This is important because things are tough around the house. Things are tough around the kitchen table, and Americans could really use this, particularly now. It will help maintain aggregate demand, and it would be very helpful.

Also, allowing more Americans to refinance their mortgages at today's near 4 percent interest rate, which can put more than $2,000 a year in a family's pocket.

Also, cutting the payroll tax in half for 98 percent of businesses. The President's plan will cut in half taxes paid by businesses on their first $5 million in payroll.

Mr. Speaker, another important element of the American Jobs Act that has to do with this tax issue is a complete payroll tax holiday for added workers or increased wages. The President's plan will completely eliminate payroll taxes for firms that increase payroll by adding new workers or increasing wages. That's a targeted tax cut. That's a tax cut that's going to get people to hire somebody, not just some give money to rich people and hope they hire somebody. This is a targeted tax cut that will actually be of value.

The next one, Mr. Speaker, encouraging businesses to make investments by extending 100 percent business expensing into 2012. This extension would put an additional $85 billion in the hands of businesses next year.

The third thing that I think is important to mention is helping the unemployed with pathways back to work. Some people like to refer to our social safety net. I think it is much more effective to refer to it as our social safety trampoline. That is when you fall down, America, caring, compassionate Nation that we are, provides a way for people to bounce back. And that is what the third element of this American Jobs Act does. Returning heroes, offering tax cuts to encourage businesses to hire unemployed veterans.

Now, I know there are some Republicans who would vote for this provision. There's got to be. Businesses that hire veterans who have been unemployed for 6 months or longer would receive a tax credit up to $5,600, and that credit rises to $9,600 for veterans who have a service-connected disability. Now, I have just got to believe that there are a few Republicans who would give a green vote to a good piece of legislation like that.

In the same vein of helping our unemployed, the most innovative reform to the unemployment insurance program in 40 years, as part of the extension of the unemployment insurance, to prevent 5 million Americans looking for work from losing their benefits, the President's plan includes innovative work-based reforms to prevent layoffs and give States greater flexibility to use unemployment insurance funds to best support job seekers and connect them to work, including in this innovative program things like work sharing, unemployment insurance for workers whose employers choose work sharing over layoffs.

Second, improve reemployment services for long-term unemployed through counseling eligibility assessments.

Three, new bridge to work program. This plan builds on and improves innovative State programs where those displaced take temporary, voluntary, or pursue on-the-job training.

I'm about at the end of my time tonight. This has been the Congressional Progressive Caucus, and we are here with the progressive message, which we like to come to as often as we can. What we're talking about tonight is standing up for the rights of women. More than 50 percent of Americans are female. My daughter is one of them. I just want to argue that for this country to rise to its full measure of greatness, we have to have full and equal rights for everybody, especially women.

Today, there was an attack on women's constitutional rights today. There also have been assaults to programs which women disproportionately rely on like Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid, and also employment sectors that women are employed in such as the public sector. This is too bad, and we need to stand up against it. But also jobs. Instead of dealing with divisive social issues where Americans of honestly held conscience disagree very severely on this issue of pro-choice/pro-life, instead of dealing with these old issues, things that we have been fighting over for years and will probably never be solved, why don't we talk about jobs.

And so we did go into the American Jobs Act tonight where we talked about the key parts of this important bill by President Obama. First, investing in our infrastructure and in our people skills; second, targeted tax breaks designed to put people back to work, not just giveaways for the rich; and, third, help for the unemployed. These are three very important features which I believe will really help America.

All we want is a chance to debate these issues on the House floor. We can bring amendments, debate them, vote some up, vote some down, but it's just wrong to deny the American people a chance to get a good jobs bill. So tonight, I just want to wrap up by saying that it's always a pleasure to come before the House and discuss critical issues facing the American people.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

CURRENT EVENTS

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

Mr. GOHMERT. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I do appreciate the opinions of our friends across the aisle and those who have spoken here tonight, and I know we both have similar goals—get people back to work. But when I hear my colleague across the aisle say Republicans keep proposing plans that have proved failures, the truth is the failures that the Republicans have supported were the things that our Democratic friends were in favor of.

I sure like President George W. Bush, but in January of 2008, he took a page right out of the Democrats' playbook—proposed a $160 billion stimulus, $40 billion of which went as rebates to people that didn't pay any income tax. So you had people getting rebates that didn't put any ''bate'' in. That money really didn't do any good.

And then we come around and end up in late September or early October of 2008, having unfortunately the Treasury Secretary appointed by a Republican, pull a page out of the Democratic playbook and help the folks on Wall Street that contribute and vote 4–1 for Democrats over Republicans. Bailed them out.

