligibility assessments and unemployment insurance improper payment reviews under the heading ''State Unemployment Insurance and Employment Service Operations'' for the Department of Labor for that fiscal year, and provides an additional appropriation for in-person reemployment and eligibility assessments and unemployment insurance improper payment reviews under the heading ''State Unemployment Insurance and Employment Service Operations'' for the Department of Labor of up to an amount further specified in that subclause, then the discretionary spending limits, allocation to the Committees on Appropriations of each House, and aggregates for that year may be adjusted by an amount in budget authority not to exceed the additional appropriation provided in such legislation for that purpose for that fiscal year.

(ii) AMOUNTS SPECIFIED.—The amounts specified are—

(I) for fiscal year 2012, an appropriation of $60,000,000, and an additional appropriation of $10,000,000;

(II) for fiscal year 2013, an appropriation of $60,000,000, and an additional appropriation of $15,000,000;

(III) for fiscal year 2014, an appropriation of $61,000,000, and an additional appropriation of $19,000,000;

(IV) for fiscal year 2015, an appropriation of $61,000,000, and an additional appropriation of $24,000,000;

(V) for fiscal year 2016, an appropriation of $62,000,000, and an additional appropriation of $28,000,000;

(VI) for fiscal year 2017, an appropriation of $63,000,000, and an additional appropriation of $28,000,000;

(VII) for fiscal year 2018, an appropriation of $64,000,000, and an additional appropriation of $29,000,000;

(VIII) for fiscal year 2019, an appropriation of $64,000,000, and an additional appropriation of $30,000,000;

(IX) for fiscal year 2020, an appropriation of $65,000,000, and an additional appropriation of $31,000,000; and

(X) for fiscal year 2021, an appropriation of $66,000,000, and an additional appropriation of $31,000,000.

(iii) DEFINITIONS.—As used in this subparagraph, the terms ''in-person reemployment

and eligibility assessments'' and ''unemployment improper payment reviews'' mean reviews or assessments conducted in local workforce offices to determine the continued eligibility of an unemployment insurance claimant under the Federal Unemployment Tax Act, title III of the Social Security Act, and applicable State laws, to ensure they are meeting their obligation to search for work as a condition of eligibility, and to speed their return to work.

(iv) ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATION.—The amounts further specified in subclauses (I) through (X) of clause (ii) are the amounts under the heading ''State Unemployment Insurance and Employment Service Operations'' for the Department of Labor for the amount of the additional appropriation for in-person reemployment and eligibility assessments and unemployment insurance improper payment reviews, but such adjustment shall be 0 (zero) unless the appropriations Act providing such additional appropriation also provides the full amount requested under the heading ''State Unemployment Insurance and Employment Service Operations'' for the Department of Labor for grants to States for the administration of State unemployment insurance laws in the budget submitted for that fiscal year under section 1105 of title 31, United States Code.

(3) OVERSEAS DEPLOYMENTS AND RELATED ACTIVITIES.—

(A) CAP ADJUSTMENT.—The discretionary spending limits, allocation to the Committees on Appropriations of each House, and aggregates for that year may be adjusted by an amount in budget authority not to exceed the amount provided in such legislation for that purpose for that fiscal year, but not to exceed in aggregate the amounts specified in subparagraph (B) for any—

(i) bills reported by the Committees on Appropriations of either House or in the Senate, passed by the House of Representatives;

(ii) joint resolutions or amendments reported by the Committees on Appropriations of either House;

(iii) amendments between the Houses, Senate amendments to such amendments offered by the authority of the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate, or House amendments to such amendments offered by the authority of the Committee on Appropriations in the House of Representatives; or

(iv) conference reports;

making appropriations for overseas deployments and related activities.

(B) LEVELS.—

(i) LEVELS.—The initial levels for overseas deployments and related activities specified in this subparagraph are as follows:

(I) For fiscal year 2012, $126,544,000,000 in budget authority.

(II) For the total of fiscal years 2013 through 2021, $450,000,000,000 in budget authority.

(ii) LEVELS FOR CONGRESSIONAL ENFORCEMENT.—For each fiscal year after fiscal year 2012, Congress shall adopt in the concurrent resolution on the budget for that fiscal year an adjustment for overseas deployments and related activities, provided that Congress may not adopt an adjustment for any fiscal year that would cause the total adjustments for fiscal years 2013 through 2021 to exceed the amount authorized in clause (i)(II).

(iii) ACCOUNTING FOR OVERSEAS DEPLOYMENT AND RELATED ACTIVITIES.—In any report issued under subsection (f)(7), OMB shall state the total amount of spending on overseas deployments and related activities for fiscal years 2013 through 2021 and the estimated amount of budget authority adjustment remaining for that period.

(C) ADJUSTMENT FOR OFFSET OVERSEAS DEPLOYMENT COSTS.—The levels set in subparagraph (B) may be further adjusted by the amount of budget authority provided in legislation for additional costs associated with overseas deployments and related activities if the amount of budget authority above those levels is offset.

(4) ADJUSTMENTS FOR DISASTER FUNDING.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—If, for fiscal years 2011 through 2021, appropriations for discretionary accounts are enacted that Congress designates as being for disaster relief in statute, the adjustment shall be the total of such appropriations in discretionary accounts designated as being for disaster relief, but not to exceed the total of—

(i) the average funding provided for disasters over the previous 10 years, excluding the highest and lowest years; and

(ii) for years when the enacted new discretionary budget authority designated as being for disaster relief for the preceding fiscal year was less than the average as calculated in clause (i) for that fiscal year, the difference between the enacted amount and the allowable adjustment as calculated in clause (i) for that fiscal year.

(B) OMB REPORT.—OMB shall report to the Committees on Appropriations in each House the adjustment for disaster funding for fiscal year 2011, and a preview report of the estimated level for fiscal year 2012, not later than 30 days after enactment of this Act.

(d) LIMITATIONS ON CHANGES TO THIS SECTION.—Unless otherwise specifically provided in this section, it shall not be in order in the Senate or the House of Representatives to consider any bill, resolution (including a concurrent resolution on the budget), amendment, motion, or conference report that would repeal or otherwise change this section.

(e) WAIVER AND APPEAL.—

(1) WAIVER.—In the Senate, subsections (a) through (d) shall be waived or suspended only—

(A) by the affirmative vote of three-fifths of the Members, duly chosen and sworn; or

(B) if the provisions of section (f)(8) are in effect.

(2) APPEAL.—Appeals in the Senate from the decisions of the Chair relating to any provision of this section shall be limited to 1 hour, to be equally divided between, and controlled by, the appellant and the manager of the measure. An affirmative vote of three-fifths of the Members of the Senate, duly chosen and sworn, shall be required to sustain an appeal of the ruling of the Chair on a point of order raised under this section.

(f) END-OF-YEAR SEQUESTER FOR EXCEEDING DISCRETIONARY CAPS.—

(1) SEQUESTRATION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 14 calendar days after the end of a session of Congress (excluding weekends and holidays) and on the same day as a sequestration (if any) under section 5 of the Statutory Pay-As-You-Go Act of 2010, there shall be a sequestration to eliminate a budget-year breach, if any, within the discretionary categories as set by subsection (b).

(B) OVERSEAS DEPLOYMENTS.—Any amount of budget authority for overseas deployments and related activities for fiscal year 2012 in excess of the levels set in subsection (c)(3)(B)(i), or for fiscal years 2013 through 2021 that would cause the total adjustment for fiscal years 2013 through 2021 to exceed the amount authorized in section (c)(3)(B)(II), that is not otherwise offset pursuant subsection (c)(3)(C)(i), shall be counted in determining whether a breach has occurred—

(i) for fiscal years 2012 and 2013, in the security and non-security categories by amounts in the same proportion as the total amount designated in that fiscal year for overseas deployments and related activities in security and non-security accounts, respectively; and

(ii) for fiscal years 2014 through 2021, in the discretionary category.

(C) EMERGENCY SPENDING.—

(i) EFFECT OF DESIGNATION IN STATUTE.—If, for any fiscal year, appropriations for discretionary accounts are enacted that Congress designates as emergency requirements in statute pursuant to this subparagraph, the total of such budget authority in discretionary accounts designated as emergency requirements in all fiscal years from such appropriations shall not be counted in determining whether a breach has occurred, and shall not count for the purposes of Congressional enforcement.

(ii) DESIGNATION IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.—If an appropriations Act includes a provision expressly designated as an emergency for the purposes of this section, the Chair shall put the question of consideration with respect thereto.

(iii) POINT OF ORDER IN THE SENATE.—

(I) IN GENERAL.—When the Senate is considering an appropriations Act, if a point of order is made by a Senator against an emergency designation in that measure, the provision making such a designation shall be stricken from the measure and may not be offered as an amendment from the floor.

(II) SUPERMAJORITY WAIVER AND APPEALS.—

(aa) WAIVER.—Subclause (I) may be waived or suspended in the Senate only by an affirmative vote of three-fifths of the Members, duly chosen and sworn.

(bb) APPEALS.—Appeals in the Senate from the decisions of the Chair relating to any provision of this subparagraph shall be limited to 1 hour, to be equally divided between, and controlled by, the appellant and the manager of the bill or joint resolution, as the case may be. An affirmative vote of three-fifths of the Members of the Senate, duly chosen and sworn, shall be required to sustain an appeal of the ruling of the Chair on a point of order raised under this subparagraph.

(III) DEFINITION OF AN EMERGENCY DESIGNATION.—For purposes of subclause (I), a provision shall be considered an emergency designation if it designates any item as an emergency requirement pursuant to this subparagraph.

(IV) FORM OF THE POINT OF ORDER.—A point of order under subclause (I) may be raised by a Senator as provided in section 313(e) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974.

(V) CONFERENCE REPORTS.—When the Senate is considering a conference report on, or an amendment between the Houses in relation to, an appropriations Act, upon a point of order being made by any Senator pursuant to this subparagraph, and such point of order being sustained, such material contained in such conference report shall be deemed stricken, and the Senate shall proceed to consider the question of whether the Senate shall recede from its amendment and concur with a further amendment, or concur in the House amendment with a further amendment, as the case may be, which further amendment shall consist of only that portion of the conference report or House amendment, as the case may be, not so stricken. Any such motion in the Senate shall be debatable under the same conditions as was the conference report. In any case in which such point of order is sustained against a conference report (or Senate amendment derived from such conference report by operation of this subsection), no further amendment shall be in order.

(2) ELIMINATING A BREACH.—Each non-exempt account within a category shall be reduced by a dollar amount calculated by multiplying the baseline level of sequesterable budgetary resources in that account at that

time by the uniform percentage necessary to eliminate a breach within that category.

(3) MILITARY PERSONNEL.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The President may, with respect to any military personnel account, exempt that account from sequestration or provide for a lower uniform percentage reduction than would otherwise apply, provided that the President has notified Congress of the manner in which such authority will be exercised pursuant to paragraph (7)(A)(ii).

(B) REDUCTIONS.—If the President uses the authority to exempt any military personnel from sequestration under paragraph (7)(A)(ii), each account within subfunctional category 051 (other than those military personnel accounts for which the authority provided under subparagraph (A) has been exercised) shall be further reduced by a dollar amount calculated by multiplying the enacted level of non-exempt budgetary resources in that account at that time by the uniform percentage necessary to offset the total dollar amount by which budget authority is not reduced in military personnel accounts by reason of the use of such authority.

(4) PART-YEAR APPROPRIATIONS.—If, on the date specified in paragraph (1), there is in effect an Act making or continuing appropriations for part of a fiscal year for any budget account, then the dollar sequestration calculated for that account under paragraphs (2) and (3) shall be subtracted from—

(A) the annualized amount otherwise available by law in that account under that or a subsequent part-year appropriation; and

(B) when a full-year appropriation for that account is enacted, from the amount otherwise provided by the full-year appropriation.

(5) LOOK-BACK.—If, after June 30, an appropriation for the fiscal year in progress is enacted that causes a breach within a category for that year (after taking into account any sequestration of amounts within that category), the discretionary spending limits for that category for the next fiscal year shall be reduced by the amount or amounts of that breach.

(6) WITHIN-SESSION SEQUESTRATION.—If an appropriation for a fiscal year in progress is enacted (after Congress adjourns to end the session for that budget year and before July 1 of that fiscal year) that causes a breach within a category for that year (after taking into account any prior sequestration of amounts within that category), 15 days after such enactment there shall be a sequestration to eliminate that breach within that category following the procedures set forth in paragraphs (2) through (4).

(7) REPORTS.—

(A) SEQUESTRATION PREVIEW REPORT.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 5 days before the date of the President's budget submission for CBO, and the date of the President's budget submissions for OMB, OMB and CBO shall issue a preview report regarding discretionary spending based on laws enacted through those dates. The preview report shall set forth estimates for the current year and each subsequent year through 2021 of the applicable discretionary spending limits for each category and an explanation of any adjustments in such limits under this section.

(ii) NOTIFICATION REGARDING MILITARY PERSONNEL.—On or before the date of the sequestration preview report, the President shall notify Congress of the manner in which the President intends to exercise flexibility with respect to military personnel accounts under paragraph (3).

(B) SEQUESTRATION UPDATE REPORT.—Not later than August 15 for CBO, and August 20 for OMB, OMB and CBO shall issue a sequestration update report, reflecting laws enacted through those dates, containing all of the information required in the sequestration preview reports. This report shall also contain a preview estimate of the adjustment for disaster funding for the upcoming fiscal year.

(C) FINAL SEQUESTRATION REPORT.—Not later than 10 days after the end of session for CBO, and 14 days after the end of session for OMB (excluding weekends and holidays), OMB and CBO shall issue a final sequestration report, updated to reflect laws enacted through those dates, with estimates for each of the following:

(i) For the current year and each subsequent year through 2021 the applicable discretionary spending limits for each category and an explanation of any adjustments in such limits under this section, including a final estimate of the disaster funding adjustment.

(ii) For the current year and the budget year the estimated new budget authority for each category and the breach, if any, in each category.

(iii) For each category for which a sequestration is required, the sequestration percentages necessary to achieve the required reduction.

(iv) For the budget year, for each account to be sequestered, estimates of the baseline level of sequesterable budgetary resources and the amount of budgetary resources to be sequestered.

(D) EXPLANATION OF DIFFERENCES.—The OMB reports shall explain the differences between OMB and CBO estimates for each report required by this paragraph.

(8) SUSPENSION IN THE EVENT OF LOW GROWTH.—Section 254(i) and subsections (a), (b)(1), and (c) of section 258 of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 with respect to suspension of this section for low growth only shall apply to this section, provided that those sections are deemed not to apply to titles III and IV of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 and section 1103 of title 31, United States Code.

(g) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) NONSECURITY CATEGORY.—The term ''nonsecurity category'' means all discretionary appropriations, as that term is defined in section 250(c)(7) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985, not included in the security category defined in this Act, but does not include any appropriation designated for overseas deployments and related activities pursuant to section (c)(3) or appropriation designated as an emergency pursuant to this Act.

(2) SECURITY CATEGORY.—The term ''security category'' includes discretionary appropriations, as that term is defined in section 250(c)(7) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985, in budget functions 050 and 700, but does not include any appropriation designated for overseas deployments and related activities pursuant to section (c)(3) or appropriation designated as an emergency pursuant to this Act.

(3) DISCRETIONARY CATEGORY.—The term ''discretionary category'' includes all discretionary appropriations, as that term is defined in section 250(c)(7) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985, but does not include any appropriation designated for overseas deployments and related activities pursuant to section (c)(3) or appropriation designated as an emergency pursuant to this Act.

(4) ADVANCE APPROPRIATION.—The term ''advance appropriation'' means appropriations of new budget authority that become available one or more fiscal years beyond the fiscal year for which the appropriation act was passed.

(5) DISCRETIONARY SPENDING LIMITS.—The term ''discretionary spending limits'' means the amounts specified in this section.

(6) DEFINITIONS.—To the extent they are not defined in this section, the terms used in this section shall have the same meaning as the terms defined in section 250(c) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

(h) SEQUESTRATION RULES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subsections (g) and (k) of section 256 of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 shall apply to sequestration under this Act.

(2) INTERGOVERNMENTAL FUNDS.—For purposes of sequestration under this section, budgetary resources shall not include activities financed by voluntary payments to the Government for goods and services to be provided for such payments, intragovernmental funds paid in from other Government accounts, and unobligated balances of prior year appropriations.

SEC. 102. SENATE BUDGET ENFORCEMENT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—

(1) For the purpose of enforcing the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 through April 15, 2012, including section 300 of that Act, and enforcing budgetary points of order in prior concurrent resolutions on the budget, the allocations, aggregates, and levels set in subsection (b)(1) shall apply in the Senate in the same manner as for a concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2012 with appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2011 and 2013 through 2021.

(2) For the purpose of enforcing the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 after April 15, 2012, including section 300 of that Act, and enforcing budgetary points of order in prior concurrent resolutions on the budget, the allocations, aggregates, and levels set in subsection (b)(2) shall apply in the Senate in the same manner as for a concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2013 with appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2012 and 2014 through 2022.

(b) COMMITTEE ALLOCATIONS, AGGREGATES AND LEVELS.—

(1) As soon as practicable after the date of enactment of this section, the Chairman of the Committee on the Budget shall file—

(A) for the Committee on Appropriations, committee allocations for fiscal years 2011 and 2012 consistent with the discretionary spending limits set forth in this Act for the purpose of enforcing section 302 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974;

(B) for all committees other than the Committee on Appropriations, committee allocations for fiscal years 2011, 2012, 2012 through 2016, and 2012 through 2021 consistent with the Congressional Budget Office's March 2011 baseline adjusted to account for the budgetary effects of this Act and legislation enacted prior to this Act but not included in the Congressional Budget Office's March 2011 baseline, for the purpose of enforcing section 302 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974;

(C) aggregate spending levels for fiscal years 2011 and 2012 and aggregate revenue levels fiscal years 2011, 2012, 2012 through 2016, 2012 through 2021 consistent with the Congressional Budget Office's March 2011 baseline adjusted to account for the budgetary effects of this Act and legislation enacted prior to this Act but not included in the Congressional Budget Office's March 2011 baseline, and the discretionary spending limits set forth in this Act for the purpose of enforcing section 311 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974; and

(D) levels of Social Security revenues and outlays for fiscal years 2011, 2012, 2012 through 2016, and 2012 through 2021 consistent with the Congressional Budget Office's March 2011 baseline adjusted to account for the budgetary effects of this Act and legislation enacted prior to this Act but not included in the Congressional Budget Office's March 2011 baseline, for the purpose of

enforcing sections 302 and 311 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974.

(2) Not later than April 15, 2012, the Chairman of the Committee on the Budget shall file—

(A) for the Committee on Appropriations, committee allocations for fiscal years 2012 and 2013 consistent with the discretionary spending limits set forth in this Act for the purpose of enforcing section 302 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974;

(B) for all committees other than the Committee on Appropriations, committee allocations for fiscal years 2012, 2013, 2013 through 2017, and 2013 through 2022 consistent with the Congressional Budget Office's March 2012 baseline for the purpose of enforcing section 302 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974;

(C) aggregate spending levels for fiscal years 2012 and 2013 and aggregate revenue levels fiscal years 2012, 2013, 2013–2017, and 2013–2022 consistent with the Congressional Budget Office's March 2012 baseline and the discretionary spending limits set forth in this Act for the purpose of enforcing section 311 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974; and

(D) levels of Social Security revenues and outlays for fiscal years 2012 and 2013, 2013–2017, and 2013–2022 consistent with the Congressional Budget Office's March 2012 baseline budget for the purpose of enforcing sections 302 and 311 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974.

(c) SENATE PAY-AS-YOU-GO SCORECARD.—

(1) Effective on the date of enactment of this section, for the purpose of enforcing section 201 of S. Con. Res. 21 (110th Congress), the Chairman of the Senate Committee on the Budget shall reduce any balances of direct spending and revenues for any fiscal year to 0 (zero).

(2) Not later than April 15, 2012, for the purpose of enforcing section 201 of S. Con. Res. 21 (110th Congress), the Chairman of the Senate Committee on the Budget shall reduce any balances of direct spending and revenues for any fiscal year to 0 (zero).

(3) Upon resetting the Senate paygo scorecard pursuant to paragraph (2), the Chairman shall publish a notification of such action in the Congressional Record.

(d) FURTHER ADJUSTMENTS.—

(1) The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise any allocations, aggregates, or levels set pursuant to this section to account for any subsequent adjustments to discretionary spending limits made pursuant to this Act.

(2) With respect to any allocations, aggregates, or levels set or adjustments made pursuant to this section, sections 412 through 414 of S. Con. Res. 13 (111th Congress) shall remain in effect.

(e) EXPIRATION.—

(1) Subections (a)(1), (b)(1), and (c)(1) shall expire if a concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2012 is agreed to by the Senate and House of Representatives pursuant to section 301 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974.

(2) Subections (a)(2), (b)(2), and (c)(2) shall expire if a concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2013 is agreed to by the Senate and House of Representatives pursuant to section 301 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974.

TITLE II—OTHER SPENDING CUTS

Subtitle A—Federal Pell Grant and Student Loan Program Changes

SEC. 211. FEDERAL PELL GRANT AND STUDENT LOAN PROGRAM CHANGES.

(a) FEDERAL PELL GRANTS.—Section 401(b)(7)(A)(iv) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1070a(b)(7)(A)(iv)) is amended—

(1) in subclause (II), by striking ''$3,183,000,000'' and inserting ''$13,683,000,000''; and

(2) in subclause (III), by striking ''$0'' and inserting ''$7,500,000,000''.

(b) TERMINATION OF AUTHORITY TO MAKE INTEREST SUBSIDIZED LOANS TO GRADUATE AND PROFESSIONAL STUDENTS.—Section 455(a) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1087e(a)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(3) TERMINATION OF AUTHORITY TO MAKE INTEREST SUBSIDIZED LOANS TO GRADUATE AND PROFESSIONAL STUDENTS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any provision of this part or part B, for any period of instruction beginning on or after July 1, 2012—

''(i) a graduate or professional student shall not be eligible to receive a subsidized Federal Direct Stafford Loan under this part;

''(ii) the maximum annual amount of Federal Direct Unsubsidized Stafford Loans such a student may borrow in any academic year (as defined in section 481(a)(2)) or its equivalent shall be the maximum annual amount for such student determined under section 428H, plus an amount equal to the amount of Federal Direct Subsidized Loans the student would have received in the absence of this subparagraph; and

''(iii) the maximum aggregate amount of Federal Direct Unsubsidized Stafford Loans such a student may borrow shall be the maximum aggregate amount for such student determined under section 428H, adjusted to reflect the increased annual limits described in clause (ii), as prescribed by the Secretary by regulation.

''(B) EXCEPTION.—Subparagraph (A) shall not apply to an individual enrolled in coursework specified in paragraph (3)(B) or (4)(B) of section 484(b).''.

(c) INAPPLICABILITY OF TITLE IV NEGOTIATED RULEMAKING AND MASTER CALENDAR EXCEPTION.—Sections 482(c) and 492 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1089(c), 1098a) shall not apply to the amendments made by this section, or to any regulations promulgated under those amendments.

Subtitle B—Farm Programs

SEC. 221. DEFINITION OF PAYMENT ACRES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1001(11) of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 8702(11)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A)—

(A) by striking ''subparagraph (B)'' and inserting ''subparagraphs (B) and (C)''; and

(B) by striking ''and'' at the end;

(2) in subparagraph (B), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(C) in the case of direct payments for the 2012 crop year, 59 percent of the base acres for the covered commodity on a farm on which direct payments are made.''.

(b) PAYMENT ACRES FOR PEANUTS.—Section 1301(5) of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 8751(5)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A)—

(A) by striking ''subparagraph (B)'' and inserting ''subparagraphs (B) and (C)''; and

(B) by striking ''and'' at the end;

(2) in subparagraph (B), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(C) in the case of direct payments for the 2012 crop year, 59 percent of the base acres for peanuts on a farm on which direct payments are made.''.

