

Mr. Speaker, we know Washington doesn't create jobs. Small businesses and entrepreneurs do. But Congress does have the responsibility to create an environment that fosters job creation and removes barriers that stifle innovation and economic growth.

Tonight, Mr. Speaker, we're going to hear from the President. I'm looking forward to finding common ground so that we can put people before politics and progress, before partisanship so we can get America back to work.

#### WE NEED A BOLD VISION FOR THE ECONOMY

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

Mr. DEFAZIO. We have the economy the tax cuts will give us. Eight years of Bush tax cuts, 2 years of Bush-Obama tax cuts, and now the individual Obama tax cut proposals. We have \$5 trillion borrowed, distributed generally with the Bush tax cuts, principally to the job creators, as the Republicans call them—millionaires and billionaires—and in little bits to working Americans. It's not working. So why would we do more of the same?

Apparently, the President tonight is going to propose again to extend the Social Security tax holiday. Two things wrong with that, maybe three. One, it's not putting anybody back to work. Two, we borrowed \$110 billion this year to put into the Social Security trust fund because we cut the income of Social Security by \$110 billion. And now we're being told perhaps we should double down. Let's give both the employers and the employees a little bit of a Social Security tax holiday.

That's \$20 a week to someone who earns \$50,000 a year. Not bad. They can use it. It's probably about the difference they pay for filling up their car to get to work. But ExxonMobil isn't hiring. Or maybe they use it to put food on the table for the kids or maybe buy junk from China. It's an old economic theory: Put money in the pockets of Americans and the idle plant capacity in America will rev up and hire Americans to make things in America. We don't make things any more because of failed trade policies. Apparently, failed trade policies are going to be part of this jobs proposal.

Three more Bush free trade proposals now adopted by Obama. That would be a disaster if that's a part of this so-called package. It would be a travesty.

Let's forget about the tax cuts. Let's not just have a little dribble or drab of infrastructure investment. People say, Oh, the stimulus failed. What happened? All your infrastructure investment, 40 percent of that stimulus was tax cuts; 7 percent was investment in infrastructure. Yes, it worked, but it was a pathetically small part of the package in a country that has a \$3 trillion infrastructure deficit, with dams that are failing, levees that are failing, highways that are crumbling, bridges

that are falling, transit systems that are based in 19th- and early 20th-century technology; and our competitors are building out a 21st-century infrastructure.

We need a bold vision. We don't need another little dribble or drab in infrastructure. We sure as heck don't need another one of these stupid shovel-ready project things. We need long-term investment. When you do long-term investment, the private companies who build all these projects—these aren't government projects. Taxpayers fund them. The private sector builds them. Many small businesses, they will go out and buy equipment. When they buy equipment, especially if we put Buy America requirements on all these proposals, they'll buy things that will be made in America that will put people back to work in manufacturing.

So this isn't just about construction jobs. It's about manufacturing jobs, it's about engineering jobs, it's about small business jobs. But it needs to be a major, bold, long-term vision on building a 21st-century infrastructure for America to make us more competitive in the world.

Enough with the tax cuts. They don't work. They don't put people back to work. Guess what? If you don't have a job, you don't get a tax cut, do you? Let's do something for the people who need jobs and for the future of the country and for our kids with a grand long-term vision tonight, not more of the same.

#### PURPLE HEART HOMES HELPS WOUNDED VETERANS LIVE WITH DIGNITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) for 5 minutes.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, over the district work period, I had the chance to attend a celebration sponsored by the Statesville Chamber of Commerce to honor the founders of a remarkable organization called Purple Heart Homes, based in Statesville, North Carolina. John Gallina and Dale Beatty, both combat-wounded disabled veterans, founded Purple Heart Homes in 2008 to help other disabled veterans live with dignity.

Beatty and Gallina were severely injured in Iraq in 2004 when their Humvee was blown up by an anti-tank mine. As a result of their injuries, these two friends discovered a new passion—helping other service-disabled veterans of all ages. Their mission is to provide appropriate housing solutions to disabled veterans at little or no cost. They know firsthand the value of returning home after serving America while deployed, and they understand just how much it means for service-disabled veterans to have a usable and accessible home.

Their leadership, hard work, and commitment to honoring those who have sacrificed so much for their Na-

tion has not gone unnoticed. Last month, Time magazine featured them on its front cover as examples of a new generation of emerging leaders. The people of Statesville and North Carolina could not be more proud of these veterans and their exemplary dedication to serving others.

John Gallina and Dale Beatty have overcome great odds to succeed in their mission of serving others. Their stirring example gives me confidence that they have only just begun to accomplish great things. I hope that many others follow in their footsteps and are inspired to serve those in need.

#### MEMO TO THE SUPERCOMMITTEE: CUT WAR SPENDING, NOT THE SAFETY NET

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, today the Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction holds its first organizational meeting; and it does this as it begins its work on reaching the spending cut benchmarks called for in the debt ceiling compromise.

I have a suggestion for the 12 members who have been entrusted with this responsibility. I know exactly the place they should identify for their savings. It's a government program that's been notorious for waste and cost overruns. It's been cited many times over by neutral experts for its excess and inefficiency. It hasn't achieved its stated goals and it is deeply unpopular with the American people.

I'll give you a hint. It's not Medicare or Social Security. It's not food stamps or unemployment benefits or Pell Grants or WIC. It's not any of the programs that comprise the safety net for our Nation. It's not any initiative designed to lift up the American people and giving them a chance to rise above difficult economic times.

No. It's a decade-long effort that has been fiscally irresponsible, eroded our moral authority around the world, and cost our Nation more than 6,000 precious lives.

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That's right, Mr. Speaker, our ongoing wars in Afghanistan and Iraq are the perfect target for the spending cuts our country needs to restore fiscal balance.

I have written a letter to the supercommittee, cosigned by 23 of my colleagues—so far, they're still signing on—strongly urging the committee to take a hard look at the overwhelming crippling costs of these wars. Afghanistan alone is costing the American people at least \$10 billion a month, and to date, Iraq and Afghanistan combined have sucked the Treasury dry to the tune of a staggering \$2.3 trillion—not million, not billion, \$2.3 trillion. Frankly, this would be a rip-off at a fraction of the cost. If these wars were