□ 2100

Some of us made clear you don't abandon free market principles to try to save the free market. If you have to abandon free market principles to save the free market, it's not worth saving. The trouble is we've gotten away from free market principles and that's why we were in trouble.

We had friends across the aisle that were demanding that loans be made to people that couldn't afford the loans. We had friends across the aisle that were verifying here in this room and in other hearing rooms that, by golly, Fannie Mae, Freddie Mac, they were healthy, there were no problems, when it turned out they were rotting from the inside.

So, apparently, as smart as my dear friends are across the aisle, they have not been taught history very well. The things that have failed are the very things that are being proposed again. The $700 billion wasn't enough. Actually, President Bush's Treasury Secretary, the second worst Treasury Secretary in the history of our country, exceeded only now recently by Secretary Geithner in just how poor a job has been done, but they spent maybe $300 billion, $250 billion of the $700 billion. So the Obama administration got about $400 billion, $450 billion of that $700 billion. President Bush unfortunately listened to ''Chicken Little'' Paulson as he ran around saying that the financial sky was falling. That ended up all going to President Obama and Secretary Geithner for them to squander, which they have, and basically used it as a slush fund, in fact.

Then we're told we have got to build bridges. We have got to do infrastructure. How could anybody disagree with infrastructure? Well, most of us didn't disagree with doing infrastructure as long as it was governmental functions. The trouble is the President had $400 billion, $450 billion from TARP still

left over, and asked for $800 billion on top of that. And then it turned out that $800 billion may have been close to a trillion by the time they got around to having what was available under the bill. Of course, forty-two cents out of every dollar of that was borrowed, much of it from our friends and neighbors across the world in China.

But here again these governmental giveaways, the governmental rebates to people that didn't put any ''bate'' in, the giving more and more money to entities that were not creating jobs, the fiascos like Solyndra. And I understand even after Solyndra, Leader REID down the hall was able to procure another $700 million for a similar company in Nevada. This is insane.

My friends, were just saying in the last hour that Republicans keep proposing plans that have proved failures. The failures of Republicans are when we adopt the Democratic strategies on these things. It's time to get back to the principles on which our government was founded. It's very basic, very simple. You give equal opportunities to people to excel, you stop paying people to fail, and we can get this country going again.

We also had a bill today that was finally going to allow people to exercise their First Amendment rights. There's not supposed to be, under the Constitution, under the Bill of Rights, the First Amendment, the government's forcing people to practice religion that is entirely opposite from the religion they believe. So we passed a bill here in the House that would allow health care providers who believe with all their heart, soul, and mind—most of them, it's a religious conviction—that to conduct an abortion and to take and kill a baby in utero, remove it and kill the baby in utero, out of utero, that it is wrong.

Having had my wife's and my first child come 8 to 10 weeks prematurely and sitting by her isolette for 8 hours—it was supposed to be only 2, but I couldn't leave, and they didn't make me until I had been there for 8 hours—with that little child, her hand clutching to the end of my finger. She was hanging on to life. The doctor pointed out, Look at the monitors. They've stabilized since she's been holding on to you. She's drawing strength. She's drawing life from you. That tiny preemie, my daughter, trying to cling to life, and my friends across the aisle condemning people like me or health care providers who think it's wrong to take that life when they just want to cling to life. Give them a chance.

I was a bit surprised but embarrassed for Minority Leader PELOSI when she said here on Capitol Hill about that bill that would allow people to practice their religious beliefs and not kill babies, the quote from our former Speaker PELOSI, was: ''Under this bill, when Republicans vote for this bill today, they will be voting to say that women can die on the floor and health care providers do not have to intervene.'' Well, there's good news for former Speaker PELOSI. We didn't vote to allow women to die on the floor and health care providers do not have to intervene. That did not happen. Yet the bill passed.

Good news. Apparently, the Speaker did not read the bill. She didn't know that what this allows is a health care provider not to have to kill a baby if it's against their religious beliefs. And also, no women will be allowed to die on the floor. If they do, there will be severe and dire consequences for any health care provider that allows that to happen.

There is nobody, despite the former Speaker's contentions here on Capitol Hill, there is nobody that voted for that bill today that would in their wildest nightmares want a woman to die on the floor without a health care provider intervening. And the bill doesn't do that. So whatever nightmarish bill the Speaker was referring to when she thought she was talking about the bill we passed today, good news for her. She didn't know what she was talking about. It does not allow women to die on the floor. It just allows people who believe with all their heart, mind, and soul, and their religious beliefs, that killing a baby is wrong, that when that baby wants to cling to life, as my little girl was clinging to my finger and her heart rate stabilized and her breathing stabilized, they can live. They don't have to be killed. They don't have to be killed in utero.