TITLE III—JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE ON DEFICIT REDUCTION

SEC. 301. ESTABLISHMENT OF JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this title:

(1) JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE.—The term ''joint committee'' means the Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction established under subsection (b)(1).

(2) JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE BILL.—The term ''joint committee bill'' means a bill consisting of the proposed legislative language of the joint committee recommended under subsection (b)(3)(B) and introduced under section 302(a).

(b) ESTABLISHMENT OF JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE.—

(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established a joint select committee of Congress to be known as the ''Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction''.

(2) GOAL.—The goal of the joint committee shall be to reduce the deficit to 3 percent or less of GDP.

(3) DUTIES.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—

(i) IMPROVING THE SHORT-TERM AND LONG-TERM FISCAL IMBALANCE.—The joint committee shall provide recommendations and legislative language that will significantly improve the short-term and long-term fiscal imbalance of the Federal Government and may include recommendations and legislative language on tax reform.

(ii) CONSIDERATION OF OTHER BIPARTISAN PLANS.—As a part of developing the joint committee's recommendations and legislation, the joint committee shall consider existing bipartisan plans to reduce the deficit, including plans developed jointly by Senators or Members of the House of Representatives.

(iii) RECOMMENDATIONS OF HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES AND SENATE COMMITTEES.—Not later than October 14, 2011, each committee of the House of Representatives and Senate may transmit to the joint committee its recommendations for changes in law to reduce the deficit consistent with the goals described in paragraph (2) for the joint committee's consideration.

(B) REPORT, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND LEGISLATIVE LANGUAGE.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—Not later than November 23, 2011, the joint committee shall vote on—

(I) a report that contains a detailed statement of the findings, conclusions, and recommendations of the joint committee and the CBO estimate required by paragraph (5)(D)(ii); and

(II) proposed legislative language to carry out such recommendations as described in subclause (I).

No amendment to the Rules of the House of Representatives or the Standing Rules of the Senate shall be in order in the legislative language required in subclause (II).

(ii) APPROVAL OF REPORT AND LEGISLATIVE LANGUAGE.—The report of the joint committee and the proposed legislative language described in clause (i) shall require the approval of not fewer than 7 of the 12 members of the joint committee.

(iii) ADDITIONAL VIEWS.—A member of the joint committee who gives notice of an intention to file supplemental, minority, or additional views at the time of final joint committee vote on the approval of the report and legislative language under clause (ii), shall be entitled to 3 calendar days in which to file such views in writing with the staff director of the joint committee. Such views shall then be included in the joint committee report and printed in the same volume, or part thereof, and their inclusion shall be noted on the cover of the report. In the absence of timely notice, the joint committee report may be printed and transmitted immediately without such views.

(iv) TRANSMISSION OF REPORT AND LEGISLATIVE LANGUAGE.—If the report and legislative language are approved by the joint committee pursuant to clause (ii), then not later

than December 2, 2011, the joint committee shall submit the joint committee report and legislative language described in clause (i) to the President, the Vice President, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the Majority and Minority Leaders of both Houses.

(v) REPORT AND LEGISLATIVE LANGUAGE TO BE MADE PUBLIC.—Upon the approval or disapproval of the joint committee report and legislative language pursuant to clause (ii), the joint committee shall promptly make the full report and legislative language, and a record of the vote, available to the public.

(4) MEMBERSHIP.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The joint committee shall be composed of 12 members appointed pursuant to subparagraph (B).

(B) APPOINTMENT.—Members of the joint committee shall be appointed as follows:

(i) The majority leader of the Senate shall appoint 3 members from among Members of the Senate.

(ii) The minority leader of the Senate shall appoint 3 members from among Members of the Senate.

(iii) The Speaker of the House of Representatives shall appoint 3 members from among Members of the House of Representatives.

(iv) The minority leader of the House of Representatives shall appoint 3 members from among Members of the House of Representatives.

(C) CO-CHAIRS.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—There shall be 2 Co-Chairs of the joint committee. The majority leader of the Senate shall appoint one Co-Chair from among the members of the joint committee. The Speaker of the House of Representatives shall appoint the second Co-Chair from among the members of the joint committee. The Co-Chairs shall be appointed not later than 14 calendar days after the date of enactment of this section.

(ii) STAFF DIRECTOR.—The Co-Chairs, acting jointly, shall hire the staff director of the joint committee.

(D) DATE.—Members of the joint committee shall be appointed not later than 14 calendar days after the date of enactment of this section.

(E) PERIOD OF APPOINTMENT.—Members shall be appointed for the life of the joint committee. Any vacancy in the joint committee shall not affect its powers, but shall be filled not later than 14 calendar days after the date on which the vacancy occurs in the same manner as the original appointment. If a member of the committee leaves Congress, the member is no longer a member of the joint committee and a vacancy shall exist.

(5) ADMINISTRATION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—To enable the joint committee to exercise its powers, functions, and duties, there are authorized to be disbursed by the Senate the actual and necessary expenses of the joint committee approved by the Co-Chairs, subject to Senate rules and regulations.

(B) EXPENSES.—In carrying out its functions, the joint committee is authorized to incur expenses in the same manner and under the same conditions as the Joint Economic Committee as authorized by section 11 of Public Law 79-304 (15 U.S.C. 1024(d)).

(C) QUORUM.—Seven members of the joint committee shall constitute a quorum for purposes of voting, meeting, and holding hearings.

(D) VOTING.—

(i) PROXY VOTING.—No proxy voting shall be allowed on behalf of the members of the joint committee.

(ii) CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE ESTIMATES.—The Congressional Budget Office shall provide estimates of the legislation (as described in paragraph (3)(B)) in accordance with sections 308(a) and 201(f) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 639(a) and 601(f)) (including estimates of the effect of interest payment on the debt). In addition, the Congressional Budget Office shall provide information on the budgetary effect of the legislation beyond the year 2021 and the Congressional Budget Office and Joint Committee on Taxation may provide information on the budgetary effect of the legislation relative to alternative fiscal scenarios. The joint committee may not vote on any version of the report, recommendations, or legislative language unless such estimates are available for consideration by all members of the joint committee at least 48 hours prior to the vote as certified by the Co-Chairs.

(E) MEETINGS.—

(i) INITIAL MEETING.—Not later than 45 calendar days after the date of enactment of this section, the joint committee shall hold its first meeting.

(ii) AGENDA.—The Co-Chairs shall provide an agenda to the joint committee members not less than 48 hours in advance of any meeting.

(F) HEARINGS.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—The joint committee may, for the purpose of carrying out this section, hold such hearings, sit and act at such times and places, require attendance of witnesses and production of books, papers, and documents, take such testimony, receive such evidence, and administer such oaths the joint committee considers advisable.

(ii) HEARING PROCEDURES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF CO-CHAIRS.—

(I) ANNOUNCEMENT.—The Co-Chairs shall make a public announcement of the date, place, time, and subject matter of any hearing to be conducted not less than 7 days in advance of such hearing, unless the Co-Chairs determine that there is good cause to begin such hearing at an earlier date.

(II) WRITTEN STATEMENT.—A witness appearing before the joint committee shall file a written statement of proposed testimony at least 2 calendar days prior to appearance, unless the requirement is waived by the Co-Chairs, following their determination that there is good cause for failure of compliance.

(G) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—Upon written request of the Co-Chairs, a Federal agency shall provide technical assistance to the joint committee in order for the joint committee to carry out its duties.

(c) STAFF OF JOINT COMMITTEE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Co-Chairs may jointly appoint and fix the compensation of staff as they deem necessary, within the guidelines for Senate employees and following all applicable Senate rules and employment requirements.

(2) ETHICAL STANDARDS.—Members on the joint committee who serve in the House of Representatives shall be governed by the House ethics rules and requirements. Members of the Senate who serve on the joint committee and staff of the joint committee shall comply with Senate ethics rules.

(d) TERMINATION.—The joint committee shall terminate on January 13, 2012.

SEC. 302. EXPEDITED CONSIDERATION OF JOINT COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS.

(a) INTRODUCTION.—If approved by the majority required by section 301(b)(3)(B)(ii), the proposed legislative language submitted pursuant to section 301(b)(3)(B)(iv) shall be introduced in the Senate (by request) on the next day on which the Senate is in session by the majority leader of the Senate or by a Member of the Senate designated by the majority leader of the Senate and shall be introduced in the House of Representatives (by request) on the next legislative day by the majority leader of the House of Representatives or by a Member of the House of Representatives designated by the majority leader of the House of Representatives.

(b) CONSIDERATION IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.—

(1) REFERRAL AND REPORTING.—Any committee of the House of Representatives to which the joint committee bill is referred shall report it to the House of Representatives without amendment not later than December 9, 2011. If a committee fails to report the joint committee bill within that period, it shall be in order to move that the House of Representatives discharge the committee from further consideration of the bill. Such a motion shall not be in order after the last committee authorized to consider the bill reports it to the House of Representatives or after the House of Representatives has disposed of a motion to discharge the bill. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the motion to its adoption without intervening motion except 20 minutes of debate equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent. If such a motion is adopted, the House of Representatives shall proceed immediately to consider the joint committee bill in accordance with paragraphs (2) and (3). A motion to reconsider the vote by which the motion is disposed of shall not be in order.

(2) PROCEEDING TO CONSIDERATION.—After the last committee authorized to consider a joint committee bill reports it to the House of Representatives or has been discharged (other than by motion) from its consideration, it shall be in order to move to proceed to consider the joint committee bill in the House of Representatives. Such a motion shall not be in order after the House of Representatives has disposed of a motion to proceed with respect to the joint committee bill. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the motion to its adoption without intervening motion. A motion to reconsider the vote by which the motion is disposed of shall not be in order.

(3) CONSIDERATION.—The joint committee bill shall be considered as read. All points of order against the joint committee bill and against its consideration are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the joint committee bill to its passage without intervening motion except 2 hours of debate equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent and one motion to limit debate on the joint committee bill. A motion to reconsider the vote on passage of the joint committee bill shall not be in order.

(4) VOTE ON PASSAGE.—The vote on passage of the joint committee bill shall occur not later than December 23, 2011.

(c) EXPEDITED PROCEDURE IN THE SENATE.—

(1) COMMITTEE CONSIDERATION.—A joint committee bill introduced in the Senate under subsection (a) shall be jointly referred to the committee or committees of jurisdiction, which committees shall report the bill without any revision and with a favorable recommendation, an unfavorable recommendation, or without recommendation, not later than December 9, 2011. If any committee fails to report the bill within that period, that committee shall be automatically discharged from consideration of the bill, and the bill shall be placed on the appropriate calendar.

(2) MOTION TO PROCEED.—Notwithstanding rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, it is in order, not later than 2 days of session after the date on which a joint committee bill is reported or discharged from all committees to which it was referred, for the majority leader of the Senate or the majority leader's designee to move to proceed to the consideration of the joint committee bill. It shall also be in order for any Member

of the Senate to move to proceed to the consideration of the joint committee bill at any time after the conclusion of such 2-day period. A motion to proceed is in order even though a previous motion to the same effect has been disagreed to. All points of order against the motion to proceed to the joint committee bill are waived. The motion to proceed is not debatable. The motion is not subject to a motion to postpone. A motion to reconsider the vote by which the motion is agreed to or disagreed to shall not be in order. If a motion to proceed to the consideration of the joint committee bill is agreed to, the joint committee bill shall remain the unfinished business until disposed of.

(3) CONSIDERATION.—All points of order against the joint committee bill and against consideration of the joint committee bill are waived. Consideration of the joint committee bill and of all debatable motions and appeals in connection therewith shall not exceed a total of 30 hours which shall be divided equally between the Majority and Minority Leaders or their designees. A motion further to limit debate on the joint committee bill is in order, shall require an affirmative vote of three-fifths of the Members duly chosen and sworn, and is not debatable. Any debatable motion or appeal is debatable for not to exceed 1 hour, to be divided equally between those favoring and those opposing the motion or appeal. All time used for consideration of the joint committee bill, including time used for quorum calls and voting, shall be counted against the total 30 hours of consideration.

(4) NO AMENDMENTS.—An amendment to the joint committee bill, or a motion to postpone, or a motion to proceed to the consideration of other business, or a motion to recommit the joint committee bill, is not in order.

(5) VOTE ON PASSAGE.—If the Senate has voted to proceed to the joint committee bill, the vote on passage of the joint committee bill shall occur immediately following the conclusion of the debate on a joint committee bill, and a single quorum call at the conclusion of the debate if requested. The vote on passage of the joint committee bill shall occur not later than December 23, 2011.

(6) RULINGS OF THE CHAIR ON PROCEDURE.—Appeals from the decisions of the Chair relating to the application of the rules of the Senate, as the case may be, to the procedure relating to a joint committee bill shall be decided without debate.

(d) AMENDMENT.—The joint committee bill shall not be subject to amendment in either the House of Representatives or the Senate.

(e) CONSIDERATION BY THE OTHER HOUSE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—If, before passing the joint committee bill, one House receives from the other a joint committee bill—

(A) the joint committee bill of the other House shall not be referred to a committee; and

(B) the procedure in the receiving House shall be the same as if no joint committee bill had been received from the other House until the vote on passage, when the joint committee bill received from the other House shall supplant the joint committee bill of the receiving House.

(2) REVENUE MEASURE.—This subsection shall not apply to the House of Representatives if the joint committee bill received from the Senate is a revenue measure.

(f) RULES TO COORDINATE ACTION WITH OTHER HOUSE.—

(1) TREATMENT OF JOINT COMMITTEE BILL OF OTHER HOUSE.—If the Senate fails to introduce or consider a joint committee bill under this section, the joint committee bill of the House of Representatives shall be entitled to expedited floor procedures under this section.

(2) TREATMENT OF COMPANION MEASURES IN THE SENATE.—If following passage of the joint committee bill in the Senate, the Senate then receives the joint committee bill from the House of Representatives, the House-passed joint committee bill shall not be debatable. The vote on passage of the joint committee bill in the Senate shall be considered to be the vote on passage of the joint committee bill received from the House of Representatives.

(3) VETOES.—If the President vetoes the joint committee bill, debate on a veto message in the Senate under this section shall be 1 hour equally divided between the majority and minority leaders or their designees.

(g) LOSS OF PRIVILEGE.—The provisions of this section shall cease to apply to the joint committee bill if—

(1) the joint committee fails to vote on the report or proposed legislative language required under section 301(b)(3)(B)(i) by November 23, 2011; or

(2) the joint committee bill does not pass both Houses by December 23, 2011.

SEC. 303. FUNDING.

Funding for the joint committee shall be derived in equal portions from—

(1) the applicable accounts of the House of Representatives; and

(2) the contingent fund of the Senate from the appropriations account ''Miscellaneous Items'', subject to Senate rules and regulations.

SEC. 304. RULEMAKING.

The provisions of this title are enacted by Congress—

(1) as an exercise of the rulemaking power of the House of Representatives and the Senate, respectively, and as such they shall be considered as part of the rules of each House, respectively, or of that House to which they specifically apply, and such rules shall supersede other rules only to the extent that they are inconsistent therewith; and

(2) with full recognition of the constitutional right of either House to change such rules (so far as relating to such House) at any time, in the same manner, and to the same extent as in the case of any other rule of such House.

TITLE IV—DEBT CEILING DISAPPROVAL PROCESS

SEC. 401. DEBT CEILING DISAPPROVAL PROCESS.

Subchapter I of chapter 31 of subtitle III of title 31, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in section 3101(b), by striking ''or otherwise'' and inserting ''or as provided by section 3101A or otherwise''; and

(2) by inserting after section 3101, the following:

''§ 3101A. Presidential modification of the debt ceiling

''(a) IN GENERAL.—

''(1) $1.2 TRILLION.—

''(A) CERTIFICATION.—If, not later than December 31, 2011, the President submits a written certification to Congress that the President has determined that the debt subject to limit is within $100,000,000,000 of the limit in section 3101(b) and that further borrowing is required to meet existing commitments, the Secretary of the Treasury may exercise authority to borrow an additional $1,200,000,000,000 subject to the enactment of a joint resolution of disapproval enacted pursuant to this section. Upon submission of such certification, the limit on debt provided in section 3101(b) (referred to in this section as the 'debt limit') is increased by $416,000,000,000.

''(B) RESOLUTION OF DISAPPROVAL.—Congress may consider a joint resolution of disapproval of the authority under subparagraph (A) as provided in subsections (b) through (f). The joint resolution of disapproval considered under this section shall contain only the language provided in subsection (b)(2). If the time for disapproval has lapsed without enactment of a joint resolution of disapproval under this section, the debt limit is increased by an additional $784,000,000,000.

''(2) ADDITIONAL AMOUNT.—

''(A) CERTIFICATION.—If, after the debt limit is increased by $1,200,000,000,000 under paragraph (1), the President submits a written certification to Congress that the President has determined that the debt subject to limit is within $150,000,000,000 of the limit in section 3101(b) and that further borrowing is required to meet existing commitments, the Secretary of the Treasury may exercise authority to borrow an additional amount equal to $1,200,000,000,000 subject to the enactment of a joint resolution of disapproval enacted pursuant to this section.

''(B) RESOLUTION OF DISAPPROVAL.—Congress may consider a joint resolution of disapproval of the authority under subparagraph (A) as provided in subsections (b) through (f). The joint resolution of disapproval considered under this section shall contain only the language provided in subsection (b)(2). After the time for disapproval has lapsed without enactment of a joint resolution of disapproval under this section, the debt limit is increased by the amount authorized under subparagraph (A).

''(b) JOINT RESOLUTION OF DISAPPROVAL.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Except for the $416,000,000,000 increase in the debt limit provided by subsection (a)(1)(A), the debt limit may not be raised under this section if, within 55 calendar days after the date on which Congress receives a certification described in subsection (a)(1) or within 15 calendar days after the Congress receives the certification described in subsection (a)(2) (regardless of whether Congress is in session), there is enacted into law a joint resolution disapproving the President's exercise of authority with respect to such additional amount.

''(2) CONTENTS OF JOINT RESOLUTION.—For the purpose of this section, the term 'joint resolution' means only a joint resolution—

''(A)(i) for the certification described in subsection (a)(1), that is introduced on September 6, 7, 8 or 9, 2011 (or, if the Senate was not in session, the next calendar day on which the Senate is in session); and

''(ii) for the certification described in subsection (a)(2), that is introduced between the date the certification is received and 3 calendar days after that date;

''(B) which does not have a preamble;

''(C) the title of which is only as follows: 'Joint resolution relating to the disapproval of the President's exercise of authority to increase the debt limit, as submitted under section 3101A of title 31, United States Code on _____' (with the blank containing the date of submission); and

''(D) the matter after the resolving clause of which is only as follows: 'That Congress disapproves of the President's exercise of authority to increase the debt limit, as exercised pursuant to the certification under section 3101A(a) of title 31, United States Code.'.

''(c) EXPEDITED CONSIDERATION IN HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.—

''(1) RECONVENING.—Upon receipt of a certification described in subsection (a)(2), the Speaker, if the House would otherwise be adjourned, shall notify the Members of the House that, pursuant to this section, the House shall convene not later than the second calendar day after receipt of such certification.

''(2) REPORTING AND DISCHARGE.—Any committee of the House of Representatives to which a joint resolution is referred shall report it to the House without amendment not later than 5 calendar days after the date of

introduction of the joint resolution described in subsection (a). If a committee fails to report a joint resolution within that period, the committee shall be discharged from further consideration of the joint resolution and the joint resolution shall be referred to the appropriate calendar.

''(3) PROCEEDING TO CONSIDERATION.—After each committee authorized to consider a joint resolution reports it to the House or has been discharged from its consideration, it shall be in order, not later than the sixth day after introduction of a joint resolution under subsection (a), to move to proceed to consider the joint resolution in the House. All points of order against the motion are waived. Such a motion shall not be in order after the House has disposed of a motion to proceed on a joint resolution addressing a particular submission. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the motion to its adoption without intervening motion. The motion shall not be debatable. A motion to reconsider the vote by which the motion is disposed of shall not be in order.

''(4) CONSIDERATION.—The joint resolution shall be considered as read. All points of order against the joint resolution and against its consideration are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the joint resolution to its passage without intervening motion except two hours of debate equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent. A motion to reconsider the vote on passage of the joint resolution shall not be in order.

''(d) EXPEDITED PROCEDURE IN SENATE.—

''(1) RECONVENING.—Upon receipt of a certification under subsection (a)(2), if the Senate has adjourned or recessed for more than 2 days, the majority leader of the Senate, after consultation with the minority leader of the Senate, shall notify the Members of the Senate that, pursuant to this section, the Senate shall convene not later than the second calendar day after receipt of such message.

''(2) PLACEMENT ON CALENDAR.—Upon introduction in the Senate, the joint resolution shall be immediately placed on the calendar.

''(3) FLOOR CONSIDERATION.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding Rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, it is in order at any time during the period beginning on the day after the date on which Congress receives a certification under subsection (a) and for the certification described in subsection (a)(1), ending on September 14, 2011 and for the certification described in subsection (a)(2) on the 6th day after the date on which Congress receives a certification under subsection (a) (even though a previous motion to the same effect has been disagreed to) to move to proceed to the consideration of the joint resolution, and all points of order against the joint resolution (and against consideration of the joint resolution) are waived. The motion to proceed is not debatable. The motion is not subject to a motion to postpone. A motion to reconsider the vote by which the motion is agreed to or disagreed to shall not be in order. If a motion to proceed to the consideration of the resolution is agreed to, the joint resolution shall remain the unfinished business until disposed of.

''(B) CONSIDERATION.—Consideration of the joint resolution, and on all debatable motions and appeals in connection therewith, shall be limited to not more than 10 hours, which shall be divided equally between the majority and minority leaders or their designees. A motion further to limit debate is in order and not debatable. An amendment to, or a motion to postpone, or a motion to proceed to the consideration of other business, or a motion to recommit the joint resolution is not in order.

''(C) VOTE ON PASSAGE.—If the Senate has voted to proceed to a joint resolution, the vote on passage of the joint resolution shall occur immediately following the conclusion of consideration of the joint resolution, and a single quorum call at the conclusion of the debate if requested in accordance with the rules of the Senate.

''(D) RULINGS OF THE CHAIR ON PROCEDURE.—Appeals from the decisions of the Chair relating to the application of the rules of the Senate, as the case may be, to the procedure relating to a joint resolution shall be decided without debate.

''(e) AMENDMENT NOT IN ORDER.—A joint resolution of disapproval considered pursuant to this section shall not be subject to amendment in either the House of Representatives or the Senate.

''(f) COORDINATION WITH ACTION BY OTHER HOUSE.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—If, before passing the joint resolution, one House receives from the other a joint resolution—

''(A) the joint resolution of the other House shall not be referred to a committee; and

''(B) the procedure in the receiving House shall be the same as if no joint resolution had been received from the other House until the vote on passage, when the joint resolution received from the other House shall supplant the joint resolution of the receiving House.

''(2) TREATMENT OF JOINT RESOLUTION OF OTHER HOUSE.—If the Senate fails to introduce or consider a joint resolution under this section, the joint resolution of the House shall be entitled to expedited floor procedures under this section.

''(3) TREATMENT OF COMPANION MEASURES.—If, following passage of the joint resolution in the Senate, the Senate then receives the companion measure from the House of Representatives, the companion measure shall not be debatable.

''(4) CONSIDERATION AFTER PASSAGE.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—If Congress passes a joint resolution, the period beginning on the date the President is presented with the joint resolution and ending on the date the President takes action with respect to the joint resolution (but excluding days when either House is not in session) shall be disregarded in computing the appropriate calendar day period described in subsection (b)(1).

''(B) VETOES.—If the President vetoes the joint resolution—

''(i) the period beginning on the date the President vetoes the joint resolution and ending on the day on which the Congress receives the veto message with respect to the joint resolution (regardless of whether Congress is in session) shall be disregarded in computing the appropriate calendar day period described in subsection (b)(1); and

''(ii) debate on a veto message in the Senate under this section shall be 1 hour equally divided between the majority and minority leaders or their designees.