It's good news. It's a great thing. I hope that the Senate will pass it and not be dissuaded by those who misread the bill. Maybe they were reading some disaster book or something, because obviously they were not reading the bill that we passed.

There is also a real easy fix to establish cuts in the Federal budget. And it would be so great if our colleagues down the aisle in the Senate, our colleagues across the aisle, the Democrats, would take the fact that this House agreed to cut our own budgets in this legislative session by 5 percent and say, Hey, rest of the Federal Government, look what we have done.

□ 2110

We've not talked about it. We did it, but we haven't really talked about it. And the truth is, by Congress, by the House at least cutting our legislative budgets by 5 percent this year, and as I understand it we're going to cut 6 percent next year, it gives us the moral authority to say to every Federal department in this government, Congress has cut—or at least the House has cut—our own budgets by 5 percent this year, and you're going to, every one of you, cut your budgets by 5 percent next year. We have the moral authority to do it because we've done it. Now, maybe the Senate doesn't want to do that, but it's the morally responsible thing to do.

And then, if it comes through and we do cut our legislative budget here 6 percent in the House, we have the moral authority to say, hey, Federal Government, every department, every agency, we cut our own budgets 5 percent last year, 6 percent next year, so you're going to cut 5 percent next year and 6 percent the year after that. That's an 11 percent cut. Now we're on the right track. And if you don't want to cut some invaluable program, there's good news: cut it off some program that's a waste.

My friend, DANIEL WEBSTER from Florida, has been looking into the different transportation agencies that provide rides to people to get to their place of appointments, whether it's with the VA, whether it's with a doctor, whether it's with the Federal Government, different agencies. Eighty-five different groups provide rides. How could that be? Well, the rules, the way they were set up in 1974 by a Democratic Congress—that also set up the screwy CBO rules that do not allow a good score for things that really do help the country—that same time they were also busy sticking different agencies that do the same thing in different committees so that we have massive duplications of those type things. Well, all we've got to do is start cutting those things out.

And I hope and pray that before I leave Congress, this body and the one down the hall will have the courage to step up and say, you know what, I know I've been on my committee for a number of years and I've got seniority, and I know this committee is critical and this committee is critical, but it's time to reform the committee process. And the only way that we'll ever be able to completely eliminate or come close to eliminating all the massive duplication, replication of the same programs—spending massive amounts of money to do the same thing and yet we could combine those and save trillions of dollars over the next 10 years—we need to have a welfare committee. We take the food stamps out of the ag budget. People hear how big the agriculture budget is and they just can't believe it—there aren't that many farmers. They don't know that between 70 and 80 percent of the ag budget goes for food stamps. Let's put that in a welfare committee.

Robert Rector over at the Heritage Foundation has done fantastic work. He was telling me it takes him 2 years to find all the hidden welfare provided from all the different subcommittees, all the different agency budgets, it takes 2 full years to do that. It's time to change things here. And I realize that with a Democratic-controlled Senate it's not going to happen this session. But I hope and pray that the next session of the Senate that begins in January of 2013 will have people in the House and the Senate, regardless of their party, that will finally reform the government here in Washington, and to use the President's words, fundamentally change the way we do business so

that we don't set ourselves up to provide massive amounts of waste, fraud, and abuse.

Now, it helps to reform government if the people here in Washington who vote on the bills and down Pennsylvania Avenue who sign bills or veto bills actually read them. Wow, what a concept. It would help if the President himself, before he had gone out on the road condemning Congress for not passing his American Jobs Act, had actually had an American Jobs Act written. But after he spoke here on this floor, Mr. Speaker, he went around the country spending millions and millions of dollars—some say it was campaigning. Whatever he was doing, he was condemning Congress for not passing a bill that didn't exist. He did so that weekend, did so on Monday. Monday evening they finally had a bill, and I got it printed out. But it turns out nobody was filing it. And yet that didn't stop the President from running around saying we were refusing to pass a bill, pass his bill, right away, right now. Nobody bothered to file it. In fact, if he had taken 10 minutes out of his schedule running around the country, spending millions of dollars condemning us for not passing his bill, to have picked up the phone and called one of his Democratic friends here in the House and said, hey, I'm running around the country condemning Republicans for not passing my bill, I'm embarrassed that nobody filed the bill. I forgot to ask anybody over there to file the bill so that you could pass it. So how about filing my bill? Didn't bother to do that. Just kept running around the country condemning us for not passing his bill.

By Wednesday, that's when I realized if the President of the United States, who obviously had not read his bill, which I did, the entire bill—clearly, from the things he said about the bill, he hadn't read it at all—I decided, you know what? If he's going to condemn us for not passing the American Jobs Act, there ought to be one, so I filed one. And I was flexible. I said here on the floor I'd be willing to negotiate. And it would create jobs because it deals with an insidious tariff of 35 percent that we put on every American-made company's goods here, which keeps them from being able to compete globally because nobody else in the world slaps that kind of tariff on their own goods produced in their country. We're doing it to ourselves.

And then the insidious part is that the American public has been convinced by people here in Washington, hey, hey, it's a corporate tax, so you don't have to pay it. Of course they pay it. The corporations are nothing but a collection agent. And the way that crony capitalism has been working around this town, the only way you get out of paying corporate taxes or the massive tariffs so you can compete globally is if you've got a friend down at the other end of Pennsylvania Avenue, or in the Senate, perhaps. Because friends of those here in the House are not fairing so well—they're having to pay taxes. But if you are an entity like General Electric and you're close friends with the President, you really enjoy each other's company, top executives and the President, good news: You're probably going to get out of paying any taxes no matter how many billions you make.

So why not level the playing field, which would bring back manufacturing jobs—and I'm surprised the unions are not all for this—it would bring union manufacturing jobs in massive numbers back to this country. And I know there's a lot of environmentalists in the United States who really don't want the manufacturing jobs back. Even though they provide good union jobs, folks that would probably vote Democrat, they don't want them back because they think somehow—and it's really unbelievable that they think this, but they think somehow by driving those manufacturing jobs out of the United States and into countries that pollute 4 to 10 times more, producing the same products, as there was added to the atmosphere here, that somehow they've helped the environment, not realizing that that pollution goes up in the air, and the way the world turns we get an awful lot of that Chinese pollution right here in our own country, even though we don't have the jobs, we don't have the tax revenue from those, and we suffer the consequences of having run those companies out. So we get all of the disadvantages of running them out and none of the advantages.

□ 2120

We hurt our economy and we hurt our ability to prepare for any type of defense that may be necessary to those who want to destroy us, because anybody that knows history knows a country that is looked to as the securer and protector of freedom must be able to provide all of the things that it would need in a battle within its own country. And if it can't do that, it's not going to last very long as the protector of freedom, which means freedom won't last very much longer.

Now, the President talked about his bill so much, and it would be easy to be very cynical since the President went on the road and went for 6 days before there was ever an American Jobs Act filed, which was my bill. It might be easy to become cynical and say, ''It doesn't sound like the President had any intention of ever getting a bill voted on; all he wanted to do was run around the country and condemn Republicans,'' when this was some kind of political game. He had no intention of that bill being pushed, even being filed.

There is a dramatically important piece of evidence that would seem to establish irrefutably that Leader HARRY REID and the President were not serious at all about his bill passing. What would that piece of evidence be?

Well, it would start with article I, section 7 of the United States Constitution, which says all bills for raising revenue shall originate in the House of Representatives. But the Senate may propose or concur with amendments, as on other bills. The critical part was all bills for raising revenue shall originate in the House of Representatives.

Well, it's not hard to find, from the President's bill, that he's raising revenue, he's raising taxes. So, clearly, under the Constitution, no question about it, the President's bill has to originate in the House. No question about it. It raises revenue. Everybody knows that. Leader REID knows that.

So, when I heard that finally the President's bill was passed in the Senate, or not passed but filed in the Senate, then I knew, because I know something about the Constitution, well, that has to be a House bill. The President is popping people with extra tax. It raises revenue. So, obviously, it has to originate in the House.

Now, normally, unless there were games played in this town, that would mean the bill starts here, and we would take up the President's bill, and if it passed, then the Senate would take it up. But over the years, both parties, apparently, have played a political game where, if the Senate wants to start a bill that raises revenue, they will take a House bill that has already passed, strip out of it every word, and substitute for all that language of the House bill the Senate bill. And then, under the gamesmanship up here in Congress, that's been considered to satisfy the requirements of the Constitution because, technically, the bill started in the House. It has a House bill number on it, and so it did start in the House. They just took out every word and then put in the Senate bill.

From a practical standpoint, it originated in the Senate, but from a technical standpoint, since it has a House number on it, then obviously they slide by, under the gamesmanship here, by saying it's a House bill.