''(5) VETO OVERRIDE.—If within the appropriate calendar day period described in subsection (b)(1), Congress overrides a veto of the joint resolution with respect to authority exercised pursuant to paragraph (1) or (2) of subsection (a), the limit on debt provided in section 3101(b) shall not be raised, except for the $416,000,000,000 increase in the limit provided by subsection (a)(1)(A)(i).

''(6) SEQUESTER.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—If within the 55 calendar days of receiving the certification described in subsection (a)(1), Congress overrides a veto of the joint resolution with respect to authority exercised pursuant to paragraph (1) of subsection (a), OMB shall, immediately, sequester pro rata amounts from all discretionary and direct spending accounts as defined in section 250(c) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (2 U.S.C. 900(c)) (as in effect September 30, 2006) equal to $416,000,000,000. No reduction of payments for net interest (all of major functional category 900) shall be made under any order issued under this paragraph.

''(B) APPLICATION.—Section 255 of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 shall not apply to this section, except that payments for military personnel accounts (within subfunctional category 051), TRICARE for Life, Medicare (functional category 570), military retirement, Social Security (functional category 650), veterans (functional category 700), and net interest (functional category 900) shall be exempt.

''(g) RULES OF HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES AND SENATE.—This subsection and subsections (b), (c), (d), (e) and (f) are enacted by Congress—

''(1) as an exercise of the rulemaking power of the Senate and House of Representatives, respectively, and as such it is deemed a part of the rules of each House, respectively, but applicable only with respect to the procedure to be followed in that House in the case of a joint resolution, and it supersedes other rules only to the extent that it is inconsistent with such rules; and

''(2) with full recognition of the constitutional right of either House to change the rules (so far as relating to the procedure of that House) at any time, in the same manner, and to the same extent as in the case of any other rule of that House.''.

SA 590. Mr. REID proposed an amendment to amendment SA 589 proposed by Mr. REID to the bill S. 627, to establish the Commission on Freedom of Information Act Processing Delays; as follows:

At the end, add the following new section:

SEC.___.

This Act shall become effective 5 days after enactment.

SA 591. Mr. REID proposed an amendment to the bill S. 627, to establish the Commission on Freedom of Information Act Processing Delays; as follows:

At the end, add the following new section:

SEC.___.

This Act shall become effective 3 days after enactment.

SA 592. Mr. REID proposed an amendment to amendment SA 591 proposed by Mr. REID to the bill S. 627, to establish the Commission on Freedom of Information Act Processing Delays; as follows:

In the amendment, strike ''3 days'' and insert ''2 days''.

SA 593. Mr. REID proposed an amendment to amendment SA 592 proposed by Mr. REID to the amendment SA 591 proposed by Mr. REID to the bill S. 627, to establish the Commission on Freedom of Information Act Processing Delays; as follows:

In the amendment, strike ''2 days'' and insert ''1 day''.

NOTICE OF HEARING

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, I would like to announce that the Committee on Indian Affairs will meet on Thursday, August 4, 2011, at 2:15 p.m. in room

628 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building to conduct a hearing entitled ''The American Indian Probate Reform Act: Empowering Indian Land Owners''.

Those wishing additional information may contact the Indian Affairs Committee at (202) 224–2251.

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Taylor Eggleston, an intern in Senator PAUL's office, be granted the privilege of the floor for the remainder of this day.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDERS FOR SATURDAY, JULY 30, 2011

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 1 p.m. on Saturday, July 30; that following the prayer and pledge, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the morning hour be deemed expired, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; that following any leader remarks, the Senate resume consideration of the motion to concur in the House message to accompany S. 627, the legislative vehicle for the debt limit increase, and that the time from 1:30 p.m. until 7:30 p.m. be equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees, with the majority and the Republicans controlling alternating 30-minute blocks of time with the majority controlling the first block; further that the time from 7:30 p.m. until 8 p.m. be equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees, with the Republicans controlling the first 15 minutes and the majority controlling the final 15 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PROGRAM

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. President, as a reminder to all Senators, the majority leader filed cloture on the motion to concur on the House message with a Reid amendment this evening.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 1 P.M. TOMORROW

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it adjourn under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 9:02 p.m., adjourned until Saturday, July 30, 2011, at 1 p.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

MICHAEL E. HOROWITZ, OF MARYLAND, TO BE INSPECTOR GENERAL, DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE, VICE GLENN A. FINE, RESIGNED.

NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

ANNEILA I. SARGENT, OF CALIFORNIA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL SCIENCE BOARD, NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION, FOR A TERM EXPIRING MAY 10, 2016, VICE GERALD WAYNE CLOUGH, TERM EXPIRED.

WITHDRAWALS

Executive Message transmitted by the President to the Senate on July 29, 2011 withdrawing from further Senate consideration the following nominations:

GOODWIN LIU, OF CALIFORNIA, TO BE UNITED STATES CIRCUIT JUDGE FOR THE NINTH CIRCUIT, VICE A NEW POSITION CREATED BY PUBLIC LAW 110–117, APPROVED JANUARY 7, 2008, WHICH WAS SENT TO THE SENATE ON JANUARY 5, 2011.

MICHAEL F. MUNDACA, OF NEW YORK, TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY, VICE ERIC SOLOMON, RESIGNED, WHICH WAS SENT TO THE SENATE ON JANUARY 26, 2011.

BARBARA K. MCQUISTON, OF CALIFORNIA, TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE. (NEW POSITION), WHICH WAS SENT TO THE SENATE ON MAY 9, 2011.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

IN HONOR OF THE CAREER OF MICHAEL J. CARROLL FROM CHESTER COUNTY, PA

HON. JIM GERLACH

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 29, 2011

Mr. GERLACH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Michael J. Carroll, Chester County, Pennsylvania, on his retirement after his outstanding service and career in law enforcement, most recently as Chief of Police of West Goshen Township.

Chief Carroll served in the United States Air Force from 1961 to 1965, participating in the USAF Honor Guard in the funeral of President John F. Kennedy. After leaving the military, he served in the Tredyffrin Police Department, the Chester County Detective Bureau, and the West Whiteland Police Department before becoming Chief of the West Whiteland Police Department in October 1988.

Chief Carroll has served as staff instructor with the Delaware County Police Academy, has been a guest lecturer at institutions such as West Chester University and the United States Naval Academy, and is a graduate of the FBI Academy. In addition to serving on the Criminal Justice Advisory Committee of Wilmington University and Alvernia University, Chief Carroll is Past President of the Chester County Police Chiefs Association, Past President of the Police Chiefs Association of Southeastern Pennsylvania, Past President of the Pennsylvania Chiefs of Police Association, and Past President of the International Chiefs of Police Association, and he has benefittingly been inducted into the International Police Association Hall of Fame.

Mr. Speaker, in light of his years of exemplary service to his community and litany of sterling accomplishments too long to record, I ask that my colleagues join me today in recognizing Chief Michael J. Carroll for his invaluable contributions to the quality of life of the citizens of West Goshen Township, Chester County, Pennsylvania and our entire nation.

HONORING MS. SHIRLEY THOMAS UPON HER RETIREMENT

HON. DAVID SCOTT

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 29, 2011

Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to rise today to recognize a hardworking, dedicated member of my staff, Ms. Shirley Thomas as she prepares to retire from a long and distinguished career of public service. Shirley has committed herself to this great institution for over 20 years, serving the U.S. Senate for 13 years and the U.S. House of Representatives for 9 years. She has been an essential part of my own staff since almost my first day as the Representative for the 13th District of Georgia.

Shirley was born on February 27, 1953 in Western Kentucky as the eldest of four children. She remains, to this day, a deeply religious woman, devoted to her family and friends. After attaining her certificate in Business Administration from the University of Illinois Business and Clerical Training School, Shirley stayed on to work for the University for almost 8 years. She then relocated to Houston, Texas to work for Dresser Industries, where she primarily worked in the accounting department.

Unfortunately, in 1988, Shirley suffered tremendous injuries after being hit by a car. To recover from her injuries, Shirley came to live in Atlanta, Georgia, where she began her career in public service. Shirley first worked for former Senator Sam Nunn for 8 years until his retirement, and for his successor, Senator Max Cleland for 5 years.

I will remain forever grateful that Shirley then chose to help me serve my own constituents. As a Constituent Services Representative and my Senior Social Security and Medicare Advisor, she worked tirelessly with those citizens most in need of my support. As my district expanded, she began serving as my Office Manger as well as providing administrative support. I am especially thankful for her work in organizing several of my annual district events, including our annual Health Fair and Jobs Fair. Her experience in working with state, federal, and private officials has had an incredible impact on the success of these events. This same experience was crucial when my district was redistricted in 2005. She has been with me for the past nine years, through the historic changes in Medicare and our healthcare delivery system, and in that time has helped countless residents access benefits that are so vital to their well being.

I am extremely proud and thankful for all her hard work. It is with great sadness that I, along with the rest of my staff, wish her a fond farewell as she retires from my office. Shirley, please accept my prayers and best wishes for your future. I thank you from the bottom of my heart for your support and dedication thorough our many years together.

May God bless you.

A TRIBUTE TO DAVID LERTZMAN'S TEACHING CAREER

HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 29, 2011

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I would like to acknowledge the career accomplishments of my cousin, David Lertzman, who retired this year after 41 years as a teacher and coach in the Los Angeles Unified School District. A native of California, David began his career in 1970 and would go on to teach and coach at numerous high schools in Los Angeles.

David's academic career revolved around teaching World History, U.S. History, and Physical Education. His passion for education and history led him to participate in a local State University Education Department program that prepared students for a career teaching U.S. History. This program was highly successful, and David would watch many of his former students go on to have distinguished careers in teaching and coaching.

In addition to his teaching accomplishments, David had a very successful coaching career. He coached football, boys gymnastics and girls volleyball. In doing so, he reached many significant milestones. At Hamilton High School in Los Angeles, he holds the record for most wins in school history for the football team and the boys gymnastics team, while at Birmingham High School he holds the record for most wins in school history for girls volleyball. He also served as a founding member of the Los Angeles Volleyball Coaches Association and the Los Angeles Football Coaches Association, and the President of the Los Angeles Coaches Association.

As a former teacher myself, I want to join my cousin Lynne, who has been David's wife for 36 years, their two daughters Stephanie and Carolyn, and their son-in-law, Scott in congratulating him on such a successful career. Teachers hold a special place in our society, and David Lertzman has proven to be at the top of his profession. I wish him all the best in his future endeavors.

HONORING THE SERVICE AND SACRIFICE OF CW3 GEORGE ANDREWS (''ANDY'') HOWES

HON. JOE DONNELLY

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 29, 2011

Mr. DONNELLY of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to solemnly honor Chief Warrant Officer 3 (CW3) George Andrews (''Andy'') Howes for his dedication and service to the United States of America. CW3 Howes was listed as missing in action on January 10, 1970 when the helicopter he was co-piloting disappeared in Vietnam. He was just 19 years old.

The remains of CW3 Howes were returned in 1988; however, they were not identified until 2010 through an advance in DNA technology. Nearly 41 years after his disappearance, CW3 Howes' surviving family was notified that Andy was found at last. He could finally receive the honor and recognition he earned for his service and for his ultimate sacrifice.

Andy Howes was born in Little Rock, Arkansas in 1950 and his family moved to Knox, Indiana in 1956. He graduated from Knox High School in 1968 and enlisted in the U.S. Army that September. He received his wings in August 1969 and was then deployed to Vietnam.

CW3 Howes flew helicopter gunships while assigned to the 71st Aviation Company, 16th Aviation Group and America Division. He flew with the Firebirds, a distinguished and decorated gunship unit based in Chu Lai, South

Vietnam. On January 10, 1970, a helicopter piloted by Capt. Herbert Crosby and co-piloted by CW3 Howes disappeared while flying in extreme weather conditions. In addition to Capt. Crosby and CW3 Howes, crew members SFS Francis Graziosi and SFS Wayne Allen were lost in the helicopter's disappearance. All of Andy's crew mates have been previously identified, making Andy the last of the crew to return home. Marine Cpl Michael L. Bleeker, his great-nephew, is escorting his remains from Hawaii to Knox, and then to Arlington National Cemetery for burial.

CW3 Howes has been awarded the following medals to honor his service and sacrifice: Air Medal with Numeral Two, National Defense Medal, Vietnam Service Medal with two Bronze Service stars, Vietnam Campaign Medal with "60" Device, Basic Aviation Badge, the Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross Unit Citation with Palm, and the Purple Heart.

Andy is survived by his brother, Robert Lloyd Howes of Wichita, Kansas, in addition to many cousins, nieces and nephews, all of whom have kept his memory alive and faithfully waited for the day he would come home. Andy's parents, Robert Lindell Howes and Bonnie Andrews Howes have passed away, as has his sister, Valerie Pulver Larew.

It is my solemn duty, and humble privilege, to honor and remember CW3 George Andrews Howes and a life cut tragically short. Andy stands as a testament to the great honor possessed, and sacrifices made, by our men and women in the armed forces, and their families. Those who were fortunate enough to know him were blessed by his presence—and we are all diminished by his loss. I and the grateful citizens of Indiana's Second District are deeply grateful that Andy is back home. We mourn his passing and offer our solemn gratitude for his service.

HONORING MR. BARRY CICERO FOR HIS INSTALLATION AS JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER OF THE AMERICAN LEGION FIRST DIVISION OF ILLINOIS

HON. DANIEL LIPINSKI

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 29, 2011

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a man who has given so much to his country and his community, Mr. Barry Cicero. This Sunday, July 31, Mr. Cicero will be installed as Junior Vice Commander of the American Legion First Division of Illinois, while Derrick David Stinson will be installed as Commander and Lawrence Nohr as Senior Vice Commander. The First Division is one of three divisions of the American Legion in Illinois and includes all of Cook County with a population of more than 5 million people. Mr. Cicero, and the other officers being installed, have demonstrated impressive dedication to their country and the American Legion, and are certainly deserving of this honor.

Barry Cicero served in the United States Army and has been an active member of the American Legion for 19 years. His home post is the Robert E. Coulter, Jr. Post 1941 in La Grange where he has been active on many projects including chairing Fall Fest, the Legion's popular fundraiser for local veterans. He has held many leadership positions during his time as a member of the American Legion, including Commander of Post 1941 and Commander of the 5th District. He held that position for two terms, a rarity in the American Legion. In addition, Mr. Cicero has been very active in giving to his church and community.

Being installed as Junior Vice Commander of a Division within the American Legion is such a special occasion because it means he will be installed as the Commander of that Division within two years. Mr. Cicero's installation is also special because he will be the first Legionnaire from Post 1941 to become a Division Commander. I am happy to see all of his hard work and dedication bear fruit as he was chosen by his colleagues to be Junior Vice Commander.

I am certain Barry Cicero will provide exemplary service as Junior Vice Commander, and his leadership will bring a prosperous year for the American Legion's First Division and all of the posts within it. Please join me in honoring Mr. Barry Cicero and may he continue to be an asset to Illinois veterans and his community.

TRIBUTE TO DR. JOE MORTON

HON. JO BONNER

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 29, 2011

Mr. BONNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the work of Alabama State Superintendent of Education, Dr. Joe Morton, who has been a leader in education for 42 years and will officially retire on August 31, 2011.

Dr. Morton grew up in Pleasant Grove and graduated from Hueytown High School. He then received his B.S. degree from Auburn University in 1969 and later his M.A. in 1973 and Ph.D. in 1974 from The University of Alabama.

Upon graduation from Auburn, he began a life of dedicated service to the field of education. He worked his way up from a school teacher to the superintendent of the Sumter County Board of Education. He is presumed to be the youngest person in the history of the state to be a local superintendent of education at the age of 27.

On July 13, 2004, he was selected by Governor Bob Riley to be the State Superintendent of Education. Along with a longstanding love of education, he has always held to the belief that Alabama students have the capability to compete with top students from around the world.

In order to engage students' interest in reading, he created and co-founded the Alabama Reading Initiative (ARI). The ARI has since become a national model and has helped the National Assessment of Educational Process in 2007 achieve the largest gains recorded in Grade 4 Reading. In 2010, AMSTI was recognized by the Center for Excellence in Education as the model of laboratory education in the United States.

Other educational programs he helped create and co-found were the Alabama Math, Science, and Technology Initiative (AMSTI) and the Alabama Connecting Classrooms, Educators and Students Statewide (ACCESS).

At the request of Governor Riley, Dr. Morton also chaired the Seat Belt Study Commission after a tragic 2006 school bus accident in Huntsville. The Commission's research into school bus safety and seatbelts is considered to be the most extensive in the country.

In 2009, he also launched First Choice, a plan to combat high school dropout rates by doubling the number of graduates. First Choice has already helped deliver a greater number of well prepared high school graduates.

As a result of Dr. Joe Morton's achievements in education, Alabama had the fourth largest increase in the number of students who graduated from high school in the nation. His achievements also paved the way for Alabama to lead the nation in student enrollment gains and Advanced Placement exam scores.

Above all, under Dr. Morton's leadership as Alabama's Superintendent of Education, the state has achieved its greatest overall educational rating in its history.

On behalf of the people of Alabama—especially the thousands of school children who will reap a lifetime of rewards because of his leadership—I wish to extend congratulations to Dr. Joe Morton for a job well done and for his many contributions to better the education and the futures of many Alabamians. My colleagues in the Alabama delegation join me in wishing him and his family the very best as they start a new chapter in their lives.

FACEBOOK FOLLOWERS' COMMENTS ON WHAT A BI-PARTISAN COMPROMISE TO THE DEBT CEILING IMPASSE WOULD BE LIKE TO THEM

HON. GEORGE MILLER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 29, 2011

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, President Obama has urged the American people to call, email and tweet their members of Congress to let them know they want a bi-partisan compromise solution to the dangerous impasse over the debt ceiling that the Republican leadership has engineered. I used my Facebook page to ask my constituents and others who follow my page what a bi-partisan compromise would look like to them.

I wanted to share with my colleagues the responses I have received so far. As you can see, the answers are very thoughtful. And the majority, not all, but clearly the majority, of responses are in favor of a balanced approach, one that combines new tax revenues with serious spending cuts. That's the approach I personally favor and that President Obama and congressional Democrats have been trying to achieve. Regrettably, we have been met with a stone wall of opposition from the Republican Congress to a balanced compromise. They are pushing for a short-term bill that would make seniors, children, and the middle class pay the burden of our fiscal problems, and that would force us to have this reckless and damaging debate again just months from now.

I want to thank the people who took the time to share their views on my page and I encourage all Americans to continue to make their views known to the Congress about this important issue.

I hope my colleagues find these comments, from people who follow me on Facebook, informative.

Kay: ''come now, let us reason together'' Praying for reasoning and that people will realize what they are doing. We must live in the solution—we know what the problem is. I'm glad you're there, GEORGE MILLER!

Brian: I think you know what needs to be done. I hope your colleagues do too.

Sue: The right won't compromise and the President has already given away far too much. He needs to take a stand for the American people and sign an executive order invoking the 14th Amendment.

Felix: Well, what do we hold that they want? Settle on the debt in exchange for, say, national CCW reciprocity?

KeKe: I'm concerned with the health bill as well as curving the expenses for colleges and bringing jobs into our states!

Gayle: Bipartisan compromise would look like the Congress has finally restored some semblance of sanity to the process of government. It would include finally taxing corporations and the rich as they should be taxed, and it would NOT include cutting Social Security programs and other services to the elderly and most at-risk populations. Is that too much to ask? I think not . . .

Gail: Very unwillingly I opt for a 'compromise' but NOT touching either social security or Medicare.. .and, in addition, pushing for closing those tax loop holes for the rich. It amazes me how little conscience the Republicans (both moderate and TPers) have with regard to a patriotic generosity towards those who have less . . .

Pamela: First of all, social security, etc., are NOT entitlements. We've paid in to them. We're not asking for a hand out, we want the money we put into the system. Stop them treating us like children looking for a handout. And I don't see why the President has to be so PC about how we got into this! Lay it right at Bush's doorstep.

Nick: It would close the tax loopholes for corporations and the wealthy, it would reform the tax code to a graduated flat tax, would end the income caps on SSI, and would modify Medicare by extending the age of eligibility to 67, adding small ($20) co-pays for medical services, and would extend the debt limit until 2014.

Nick: It would also close any and all tax benefits that U.S. Corporations receive by using overseas labor.

Anne: Quite honestly I think we need to reverse Bushs tax cuts and get out of three wars as quickly as possible.

Daniel: The President should use the 14th Amendment option and stop trying to exploit this ''debate'' for an opening to cut the social safety net. Anyone who votes for a bill—and both the Reid and Boehner plans have these things in them—that puts huge spending cuts in place during the longest unemployment crisis since the Great Depression is not getting my money, time, or vote in 2012. Anyone who votes for a bill that contains provisions for a ''super congress'' panel that could, say, force through massive spending cuts to SS, Medicare, or Medicaid too quickly for the public to notice is not getting my money, time, or vote in 2012. Any Democrat who attacks the New Deal or Great Society policy template in any way is not getting my money, time, or vote in 2012. Ideals and principles matter. People who think so aren't ''sanctimonious,'' they think what we say and do matters.

Karen: Tax the rich. Close the loopholes. Mega-corps & financiers need to pay their fair share. Reinvest in the United Stated and their people. Or they will not reinvest their trust in a Congress that has forgotten 'by the People, of the People, for the People. Tell them they are close to committing treason, against the true government of these United States: We the People. We will not be distracted or forget this time. We are awake & We expect Action!

Pamela: There is no compromise at this time. Nor should there be. The full faith and credit of the US should not be held hostage to the budget. Simply raise the debt ceiling and then consider the budget as a separate issue . . . which it is. And THEN eliminate the Bush tax cuts.

Clark: As in the past, a REAL compromise would be a clean debt limit bill, and then the parties can slog it out over the deficit reduction later. The biggest help would be putting most of the unemployed and underemployed back to work, that will whittle down the problem nicely!

Robert: Cut enough to get the deal done . . . there is plenty that could be reduced in our bloated budget. Deal with tax overhauls separately, you don't have enough time to broadly revamp that end of the business in a few days. The Pres needs to drop his politically motivated insistence that the ceiling is raised high enough to avoid dealing with this again until after the election. And would someone please read the 14th Amendment and set clear there is nothing to invoke? It is sad to hear ''CNN sound bite'' educated numbskulls calling for something they have never read and have no context about how it originally came to be, or what it was trying to address (Civil War era history is apparently not a deeply taught subject in this country . . .). GET 'ER DONE GEORGE!

Ulrich: Stop the WARs!

Nic: Social Security should be self-sustaining and not redistribute wealth. The average American should recieve benefits equal to their inflation adjusted contributions, regardless of income. Same with Medicare. The tax code should be simplified. Annual budgets should not run deficits. And don't raise taxes—cut non-essencial services. That's it.

Ted: Save money and lives get out of the wars now!! I don't understand the Republicans, they won a huge victory in this debate, no new taxes, no shared responsibility. The Tea party Republicans, are making a mess of this. The President has been very reasonable and willing to comromise. I hope he will use the 14th amendment, section 4 to save our economy and raise the debt c. That's my opinion!!

Maureen: The President is trying to deal with people who do not know or respect the meaning of the word ''compromise.'' For the moment, use the 14th Amendment option. For the long term, raise upper income tax rates, close corporate tax loopholes, decrease defense budget (reduce our overseas presence and military ops). Social Security (insurance, not entitlement!) is not a part of this equation, but what is the big deal about simply raising the ceiling on the FICA-taxable compensation?

Tyson: It's obvious we have a revenue problem as well as a spending problem. Put out a message and scream it louder than the GOP. You have the facts to back it up.

Toni: A bi-partisan compromise. Raise taxes on the wealthiest. Cut what we have to, a bit from everywhere, raise the debt ceiling as there is no alternative apparently. How about for a year rather than six months or two years? In other words, give for the greater good.

Rick: It's time for the Democrats to show some courage in this . . . time for a compromise and to ignore the fundamentalist purity of the freshman Republicans.

Lori: I'm tired of the rhetoric. The solution is: A one page bill that will increase the debt limit. Then . . . a bi-partisan committee to review where Government waste is. I'm sick of the lobbying of the special interests that pay into the superpacs for their agendas. The people understand this and are tired of being condescended to. No elected representative . . . should be enticed with money and perks for their own purposes. GEORGE . . . I have LOTS of ideas . . . and you have probably received them all. Sorry you're not my Congressman anymore.

Dave: The president has already given away TOO MUCH, in the name of bi-partisanship! Any and all giveaways end up as bigger tax breaks for Republicans' Corporate friends anyway. Enough with ''compromising!'' Invoke the 14th and be done with it!

James: A bipartisan compromise on the debt ceiling would be a simple increase in it WITHOUT ANY STRINGS ATTACHED, just like the nearly trillion dollar bailout of the financial system in October of 2008!

Tom: Simplifying the tax code by eliminating some tax breaks might be good for the country. That might be part of a bill that both parties could accept. You're not really raising taxes that way, in some sense. Another problem is that large corporations that own a lot of land that they can sit on for a century are getting a free ride on some property taxes, due to assessed values lagging behind inflation, which is unsustainable in the long run. Cutting foreign aid when it isn't really in American interests might help reduce spending a little. We really don't get much appreciation from foreigners for all the help we give them, instead they seem to resent us. Probably we should disentangle ourselves from involvement in foreign affairs to some extent.

Keynes should be read in the original, it's perfectly clear from his books that government needs to be lender of last resort in an economic crisis, which he proved in the 1930s. There is some value in the Austrian school of economics, but their doctrines can lead to disaster, as proved by the Hoover policies that led to the Great Depression in the 1930s. Keynes showed the way out of that mess. Government spending on American infrastructure is absolutely necessary to get us out of the current crisis, even if we have to borrow money to do it.

Carol: A clean Debt Ceiling increase. A one pager.

Cathy: Compromise is what statesmen and stateswomen do! We must move forward with balanced cuts and revenue building that does not stop job growth or hurt the poor, elderly, our youth or our vets . . . it must be modest over decades—this is what makes sense. Close the IRS loopholes, cut waste, reform entitlements so they are healthy—these things can not be done overnight—there is no silver bullet—we must be adults and rebuild our economy intelligently and calmly.

Bonnie: I trust that you will represent us well on this issue! I'm so worried for those in our country who have the weakest voice.

Mike: Clean debt ceiling bill. Negotiate the rest in appropriations with an eye toward balancing cuts and revenue increases. No raising eligibility requirements. No benefit reductions. Means testing, possibly. Perhaps raise SS cap beyond $106,000 . . . .

Jean: Perhaps it would simply raise the debt ceiling, as has been done so many times in the past, without including the other crap that the Tea Party idiots are so against. Then work on THAT compromise, which will cut spending AND raise taxes . . . especially on the rich to add to their fair share. Or is that too easy?

Deborah: after the reports of multi billion dollar profits from big oil this week it is time to share with the government across the board . . . The timing of these earnings is not exactly ideal for the Republicans in Congress.

Debbie: What is the big deal on the debt ceiling, really? Why can't it be taken care of as it has been in the past? Yes, I know we are swimming in debt and yes, I know it has to be reined in, but please, please, please not on the backs of our elderly citizens. Does no one in the Tea Party have a mother or father who have social security and medicare as their only source of income and health care? I find the Tea Party's newly elected House members to be arrogant, self-serving and short-sighted. Also, is every wealthy American a job producer? The Republican party seems to think so, because to hear them tell it, raising taxes on the wealthy will limit job growth; there are so many loopholes for the wealthy, that they pay only a fraction of their assessed taxes as it is. Washington is broken and seems beyond fixing, short of ditching everybody up there and starting over again, and I know that's not a fix either.

Jane: There are not enough taxes that could possibly be collected to pay off our debt! Just stop the spending! Obama is running this country into the ground! Wake up people unless you like the idea of losing everything. Not hard to figure out.

Stacey: A bipartisan balanced budget would: (1) pass a clean increase to the debt ceiling (NO riders or deals attached). (2) Increase in revenues by increasing the tax brackets to pre-Reagan levels. OR by making a 9% flat tax for all Americans, no deductions. (3) Reduce spending by scaling back on foreign wars. (4) Reducing Washington waste, Senators and Representatives pay own way after leaving office like ordinary citizens (they'll collect SS and Medicare too. (5) Keep Social Security and Medicare intact, stop Gov't from borrowing from these programs. The Gov't MUST REPAY, all monies borrowed from SS since Reagan's tenure. (6) Stop subsidizing Big Oil or other conglomerates. (7) Follow California's lead and Congress and Senate does not get paid unless a balanced budget is passed into law by June 30th. Otherwise they work for free until the job is done. No back pay if budget passed after June 30th.

175TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BOROUGH OF HOLLIDAYSBURG

HON. BILL SHUSTER

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 29, 2011

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to rise today to recognize the Borough of Hollidaysburg upon the 175th anniversary of its founding. I, along with close to 6,000 of my constituents am proud to call Hollidaysburg home and I am pleased to have the opportunity to call attention to the borough and its history in the House today.

Hollidaysburg, like so many other boroughs in Pennsylvania, has a rich history that stretches back before the founding of our nation to the French and Indian War. Hollidaysburg was first settled in the early 1700's by brothers Adam and William Holliday after their purchase of 1,000 acres of land along the Juniata River from the decendents of William Penn.

As with many small settlements of the time, the community forged from the wilderness by the Holliday family remained small throughout the Revolutionary War and the first few years of America's founding. However, as America began to expand and look west, the population began to grow as important transportation projects like the Huntingdon, Cambria, and Indiana Turnpike were completed.

In 1832, Hollidaysburg underwent a second population boom when the Pennsylvania Main Line Canal opened, giving merchants in the area a way to move their products to Philadelphia and other eastern markets. Two years later, the Allegheny Portage Railroad solidified Hollidaysburg as a center for trade by linking the canal to a railroad connecting Pittsburgh and Philadelphia. Later, at the dawn of the Twentieth Century, the Pennsylvania Railroad established a large switching yard at Hollidaysburg; further solidifying the borough's important role as a link in America's growing railroad infrastructure.

This rapid development in transportation around Hollidaysburg enabled the borough to officially charter itself in 1836. Within a few years, the population surged again, to a record number of 2,000 inhabitants by 1840. The borough's growth in such a short time enabled it to become the seat of Blair County and remains a center of commerce and local government to this day. I might add to that list, innovation since Hollidaysburg is the home of the renowned and ageless toy, the Slinky.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the borough of Hollidaysburg for 175 years of history, growth and success. Hollidaysburg continues to boast a vibrant community in a beautiful area of Pennsylvania and I invite the American people to help celebrate its anniversary by visiting the borough to experience all it has to offer first hand.

MOROCCO: ANSWERING THE CALL FOR REFORM AND PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 29, 2011

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak to my colleagues today about the relationship between the United States and Morocco. Today, with chaos and conflict spreading in North Africa and the Middle East, it is important that the United States recognize and encourage those countries that share our democratic values and support reforms so badly needed in the region. There is no better friend and ally for America in North Africa than the Kingdom of Morocco.

You may ask, ''How has the country fared during the recent crises in the region?'' Morocco has largely avoided the tensions, confrontations, and violence common to other countries. There have been few disturbances in the country; and demonstrations for better governance, more transparency, and jobs have been largely peaceful and constructive.

Ties between the Moroccan people and the King are quite strong and it is this bond that supports the partnership that the King has called for in the process to reform the constitution through a consultative process and national referendum—steps unheard of in other parts of the Arab Middle East and North Africa.

Recently, the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, Taieb Fassi Fihri, visited the United States to talk about the reform process in Morocco, and to consult with United States government officials about how to bring greater stability, security, development, and democracy to the region. He met with senior officials in the White House and State Department. On March 23, Secretary of State Hilary Clinton met with the Foreign Minister to discuss concrete steps to renew and strengthen the strategic relationship between the United States and Morocco. She called it a ''very special relationship,'' and praised the King for his continuing actions to promote reform and enhance economic, political, and social development in Morocco and the broader region.

As Secretary Clinton remarked, ''We also look forward with great optimism to further deepening our strong and strategic partnership in working with Morocco on so many issues.'' Among the areas discussed with the Foreign Minister were cooperation on resolving the Western Sahara conflict and promoting Human Rights.

With regard to the Western Sahara, the Secretary reiterated that the Obama Administration policy is consistent with that of the two previous administrations; and that the Moroccan autonomy proposal for resolving the conflict was ''serious, realistic, and credible.'' The Foreign Minister provided the U.S. government with an update on recent progress in promoting Human Rights and was advised by the State Department that the new reforms were largely satisfactory and met U.S. government concerns.

Among the key changes already launched by Morocco in December 2010 are new and independent institutions and collateral mechanisms to promote human rights in all areas of Morocco, including the Sahara, protecting whistle blowers, providing authority to bring charges against human rights violators, and setting up new channels for reporting human rights abuses. Additionally, a stronger level of human rights protections are included in the constitutional reforms proposed by the King in his speech of March 9, 2011.

From an international reporting perspective, the new process adopted by Morocco will link the new Moroccan Human Rights institutions with the various Special Rapporteurs of the UN Human Rights Commission.

Unfortunately, others who either lack this information or chose to ignore it are supporting a monitoring proposal that ignores the core issues of the Western Sahara conflict: supporting and respecting the rights of the refugees held in the camps in Tindouf, Algeria. The proposal does nothing to address much

more serious issues at stake in Western Sahara concerning terrorism, and trafficking in persons, guns, drugs and other contraband.

Morocco has met the State Department's criteria for enhanced human rights protection and reporting, and should be applauded for taking this initiative as part of its continuing reform process and desire to improve the lives of all Moroccans, including the Western Sahara. Morocco is working hard to become the standard bearer for progress, reform, and development in the region. We should do all we can to support these vital efforts.

CELEBRATING THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE COAST GUARD TRAINING CENTER PETALUMA

HON. LYNN C. WOOLSEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 29, 2011

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise with great pride today to honor Coast Guard Training Center Petaluma on the occasion of its 40th anniversary.

Originally known as Two Rock Ranch Station, the 876-acre site was purchased by the U.S. Army for $97,377 in 1942 and used as an electronic intercept station in World War II. There were two officers and 45 enlisted men assigned to it. Two Rock's use was expanded during the Vietnam War to include training, with a re-created Vietnamese village.

The Coast Guard took ownership of the facility in 1971, renaming it ''Coast Guard Training Center Petaluma'' and transferring the Subsistence Specialist School, Storekeeper School, and Radioman School from New York. Since that time, two barracks have been built (Steadman Hall and Horsley Hall) as well as 15 duplex housing units to provide affordable housing to the workforce. Several other buildings for use in training were also constructed (Bauer Building, Juliet-Nichols Building, and Haley Hall). The current replacement value of the facility is close to $245 million.

During the 1990s, Coast Guard Training Center Petaluma was threatened with closure twice as the U.S. reevaluated its bases. The local community rallied in support, and I was able to work with them and with Coast Guard officials to keep this important facility open.

Today, the Center is home to seven ''A'' schools for electronics, technician, food service specialist, health service technician, information system technician, operation specialist, storekeeper and Yeoman. There are also 40 ''C'' schools and a Chief Petty Officer Academy. With a permanently assigned cadre of 500 active duty, civilian, and contractor staff, the facility supports more than 15,000 students per year.

Coast Guard Training Center Petaluma truly embodies its vision: To be a world leader in valid and reliable performance-based training; to be the best place to live and work in the Coast Guard; to be the best and most efficient steward of resources (money and property) in the Coast Guard training system; and to be the most environmentally-friendly Coast Guard base in the world. Having recently attended an event to throw the switch on solar panels that now provide much of the Center's electricity, I have seen first-hand how serious this vision is.

Mr. Speaker, Coast Guard Training Center Petaluma is important to the local community and important to our country. Please join me in congratulating the Coast Guard on the facility's 40th anniversary and wishing it many more years of service.

OPPOSITION TO H.R. 2587, PROTECTING JOBS FROM THE GOVERNMENT INTERFERENCE ACT

HON. MICHAEL M. HONDA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 29, 2011

Mr. HONDA. Mr. Speaker, despite the bill's colorful title, the Protecting Jobs from Government Interference Act (H.R. 2587) is a blatant attempt to declaw the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) and weaken the rights of American workers. Created in 1935 by the enactment of the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA), the NLRB oversees the process by which employees form unions and enforces fair labor provisions against violations committed by private sector employers and unions. H.R. 2587 would strip the NLRB's ability to punish businesses for unlawfully relocating or dissolving jobs in retaliation for union organization, and thus eliminate the NLRB's only meaningful enforcement tool to protect working Americans under the National Labor Relations Act.

H.R. 2587 was authored by Representative TIM SCOTT of South Carolina to prevent the NLRB's ongoing case against the Boeing Company for allegedly violating federal labor laws by opening a non-union passenger plane production facility in South Carolina, rather than in the state of Washington, from moving forward. According to the NLRB, it has evidence that Boeing intentionally moved its facilities to a non-union state in retaliation against unionized workers in Washington. By law, employers may move their facilities to non-union states, but it is illegal for employers to retaliate against employees for exercising their federally-protected right to strike. Whether or not Boeing's actions were illegal is a matter to be decided, but not by politicians.

While millions of Americans are struggling to find employment, the Protecting Jobs from Government Interference Act would neither create nor protect jobs as the title claims. On the contrary, H.R. 2587 would weaken American workers' rights and reduce the number of U.S. jobs by legalizing company reprisals against unions through the dissolution or transfer of jobs to non-union sites elsewhere in the United States and, even more worrisome, somewhere overseas.

As a stalwart advocate for American workers, I cannot support efforts that would take away an important tool in helping to ensure that employers do not violate the law by retaliating against unionized employees. Our nation is stronger when workers join together and bargain for a better life, and when employers respect those rights. To that end, I have long supported efforts in Congress to protect and strengthen the right of American workers in every industry to collective bargaining. While I imagine the dispute between the NLRB and the Boeing Company will be worked out, in the meantime, Congress should not interfere with important legal protections for union workers that are already in place. For these reasons, I am strongly opposed to H.R. 2587.

THE HONOR FLAG—10TH ANNIVERSARY OF 9/11 ATTACKS

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 29, 2011

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, in less than one month, Americans will observe the 10th anniversary of the September 11th terror attacks. Those who witnessed the events of September 11th will always remember that day and what they were doing. It's like those of us that were alive when President Kennedy was assassinated. We remember that day; we remember what we were doing. And the old timers, they remember Pearl Harbor and what they were doing on December 7, 1941. September 11th is a day that we as a Nation should always remember because it reminds us of the preciousness of this Nation and her belief in freedom and liberty. It is something that is without a doubt worth preserving.

As we remember where we were on that fateful day, it is even more important that we remember the 3,000 individuals that lost their lives that day. Many who lost their lives were heroes trying to rescue those trapped by the attacks. When those Twin Towers were set aflame, those volunteers, those firefighters, those emergency medical folks and those police officers, they rushed as hard as they could to get to that terror from the sky. As a result of their heroism, many got to live another day. There are countless stories of the selfless bravery which occurred on 9/11, how Americans reacted extraordinarily in order to rescue one and other. In the face of attack, we pulled through with a remarkable spirit of unity and compassion that swept through our country.

Shortly after the tragic September 11, 2001 attacks on our great Country, Americans all over the world raised up 'old glory' in patriotic understanding of the events which had just befallen our country. The American Flag has always been a symbol of bringing our Nation together in good times or bad. One of these many flags was the symbol of our Nation's perseverance, was the Flag which was flown over Ground Zero. Still today this flag continues to fly, all around this great Nation in support of our heroes, because of Texas Patriot, Chris Heisler.

In the aftermath of September 11th, Chris Heisler, like many other Americans felt compelled to take action after witnessing his country come under attack. When Chris was gifted this patriotic flag by Texas House of Representatives, he helped organize one of the longest police motorcades in the history of the United States to honor it. The American flag is a symbol to revere, respect, and honor and Chris' profound respect for America's symbol should be commended.

Following the 9/11 terrorist attacks, patriotism surged in the United States. Many young men and women enlisted to help fight the war on terrorism. Chris Heisler was part of this movement, and at the age of 34 he put his business career on hold to enlist in the U.S. Army. While serving his country, Chris carried his revered flag with him to Kuwait, Qatar, and Iraq so it could fly with soldiers in combat zones.

Soon soldiers began to refer to this flag as one of honor, as a result the flag is now named the United States Honor Flag. Ten

years later, The United States Honor Flag continues to pay tribute to those who have lost their lives in the line of duty protecting the freedoms we all hold dear. The United States Honor Flag has been to many places including Ground Zero in New York, the Pentagon, National Fallen Firefighters Foundation Memorial, the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial, Presidential Libraries, VA Hospitals, and to countless sporting events. The flag has flown for more than 1,000 fallen soldiers and at funerals for police officers and firefighters. Recently it went to Space! It traveled on board the shuttle Atlantis' final mission.

It is one single flag. There's a lot of security details involved in transporting the U.S. Honor Flag. It is kept in a secure case. The Department of Homeland Security has sewn microchips into the seam of the flag to verify its authenticity. The flag is constantly traveling. It is a national treasure that is respected and guarded.

The betterment in our country often originates from the efforts of just one person. The establishment of the Honor Flag serves as an important reminder of the daily sacrifices our Nation's heroes make, and recognizes the freedoms of Old Glory. In recognition of Chris Heisler's patriotism, in remembrance of the tragic events on September 11, 2001 and for those who continue to fight to preserve our liberty, I am proud to salute Chris Heisler for his loyalty to America, and to the United States Flag.

We should remember those that died, those that got to live, and those that continue to fight for our freedoms today in places all over the world in the name of liberty and freedom.

And that's just the way it is.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 29, 2011

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, on Monday, July 25, I missed a couple of rollcall votes. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on No. 630 and "nay" on Nos. 631, 632, 634, 635, 636.

TRIBUTE TO DR. STANLEY PEARLE

HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 29, 2011

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my sadness over the passing of one of America's greatest assets to the field of optometry, and one of my dear friends, Dr. Stanley Pearle. The man behind the eyewear business Pearle Vision, passed away last week at the age of 92 in his home in Dallas, Texas.

Pittsburgh-native Dr. Pearle graduated from Northern Illinois College of Optometry in 1939 and relocated to Dallas to take his board examinations and later marry his high school sweetheart, Elsie. He served in the U.S. Navy for a few years and after World War II he worked for several eye care companies, rising to a management position with Lee Optical in Dallas. Eager to start his own business he left the company in 1961 to open his first store. More than 40 years and 675 company and franchise stores later, Pearle Vision remains a trusted household name with locations across the U.S., Canada and Puerto Rico.

His contributions to the world of optometry are world renowned. Dr. Pearle's vision was to change how people were fitted for their eyewear. Initially, eye patients would visit an optometrist for a medical procedure but Dr. Pearle made it a more fashionable purchase and experience in a well-lit store with a vast array of frames to choose from. Pearle Vision has boasted that it is the first nationwide optical retailer and it is all thanks to the vision of Dr. Pearle himself. I knew his wife, Elsie Cohen who was a dear friend of mine. Dr. Pearle is survived by three of his four children, 10 grandchildren and 11 great-grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to Dr. Stanley Pearle. I appreciate the dedication and innovative changes he made to optometry. He will truly be missed.

ON THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NASA LANGLEY AEROSPACE RESEARCH SUMMER SCHOLARS (LARSS) PROGRAM

HON. ROBERT C. "BOBBY" SCOTT

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 29, 2011

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the NASA Langley Aerospace Research Summer Scholars program.

In 1986, under the leadership of Dr. Sam Massenberg along with the support of senior leadership from NASA Langley Headquarters, the Langley Aerospace Research Summer Scholars (LARSS) program was established. This program was designed to create internship opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students and ultimately provide a pipeline of experienced graduates into NASA's workforce. Today, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize and commemorate the program's 25th anniversary.

The LARSS program is NASA's oldest year round internship program providing high school, undergraduate, and graduate students hands on research experience working side-by-side with NASA engineers and scientists. This program was "the first of its kind" and has served as a model for other NASA centers.

During the 25 year history of the LARSS program, more than 4,500 competitively selected students from all over the United States and the U.S. territories have participated in the program. The program began with a class of 20 in 1986 and has since grown to include more than 200 students annually. This year the program received its largest applicant pool with nearly 800 applicants applying over the fall, spring, and summer sessions.

The LARSS program has been benefiting engineering undergraduate and graduate students for 25 years. Many of these students join NASA's workforce and have taken a significant role in preserving NASA's leadership in aeronautics and space science. This program has been a catalyst for promoting careers in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics especially in the African-American, Hispanic, and Native American communities. The result continues to be a well educated, well trained, and diverse engineering and science workforce for NASA. Minorities made up 23% of the 200 scholars participating in the program this past year and that number continues to increase.

Since 2006, the Virginia Space Grant Consortium has managed the LARSS program for NASA under a sub-award from the National Institute of Aerospace. This has allowed the program to grow from a summer only program to a year round program in the spring, summer, and fall. The success of the LARSS program has been recognized by the Langley and Hampton Roads communities, and it was recently ranked sixth on a national list of the "10 Best Internships for 2011" by Vault Career Intelligence.

As the world becomes increasingly relevant on technology, the importance of the United States remaining technologically competitive and producing quality engineers and scientists is vital.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud that 25 years later we are able to recognize the importance of this great program and the dynamic impact it has made on American society. On this 25th anniversary of LARSS, I commend NASA for the progress it has made to strengthen STEM education, and I challenge it to continue to inspire our youth to create new ideas, new products and innovative solutions to solve our nation's problems.

It is my hope that LARSS will continue to provide NASA and our nation's engineering and science community a pipeline of problem solvers and innovators. I thank NASA Langley for continuing the great legacy of the LARSS program over the past 25 years, and I look forward to its continued success.

IN HONOR OF REV. DR. JOHN A. SEVERSON CELEBRATING FIFTY YEARS OF PREACHING THE GOSPEL

HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 29, 2011

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor of the Rev. Dr. John A. Severson, who will celebrate fifty years of preaching the gospel this weekend. Through these many years, Rev. Dr. Severson has remained dedicated to spreading the Word of God and striving to improve his community, particularly those less fortunate.

John A. Severson was born in Calhoun County in Edison, Georgia to the late Mr. Lucious B. Severson Sr., and the late Mrs. Annett H. Severson. He received his early education in the public schools of Calhoun County, and in 1961, felt the call to ministry.

Rev. Dr. Severson received his Bachelors & Master's Degrees in Ministry from Bethany Theological Seminary, and he received his Doctorate of Theological Studies from the Bethany Divinity College and Seminary, in Dothan, Alabama. Since graduating, Rev. Dr. Severson and has been proclaiming the good news of the gospel to this day, serving several congregations in both Georgia and Alabama.

Presently, Rev. Dr. Severson faithfully serves the Union Missionary Baptist Church congregation, where he has given spiritual guidance for the past thirty-three years. Under his gracious leadership, many in his community have developed a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ. Further, many physical changes have taken place under his leadership: Rev. Dr. Severson has organized many new ministries and new outreach ministries in the community.

Dr. Severson is the past moderator of the Camilla Missionary Baptist Association; Co-Founder of the Christian Unity—biracial organization; past president of the Baptist Ministries Conference of Dougherty County; a member of Vision Albany; a member of the General Missionary Baptist Convention of Georgia; and a member of the National Baptist Congress of Christian Education—National Baptist Convention, U.S.A. Inc.

As the Founder and CEO of the Union Mission Outreach Center, an outreach ministry for the Union Missionary Baptist Church and community, Rev. Dr. Severson and the congregation continue Jesus' work of helping the poor by providing medicine, eye glasses, and dental care to those community residents who otherwise could not afford it. In addition, Rev. Dr. Severson developed a summer enrichment program held at Union Missionary Baptist Church each summer which is available to the community free of charge.