In fact, that's exactly what happened with ObamaCare. The House had not passed a bill that the Senate would take up on health care back 2 years ago. So what the Senate did was take a House bill, H.R. 3590, and this is the actual name of the ObamaCare health bill. I've got the first volume of the two volumes that make up the 2,400 or 2,500 pages of the President's health care so-called bill, H.R. 3590, entitled, ''An act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to modify the first-time homebuyers credit in the case of members of the Armed Forces and certain other Federal employees, and for other purposes.'' ObamaCare is H.R. 3590, and it was a bill the House of Representatives passed mainly to help our veterans, to help our armed services, our members who have pledged their lives, their fortunes, their sacred honor to serve in our military—that is mainly who it was for—and give them a tax credit for the first-time purchase of a home.

It just seems so coldhearted to have taken a bill that started out to help

veterans and our armed services members and, beginning with line 1, page 1, strip out every single word of the bill to help our veterans and substitute therein ObamaCare, 2,400, 2,500 pages. But that's what they did because that was the game. Because they knew in the Senate, if they were going to pass a bill that raised revenue, under Article I, section 7 of the Constitution, they had to take a House bill so they could play the game of saying, Well, it did originate in the House, has a House number on it, House title on it. We just stripped all that language out and put our bill in.

That's the only way that the President's so-called jobs bill could originate in the Senate, practically, is to take a House bill, strip out every word, keep the House bill number, keep the House bill title, and put the President's so-called jobs bill in there. That's the only way that bill could ever have a chance of becoming law. And Leader REID knows that. He's a smart man.

And from what I understand, the President at one time was a local instructor in a law school, and surely he had to have read the Constitution and understand that. So he would know, as would Leader REID, that for the President's jobs bill to meet the constitutional requirement of Article I, section 7, then Leader REID would have to strip out a House bill.

So when I heard that Leader REID had filed the President's so-called jobs bill, I directed my staff to find out what House bill number and what House bill title that Leader REID had stripped every word out of and substituted therein the President's so-called jobs bill. And I found the answer. He didn't do that. Leader REID filed the President's bill with no cosponsors.

A little trivia. The American Jobs Act, my bill, I think it's got five cosponsors. The President's so-called jobs bill, zero cosponsors. Mr. REID filed it. Mr. Speaker, it is S. 1549. That's a Senate number, S. 1549. That's a Senate bill.

□ 2130

Leader REID did not bother to do what would be required, even under the gamesmanship of Capitol Hill, to strip out a House bill. And there's only one reason he wouldn't do that. There's only one reason the President wouldn't request that he do that, and that is because they had no intention of that bill—this bill—ever passing. Now I've only got the first few pages because the President's bill is actually 155 pages. But that came before. I got a copy of that before it was ever filed by anybody.

So then I heard that Leader REID actually filed an amendment to the President's so-called jobs bill, and I thought, ah, now he's no longer going to play this ridiculous charade of acting like he wants a bill to pass that he knows could never become law because it originated in the Senate and doesn't have a House bill number. So, okay, he's filed an amendment, the new bill, it has surely got to be some House bill that was stripped of every word, but it turns out that was Senate bill 1660. It's still a Senate number, it is still originating in the Senate, there's not even a charade, facade being shown here, which makes very, very clear Senator REID and President Obama never ever intended for the so-called jobs bill of the President to pass. Never intended for it to pass. They never did.

A smokescreen is all this has been for weeks now, millions and millions and millions of dollars running around the country demanding we pass a bill that neither Leader REID nor the President had any intention of ever having passed because they knew the way the procedure works here when a bill like this that raises revenue originates in the Senate and the Senate were to actually pass it, then the Senate Clerk would send it to the House, it would go to our Clerk, and they would review it, and they would find that it raises revenue, as the President and Leader REID know and acknowledge, and they would do what's called blue slipping it. They put a blue slip on it in essence saying that the House cannot take up the Senate bill because it raises revenue. And that means under article I, section 7, it must originate in the House, and, therefore, it's being sent back to the Senate without any action whatsoever because obviously people at the other end of the hall were playing some kind of game, knowing that a bill to raise revenue that originated in the Senate and did not have a House number, did not have a House title, would never become law. It was all a game. All a game.

Apparently, the goal of this political game played by the President, and Leader REID has as a goal the President winning the game, the political game, and getting reelected and the American people losing because there was no bill that was ever seriously intended to pass by the President or Leader REID. That is tragic, simply tragic.

The American people suffer, people are losing their jobs, and the only reason that the unemployment rate did not rise one more time again, that it stayed at 9.1 percent, that disastrous rate, was because so many employees who had been out on strike came back on to work. If they had not done that, then the unemployment rate would have reflected the truth.

This country is still in big trouble, all while the President travels around making speeches about passing a bill that neither he nor Leader REID ever had any intention of passing and becoming law as the American people suffer.