Mr. Speaker, Rev. Dr. Severson's devotion to the improvement of his community reminds me of Matthew 25:35–37, in which Jesus says, "I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me . . . Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me." Rev. Dr. Severson has done a remarkable job of touching the lives of his congregations, his communities, and especially the least of these. As we mark his fiftieth year of religious service, I wish to extend my heartfelt thanks and sincerest congratulations for his incredible contributions.

COMMEMORATING THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 29, 2011

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, twenty-one years ago on July 26, 1990, the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) was enacted with complete bi-partisan support; opening doors that were once shut and enabling persons with disabilities to go to work, movies, take public transportation and enjoy everyday activities with dignity. Where physical and mental difficulties once served as barriers, countless numbers of employment and educational opportunities are now available as a result of this important piece of legislation.

I am proud to recognize the great work of The Harlem Independent Living Center in my congressional district in Manhattan, an organization that emerged under the ADA, and offers invaluable services for the disabled community such as counseling, training, and job referrals. Under the leadership of Ms. Christina Curry, who heads the center, all disabled New Yorkers have access to these services and the organization works tirelessly to make sure that businesses abide by the ADA.

While there is much to be proud of, we must do more to better accommodate the disabled community. Compared to the national unemployment rate of 9.2%, a disproportionate 16.9% of our disabled Americans are currently unemployed. At a time when we are relying more heavily on advanced technology and Internet services, our hearing and visually impaired are being left behind. Worse, the cuts proposed under the Republican agenda take away vital support services, including Social Security, which is relied on by 55 million people with disabilities.

I will continue to fight to ensure that all Americans, regardless of background, ethnicity or physical or mental capabilities have the same opportunities to enjoy the American Dream. We owe it to one out of five Americans with a disability, including 16,000 residents in my district, who are counting on Congress to be there for them.

IN TRIBUTE OF MR. BODHISATTWA CHAUDHURI

HON. JOE COURTNEY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 29, 2011

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to extend my sincerest congratulations to Dr. Bodhisattwa Chaudhuri, who has been awarded a 2011 Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America Foundation award. Connecticut's Second District is honored to recognize the outstanding achievement of Dr. Chaudhuri's extensive work at the University of Connecticut.

For 45 years, the PhRMA Foundation has assisted scientists with their research. The Foundation believes that science and the world of medicine can improve if scientists have the right resources readily available to them. Scientists who have been supported by the PhRMA Foundation have shared their knowledge with about 20,000 graduate students.

Born in Agartala, India, Dr. Chaudhuri attended the Indian Institute of Science where he received a MS in Chemical Engineering. He then went on to the New Jersey Institute of Technology, where he studied Mechanical Engineering and received his doctorate. Today, Dr. Chaudhuri serves as an assistant professor in the departments of Pharmaceutical Sciences and Institute of Material Sciences at our very own University of Connecticut. He and many of his students are passionate about researching granular mechanics in order to better understand different processes in pharmaceutical manufacturing.

We need leaders and researchers—like Dr. Chaudhuri—who are dedicated to sharing their knowledge with young students. I stand with my constituents in eastern Connecticut in honoring the successful efforts of Dr. Chaudhuri's and interests in pharmaceutical technology and granular mechanics research. I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the impressive work of Dr. Bodhisattwa Chaudhuri. May Dr. Chaudhuri and others continue to teach and encourage curiosity in the world of science, medicine, and beyond.

HONORING CPT WILLIAM SMITH

HON. STEVE STIVERS

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 29, 2011

Mr. STIVERS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor CPT William Smith, who passed away July 15, 2011, at the age of 93. A true American hero, CPT Smith charged the beaches of Normandy, survived the Battle of the Bulge, and continued on to serve in the Korean Conflict.

D-Day for CPT Smith began hours before thousands braved the beaches of Normandy on June 6, 1944. Under the cover of darkness, he rowed alone onto Omaha Beach, making ready for his duty as a forward observer. Burying himself for hours beneath a concrete slab and under heavy enemy fire, CPT Smith used only the lights of German artillery to locate their guns, calling in the targets to US Naval ships protecting the invasion. CPT Smith survived D-Day, spending 12 grueling hours alone in his make-shift post with nothing but infantry assault elements to protect him.

CPT William Smith also fought in the invasions of North Africa and Sicily. In total, CPT. Smith served in seven European campaigns, including the infamous Battle of the Bulge, never once putting his own safety before that of his country. For his service in the 32nd Field Artillery, 1st Infantry Division, he was awarded the D-Day medal, World War II medal, French Freedom and Jubilee medals and the Bronze Star with V for Valor.

Less than a decade later, CPT Smith once again answered his country's call to duty, serving as an invasion specialist in the Korean Conflict. Upon returning home, he built Kisco Photo Service into a dominant force in the camera and film market. Smith then went on to serve as the Chairman of Sales and Marketing Technology at Columbus Technical College at age 53. Bill never lost touch with his comrades in arms, joining both the VFW Lodge #2398, Worthington, Ohio and AMVETS, Worthington Post #239. He was a member of New England Lodge #4, F & AM and a 32nd degree Mason, Valley of Columbus.

Married 70 years to wife Berni, with two children, Bill and Shirley, Smith fully lived his family values. Smith's son, Bill E. Smith, spoke of his late father as a man of faith, of family, and of community. And that is just how we will remember him.

THE 184TH RETURNS: A MOMENT IN HISTORY

HON. STEVEN M. PALAZZO

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 29, 2011

Mr. PALAZZO. Mr. Speaker, on July 25, an exchange of authority took place at Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan, signifying the end of mission for the 184th Expeditionary Sustainment Command—the largest Mississippi Army National Guard Unit and the largest one ever led by Mississippians.

The guard unit is more than 250 strong; most are Mississippians; and the size of the unit reflects the size of the mission. They served as headquarters for Joint Sustaimnent Command—Afghanistan, affecting more than 100,000 U.S. and coalition soldiers and civilians. Over the past 9 months, the unit delivered nearly 414 million gallons of fuel, 26 million pounds of ammo, 110 million meals, and 43 million pounds of mail.

This marks an important moment in history and for military logistics, and the 184th has made Mississippi, the National Guard, and this Nation proud. To them, I am honored to say, "Welcome Home and thank you."

RECOGNIZING THE 125TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SACRED HEART CATHOLIC CHURCH IN WADSWORTH, OHIO

HON. JAMES B. RENACCI

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 29, 2011

Mr. RENACCI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 125th anniversary of the Sacred Heart Catholic Church in my home town, Wadsworth, Ohio.

Sacred Heart has been encouraging the Wadsworth community to participate, celebrate and spread Catholic values for over a century, and quite successfully, I might add. Sacred Heart aims to empower and encourage others to make a positive difference in the world. With their devotion to the community comes the lasting effect of true humanitarian work.

As a proud member of this parish, it has been a truly humbling experience to witness so many students, faculty, volunteers, and citizens brought together by this one entity. Sacred Heart has been a place of learning, sharing the Catholic faith and creating life-long friends for the last 125 years.

It is my pleasure to commemorate this momentous anniversary and to acknowledge all of their accomplishments within the Wadsworth community.

TRIBUTE TO EDITH MAE JORDAN WILCOX

HON. JO BONNER

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 29, 2011

Mr. BONNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to express my profound sadness at the passing of longtime Washington County, Alabama resident and community leader, Mrs. Edith Mae Jordan Wilcox, who passed away on July 12 at the age of 95 after an extended illness.

"Miss Edith"—as she was affectionately known—was born May 23, 1916, in Spencer, Alabama. Her schooling began in the Yarbo one-room school house with her two older sisters. In 1932, she graduated from Murphy High School in Mobile. From there, she attended the University of Alabama where she received an A&S Degree in 1936 and an LLB Degree from the School of Law in 1939. Upon graduation from law school, she was admitted to the State Bar.

Miss Edith and her husband, Roy, married on January 31, 1942. While he served in the Army Air Corps in New Guinea during World War II, Miss Edith became a very active community volunteer and a part of the family's land, timber, and mill business in Jordan.

When Staff Sgt. Wilcox returned from service to his country, they established the Wilcox and Plemmons Sawmill Company. The company remained a vibrant part of the local economy until it closed in 1980.

Throughout her life, Miss Edith was an avid volunteer. She was actively involved with the board of the Washington County Chapter of the American Red Cross, serving as chairman of the Red Cross Blood Program when it was first introduced in the county. She spent many years traveling throughout the state with the Bloodmobile.

Miss Edith was a member of the committee that organized the Washington County Health Council and was appointed to the Washington County Hospital Board where she served for 10 years.

She was elected State President of the Alabama Extension Homemaker's Council and was an active and founding member of the Washington County United Way. For all her volunteer service, Miss Edith was awarded with the Washington County Humanitarian of the Year Award in 1997.

She was a member of the Order of the Eastern Star for over 50 years and served as state officer of the Alabama Grand Chapter. She was also one of the founding members of the Washington County Public Library and served on its board for over 20 years.

In 2002, in recognition for her lifetime of remarkable achievement and public service, Miss Edith was inducted into the Washington County Hall of Fame and a plaque was placed in the courthouse in her honor.

Today, Jordan-Wilcox Stadium at Washington County High School bears her family name as a tribute to her vision and generosity. She donated the land for the building of the Chatom Community Center that is also named for her.

During her long and active life, Miss Edith traveled to over 60 countries and throughout all fifty states. She established an art gallery in Chatom to showcase collectibles and memorabilia from her world travels. The Wilcox Gallery and Foundation will continue to educate and entertain the residents of Washington County for years to come.

On behalf of the people of South Alabama, I extend my deepest condolences to Miss Edith's family, including her daughter, Susan Wilcox Turner and one granddaughter, Jordan Anne Garner. Miss Edith's memory will live on through her great legacy of service to our area.

FAA SHUTDOWN

HON. MAXINE WATERS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 29, 2011

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, today millions of Americans are waiting to see if the Republicans will stop holding the economy hostage and allow our nation to pay its bills, honor its commitments to senior citizens and veterans, and keep government workers at their jobs. But 4,000 government workers already have been laid off because of Republican intransigence.

The Federal Aviation Administration, FAA, was forced to shut down many of its operations last Saturday, because the House of Representatives refused to pass a simple bill to extend its funding authorization. As a result, 4,000 FAA employees in 35 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico were placed on furlough. Those affected include many of the FAA's engineers, scientists, research analysts, administrative assistants, computer specialists, program managers, environmental protection specialists, and community planners. These government workers are being forced to live without pay and are unable to do their jobs developing our air travel infrastructure and serving the flying public.

The FAA has assured the American people that air traffic controllers will remain on the job, and the safety of the flying public will not be compromised. However, numerous FAA projects and services have been affected.

Earlier this week, the FAA AN as forced to issue stop work orders to construction and technology contractors for critical airport modernization projects. As a result, dozens of construction projects to build and modernize air traffic control towers and other aviation infrastructure were immediately halted. This work stoppage risks putting numerous construction workers and other private sector employees out of work as well.

In my home state of California, the FAA shutdown has delayed $131.5 million in funding for projects and furloughed 203 FAA employees in the Los Angeles area alone. But the actual impact on the Los Angeles area is far greater. Los Angeles International Airport, LAX—which is located in my Congressional District—is the world's sixth busiest airport. LAX creates an estimated 59,000 jobs in or near the airport and has a total annual economic impact estimated at $60 billion. In 2008, 60 million passengers and 1.8 million tons of freight and mail passed through LAX. All of this economic activity depends upon the safety and efficiency of our air travel system.

The work stoppage will have an immediate negative impact on LAX, delaying a much needed project to design and install new runway status lights. These lights improve visibility for pilots and help them see when it is safe to enter, cross or take off on a runway. Stopping work on important projects like this one will not only delay their completion but also significantly increase the long-term costs for taxpayers.

Unfortunately, LAX isn't alone in losing out on these funds. Nationwide, over $250 million in contracts for runway status lights have been suspended. Also affected are nearly $20 million in construction and engineering contracts to protect air traffic control towers from earthquakes and over $14 million in projects to research weather technology systems for air traffic facilities and aircraft cockpits. This is no way to run one of the top air transportation systems in the world.

Why are the Republicans refusing to allow the FAA to reopen its doors? The Republicans certainly cannot claim they are trying to be fiscally responsible. The FAA shutdown is costing the federal government $30 million a day in lost revenue from uncollected airline taxes.

FAA employees are dedicated public servants who work hard to ensure safe and efficient air travel for the flying public. They are proud of the work they do. I urge my Republican colleagues to let them go back to work.

They need their jobs, and the American people need them.

IN HONOR OF COLONEL FRANCIS H. DILLON, JR.

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 29, 2011

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Colonel Francis H. Dillon, Jr., a constituent of mine from Great Falls, Virginia, for his 31 years of service to our nation as he approaches his 90th birthday on September 10. I also want to call attention to the fact that his entire family has followed his example of service.

Colonel Dillon served in the United States Army and began his service in 1943 during World War II in the 17th Airborne Division in which he saw combat action during the Battle of the Bulge, Operation Varsity, and the Allied invasion of Germany. He answered his nation's call a second time in 1950, recalled to active duty as an Intelligence Officer during the Korean War. Before retiring from the Army in 1974, he again served his country from 1968–1969 as he commanded the 525th Military Intelligence Group in Vietnam.

In 1947, Colonel Dillon married Martha Getz and together they raised seven sons. Through his example of selfless service, each one of Colonel Dillon's seven sons served in the Armed Forces of the United States. Four of his sons served as career Army officers; Major Francis H. Dillon III (ret.) 20 years, Colonel Peter J. Dillon (ret.) 28 years, LTC Dan P. Dillon (ret.) 26 years and LTC James R. Dillon (ret.) 20 years. Colonel Dillon's second son, Thomas C. Dillon, is a 1975 graduate of the United States Naval Academy and served on active duty in the Navy for nine years. Two of Colonel Dillon's sons served in the National Guard and United States Army Reserve. Sergeant Timothy D. Dillon served in the Connecticut National Guard for four years and the youngest of the seven sons, Major Douglas M. Dillon continues to serve in the United States Army Reserve as a Civil Affairs Officer. Colonel Dillon's sons have served in numerous overseas contingency operations including Operation Desert Shield/Storm, Kosovo, Operation Enduring Freedom (Afghanistan) and Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Colonel Dillon has four grandchildren who are also current members of Armed Forces. Captain Peter J. Dillon Jr. serves as an Army doctor and is currently deployed to Afghanistan. Duncan Dillon is in his third year at the United States Air Force Academy, Timothy Dillon Jr. is a Private First Class in the Idaho National Guard and enrolled in the University of Idaho Reserve Officer Training Course program and granddaughter, Julie Dillon, just entered her first year at the United States Military Academy at West Point.

Two of Colonel Dillon's daughters-in-law have also served in the United States Army. Captain Patricia Dillon served for six years and LTC Maryanne Dillon (ret.) served for 20 years.

Mr. Speaker, I salute Colonel Francis H. Dillon, Jr. and offer the appreciation of a grateful nation to him and his family for their dedicated service to America.

ON THE OCCASION OF THE WESTACRES COMMUNITY'S 75TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. GARY C. PETERS

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 29, 2011

Mr. PETERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Community of Westacres in the Township of West Bloomfield, as its residents celebrate its 75th anniversary.

In 1936, as the nation was still in the throes of the Great Depression and stood on the precipice of an unknown future, United States Senator James Couzens partnered with the Federal Emergency Relief Administration and Oakland Housing Inc., to establish the Westacres community. The vision was to build a community where working class Michigan residents and their families could have a place of their own and strive to achieve the American Dream. To this end, Oakland Housing Inc. put forward a number of guidelines to ensure that the residents of Westacres would be families interested in the welfare of their neighbors and in using the land they were provided to help them be self-sufficient.

As with all new communities, Westacres faced a number of challenges, but its residents always rose to meet the call of service to their neighbors. In 1937, to address the need for public safety, residents started the Westacres Fire Department, a volunteer force to protect their community. Residents also took it upon themselves to create the Westacres Credit Union and Westacres Library to provide the financial support and continuing education for their neighbors. The residents also founded the Orchard Lake Community Church and at the height of our nation's need for austerity, established the nation's oldest ride pool to get workers to work while conserving resources.

It is with a sense of great pride that over the last 75 years and from its humble beginnings, the Westacres community has grown and flourished as its residents have moved into America's dynamic middle class. Today, the community has grown to over 300 residences with dozens of families who have been part of Westacres for generations. As was the case when it was founded, service has continued to remain strong with the community residents who volunteer countless hours across the greater southeast Michigan community.

It is with great honor and pride that I represent the community of Westacres, as it celebrates this most auspicious occasion. Through its history, Westacres and its residents represent the powerful success that can be achieved in the face of adversity. Westacres' 75th anniversary is indeed an impressive milestone and I wish its residents many more years of success and service to our community.

THE GOLDEN WEST HUMANITARIAN FOUNDATION

HON. LAURA RICHARDSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 29, 2011

Ms. RICHARDSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Golden West Humanitarian Foundation.

Since 1998, the Golden West Humanitarian Foundation has been proactive in combating shortfalls in heavily mine-impacted countries. With innovation, forethought, partnership, appropriateness and affordability as its key strategies for intervention, the Foundation's mandate is to safeguard the lives of men, women and children across the globe where landmine and unexploded ordnance contamination is a major threat. That commitment and investment is most certainly deserving of recognition. Their tireless work brings countries closer to peace and prosperity and serves as inspiration to others to do the same.

Mr. Speaker, in December I traveled to Cambodia and saw first-hand the great work that Golden West Humanitarian Foundation does in that country. Golden West has been actively removing landmines and other unexploded munitions in Cambodia caused by three decades of war. Estimates are that up to six million landmines still remain in Cambodia. Landmines claim more than 200 lives annually and have caused more than 40,000 people to live as amputees. This means that one out of every 230 people living in Cambodia is an amputee.

Mr. Speaker, the 37th Congressional District of California, has the largest population of Cambodians living in the United States. What happens in Cambodia affects my constituents in California. Every time someone in Cambodia is maimed or killed by a landmine, it is likely that person has family members or friends that live in my district.

Mr. Speaker, the Foundation is hard at work doing the important work of removing landmines in Cambodia and elsewhere around the world. Golden West Humanitarian Foundation has implemented several other successful programs. They offer support to Cambodians who, while at work or play, face the risk of death or maiming by these remnants of conflict.

One of Golden West Humanitarian Foundations' most effective programs is its Explosive Harvesting Program (EHP). This program recycles explosives extracted from existing weapons stockpiles to create disposal charges for humanitarian demining. Since its inception, EHP has provided the bulk of all demining explosives used in Cambodia. The Explosive Harvesting Program has deactivated over 200,000 landmines and has removed more than 24 tons of explosives from potential black market sales.

Another effective way the Foundation is preventing unnecessary deaths in Cambodia is through Research and Development. Research into explosive and non-explosive demining tools, as well as landmine and unexploded detection technologies, is where investments have produced impressive returns on investment. The Foundation has provided cutting edge solutions for problems encountered in humanitarian demining. The technical achievements of their research have been utilized by numerous organizations worldwide.

The Foundation further aids in protecting the most vulnerable group impacted by landmines and unexploded ordnance—children. Children are at a high risk of either dying or becoming physically or psychologically injured from land mines and other detonators in Cambodia. According to reports, there are two active mines in Cambodia for every child. Curious and trusting by nature, children are easily attracted by the explosives' texture and shine and too often find themselves exposed to the risk of harm.

Through their Children's Education Program, the Foundation has put ideas into action and created effective ways of preventing the unnecessary and heart rending death or harm to innocent children. One innovation in particular is the videogame Undercover UXO (shorthand for unexploded ordinance). It is an interactive, aged appropriate tool targeted that helps bring awareness to the children of the dangers land mines and other unexploded ordnance.

Golden West Humanitarian Foundation's work is critical to saving lives in Cambodia and around the world. The Foundation has more than a decade of experience making the world a safer place. I urge my colleagues to join me in honoring the Golden West Humanitarian Foundation and thanking them for the work that they do.

HONORING DORSEY'S LOCKER

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 29, 2011

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the 70th Anniversary of the Dorsey family's service to the greater Bay Area, and their historic soul food restaurant Dorsey's Locker, which has become an important cultural institution within the African-American community in Oakland, California.

During a week-long community celebration of the restaurant's 70 years in business, we reflect upon the unique role that Dorsey's Locker and the Dorsey family have played in preserving a venue for authentic foods, spoken word artists, burgeoning comedians and diverse music.

In 1941, Mr. and Mrs. Henry and Wilma Dorsey opened the family restaurant in West Oakland. The business relocated in 1956 to Bosn's Locker on nearby Shattuck Avenue, where Clarence Dorsey, with the assistance of brothers Tom, Armstead and Jack, supervised the addition of a cocktail lounge. The restaurant received another personalized addition 3 years later, when Martin Luther Dorsey arrived in Oakland from Texas to build the Locker's existing bar by hand.

Mr. and Mrs. Dorsey continued to provide "Texas-Style" soul food until Henry's death. Dorsey's Bosn Locker was sold in 1986, only to be re-opened in 1996 by the next generation of the Dorsey family, under Dorsey & Associates, Inc.

Currently, Dorsey's Locker is owned by Donald Dorsey and features daily signature soul food specials and a wide variety of featured entertainment at no extra cost. Whether enjoying live poetry, comedy, karaoke, reggae, or R&B performances during the Locker's nightly supper club, patrons have a familiar space to dine, unwind and enjoy a tried and true Oakland experience.

On behalf of California's 9th Congressional District, I want to extend my congratulations on this important milestone. Thank you, Dorsey family and the Dorsey's Locker community, for all that you do. Through your hard work, generosity and perseverance, so many have built memories, made history, and added to the rich cultural heritage that we share. I wish you enduring success and prosperity as you continue to nourish the bodies, hearts and minds of our community.

ESTABLISHING SPECIAL ENVOY FOR RELIGIOUS FREEDOM IN THE NEAR EAST AND SOUTH CENTRAL ASIA

SPEECH OF

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 27, 2011

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to oppose yet another of our misguided foreign policy initiatives. Of course none of us favors religious persecution, here or abroad, but how would we feel if Iran, Israel, Afghanistan, or Iraq—all targeted by this bill—sent a government representative here to dictate what our government policies toward religious minorities should be? In many parts of the world certain religious institutions are financed by the state. How would we feel if foreign governments demanded that we abide by such practices? In short, it is arrogant and counterproductive to attempt to impose our values—which we sadly do not always live up to—onto nations overseas. I certainly believe that people should have the right to worship as they wish without government interference, but it would be far better for us to lead the rest of the world by example than by the implied force of a "special envoy."

Finally, I find it disturbing but sadly telling that on the day we are debating our dire fiscal condition and contemplating the implications of reaching the debt ceiling we nevertheless do not hesitate to obligate taxpayer dollars to fund yet another new boondoggle overseas. This bill will spend another million dollars per year for the special envoy and his staff to travel throughout the Middle East and South Central Asia lecturing foreign governments on religious policy. What a waste.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2012

SPEECH OF

HON. SHELLEY BERKLEY

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 25, 2011

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2584) making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2012, and for other purposes:

Ms. BERKLEY. Mr. Chair, I rise today in support of funding for the National Endowment for the Humanities. As a former President of the Southern Nevada Public Broadcasting Station, I have long been an advocate of funding our Nation's cultural agencies. Arts and humanities play a valuable role in my home State of Nevada, not only because they enrich our culture, but also because they create much-needed jobs in our communities.

Programs funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities are particularly critical to enhancing the quality of K–12 education in Nevada. In 2010, Nevada Humanities produced and supported programs that reached 228 K–12 educators and nearly 55,000 K–12 student participants throughout the State. The humanities play an important role in preparing our students for the future, encouraging them to seek knowledge and wisdom and to reflect on the values and traditions that have shaped this great Nation.

The study of arts and humanities enriches our knowledge about our world and the value of different cultures, which is essential in today's global economy. These efforts preserve the great accomplishments of the past, help us understand the present, and bring clarity and insight to the future. Providing funding for humanities programs is a smart investment for our Nation because it teaches our young people to be thoughtful and well-rounded leaders of tomorrow and creates much-needed jobs today. As a proud member of the Congressional Arts Caucus and a passionate patron of the arts and humanities, I am committed to protecting these investments now and for generations to come.