Now, I heard my friends across the aisle here tonight say they wish, in essence, that the Republicans would bring their jobs bill. Well, there's great news. Apparently, while my friends hadn't noticed, we have passed about a dozen bills out of this body and sent them down to Leader REID that will create jobs across the country, will bring down the price of gasoline, will bring down the price of energy, all kinds of bills we've sent down there, and they're sitting in the Senate.

So for all of those people who have said the President is flat wrong when he says that we have a do-nothing Congress and as he is traveling around this week saying there's a do-nothing Congress, I'm going to defend the President here. For those that say the President is completely wrong when he says it's a do-nothing Congress, well, I'm going to defend the President. And I stand up for him because the President, when he says there's a do-nothing Congress, is one-half right, and he ought to be acknowledged for being one-half right when he says there's a do-nothing Congress because there is a do-nothing Senate.

They're sitting on bills that would create jobs, bring down energy prices and would bring jobs back to America easing the burdens that have sent companies fleeing from this country to South America, to China, to India and to other countries. We bear them no ill will, but we want our jobs back here in America. And how wonderful to have the President's big job czar as a guy who has sent thousands and thousands of jobs from his own company overseas.

Well, he apparently knows what he's doing because since he's been our jobs czar for President Obama, we've had thousands and thousands and thousands and thousands more jobs continue to flee and go across to other countries. He knows what he's doing. He did it with his own company, and now we're continuing to have that happen with other companies.

Well, obviously, since the President, based on the things he said about his so-called jobs bill, has not read the bill, clearly, that's how we know he's not misrepresenting things, he just doesn't know what his bill says. And, in fairness, he could not possibly know what his bill says because he was on the road for 4 or 5 days, the whole time the bill was being written, demanding we pass a bill that hadn't even been written.

I'll just flip through some of the provisions here. We're told, once again, just like we were in January of 2009, that we must pass the President's bill, just like in 2009, because it's going to provide bridges and infrastructure. I'm surprised that in 2½ short years the President was thinking people would have already forgotten that he used that sales pitch to sell a nearly trillion-dollar bill that didn't do anything he said it would. And then I found out today—my friend, MICK MULVANEY, pointed out this morning that when adjusted for inflation to the current level today, every interstate highway in this country had $425 billion spent in total to construct all the interstate highways we have in the country. Yet the President, in January of 2009, talked about creating all these new roads, infrastructure and bridges, and yet there was only a tiny fraction of all that

money that was used at all on such infrastructure, and if he had taken half of that money and used it on infrastructure, we could have had an entirely new interstate highway system to mirror the one that we already have.

It is amazing the kind of money that was squandered with nothing to show for it. That's the embarrassing part. If we had more people employed today than ever before, then even though it was an abandonment of free market principles, I would have to be grateful that there were new jobs and people were employed. You want to help people? Let them get a job that was not a giveaway from some government agency. Let them earn their own keep.

□ 2140

For those of us who believe the Bible—I won't try to shove my religious beliefs on anybody else, but for those of us who do believe the Bible, you can look. Before there was a fall from grace, before such a thing as some people call ''sin'' was ever introduced into the world by improper choices, God gave Adam and Eve—not Adam and Steve, but Adam and Eve—a job.

He said, ''Tend the garden.'' They were in a perfect paradise where there were no thorns, no sweat—a perfect paradise. People had a job. ''Tend the garden.''

A job is a good thing. It builds self-esteem, and it allows people to give of themselves to help others, not to come to Washington and use and abuse the taxing authority to take people's money to give to our favorite charity. It's for individuals to be blessed because they earned money at their own jobs and then helped people.

I believe the Creator knew how much good that did our hearts, minds and souls to earn something and then help ourselves and others who need it.

That's not what you find in the President's so-called ''jobs bill.'' Just when we thought, surely, Washington had learned a big, big lesson about the disaster when the Federal Government starts getting into the business of financing things, we have the President proposing what he calls the American Infrastructure Financing Authority, page 40. It's another massive bureaucracy.

Who would control it?

Oh. Well, it's a financing authority, so maybe it's not run by the government. Fannie and Freddie had government fingerprints all over them, all over some of the worst problems. Maybe the President learned a lesson from the damage done to this country by Fannie and Freddie being improperly managed.

Then you can turn the page to page 41 and see, oh, the board of directors of the American Infrastructure Financing Authority consists of seven voting members appointed by the President. How about that. How about that. I guess the President didn't learn his lesson. He thinks the government is still the way to go about, not only funding housing for 100,000, 200,000, 300,000 or so, but now we'll fund billions of dollars in infrastructure financing. He'll stand good for that.