59TH NATIONAL PRAYER BREAKFAST—PART I

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 29, 2011

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I would like to submit the following:

59TH NATIONAL PRAYER BREAKFAST, THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2011, WASHINGTON, DC, CO-CHAIRS, U.S. REPRESENTATIVE JEFF MILLER, FORMER REPRESENTATIVE ANN KIRKPATRICK

Congressman Jeff Miller: Good morning everyone. Welcome to the 59th National Prayer Breakfast. I'm Congressman Jeff Miller from the state of Florida and this is my co-chair, Congresswoman Ann Kirkpatrick of Arizona.

Congresswoman Ann Kirkpatrick: Thank you. Good morning to all of you and welcome. What an amazing collection of people this morning and what an exciting opportunity we have. In this room this morning, we have many of the U.S. members of the House and Senate, distinguished judges and members of the administration. We are also joined by people of over 140 nations, parliamentarians and heads of state from around the world.

Congressman Miller: We are all here to pray, to listen, to learn, to build new relationships for the good of the city of Washington, D.C., the United States and the world. If you would, please bow your head with me.

Lord, God of the universe of history and each one of us here today, thank you that we are here and more importantly that you are here with us. We pray that the distractions and worries we brought in here with us will suddenly fade away so we can be present with you and our neighbor today. May everything we say and think and do in and around this breakfast be pleasing to you. Change us with your love and your truth. Thank you for the physical food and the spiritual food we are about to consume. In the wonderful name of Jesus I pray, Amen.

Congresswoman Kirkpatrick: Jeff, I just want to tell you it's amazing that we got this many people into this room for this breakfast. Many of you have probably experienced a very crowded elevator bank this morning, and so my husband and I decided to take the stairwell, and we ended up in the kitchen. And I said, ''Well you know—go to

the source.'' But you know what—I always like to thank our people who prepare our food, our food servers. So, would you join me in a round of applause to those who are serving us? Thank you.

I'm now going to introduce the head table. We are very honored to have Mr. Dudley Hall, who is an associate with Ms. Alison Krauss, Ms. Alison Krauss whose CD I have in my Ford Explorer when I drive around back in Arizona, Congressman Randy Forbes, United States Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack, my good friend Congressman Larry Kissell from North Carolina, Senator Jeff Sessions, Vice President Biden, my husband and the person who guides me throughout my day—Roger Curley, our guest speaker Randall Wallace. We will have the President and Mrs. Obama in a little bit. We have Mrs. Miller, Jeff's wife, Senator Mark Pryor, Jose Enriquez from the Chilean miners, Alfredo Cooper who is the chaplain of the President of Chile, Senator Kay Hagan, and Captain Mark Kelly, the husband of my dear colleague Congresswoman Gabriel Giffords. Please enjoy each other's company and your breakfast, thank you.

[President Obama Enters]

Announcer: Ladies and gentlemen, the President of the United States and Mrs. Michelle Obama.

Congresswoman Kirkpatrick: The vision of this breakfast was first cast by President Eisenhower and the members of a small weekly breakfast group that met in the Senate and House. As they experienced the warmth and strength of praying together, they decided to share the experience with the country and eventually the world.

Congressman Miller: That small group in the Senate and its counterpart in the House continues to meet over five decades later. What we're doing this morning is just a big public version of what we do in private as members of Congress every single week that Congress is in session.

Congresswoman Kirkpatrick: We are happy to report that small groups like this have sprung up in parliaments in almost 200 countries. And many countries and regions of the world hold annual prayer breakfasts just like this one. Isn't it encouraging that people all over the world with very different languages, cultures and ideas can be united in prayer?

Congressman Miller: With us this morning are the President of Equatorial Guinea, His Excellency Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo and the President of Macedonia, His Excellency Gjorge Ivanov. We've also received a letter that I would like to read a couple of excerpts from, from his Majesty King Abdullah II to the National Prayer Breakfast.

''In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful, Mr. President, my dear friends. The National Prayer Breakfast brings together people each year not only in fellowship but in earnest prayer that our generation may do God's good will on earth. I am honored to join your endeavor by letter this morning as I joined you in person just five years ago. We are also linked not only by belief but also, and more basically, our common humanity. However, it is only by truly understanding the best in our faiths and in our common humanity that we can serve God and protect our children's future. In this vein, Jordan has a long and proud heritage of tolerance and moderation. Today Jordanians are working systematically and boldly to expand the zone of understanding and dialogue around the world.''

Now as you might imagine, in our House prayer breakfast we don't all agree on everything. In fact, we disagree strongly on many of the issues of today's time. But the beauty of our prayer breakfast group is that we can pray together in spite of all of our differences. Prayer is a powerful reconciling force. Just because we can't resolve every issue doesn't mean we can't have strong relationships together.

Congresswoman Kirkpatrick: Jesus said, ''Blessed are the peacemakers.'' He didn't say peace lovers because we all love peace. He said, ''Peacemakers.'' It is the obligation of all of us to be peacemakers. Events like the tragedy in Tucson, in my home state of Arizona, and the turmoil in the Middle East today make it clear we have a lot of work to do and prayer is the best place to start.

Congressman Miller: Ann and I, along with our colleagues, have worked all year long to provide you an uplifting and encouraging experience this morning. We hope you receive it in faith and think about how a small prayer breakfast group or a big event just like this one might change your life, your leadership and the place you call home.

Congresswoman Kirkpatrick: Music has an amazing power to touch our emotions and lift our spirits. We are pleased to have with us a supremely talented woman who will give us a worshipful sense of just why we are all here. With her violin and her voice, she has won more Grammy Awards than any female artist. Here to join our hearts together with her beautiful music, Alison Krauss.

[Song by Alison Krauss]

Congresswoman Kirkpatrick: Thank you, Alison. Part of what makes service in the House fascinating is all the different backgrounds of people elected to serve here in Washington. Most of you can remember a civics, a government or a social studies teacher who first taught how nations and people come together to make decisions.

Congressman Miller: The people of North Carolina sent a social studies teacher to represent them here. For our first reading from the Holy Scripture, our friend and brother, Representative Larry Kissell.

Representative Larry Kissell: Mr. President, good morning special guests. I will be reading to you from the New Testament. First I was asked to talk about briefly our best hour of the week as we refer to it in the House. This National Prayer Breakfast began, as you've already heard, with members of Congress meeting with President Eisenhower. Mr. President, we want to thank you for continuing this tradition, it is so important. It is the best hour of the week when members of the House can come together, leave their burdens and cares at the door, and fellowship, pray, laugh, talk and share. It is the best hour of the week. I will be reading to you from Luke Chapter 24, verses 13 through 16 and 28 through 31. You may recognize this as the road to Emmaus story, a time taking place right after the crucifixion of Jesus.

''And, behold, two of them went that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was from Jerusalem about threescore furlongs. And they talked together of all these things which had happened. And it came to pass, that, while they communed together and reasoned, Jesus himself drew near, and went with them. But their eyes were holden that they should not know him.''

''And they drew nigh unto the village, whither they went: and he made as though he would have gone further. But they constrained Him, saying, Abide with us: for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent. And he went in to tarry with them. And it came to pass, as he sat at meat with them, he took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave it to them. And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight.''

As we go through our walks of life, whether we are followers of Jesus or even of another religion, it is through Jesus—his words, his action, his love—that we have a way to come together. And we should always walk as if we are going to meet a stranger who is Jesus. Thank you, and God bless this Scripture.

Congressman Miller: We will now hear from our friends in the Senate prayer breakfast group.

Senator Jeff Sessions: Good Morning. I'm Jeff Sessions from Alabama, a Republican.

Senator Mark Pryor: And I'm Mark Pryor of Arkansas, a Democrat.

Honorable Jeff Sessions: We're here on behalf of the Senate prayer breakfast to welcome you.

Senator Pryor: Yes, welcome and thank you for being here this morning. Every Wednesday that the United States Senate is in session, a group of us meet for prayer and fellowship.

Senator Sessions: This is a Senate tradition that has gone uninterrupted since the 1940's, and all who participate in it will tell you that it is the most meaningful period of our week.

Senator Pryor: The Senate prayer breakfast is a time when we can come together in a non-partisan, non-sectarian, non-political way and share our life experiences with one another. Proverbs says, ''Just as iron sharpens irons, so one man sharpens another.'' This is our weekly time of sharpening.

Senator Sessions: The same prayer breakfast co-hosts the National Prayer Breakfast. We are delighted to be here and we hope this time together is a real blessing to you and that you will continue to grow in your faith as we seek to grow in ours. Maybe this morning will inspire you to start your own local prayer breakfast.

Senator Pryor: Thanks again for being here and if you could remember the Senate and senators in your prayers, we would greatly appreciate it.

Senator Sessions: Let me say Amen to that. God bless you, welcome.

Congressman Miller: One of the messages that we hope you will take home from this breakfast is that members of Congress do pray. You can tell your friends back home you even saw one do it here. You also may have read about the many caucuses that we have in the House, the Congressional Black Caucus, a Pro Trade Caucus, the Renewal Energy Caucus, for example.

Congresswoman Kirkpatrick: What you may not know is that we in the House have what we call the Prayer Caucus, and we have asked its leader, Representative Randy Forbes of Virginia, to lead us in our prayer for national leaders. Randy.

Representative Randy Forbes: Could you join me as we pray for the leaders of our country please? Lord, today we thank you that even in the darkest times of our lives your light will guide our way. We thank you that no matter how many times we ignore you, no matter how often we reject you, and no matter how fervently we try to deny your very existence, you have never stopped speaking to us. This morning, we thank you for our country and for the leaders of our country. We pray that you will give them hope, strength and wisdom and measure enough to sustain those they lead. We pray that you will not allow them to falter even when the earth seems to shake around them. We pray that through the noise of the world, they will discern your words. And we pray that you give them a heart to defend the right of our nation to trust in you. But, Lord, although we do not ask more of them than they can do, that is why this day we turn to you, as King Solomon did generations ago, and ask you, Lord, to heal our land. We ask you to bless our leaders and we ask you to continue to bless the United States of America. Amen.

Congresswoman Kirkpatrick: Since much of what our government does is raise and

spend money, it is good to have some people around who know how to make wise decisions with money.

Congressman Miller: So it's good that the people of North Carolina, again, sent us a banker to provide us a reading from the Holy Scriptures, Senator Kay Hagan.

59TH NATIONAL PRAYER BREAKFAST—PART II

HON. W. TODD AKIN

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 29, 2011

Mr. AKIN.

Senator Kay Hagan: Thank you and good morning. If I wasn't here, and I was actually back in my home state of North Carolina on a Wednesday morning, I would attend a prayer breakfast with a small group of women at my church. And I have asked them today to pray for you and to lift all of you up in prayer and to pray for peace. I do want to read from the Old Testament, Isaiah chapter 40 verses 28 through 31.

''Have you not known? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary. His understanding is unsearchable. He gives power to the faint and strengthens the powerless. Even youth will faint and be weary and the young will fall exhausted but those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength. They shall mount up with wings like eagles. They shall run and not be weary and they shall walk and not faint.''

Congressman Miller: Sometimes as busy people we say that we are buried in our work. Our next presenter knows the literal meaning of the term. Along with 32 other miners, he endured 69 days half a mile under ground in a Chilean mine. The world marveled at the technological achievement of their rescue.

Congresswoman Kirkpatrick: Our guest today brings us the story of how God protected and encouraged them until their rescue. Please welcome the man who led those miners in worship and prayer throughout those dark and fearful days, Jose Enriquez. Translating for Jose will be the chaplain of the President of Chile, Reverend Alfred Cooper. [Applause]

[Mr. Jose Enriquez]

Mr. Cooper translating for Mr. Enriquez: First of all, greeting to President Obama and all present, government authorities and church authorities. My name is Jose Enriquez. I thank God for being in this place. I have come to give a testimony of what God did in that mine of San Jose. On the 5th of August, we were surprised by a rock fall and an explosion, and we had to organize ourselves down there to face this crisis. We had many difficulties, but we were able to overcome them. Organizing ourselves into a democratic community, we voted 50 plus one for every major decision and we went along with it. We realized, however, that we only had one alternative and that was God, himself. We were different creeds and different churches, so I got them all in a circle and began to teach the miners how to pray with participative prayer. We made sure that each one, in his own way, could pray and participate. And as we prayed, we began to know the presence and blessing of God among us down in the mine. We were strengthened and our spirits were revived.

We had some serious problems. We had very little food—for three days only, we had no water and we had to sort out the jobs like repairing the electrics and the piping. So we decided that, unless we prayed and God did a miracle, there would be no way out. And that became our daily hope and comfort as we began to pray—that He would do miracles among us and solve our problems.

The first 17 days were the worst, with no communication with the outside world. But we kept preaching the word of God. And God was with us and among us and he began to deal with us and teach and speak to us. He began to reconcile the inevitable tensions that occur in such a situation. And so in this democratic, not secular democratic but praying democratic, community God began to reconcile us together. And so we would get the one with the other and force them to shake their hands and to become reconciled and we maintained the peace and the community spirit down there that way. And then we had the great miracle where the second drill, the first one had passed us by, glanced off a rock and broke in at exactly the right level, at exactly the right angle to enable our rescue. And then of course you know the rest of the story—52 days of surviving down there but now in touch with the outside world. At last we were able to eat. We got our beef steaks that we wanted, and we got all our medication. And then, this was the greatest blessing of all that came down that small pipe, small Bibles, because those fitted. They came down, and I then had a Bible to speak from, and I could preach more powerfully and profoundly from the very word of God. There was one Bible for each man with his name on it.

There is so much to tell you, dear folk. And finally that day came when we were rescued. And even before we went up, I encouraged them to get on their knees and pray one final time. Some wanted to dive into the capsule and get out immediately. But we said, no, hold it, wait one moment: we're going to pray first. We had that final time of prayer together. I said to them, brethren, we pray to our God in a desperate situation, and he answered our prayers. So now we wish to pray and thank God and bless God for all the help from all over the world. We blessed the capsule and thanked God for the work that so many had put into it—the many authorities, politicians, our very President who committed himself sparing no expense or effort to make sure we were found. And then came that great day when we began to come up one by one—which it seems all of you saw, and the whole world was watching. We felt the best way to express what we were feeling was to wear this t-shirt that we sent to be made, it said: ''Thank you God. Thank you Lord Jesus. Thank you for having saved us.'' And then we came out to hug our wives and loved ones. Glory to God!

Congresswoman Kirkpatrick: We know of course that the President does not run the government alone but draws the greatest talent from the 50 states to serve the people. Tom Vilsack previously served as the Governor of the State of Iowa and serves our nation as our Secretary of Agriculture.

Congressman Miller: To pray for the leaders of the world, Secretary Tom Vilsack.

Secretary Tom Vilsack: Let us bow our heads and pray to the God who comforts us and watches over us. For our world leaders, our prayer is for them to remember and to live the beatitudes. Blessed are the leaders who are poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are the leaders who are meek, for they and their people shall posses the earth. Blessed are the leaders who mourn, for they and their people shall be comforted. Blessed are the leaders who hunger and thirst for justice, for they and their people shall be satisfied. Blessed are the leaders who are merciful, for they and their people shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the leaders who are clean of heart, for they and their people shall see God. And blessed are the leaders who are peacemakers, for they and their people shall be called Children of God. Blessed are the leaders who suffer persecution for justice sake, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven. Let us pray that our world leaders do justice, love kindness and walk the path according to God's plan. Amen.

Congresswoman Kirkpatrick: There may be no more potent or effective force on good earth than the power of story. There are those precious few gifted artists who can shape the ideas in histories of the human struggle into the form that touches and transforms us all. We have one such artist among us this morning. Randall Wallace has touched audiences around the world with his cinematic masterpieces such as ''We Were Soldiers,'' ''Secretariat,'' my favorite, ''Pearl Harbor'' and especially, ''Braveheart,'' a tribute to his Scottish ancestor, William Wallace. We look forward to receiving the power of the words he has chosen to share with us this morning. Please welcome Randall Wallace.

Mr. Randall Wallace: Mr. President, Mrs. Obama, Mr. Vice President, members of Congress, international guests, all of you here today, it is a great honor for me to be with you.

An introduction like this sort of covers me with Hollywood glory, and whenever I am introduced that way I feel compelled to tell a story that relates exactly how glamorous I am. My first big break in Hollywood was when I was promoted to producer and sent to take over a television show that was in trouble. The ratings were low, the actors were unhappy, and unhappiest of all was a gorgeous young woman who had been Miss Universe. So, before I went out to meet them, I bought what I considered the essential piece of equipment for a producer: a strap to hold my sunglasses so they could dangle around my neck. My plan was to walk up, say, ''Hi, I'm Randall Wallace,'' snap off my sunglasses, make my point, and then close with a dramatic flourish by putting them on again. I figured the actors would love it. So I walked up to Miss Universe, said ''Hi, I'm Randall Wallace,'' snapped off my glasses and said, ''I know you're not happy. You haven't been given enough to do. But I'm in charge of this show now—the writing, directing, everything. So if you have any problems, you come to me.'' And I snapped my sunglasses back on. But while I was talking, I'd been fidgeting with my tie, and I did this.

There is no fallback position from that position. A friend told me it may have been the first time in Hollywood history that an actress wondered whom she would have to seduce to get out of a job.

Movies are arguably America's most influential export—but guys like me don't seem the obvious choice to speak at a prayer breakfast. When I was directing ''We Were Soldiers'' at Fort Benning, Georgia, I found time one weekend to drive over to visit former President Carter's Sunday lesson at his home church in Plains. I asked a friend who knew the Carters to save me a seat, and when I arrived, I found the seat was right next to Rosalyn Carter. Apparently, Mrs. Carter, gracious Southern lady that she is, had wanted to be sure I felt at home. I sat down and Mr. Carter asked the congregation to open their pew Bibles to a passage that was the subject of his lesson. Now I grew up in Baptist churches, and I was familiar with the passage he was about to read. So I took the chance to open the hymn book to check on the lyrics of a hymn I was thinking of using in our film. And as I was thumbing through the hymn book, Mrs. Carter touched my arm and handed me her Bible, opened to the right passage. And I realized in that moment that Mrs. Carter had logically assumed

that since I was a Hollywood director I didn't know the difference between a hymn book and a Bible. And I have to admit, it did strike me that I had the perfect chance to steal Mrs. Carter's Bible. If anyone stopped me, I'd just say, ''She gave it to me.'' It was worn with use, marked with joy and tears. Imagine what it would bring on e-bay.

To prepare myself, I've studied the speeches of those who have preceded me in this position in past years. The causes they've advocated from this podium are vital, and I have no way to compete with their accomplishments or their eloquence. So this morning I'd like to do something that as nearly as I can tell is unprecedented for a keynote address at the National Prayer Breakfast. I'd like to speak about . . . prayer. I'm not a philosopher. I'm not a preacher. I'm a storyteller. Like Jesus. As nearly as I can tell, that is my only similarity to Him. Actually there is one other: I too have cried out, ''My God, why have you forsaken me.''

I've lived a life of tremendous privilege. I grew up just down the road from here, in Lynchburg, Virginia. Virginians are a righteous and sober people, too proud to tell a lie. But I was born in Tennessee. My father was born in Lizard Lick, Tennessee. The men in my father's family are Alton, Elton, Dalton, Lymon, Gleaman, Herman, Thurman and Clyde. They called Clyde, Pete. Nobody knew why.

When I was a child I suffered from attacks of asthma so severe that I couldn't breathe at all, and I had the real sense that if I panicked I would die. Grandmother would hold me in her lap all night long, and she would sing to me, and tell me stories from her childhood, and from the Bible. And she would look into my eyes, and she would smile. And I don't look at blue eyes to this day without seeing hers.

And as I grew older, I found her looking at me in a different way—quietly, distantly, and so I asked her, ''Grandmother, why are you looking at me that way?'' And she answered, ''You remind me of Rufe.'' Rufe was her husband—my grandfather—who had died before I was born. Of course, I became hungry to learn about him, so I asked my father to tell me what he was like, and he told me this story.

During the Great Depression my grandfather, who was a farmer, decided to open a country store to feed his family. There was no wood to be had and no money to buy any, but he found a wrecked riverboat on the shore of the Tennessee River, and he salvaged that wood to build his store. But he needed cash to buy the stock to sell, and there was one place in town that paid cash for labor, and that was the plant where they froze huge blocks of ice, and men would pick them up with tongs and sling them up onto wagons so they could sell them to farmers whose homes had no electricity. My grandfather was the only white man who did that job; all the rest were what they then called ''colored'' men.

So his first day on the job, the supervisor, another white man, approached my grandfather and told him, ''Listen, I just want you to know, all I got on this crew besides you is a bunch of . . . Colored men, and I cuss at 'em to make 'em work. So if I forget myself and I call you an S.O.B., don't pay me no mind, I don't mean nothin' by it, that's just the way I am.'' And my grandfather looked at the supervisor and said, ''I understand completely. And I just want you to know that if you do forget yourself, and you call me an S.O.B., and I hit you in the face with a claw hammer, don't pay me no mind, I don't mean nothin' by it, that's just the way I am.''

And in that one story I understood exactly who my grandfather was, and exactly who I wanted to be. And I understood the power of a story.

My father, and mother, worked extremely hard so that I could go to school. He was a salesman who loved his customers, and he rose in his company, with promotion after promotion . . . until one day the family-owned company he had worked for twenty years was sold to a professional investment group who knew nothing about the business itself but who believed it would prosper if they fired all the old guys and hired cheaper younger guys. My father was one of the old guys. He was 38. I've always wondered if my father lived his life hungry for the father he'd never had; his own father had died before he was born—the grandfather he'd told me about was my mother's father, not his. He had never been fired from anything. The strongest and best man I ever knew, and he had a complete breakdown.

While he was in the hospital, my sister and I were farmed out to relatives. For awhile, we lived in a house that had no indoor plumbing. When I told my father about that he said, ''Well . . . rich people have a canopy over their beds—and we've got a can of pee under ours.'' And that's when I knew my daddy would be all right.

The last sale he had made for his old company was for 90,000 dollars—in 1961. The first sale he made when he started his next job was for 90 cents. Working one hundred hours a week, he clawed his way back to success. God Bless America. And God bless my Daddy. He told me that I could go to college anywhere—something he and my mother had never gotten a chance to do. I chose the most expensive place possible—and he was so proud. But when I graduated, I didn't want to be a doctor or a lawyer, I wanted to be a writer. I wanted to tell the kind of stories that would let a young man know who his ancestors were, and who he might be. The kind of story that might keep a child alive through a long night.

59TH NATIONAL PRAYER BREAKFAST—PART III

HON. PAUL C. BROUN

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 29, 2011

Mr. BROUN.

My first job was in Nashville at a theme park, managing a live show that featured barnyard animals playing musical instruments. I'm not making this up. I had a piano playing pig, named Pigarace. I had a duck that played the drum named Bert Bachquack. You can imagine how proud my parents were.

I had my embarrassments and my setbacks, but I kept writing. I moved to Los Angeles. I got an opportunity in television. I married. We had two beautiful sons. I had purpose in my life, and I worked like I'd seen my father work, with pride and with passion. I'd won a multi-year contract with a thriving company. I bought an old home and remodeled it; I was promoted to producer. Except for an occasional mishap with my tie, life was sweet.

Then the Writer's Guild went out on strike, which caused the company I worked for to void its contract with me. The strike went on forever, and when it was over the company was barely there anymore. I was out of work, my savings were gone. No one would return my phone calls—I'm sure that's never happened where you work.

I kept trying, of course. I was always good at trying. But one day I was sitting at my desk and I was staring at nothing, my stomach in a knot, my hands trembling, and I realized I was breaking down, as my father had. I feared I had failed my father, and my mother and my grandmother. And my greatest fear was that I would fail my sons. I was afraid they would see me come apart, as I had seen my father come apart, and it would be something they could never forget.

I got down on my knees; I had nowhere else to go. And I prayed a simple prayer. I said ''Lord, all I care about right now are those boys. And maybe they don't need to grow up in a house with a tennis court and a swimming pool. Maybe they need a little house with one bathroom, or no bathrooms at all. Maybe they need to see what a man does when he gets knocked down, the way my father showed me. But I pray, if I go down, let me go down not on my knees, but with my flag flying.''

And I got up and I began to write the words that led to ''Braveheart.''

Great writers like Robert Frost and Jane Austin have said that an ending that does not surprise the writer won't surprise the reader. When I wrote about William Wallace standing on a battle field ready to die for what he believed, I felt it and when I came to the end I wept.

Was that moment of prayer the single determining factor in the arc of my whole life? Of course not. My teacher and mentor in college, the great Thomas Langford, of Duke University, once told us in class that no decision in our lives stands alone; the trajectory of all other decisions we've ever made points our direction for the future.

Our lives are unfolding stories, they are moving pictures. If we took a freeze frame of Golgotha, on the day that Jesus was crucified, and showed that picture to anyone unfamiliar with the story and asked them to judge who the victor was in that scene, they'd be unlikely to say: ''The one hanging on the cross in the middle.''

It was from that cross that Jesus cried, ''My God! Why have you forsaken me?''

That cry does not amaze me. What does amaze me is that while one of the two thieves hanging on either said of Jesus mocked Him, the other acknowledged the justice of his fate and asked Jesus for help; and Jesus, in the agonies of crucifixion, told him, ''Today you will be with me in Paradise.'' That does more than amaze me. It makes me believe that any power that could enable Jesus to say that, then, could do anything.

And it seems to me that Jesus' response is the answer to every prayer that thief never prayed. If God is God, then God knows our prayers whether we pray them or not.

So why pray the prayers? To me, it's not because God needs to know my prayers, but because I do.

Prayer sifts us like sand. Take any moment of our lives; take this one. Here, in a room resonant with power. Did we come this morning because we want to feel a closeness to power? Do we come before God because what we truly want is to use the ultimate power we imagine God has? Or do we fall to our knees to admit the truth of our weakness—and stand again, in the strength of that truth?

Jesus said the truth will set us free, and He said the truth is: God is love.

It seems to me that the prayer that comes from Love is the prayer that goes to God.

My father once told me a story of a man drowning in the ocean. He cried out, ''Oh God! If you save me, I will spend the rest of my life in serving You!'' A few moments later a boat appeared and he was pulled from the water, and on the way back to shore the man lifted his eyes to heaven and said, Of course You do understand that I meant ''in

an advisory capacity.'' But life does not give us the option of Advisory Capacity.

Tolstoy wrote in War and Peace that in a battle, one man throwing down his weapon and running away can panic a whole army, and in a panic, one man lifting up the flag and running back toward the enemy can rally a whole army, and no one but God knows what will happen, and when.

What if prayer is the way to glimpse God's true intentions—the divine purpose for each of us? I'm no theologian. I'm not looking for logic; I'm only trying to find an understanding for my experience that prayer matters. Does it change the mind of God? I don't know. I can only tell you that it changes me.

When I was a boy we sang a hymn called ''Footsteps of Jesus.'' Not everyone grew up as I did. I'm sometimes described as a rarity, a filmmaker who might speak freely about prayer. But really I'm not so unusual. All of us dreamers in Hollywood are keenly aware of the falseness of fame, the fleeting nature of beauty, the illusions of power. And when I pray with or for my friends, my first concern is not whether they follow the footsteps of Jesus, but whether I do.

If I've led you to believe my life is any example of righteousness, then maybe you're not familiar with the Tennessee talent for stretching the truth. And even if I could have stolen Mrs. Carter's Bible, I couldn't have kept it. You might own the pages but you don't own the Bible until you've lived it.

Some of you here lead nations. Some of you here lead the world. All of us here have one heart inside us, and it is in that one heart where the whole battle is fought.

There are as many ways to approach the great questions of life as there are people on the earth. But every one of us must stand alone before all that made us, and all that we have been, and that we might be. And dying in your bed, many years from now, would you not trade all the days from that day to this for one chance, just one chance, to open your heart before God Almighty, and to tell Him, ''I will lose my life, and I will find it by loving in all the ways You lead my heart to love.''

You have a prayer, pray it. Amen.

Congressman Miller: Thank you, Randall. Thank you for inspiring all of us. And now it is my honor to introduce my President, our President, the President of the United States of America. We have an expression in Florida that you can walk shoulder to shoulder with someone even if you don't see eye to eye. That's the prayerful spirit in which we gather today. It is the genius of our founders that we have one President at a time and it is the higher genius of the Scriptures that we are to pray for our leaders that we may all lead quiet and peaceable lives. Mr. President, first we thank you for your attendance and the strong support that you have given this event and all of the activities that surround it. I speak for all members of Congress here and for millions across our country and around the world, we pray for you each day as you lead our country. Ladies and gentlemen, the President of the United States, Barack Obama.

President Barack Obama: Thank you so much. To the co-chairs, Jeff and Ann; to all the members of Congress who are here, the distinguished guests who have traveled so far to be here this morning; to Randall for your wonderful stories and powerful prayer; to all who are here providing testimony, thank you so much for having me and Michelle here. We are blessed to be here.

I want to begin by just saying a word to Mark Kelly, who's here. We have been praying for Mark's wife, Gabby Giffords, for many days now. But I want Gabby and Mark and their entire family to know that we are with them for the long haul, and God is with them for the long haul.

And even as we pray for Gabby in the aftermath of a tragedy here at home, we're also mindful of the violence that we're now seeing in the Middle East, and we pray that this violence in Egypt will end and that the rights and aspirations of the Egyptian people will be realized and that a better day will dawn over Egypt and throughout the world.

For almost 60 years going back to President Eisenhower, this gathering has been attended by our President. It's a tradition that I'm proud to uphold, not only as a fellow believer but as an elected leader whose entry into public service was actually through the church. This may come as a surprise, for as some of you know, I did not come from a particularly religious family. My father, who I barely knew—I only met once for a month in my entire life—was said to be a non-believer throughout his life.

My mother, whose parents were Baptist and Methodist, grew up with a certain skepticism about organized religion, and she usually only took me to church on Easter and Christmas—sometimes. And yet my mother was also one of the most spiritual people that I ever knew. She was somebody who was instinctively guided by the Golden Rule and who nagged me constantly about the homespun values of her Kansas upbringing, values like honesty and hard work and kindness and fair play.

And it's because of her that I came to understand the equal worth of all men and all women, and the imperatives of an ethical life and the necessity to act on your beliefs. And it's because of her example and guidance that despite the absence of a formal religious upbringing my earliest inspirations for a life of service ended up being the faith leaders of the civil rights movement.

There was, of course, Martin Luther King and the Baptist leaders, the ways in which they helped those who had been subjugated to make a way out of no where, and transform a nation through the force of love. There are also Catholic leaders like Father Theodore Heshburg and Jewish leaders like Rabi Abraham Joshua Heschel, Muslim leaders and Hindu leaders. Their call to fix what was broken in our world, a call routed in faith, is what led me just a few years out of college to sign up as a community organizer for a group of churches on the Southside of Chicago. And it was through that experience working with pastors and laypeople trying to heal the wounds of hurting neighborhoods that I came to know Jesus Christ for myself and embrace Him as my Lord the Savior.

Now, that was over 20 years ago. And like all of us, my faith journey has had its twists and turns. It hasn't always been a straight line. I have thanked God for the joys of parenthood and Michelle's willingness to put up with me. In the wake of failures and disappointments, I have questioned what God had in store for me and have been reminded that God's plans for us may not always match our own short-sided desires. And let me tell you, these past two years, they have deepened my faith. The presidency has a funny way of making a person feel the need to pray. Abe Lincoln said, as many of you know, ''I have been driven to my knees many times by the overwhelming conviction that I have no place else to go.''

Fortunately, I'm not alone in my prayers. My pastor friends like Joel Hunter and T.D. Jakes come over to the Oval Office every once in a while to pray with me and to pray for the nation. The chapel at Camp David has provided consistent respite for fellowship. The director of our Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnership's office, Joshua DuBois, a young minister himself, starts my morning off with meditations from Scripture.

Most of all, I've got friends around the country—some who I know, some who I don't know—but I know there are friends who are out there praying for me. One of them is an old friend named Kaye Wilson. In our family we call her Mama Kaye. And she happens to be Malia and Sasha's Godmother. And she has organized prayer circles for me all around the country. She started small with her own Bible study group, but once I started running for President, and she heard what they were saying about me on cable, she felt the need to pray harder. By the time I was elected President, she said, ''I just couldn't keep up on my own. I was having to pray eight, nine times a day just for you.'' So she enlisted help from around the country.

It's also comforting to know that people are praying for you who don't always agree with you. Tom Coburn, for example, is here. He is not only a dear friend but also a brother in Christ. We came into the Senate at the same time. Even though we are on opposite sides of a whole bunch of issues, part of what has bound us together is a shared faith, a recognition that we pray to and serve the same God. And I keep praying that God will show him the light and he will vote with me once in a while. It's going to happen, Tom. A ray of light is going to beam down.

My Christian faith then has been a sustaining force for me over these last few years. All the more so, when Michelle and I hear our faith questioned from time to time, we are reminded that ultimately what matters is not what other people say about us but whether we're being true to our conscience and true to our God. ''Seek first his Kingdom and his righteousness and all these things will be given to you as well.''

As I travel across the country folks often ask me—what is it that I pray for? And like most of you, my prayers sometimes are general: ''Lord, give me the strength to meet the challenges of my office.'' Sometimes they're specific: ''Lord, give me patience as I watch Malia go to her first dance where there will be boys. Lord, have that skirt get longer as she travels to that dance.''

But while I petition God for a whole range of things, there are a few common themes that do occur. The first category of prayer comes out of the urgency of the Old Testament prophets and the Gospel itself. I pray for my ability to help those who are struggling. Christian tradition teaches that one day the world will be turned right side up and everything will return as it should be. But until that day, we're called to work on behalf of a God that shows justice and mercy and compassion to the most vulnerable.

59TH NATIONAL PRAYER BREAKFAST—PART IV

HON. MIKE McINTYRE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 29, 2011

Mr. McINTYRE.

We've seen a lot of hardship these past two years. Not a day passes when I don't get a letter from somebody or meet someone who is out of work, or has lost their home or are without health care. The story Randall told about his father—that's a story that a whole lot of Americans have gone through over these past couple of years.

Sometimes I can't help right away. Sometimes what I can do to try to improve the economy or to curb foreclosures or to help deal with the health care system—sometimes it seems so distant and so remote, so profoundly inadequate to the enormity of the need. And it is my faith, then, that Biblical injunction to serve the least of these, that

keeps me going and that keeps me from being overwhelmed. It's faith that reminds me that despite being just one very imperfect man, I can still help whoever I can, however I can, wherever I can, for as long as I can, and that somehow God will buttress these efforts.

It also helps to know that none of us are alone in answering this call. It's being taken up each and every day by so many of you—back home, your churches, your temples and synagogues, your fellow congregants—so many faith groups across this great country of ours.

I came upon a group recently called charity: water, a group that supports clean water projects overseas. This is a project that was started by a former night club promoter named Scott Harrison who grew weary of living only for himself and feeling like he wasn't following Christ as well as he should.

And because of Scott's good work, charity: water has helped 1.7 million people get access to clean water. And in the next 10 years, he plans to make clean water accessible to a hundred million more. That's the kind of promoting we need more of, and that's the kind of faith that moves mountains. And there are stories like that scattered across this room, of people who have taken it upon themselves to make a difference.

Now, sometimes faith groups can do the work of caring for the least of these on their own; sometimes they need a partner, whether it's in business or government. And that's why my administration has taken a fresh look at the way we organize with faith groups, the way we work with faith groups through our Office of Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships.

And through that office, we're expanding the way faith groups can partner with our government. We're helping them feed more kids who otherwise would go hungry. We're helping fatherhood groups get dads the support they need to be there for their children. We're working with non-profits to improve the lives of people around the world. And we're doing it in ways that are aligned with our constitutional principles. And in this work, we intend to expand it in the days ahead, rooted in the notions of partnership and justice and the imperatives to help the poor.

Of course, there are some needs that require more resources than faith groups have at their disposal. There's only so much a church can do to help all the families in need—all those who need help making a mortgage payment, or avoiding foreclosure, or making sure their child can go to college. There is only so much that a non-profit can do to help a community rebuild in the wake of disaster. There is only so much the private sector will do to help folks who are desperately sick get the care that they need.

And that's why I continue to believe that in a caring and in a just society, government must have a role to play; that our values, our love and our charity must find expression, not just in our families, not just in our places of work and our places of worship, but also in our government and in our politics.

Over the past two years, the nature of these obligations, the proper role of government has obviously been the subject of enormous controversy. And the debates have been fierce as one side's version of compassion and community may be interpreted by the other side as an oppressive and irresponsible expansion of the state or an unacceptable restriction on individual freedom.

That's why a second recurring theme in my prayers is a prayer for humility. God answered this prayer for me early on by having me marry Michelle. Because whether it's reminding me of a chore undone, or questioning the wisdom of watching my third football game in a row on Sunday, she keeps me humble.

But in this life of politics when debates have become so bitterly polarized, and changes in the media lead so many of us to listen and reinforce our existing biases, it's useful to go back to Scripture to remind ourselves that none of us has all the answers—none of us, no matter what our political party or our station in life.

The full breadth of human knowledge is like a grain of sand in God's hands. There are some mysteries in this world we cannot fully comprehend. As it is written in Job, ''God's voice thunders in marvelous ways. He does great things beyond our understandings.''

The challenge I find then is to balance this uncertainty, this humility with the need to fight for deeply held convictions, to be open to other points of view but firm in our core principles. And I pray for this wisdom every day.

I pray that God will show me and all of us the limits of our understanding, and open our ears and our hearts to our brothers and sisters with different points of view; that such reminders of our shared hopes and our shared dreams and our shared limitations as children of God will reveal a way forward that we can travel together.

And the last recurrent theme, one that binds all prayers together, is that I might walk closer with God and make that walk my first and most important task.

In our own lives it's easy to be consumed by our daily worries and our daily concerns. And it is even easier at a time when everybody is busy, everybody is stressed and everybody—our culture—is obsessed with wealth and power and celebrity. And often it takes a brush with hardship or tragedy to shake us out of that, to remind us of what matters most.

We see an aging parent wither under a long illness, or we lose a daughter or a husband in Afghanistan, we watch a gunman open fire at a supermarket—and we remember how fleeting life can be. And we ask ourselves how we have treated others, whether we've told our family and friends how much we love them. And it's in these moments, when we feel most intensely our mortality and our own flaws and the sins of the world, that we most desperately seek to touch the face of God.

So my prayer this morning is that we might seek His face not only in those moments, but each and every day; and every day as we go through the hustle and bustle of our lives, whether it's in Washington or Hollywood or anywhere in between, that we might every so often rise above the here and now and kneel before the Eternal; that we might remember, Kaye, the fact that those who wait on the Lord will soar on wings like eagles, they will run and not be wary and they will walk and not faint.

When I wake in the morning, I wait on the Lord, and I ask Him to give me the strength to do right by our country and its people. And when I go to bed at night I wait on the Lord and ask him to forgive me my sins, and look after my family and the American people, and make me an instrument of His will.

I say these prayers hoping they will be answered, and I say these prayers knowing that I must work and must sacrifice and must serve to see them answered. But I also say these prayers knowing that the act of prayer itself is a source of strength. It is a reminder that our time on Earth is not just about us; that when we open ourselves to the possibility that God might have a larger purpose for our lives, there is a chance that somehow, in ways that we may never fully know, God will use us well.

May the Lord bless you and keep you, and may He bless this country that we love.

[Song by Alison Krauss]

Congresswoman Kirkpatrick: Thank you so much, Alison. It has been quite a morning.

Congressman Miller: We are grateful to all of our head table guests and our distinguished visitors around the world. We all hope you have something powerful to think about and apply to your leadership challenges wherever you may live.

Congresswoman Kirkpatrick: Prayer is a powerful thing because we all are connected to a powerful loving God. We are all brought to this place and this moment for a reason and it is our responsibility to figure out what we can do to spread the message of hope and faith we received today. One of the things we perhaps all have noticed is that in the world that God has made almost always where there is tragedy, there is also a release of great love. People across the country and around the world have been focused on the terrible senseless shooting 26 days ago in Tucson. It has made us all ask, why, and examine what we can do to make the world where such things don't happen.

Congressman Miller: Most of us have said our prayers for the life and the recovery of all of the victims and especially our colleague Gabby Giffords. This morning we get to pray with her husband Captain Mark Kelly. Captain, we thank you for your own service to our country. As a member of the United States Navy and as an astronaut, we thank you for being here to lead us in our closing prayer.

Captain Mark Kelly: Congresswoman Kirkpatrick, Congressman Miller, thank you for inviting me here today. I am not so sure I can thank you for having me follow Jose Enriquez, Randall Wallace and the President of the United States, though. What allowed me to be here today, I think, is Gabby's condition. It continues to improve. Every day she gets a little bit better and the neurosurgeons and neurologists tell me that that is a great sign. The slope of that curve is very important. It is good to be here at an event that has become such an important part of our national dialogue. As you can imagine, the last month has been the hardest time of my life and the hardest time of my family's life. It was on January 8th, just four weeks ago on Saturday, that Gabby's life and my life have forever been changed. And we are not the only ones; the shooting has cost other families dearly. Gabby's community in Tucson, my community in Tucson, the people of Tucson are suffering. Suffering deeply, but suffering together. When something like this happens it's natural to think, how? Why could this happen? Why were six people killed? Why was a nine year old girl, an innocent child, killed who just wanted to meet her Congresswoman? Why was Gabby shot through her head and left barely clinging to life? We can't ever know the answers to these questions. We won't. But, thankfully, miraculously, Gabby survives.

I was telling Gabby just the other night, two nights ago that maybe this event, this terrible event, was fate. I hadn't been a big believer in fate until recently. I thought the world just spins and the clock just ticks and things happen for no particular reason. President Lincoln was a big believer in fate. He said ''the Almighty has His own purposes.'' He believed that there was a larger plan. I can only hope and I told Gabby the other night that maybe it is possible that this is just one small part of that same plan. That this event, horrible and tragic, was not merely random, that maybe something good can come from all this. Maybe, it's our responsibility. Maybe it's your responsibility to see that something does.

As many of you know, I'm an astronaut. I've been fortunate on three separate occasions in my life to look down at this planet from space. We orbit the earth at about nearly the same distance that Washington is

from my home in West Orange, New Jersey—but from space far above that traffic on the New Jersey Turnpike, you have an entirely different perspective of life on our planet.

It's humbling to see the earth as God created it in the context of God's vast universe. Many of you may also know that my twin brother Scott is also an astronaut. And through this very difficult time, he has been aboard the International Space Station. It's a really tough place to be when your twin brother and your family, and the nation, is going through something that is so difficult. He was asked by several journalists what it's been like to be so far away and unable to return to his family during this time, and I think what he said bears repeating. Scott said, ''What we do here in space is incredibly challenging. Our country faces a lot of challenges and the way we address those challenges is through teamwork. And I'd like to see more teamwork with more people not only in government but everyone in meeting the challenges our country faces. Hopefully if anything good can come from this, it's that we learn to work better together.'' Scott concluded by saying, ''We are better than this. We must do better.'' My brother is right, I know we will do better, and I know that prayer must be part of that effort.

One morning when Gabby was still in Tucson at the Tucson University Medical Center, I was outside visiting that memorial that just sprung up on the grass in front of the hospital. It isn't a formal religious site but there is a lot of religious material that people left there on the lawn—Bibles, angels, prayers. And the people of Arizona have turned that place into a place of prayer, a pilgrimage site. On that particular morning there was no wind, there were candles burning on the lawn, hundreds of them, and it was like stepping into a church, a place with heaven itself as a ceiling. That reminded me that you don't need a church, a temple or a mosque to pray. You don't even need a building or walls or even an altar. You pray where you are. You pray when God is there in your heart and prayer isn't just asking, it's also listening for answers and expressing gratitude, which I've done a lot lately.

With that, I'd like to conclude with a prayer that my wife's Rabbi, Rabbi Stephanie Aaron who married us, said over Gabby's hospital bed on the first night when this happened on January 8. Rabbi Aaron said, and this is my prayer:

''In the name of God, our God of Israel, may Michael, God's angel, messenger of compassion, watch over your right side. May Gabriel, God's angel, messenger of strength and courage, be on your left. And before you, guiding your path, Uriel, God's angel of light, and behind you, supporting you, stands Raphael, God's angel of healing. And over your head surrounding you is the presence of the Divine.''

Thank you. God bless you and please, please, please continue to keep Gabby's thoughts and prayers in your heart, it is really helping. Thank you.

Congressman Miller: I would ask that you all remain in your places to allow the President and the First Lady to depart. Thank you so much for coming Mr. President and thank you for bringing Mrs. Obama with you today.

Congresswoman Kirkpatrick: Jeff, it's been quite a morning, and thank you again for being co-chair with me on this. Thank you and God bless you and now go and make peace.

OPPOSITION TO H.R. 2417 ''BETTER USE OF LIGHT BULBS ACT''

HON. LAURA RICHARDSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 29, 2011

Ms. RICHARDSON. Mr. Speaker, I am compelled to rise in strong opposition to H.R. 2417, the ''Better Use of Light Bulbs Act.'' I oppose the ''Bulb Act'' because it is costly to taxpayers, harmful to the environment and an impediment to technological innovation. In short, H.R. 2417, the ''Bulb'' act should be rejected. It is unnecessary and, to put it simply, not a bright idea.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation is a thinly veiled attempt to reverse the advances made by the ''Energy Independence and Security Act,'' passed by the Democratic controlled 111th Congress. In fact, the original 2007 light bulb efficiency language was co-sponsored by Rep. UPTON, R–Mich., and then-House Speaker Dennis Hastert, Ill. Of the 95 Republicans who originally voted for the new energy standards in 2007, 55 of them remain in office, including the current chair of the Energy and Commerce Committee and several members of the Republican leadership. House Energy and Commerce Chairman FRED UPTON and Republican leaders CATHY MCMORRIS RODGERS, PETER ROSKAM and PETE SESSIONS. It was a good idea then and is a good idea now. I was proud to vote for that bill and oppose this effort to undo it.

Mr. Speaker, the ''Energy and Independence Act'' did not ban incandescent bulbs; it spurred innovation and economic growth. This growth is put at risk by H.R. 2417. In my home state of California, light bulb standards have spurred innovation and economic growth. It does this not by banning incandescent bulbs, but rather investing in innovative technologies such as advanced incandescent, compact fluorescent lights (CFLs) and light-emitting diodes (LEDS). These policies translate into significant cost savings for American households; H.R. 2417 does not.

Second, the energy efficiency standards threatened by H.R. 2417 translate into huge cost savings for Americans. The standards would save American families, businesses and the country more than $12.5 billion annually, reducing Americans' energy costs by an average of 7 percent or about $85 per household each year. In California, standards have already resulted in tens of billions of dollars in utility bill savings for its citizens.

Studies have documented that energy efficient bulbs would save the average California household $125 a year, while the reliance on inefficient bulbs would cost consumers $35.6 million in unnecessary and unreasonably higher electricity bills.

Mr. Speaker, this bill is harmful to the environment. The efficiency standards that H.R. 2417 would repeal have been shown to reduce harmful greenhouse gas emissions. Thus, it is not surprising that H.R. 2417 is strongly opposed by environmental groups like Environment America, the Environmental Defense Fund, and the Natural Resources Defense Fund. They understand the detrimental, long-term effects that a repeal of H.R. 2417 would have on our environment, and what that means for the quality of life of our children and families nationwide.

Efficient light bulbs decrease the level of harmful air pollution by 100 million tons of carbon pollution per year. That is the equivalent to the emissions of 17 million cars. H.R. 2417 would dismantle what have proven to be successful efforts at reducing harmful emissions associated with much-needed energy production and job creation.