Ironically, just as in the President's so-called ''stimulus bill'' in January of 2009, where the President promised all this great infrastructure and it turned out it was just a tiny bit of infrastructure compared to the overall amount, we find he has done the same thing in this new so-called ''jobs bill.'' There's a little bit of money for infrastructure, but compared to $450 billion, it is a tiny drop in the bucket. There's a little revenue generated here by auctioning off some broadband spectrum. Oh, I see there are provisions here where the public will relinquish some of its licenses and where other people will relinquish different things.

I always hate to see that word when the government makes people relinquish things, but the language is there.

Then what we get by selling off a little bit of broadband spectrum is found at page 75 of the President's bill, called the Public Safety Broadband Network. If individuals in this country were disappointed that the Federal Communications Commission, the FCC, did not totally control the airwaves the way they wanted them to—maybe they wish there'd been a Fairness Doctrine reinstated or maybe they wanted the Federal Government to just exercise with an iron fist its authority, which I think would be unconstitutional, but to limit speech—well then, people would have to be encouraged by this new entity, the Public Safety Broadband Network, because it will take over the broadband for us.

But not to worry. We'll call it a ''corporation,'' so it won't be government, right? Wrong.

If you look at page 76, even though it says it will be established as a private, nonprofit corporation, it turns out the members of the board will be the Secretary of Commerce, the Secretary of Homeland Security, the Attorney General of the United States, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, and they will go about appointing 11 more individuals to serve as non-Federal members of the board.

Well, happy days, happy days.

More and more government.

It's interesting. There's a little money for a reemployment program. How many reemployment programs are we going to throw money away on to train people for jobs that don't exist? How about allowing the public sector to have that money?—which is not available to borrow when the Federal Government is sucking that money out of use by the private sector. It's not there to be borrowed and used to build up companies, to build up jobs, to create jobs. Oh, no. The Federal Government is taking it to build more government—more training programs for jobs that don't exist.

Then there's a new program here at page 106 that most people have never heard about, and I really doubt that the President knows it's here. It's a new program, entitled Short-Term Compensation Program. It does say that it's initially voluntary, but it also says if an employer reduces the number of hours worked by employees in lieu of layoffs—and I've had people tell me they were doing this, where, for example, they didn't want to lose their valuable employees, but business was terrible, so they all agreed among themselves they would take a reduction in hours/a reduction in pay so that they could save the company, weather the storm, maybe get to January 2013 when the economy would rebound because we'd have new free market principles put in place and things would take off. Then everybody could go back to making an even a better living.

Under this provision, if you're part of the President's new program and if you reduce by at least 10 percent the hours of your employees, then according to subsection 3, those employees would be eligible for unemployment compensation. That means the unemployment tax rate for that employer would go up. I've heard from employers who've said, If you raise my unemployment tax rate, I'm going to have to lay off a whole lot of employees instead of being able to save the company, save their jobs and weather this storm.

It does say on down the page, under subsection 7, that if an employer provides health benefits and retirement benefits under a defined benefit plan, then the State agency is required to certify that such benefits will continue to be provided, which means, for the employers I talked to who are struggling and just trying to hold on, they're not going to be able to hold on. They're going to have to keep providing benefits at the same level. They're trying to weather the storm, which is what companies normally do just to survive. That's what individual mom and pop operations do—they cut their budgets. Not here in Washington.

One of the best things I've heard all year is when Chairman RYAN said the vision he has for our budget includes finally adopting a zero baseline budget. I am so grateful to Chairman RYAN. He sees the same thing I do. We need to have a zero baseline—in other words, no automatic increases. It started in 1974. It's time it quit because a mom and pop operation—a mom operation, a pop operation, any operation, any business. When times are tough, they have to cut. Not here in Washington. Under the rules set up in 1974, there is a formula so that we have automatic increases every year. It's time to stop it.

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If an agency is going to get additional money, they need to prove that they should get it. But as I started off this hour, Mr. Speaker, saying this House has adopted a budget that cut our legislative budgets by 5 percent across the board, it's time we exercise our moral authority and say everybody else in the Federal Government is

going to have to have the same kind of 5 percent cut across the board. And when we do that 6 percent to our budget next year, it's time to demand, after we do it in the House, everybody else in the Federal Government has to do it too.

There's so many other provisions that have nothing to do with creating jobs, and you can look at page 134 and see that the President, who's talked about all these millionaires and billionaires need to pay their fair share, even though we're now approaching 50 percent of the country that will not pay income tax.

If the President believes what he says, Mr. Speaker, it is time to call the bluff and say, all right, then let's have a flat tax, everybody pays the same amount, it doesn't matter if you're an ultra zillionaire, billionaire, if you're one of the poorer workers, everybody is going to have an investment, as the President likes to say in this government, and that way they'll have more interest in what happens. They'll have more interest in seeing we don't waste so much money up here, and we can do that.