Finally, and most importantly, H.R. 2417 will impede new job creation in America. The new standards that H.R. 2417 would repeal are already prompting manufacturers to build new U.S. plants. Nationally, more than 2,000 jobs have already been created at new factories across the country, including Pennsylvania, Ohio, North Carolina, Florida and my home state, California. We need to adopt policies that will create jobs, not jeopardize them as H.R. 2417 does.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 2417 is a dim idea that should not see the light of day. Because I am focused on spurring innovation, conserving energy, protecting the environment and creating jobs, I strongly oppose H.R. 2417, and urge my colleagues to do likewise.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ADAM SMITH

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 29, 2011

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, on Friday, July 22, and Monday, July 25, 2011, I was unable to be present for recorded votes due to a family commitment. I request the record show that had I been present, I would have voted ''yes'' on rollcall vote No. 629 (on passage of H.R. 2551), ''no'' on rollcall vote No. 630 (on agreeing to the resolution H. Res. 363), and ''yes'' on rollcall vote No. 631 (on approving the journal).

TRIBUTE TO PIETRO SAMBI, APOSTOLIC NUNCIOTO TO THE U.S.

HON. JOHN B. LARSON

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 29, 2011

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, it is with a heavy heart that I rise today to inform my colleagues of the recent passing of The Most Reverend Pietro Sambi, who was the Titular Archbishop of Bellicastrum and the Apostolic Nuncio to the United States, on July 27 at Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore. He was 73 years old.

Archbishop Sambi was born in Sogliano at Rubicone (Forli-Cesena), Italy on the 27th day of June, 1938. He was a respected scholar who had doctorates in both theology and canon law and spoke Italian, English, French and Spanish. He was ordained to the priesthood for the Roman Catholic Diocese of San Marino-Montefeltro on March 14, 1964, and began his distinguished career in the diplomatic service of the Vatican's Secretariat of State in 1969.

His overseas assignments included sensitive postings to Cameroon, Cuba, Algeria, Nicaragua, Belgium, India, Indonesia and Cyprus. In 2000, Archbishop Sambi led discussions with Israeli religious and political leaders

orchestrating Pope John Paul II's historic visit to Jerusalem. As the Papal representative to Israel in 2002, Archbishop Sambi reportedly helped end a 39-day standoff between Israeli troops and Palestinian militants, who had holed up inside the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem.

Pope Benedict XVI named Archbishop Sambi as the Apostolic Nuncio to the United States on December 17, 2005, and he was installed in early 2006. Shortly after his appointment, he toured the damage left by Hurricane Katrina. He was deeply involved in efforts to introduce Pope Benedict to American Catholics and he accompanied the Pope during his April 2008 visit to the U.S. and hosted him at the Apostolic Nunciature, where the Pope held a historic private meeting with five victims of clergy sexual abuse. In September of 2010, he presided at a Mass to mark the 13th anniversary of the death of Blessed Mother Teresa, which coincided with the U.S. Postal Service's issuance of a commemorative stamp in her honor.

Archbishop Sambi received numerous tributes and honors over the years, especially for his ecumenical activities and efforts to increase and secure access to religious sites in the Holy Land.

Like many of my colleagues, I had the honor of knowing Archbishop Sambi through my friend Luca Ferrari, the former Minister Counselor for Public and Legislative Affairs at the Embassy of the Republic of Italy here in Washington. The Archbishop was always willing to gently inform us on theology as well the critical international issues of the day. He was an amiable conversationalist and a good friend, and will be greatly missed by so many of us here in Washington, DC, as well by family, friends and colleagues around the world.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to conclude by urging all of our colleagues to join me in paying tribute to Archbishop Pietro Sambi's service to international relations and understanding, and to express our condolences to his family for their loss. Thank you.

RECOGNIZING SAMUEL FLORES

HON. HENRY CUELLAR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 29, 2011

Mr. CUELLAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the late Samuel Flores for his dedication and contributions to the city of Seguin and south Texas.

Mr. Flores was born in San Marcos, Texas as the middle child of seven and raised during the difficult years of the Great Depression. During his early years, he lived the arduous life of a migrant worker traveling from California to Minnesota as the seasons changed. At the age of seventeen, he dropped out of school to serve his country and joined the United States Marine Corps. After six years of service, he returned to school. Flores earned a degree in education from Southwest Texas State University, as well as a Master's degree in school administration. After marrying Velia Flores and moving to her hometown of Seguin, Texas, he started working for Harlandale Independent School District where he resided for an accomplished 35 years of service.

Throughout his career in education, he taught mainstream and special education to elementary and secondary school students. He distinguished himself as the first Hispanic Principal for Harlandale Independent School District. He became Director for Special Education for six school districts and later on worked for the Seguin school district as the Attendance Officer. Even after his retirement in 2000, he continued to serve his community by becoming chairman of the Walnut Branch Restoration Project.

Aside from his teaching vocation, Flores dedicated a great part of his life to fighting against discrimination in public places. He founded the Seguin Bi-racial Committee during the 1960s. Thanks to his hard work and dedication, schools like Texas Lutheran University, now have a Mexican-American Studies program for the benefit of the students. He also assisted in founding the Seguin Boys Club, as well as establishing the Health Unit Project, the Walnut Creek Flood Project, and a new Seguin Post Office. Along with forming these vital programs and initiatives, Mr. Flores served as a member of the Seguin City Council from 1965–2000.

Mr. Flores' tremendous commitment to the Seguin education system and the overall community was honored by having part of Highway 46 in Texas dedicated to him. He was also recognized on the floor of the Texas House of Representatives with a resolution in his honor presented by Edmund Kuempel in 2001.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to have had the time to recognize the dedication, accomplishments, and commitment of the late Samuel Flores.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MICK MULVANEY

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 29, 2011

Mr. MULVANEY. Mr. Speaker, I missed rollcall 463 on June 22, 2011. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

HONORING U.S. ARMY SGT. JEREMY R. SUMMERS

HON. GEOFF DAVIS

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 29, 2011

Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize U.S. Army Sgt. Jeremy R. Summers from Bracken County, Kentucky, who lost his life on July 14, 2011 in Paktika Province, Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. His unit was attacked by enemy forces while he was on duty as a forward scout observer.

Sgt. Summers joined the Army after graduating from Bracken County High School in 2002. He was assigned to Headquarters Company, 2nd Battalion, 506th Infantry Regiment, 101st Airborne Division, out of Fort Campbell, Kentucky. He served tours of duty in Korea and Iraq in addition to his service in Afghanistan. Sgt. Summers was a dedicated soldier and demonstrated great character in his service. His dedication to defending our Republic was proven again when he recently reenlisted in the United States Army.

Sgt. Summers' life is yet another reminder of the high cost of freedom. Today, as we remember the life and accomplishments of this extraordinary Kentuckian, my thoughts and prayers are with Sgt. Summers' family and friends.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MICK MULVANEY

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 29, 2011

Mr. MULVANEY. Mr. Speaker, I missed rollcall No. 598 on July 15, 2011. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

TRIBUTE TO DR. JOE MORTON

HON. JO BONNER

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 29, 2011

Mr. BONNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the work of Alabama State Superintendent of Education, Dr. Joe Morton, who has been a leader in education for 42 years and will officially retire on August 31, 2011.

Dr. Morton grew up in Pleasant Grove and graduated from Hueytown High School. He then received his B.S. degree from Auburn University in 1969 and later his M.A. in 1973 and Ph.D. in 1974 from The University of Alabama.

Upon graduation from Auburn, he began a life of dedicated service to the field of education. He worked his way up from a school teacher to the superintendent of the Sumter County Board of Education. He is presumed to be the youngest person in the history of the State to be a local superintendent of education at the age of 27.

On July 13, 2004, he was selected by Governor Bob Riley to be the State Superintendent of Education. Along with a longstanding love of education, he has always held to the belief that Alabama students have the capability to compete with top students from around the world.

In order to engage students' interest in reading, he created and co-founded the Alabama Reading Initiative (ARI). The ARI has since become a national model and has helped the National Assessment of Educational Process in 2007 achieve the largest gains recorded in Grade 4 Reading. In 2010, AMSTI was recognized by the Center for Excellence in Education as the model of laboratory education in the United States.

Other educational programs he helped create and co-found were the Alabama Math, Science, and Technology Initiative (AMSTI) and the Alabama Connecting Classrooms, Educators and Students Statewide (ACCESS).

At the request of Governor Riley, Dr. Morton also chaired the Seat Belt Study Commission after a tragic 2006 school bus accident in Huntsville. The Commission's research into school bus safety and seatbelts is considered to be the most extensive in the country.

In 2009, he also launched First Choice, a plan to combat high school dropout rates by doubling the number of graduates. First Choice has already helped deliver a greater number of well prepared high school graduates.

As a result of Dr. Joe Morton's achievements in education, Alabama had the fourth largest increase in the number of students who graduated from high school in the Nation. His achievements also paved the way for Alabama to lead the Nation in student enrollment gains and Advanced Placement exam scores.

Above all, under Dr. Morton's leadership as Alabama's Superintendent of Education, the State has achieved its greatest overall educational rating in its history.

On behalf of the people of Alabama—especially the thousands of school children who will reap a lifetime of rewards because of his leadership—I wish to extend congratulations to Dr. Joe Morton for a job well done and for his many contributions to better the education and the futures of many Alabamians. My colleagues in the Alabama delegation join me in wishing him and his family the very best as they start a new chapter in their lives.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MICK MULVANEY

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 29, 2011

Mr. MULVANEY. Mr. Speaker, I missed rollcall No. 601 on July 18, 2011. Had I been present, I would have voted ''yes''.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MICK MULVANEY

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 29, 2011

Mr. MULVANEY. Mr. Speaker, I missed rollcall 602 on July 18, 2011. Had I been present, I would have voted ''yes''.

CONGRATULATING RECIPIENTS OF THE WORLD PEACE PRIZE

HON. MELVIN L. WATT

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 29, 2011

Mr. WATT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to make sure that we acknowledge in our official record an important event that took place on June 14, 2011 in the Gold Room of the Rayburn House Office Building, the award by the World Peace Council of the 2010 World Peace Prize.

The World Peace Corps Mission confers World Peace Awards to individuals and organizations that have made significant contributions to peacemaking efforts around the world. This year the Top Honor Prize was given to His Holiness Dorje Chang Buddha III and to Hon. Benjamin A. Gilman. The 2010 Roving Ambassador for Peace Award was awarded to the Civil Air Patrol.

H.H. Dorje Chang Buddha III is the highest leader of Buddhism in the world. He was recognized for his support of a wide variety of healing and rescue-relief activities around the world, as well as for his art and poetry, through which he has promoted nonviolence, charity and love for humanity. H.H. Dorje Chang Buddha III is the first Buddhist leader to be awarded the World Peace Prize. In his acceptance speech, H.H. Dorje Chang Buddha III said, ''I believe this is not an affirmation of me personally. Rather, it is an affirmation of all human beings who seek happiness, freedom and equality. It is an affirmation of all efforts to selflessly benefit and help others.''

Hon. Benjamin A. Gilman served 15 terms in the United States House of Representatives. He was recognized for championing human rights, fighting world hunger and fighting drug abuse and trafficking. While in Congress he served as Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, as Congressional Delegate to the United Nations, on the Ukrainian Famine Commission and as Vice Chairman of the Select Committee on POWs. He organized successful ''prisoner exchanges'' which freed American citizens held in East Germany, Mozambique, Cuba and several other countries.

The Civil Air Patrol is the official auxiliary of the U.S. Air Force. It was recognized for providing disaster relief and emergency services following natural and man-made disasters. The CAP performs 90 percent of continental U.S. inland search and rescue missions as tasked by the Air Force Regional Coordination Center. It was credited with saving 113 lives in fiscal year 2010.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating H.H. Dorje Chang Buddha III, Hon. Benjamin Gilman and the Civil Air Patrol for receiving these awards.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MICK MULVANEY

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 29, 2011

Mr. MULVANEY. Mr. Speaker, I missed rollcall No. 612 on July 21, 2011. Had I been present, I would have voted ''yes.''

Daily Digest

Senate

Chamber Action

Routine Proceedings, pages S5027–S5087

Measures Introduced: Six bills and four resolutions were introduced, as follows: S. 1449–1454, and S. Res. 242–245. **Page S5071**

Measures Reported:

S. 605, to amend the Controlled Substances Act to place synthetic drugs in Schedule I. **Page S5071**

Measures Passed:

Respecting Sovereignty of Georgia: Senate agreed to S. Res. 175, expressing the sense of the Senate with respect to ongoing violations of the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Georgia and the importance of a peaceful and just resolution to the conflict within Georgia's internationally recognized borders. **Page S5049**

Women's Political Participation in Saudi Arabia: Senate agreed to S. Res. 216, encouraging women's political participation in Saudi Arabia, after agreeing to the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute. **Pages S5049–51**

National Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month: Senate agreed to S. Res. 242, supporting the goals and ideals of National Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month. **Page S5051**

Atrial Fibrillation Disease: Senate agreed to S. Res. 243, promoting increased awareness, diagnosis, and treatment of atrial fibrillation to address the high morbidity and mortality rates and to prevent avoidable hospitalizations associated with the disease. **Page S5051**

Congratulating Omega Psi Phi Fraternity: Senate agreed to S. Res. 244, congratulating Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. for 100 years of service to communities throughout the United States and the world, and commending Omega Psi Phi for upholding its cardinal principles of manhood, scholarship, perseverance, and uplift. **Page S5052**

Motion To Instruct the Sergeant at Arms: By 76 yeas to 23 nays (Vote No. 119), Senate agreed to the motion to instruct the Sergeant at Arms to request the attendance of absent Senators. **Pages S5061–62**

House Messages:

***Debt Limit Increase Bill—Agreement*:** Senate began consideration of the amendment of the House of Representatives to S. 627, to establish the Commission on Freedom of Information Act Processing Delays, taking action on the following motions and amendments proposed thereto: **Pages S5062–65**

Pending:

Reid motion to concur in the amendment of the House of Representatives to the bill, with Reid Amendment No. 589, to cut spending, maintain existing commitments, and for other purposes. **Pages S5062–63**

Reid Amendment No. 590 (to Amendment No. 589), to change the enactment date. **Page S5063**

Reid motion to refer the message of the House on the bill to the Committee on the Budget, with instructions, Reid Amendment No. 591, to change the enactment date. **Page S5063**

Reid Amendment No. 592 (to the instructions (Amendment No. 591) on the motion to refer), of a perfecting nature. **Page S5063**

Reid Amendment No. 593 (to Amendment No. 592), of a perfecting nature. **Page S5063**

Rejected:

Motion to concur in the amendment of the House of Representatives to the bill. (By 59 yeas to 41 nays (Vote No. 120), Senate tabled the motion.) **Page S5062**

A motion was entered to close further debate on the Reid motion to concur in the House amendment to the bill, with Amendment No. 589, and, in accordance with the provisions of Rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, a vote on cloture will occur on Sunday, July 31, 2011. **Pages S5062–63**

A unanimous-consent-time agreement was reached providing for further consideration of the motion to concur in the House amendment to the bill, with Amendment No. 589, at approximately 1 p.m., on Saturday, July 30, 2011; and that the time from 1:30 p.m. until 7:30 p.m., be equally divided and controlled between the two Leaders, or their designees; with the Majority and the Republicans controlling alternating 30-minute blocks of time with the Majority controlling the first block; provided

further, that the time from 7:30 p.m. until 8 p.m., be equally divided and controlled between the two Leaders, or their designees; with the Republicans controlling the first 15 minutes, and the Majority controlling the final 15 minutes. **Page S5087**

Nominations Received: Senate received the following nominations:

Michael E. Horowitz, of Maryland, to be Inspector General, Department of Justice.

Anneila I. Sargent, of California, to be a Member of the National Science Board, National Science Foundation, for a term expiring May 10, 2016. **Page S5087**

Nominations Withdrawn: Senate received notification of withdrawal of the following nominations:

Goodwin Liu, of California, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Ninth Circuit, which was sent to the Senate on January 5, 2011.

Michael F. Mundaca, of New York, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Treasury, which was sent to the Senate on January 26, 2011.

Barbara K. McQuiston, of California, to be an Assistant Secretary of Defense, which was sent to the Senate on May 9, 2011. **Page S5087**

Messages from the House: **Page S5068**

Measures Referred: **Pages S5068–69**

Executive Communications: **Pages S5069–71**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages S5071–72**

Statements on Introduced Bills/Resolutions: **Pages S5072–78**

Additional Statements: **Pages S5067–68**

Amendments Submitted: **Pages S5078–86**

Notices of Hearings/Meetings: **Pages S5086–87**

Privileges of the Floor: **Page S5087**

Quorum Calls: One quorum call was taken today. (Total—4) **Page S5061**

Record Votes: Two record votes were taken today. (Total—120) **Pages S5061–62, S5062**

Adjournment: Senate convened at 9:30 a.m. and adjourned at 9:02 p.m., until 1 p.m. on Saturday, July 30, 2011. (For Senate's program, see the remarks of the Acting Majority Leader in today's Record on page S5087.)

Committee Meetings

(Committees not listed did not meet)

No committee meetings were held.

House of Representatives

Chamber Action

Public Bills and Resolutions Introduced: 18 public bills, H.R. 2694–2711 were introduced. **Page H5780**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages H5781–82**

Reports Filed: Reports were filed today as follows:

H.R. 2076, to amend title 28, United States Code, to clarify the statutory authority for the longstanding practice of the Department of Justice of providing investigatory assistance on request of State and local authorities with respect to certain serious violent crimes, and for other purposes, with amendments (H. Rept. 112–186);

H. Res. 383, providing for further consideration of the bill (S. 627) to establish the Commission on Freedom of Information Act Processing Delays (H. Rept. 112–187);

H.R. 1002, to restrict any State or local jurisdiction from imposing a new discriminatory tax on cell phone services, providers, or property, with an amendment (H. Rept. 112–188); and

H.R. 1059, to protect the safety of judges by extending the authority of the Judicial Conference to redact sensitive information contained in their financial disclosure reports, and for other purposes (H. Rept. 112–189). **Page H5780**

Speaker: Read a letter from the Speaker wherein he appointed Representative Neugebauer to act as Speaker pro tempore for today. **Page H5737**

Recess: The House recessed at 9:15 a.m. and reconvened at 2 p.m. **Page H5739**

Waiving a requirement of clause 6(a) of rule XIII with respect to consideration of certain resolutions reported from the Committee on Rules: The House agreed to H. Res. 382, waiving a requirement of clause 6(a) of rule XIII with respect to consideration of certain resolutions reported from the Committee on Rules, by a yea-and-nay vote of 236 yeas to 186 nays, Roll No. 672, after the previous

question was ordered by a yea-and-nay vote of 237 yeas to 185 nays, Roll No. 671. **Pages H5739–49**

Suspension—Proceedings Resumed: The House agreed to suspend the rules and pass the following measure which was debated on July 27th:

Providing for the establishment of the Special Envoy to Promote Religious Freedom: H.R. 440, amended, to provide for the establishment of the Special Envoy to Promote Religious Freedom of Religious Minorities in the Near East and South Central Asia, by a ⅔ yea-and-nay vote of 402 yeas to 20 nays, Roll No. 673. **Page H5750**

Suspensions—Proceedings Resumed: The House agreed to suspend the rules and pass the following measures which were debated on July 28th:

Corporal Steven Blaine Riccione Post Office Designation Act: H.R. 2244, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 67 Castle Street in Geneva, New York, as the "Corporal Steven Blaine Riccione Post Office", by a ⅔ yea-and-nay vote of 418 yeas to 1 nay with 1 voting "present", Roll No. 674; **Pages H5750–51**

Sergeant Jason W. Vaughn Post Office Designation Act: H.R. 2213, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 801 West Eastport Street in Iuka, Mississippi, as the "Sergeant Jason W. Vaughn Post Office", by a ⅔ recorded vote of 420 ayes with none voting "no", Roll No. 678; and **Pages H5766–67**

Sergeant Matthew J. Fenton Post Office Designation Act: H.R. 789, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 20 Main Street in Little Ferry, New Jersey, as the "Sergeant Matthew J. Fenton Post Office". **Page H5767**

Faster FOIA Act of 2011: The House passed S. 627, amended, to establish the Commission on Freedom of Information Act Processing Delays, by a recorded vote of 218 ayes to 210 noes, Roll No. 677. Consideration of the measure began yesterday, July 28th. **Pages H5751–66**

Rejected the Hochul motion to recommit the bill to the Committee on Rules with instructions to report the bill back to the House forthwith with an amendment, by a recorded vote of 183 ayes to 244 noes, Roll No. 676. **Pages H5764–65**

Pursuant to the rule, the further amendment printed in H. Rept. 112–187 shall be considered as adopted. **Pages H5739, H5751**

H. Res. 383, the rule providing for further consideration of the bill, was agreed to by a yea-and-nay vote of 239 yeas to 187 nays, Roll No. 675, after the previous question was ordered without objection. **Pages H5751–64**

Meeting Hour: Agreed that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 12 noon tomorrow, July 30th, and further, when the House adjourns on that day, it adjourn to meet at 1 p.m. on Sunday, July 31st. **Page H5779**

Quorum Calls—Votes: Five yea-and-nay votes and three recorded votes developed during the proceedings of today and appear on pages H5748, H5749, H5750, H5750–51, H5761, H5765, H5765–66, H5766–67. There were no quorum calls.

Adjournment: The House met at 9 a.m. and adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Committee Meetings

FASTER FOIA ACT OF 2011 (BUDGET CONTROL ACT OF 2011)

Committee on Rules: Full Committee held a hearing on further consideration of S. 627, the "Faster FOIA Act of 2011" (Budget Control Act of 2011). The Committee granted, by a record vote of 8 to 4, a rule providing for further consideration of S. 627. The rule provides that upon adoption of the resolution the amendment printed in the Rules Committee report accompanying the resolution shall be considered as adopted.

Joint Meetings

No joint committee meetings were held.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR SATURDAY, JULY 30, 2011

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Senate

No meetings/hearings scheduled.

House

No hearings are scheduled.

Next Meeting of the SENATE

1 p.m., Saturday, July 30

Senate Chamber

Program for Saturday: Senate will continue consideration of the motion to concur in the amendment of the House of Representatives to S. 627, Debt Limit Increase, with Reid Amendment No. 589, with the time equally divided until 8 p.m.

Next Meeting of the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

12 p.m., Saturday, July 30

House Chamber

Program for Saturday: To be announced.

Extensions of Remarks, as inserted in this issue

HOUSE

Akin, W. Todd, Mo., E1450
Berkley, Shelley, Nev., E1448
Bishop, Sanford D., Jr., Ga., E1444
Bonner, Jo, Ala., E1440, E1446, E1455
Broun, Paul C., Ga., E1451
Courtney, Joe, Conn., E1445
Cuellar, Henry, Tex., E1455
Davis, Geoff, Ky., E1455
Donnelly, Joe, Ind., E1439
Engel, Eliot L., N.Y., E1439
Gerlach, Jim, Pa., E1439
Graves, Sam, Mo., E1444
Honda, Michael M., Calif., E1443
Jackson Lee, Sheila, Tex., E1442
Johnson, Eddie Bernice, Tex., E1444
Larson, John B., Conn., E1454
Lee, Barbara, Calif., E1448
Lipinski, Daniel, Ill., E1440
McIntyre, Mike, N.C., E1452
Miller, George, Calif., E1440
Miller, Jeff, Fla., E1448
Palazzo, Steven M., Miss., E1445
Paul, Ron, Tex., E1448
Peters, Gary C., Mich., E1447
Poe, Ted, Tex., E1443
Rangel, Charles B., N.Y., E1445
Renacci, James B., Ohio, E1446
Richardson, Laura, Calif., E1447, E1454
Scott, David, Ga., E1439
Scott, Robert C. ''Bobby'', Va., E1444
Shuster, Bill, Pa., E1442
Smith, Adam, Wash., E1454
Stivers, Steve, Ohio, E1445
Waters, Maxine, Calif., E1446
Watt, Melvin L., N.C., E1456
Wolf, Frank R., Va., E1447
Woolsey, Lynn C., Calif., E1443

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