This is why I'm sure, also, the President never read the bill that he demands we pass, that I explained earlier, why we know now neither the President nor Leader REID had any intention of this bill passing, so they didn't bother to meet the constitutional requirements.

At page 135, the President's bill defines what he's been calling a billionaire and a millionaire as a taxpayer whose adjusted gross income is above, C, $125,000 in the case of married filing separately; 250,000 in the case of a joint return. But if you're a gay couple living together, then you can be grateful to the President because you can claim $200,000 or $225,000 as your exemption amount.

But even at that rate, I'm from East Texas, and the public schools I went to were awfully good, but they taught me that when a number has six figures in it, it isn't a million and it isn't a billion. So when the President's bill says $125,000 if you're married, that's the exemption you've got before they start slapping you with extra tax, and I haven't heard anybody else but me talk about this, but down in subsection C on page 135, not only does the President not do away with the alternative minimum tax, as the title says there's an additional AMT amount in the President's bill.

Now there's a jobs bill. People you're calling millionaires and billionaires and define it as somebody that makes $125,000, you slap them with extra alternative minimum tax, you take away deductions.

I'm telling you, Mr. Speaker, it is time that we had a flat tax across the board. Everybody would pay their fair share. And the more money you make on a flat tax, the more money you're going to pay in.

I agree with Art Laffer, who was telling me, there is a strong justification for two deductions only, the mortgage interest deduction and charitable contribution deduction. All the others go away. Now that would be a fair tax. Everybody would pay their fair share. And since the President's not aware of how oil companies work, and since they've spent more and more and more money than ever in the Interior Department budget to consider permits to drill for oil or gas, we've gone from 140-something permits that cost a whole lot less to process to now processing double-digit permits, we're losing jobs.

I hear from people in the Gulf affected by the Deepwater Horizon explosion by the President's good friends at British Petroleum, who were all set to endorse the President's cap-and-trade bill before the blowout, and then they had to postpone that. But when you eliminate deductions that only keep independent oil companies alive, then it affects the majors in only one way, and that is you drive out all the independent producers, the majors will be able to charge more than ever, they'll make more profit than ever.

Mr. Speaker, how much time do I have remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas has 3 minutes remaining.

Mr. GOHMERT. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

In the few minutes I have left, with so many wanting to destroy our way of life, with so many out of work, such a troubled time here, I want to finish my time on the floor tonight by reading the words of a man named Abraham Lincoln. In 1851 he wrote to his stepbrother encouraging him about the last illness of their father.

Lincoln said: ''I sincerely hope father may recover his health; but at all events tell him to remember to call upon and confide in our great and good and merciful Maker, who will not turn away from him in any extremity. He notes the fall of a sparrow and numbers the hairs of our head, and He will not forget the dying man who puts his trust in Him.''

In 1858, Abraham Lincoln said: ''Our reliance is in the love of liberty which God has planted in us. Our defense is in the spirit which prized liberty as the heritage of all men, in all lands everywhere. Destroy this spirit and you have planted the seeds of despotism at your own doors. Familiarize yourselves with the chains of bondage and you prepare your own limbs to wear them. Accustomed to trample on the rights of others, you have lost the genius of your own independence and become the fit subjects of the first cunning tyrant who rises among you.''

And then finally this from his speech in 1861, as he left Springfield, Illinois, to head for Washington, and I close with this, Mr. Speaker:

''I now leave, not knowing when or whether ever I may return, with a task before me greater than that which rested upon Washington. Without the assistance of that Divine Being who ever attended him, I cannot succeed. With that assistance I cannot fail. Trusting in Him who can go with me, and remain with you, and be everywhere for good, let us confidently hope that all will yet be well.''

It is with that faith in that same Divine Being that I have hope for the future, and with that, Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported and found truly enrolled bills of the House of the following titles, which were thereupon signed by the Speaker:

H.R. 2944. An act to provide for the continued performance of the functions of the United States Parole Commission, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3078. An act to implement the United States-Columbia Trade Promotion Agreement.

H.R. 3079. An act to implement the United States-Panama Trade Promotion Agreement.

H.R. 3080. An act to implement the United States-Korea Free Trade Agreement.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 9 o'clock and 59 minutes p.m.), the House adjourned until tomorrow, Friday, October 14, 2011, at 9 a.m.

EXPENDITURE REPORTS CONCERNING OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL

Reports concerning the foreign currencies and U.S. dollars utilized for Official Foreign Travel during the third quarter of 2011 pursuant to Public Law 95–384 are as follows: