

and yet have a higher rate of their income that they have paid taxes on.

What does this unfairness mean? Well, one thing I can tell you is that you're not going to have too much noise from the spiritual community because somehow they're silent as we deal with the question of budget deficits and budget cuts. They haven't responded to the fact that many of these cuts have to deal with income after retirement, with Social Security. Others deal with the ability to pay for health care. Others just deal with the plight of not being able to put food on the table, to get health care. In other words, it's all biblical as to what is wrong about the disparities in income. But there are other things that we don't talk about. You can rest assured that this includes some of the benefits that the 1 percent have.

Why is it that we know or that we can suspect that in this war where we lost so many lives, where so many people have been wounded, that our brave men and women coming home will subject themselves to a lack of funds to deal with their physical and mental problems, and yet we somehow know that that 1 percent was not involved in defending our great Nation? Oh, we take it for granted that those people who can't get jobs would volunteer, but we can almost know without any investigation that the wealthiest of Americans never found themselves protecting our flag.

What else can we tell? Well, we can tell there's a limited amount of money that billionaires can spend. And we don't expect them to be at the local supermarket or buying a pair of socks or going to the drugstore looking for prescriptions. No, they hold on to their money. They invest their money. They don't even lend their money.

But having said that, one thing is clear, that if we have the other 99 percent of the people that are not wealthy, and if it was possible for them to get a fairer shake and have more expendable income, you wouldn't have to put out ads for them to buy, that they have the needs and they would be purchasing. And small businesses depend on these people—not the barons, not the tycoons, but they depend on the people in the neighborhood. That's why the stores are located there. So it's not a question of having consumer confidence. It's a question of consumers not having the money to buy what they need.

But I really think the worst thing of all when we just overlook and don't pay attention to that is the American Dream that is being shattered, because we do know that poverty means you're not going to have good health; you're not going to get the kind of education to get out of poverty. Poverty means that you lose the hope and the dreams of this great Nation. And more than poverty and wealth, what really is the engine that makes our Nation so great is people from all over the world believe you can make it in the United States of America.

But when you are now going through decades of poverty, kids not able to go to college, those that graduate not able to find jobs, our young people and older alike running to the streets and protesting, explosion of this type occurring all over the great United States, then the hopes and dreams that are the engine that makes our country so great are limited in their ability to bring the scientists and the doctors and the people we need for this country.

One percent of our wage earners, 42 percent of the Nation's wealth, there is something wrong with that formula.

MOVING THE AMERICAN DREAM FORWARD

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

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, you probably get the same questions I get when I go back home. Those questions are from folks who came, they sat here in the gallery and they looked down on the House floor, and they thought: Golly, where is everybody? Where's everybody? I thought it was going to be full of 435 Members of Congress. But, of course, as you know, Mr. Speaker, in today's modern technology world, everybody's back in their office watching things on television. But I confess that sometimes during this morning-hour, I turn the volume down a little bit. I turn it down a little bit because sometimes we get into those divisive issues down here on the House floor. It gets my blood pressure up so much I think my head is going to explode first thing in the morning. I sometimes turn the volume down.

But today I wanted to come down here and find those things that bring us together as opposed to divide us, because I really do believe that as we face the kind of economic challenges that we're facing in America today, there is more that unites this body than divides it. There's more that we can do together than we must fight about in order to move the American Dream forward.

I have in my pocket a card. It's titled, "The House Republican Jobs Plan," but I'd tell you it's an American jobs plan. I look down the items that we have brought forward in this Republican House, America's House, the things that they've been able to pass in the United States Senate, those things that have gone to the President's desk, and we are making progress, Mr. Speaker, on those things that unite us.

Of course, we started the year off repealing the 1099 provision from the President's health care bill, that onerous provision that required new paperwork mandates on all of our small businesses, completely unworkable. We came together, the House and Senate, and the President repealed that.

Last week, we came and we passed three new free trade agreements—three new free trade agreements—for this

Nation. Mr. Speaker, as you know, with every nation that America has a free trade agreement, we have a manufacturing surplus. Hear that, Mr. Speaker. With every nation with which we have a free trade agreement, we have a manufacturing trade surplus. We ship more American-made goods to those countries than we import. We have a trade deficit as a Nation, but a manufactured goods surplus with the nations with which we signed free trade agreements. Free trade agreements, good for America, good for jobs, good for trade, and we were able to move those across the President's desk with his signature last week—2 weeks ago now.

And this week, we're going to bring two more bills to the floor, things that bring us together. You heard my colleague from Illinois talk about, earlier this morning, the 3 percent withholding, a bill that we passed to say we think there are lots of tax cheats going on out there among folks who contract with the government, so we're going to just withhold those taxes up front and make you get them back later on. Well, it turns out 3 percent withholding, our small businesses owners didn't even have a 3 percent margin.

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If we had held all that money, they couldn't even pay the bills. They'd actually have to operate at a loss for the year and ask the government in April for their refund.

The President's onboard with that repeal. I believe the House is going to be onboard with that repeal. The Senate is going to be onboard with that repeal. We're going to move that across the floor this week as well.

Things that are bringing us together, Mr. Speaker, are common ground that we can cover to make it easier to create jobs in this country. Because I agree with my colleague, Mr. RANGEL, the American Dream is that you can come here and do better tomorrow than you did today, that you can provide your kids with more opportunity than what you had. That is the American Dream.

I don't worry that folks want to come to America. I worry about the one day that that dream has disappeared and folks don't want to come to America anymore. They'd rather take their big brain and their hard work ethic to China or to India or Brazil or Argentina. We must preserve America as the magnet of success, the magnet that attracts those that want to improve their lives and believe those opportunities exist here.

Mr. Speaker, there's a commonality in all of those bills that we've passed and sent to the President's desk this year, and it's that these were things the government did to try to encourage compliance, to try to regulate, to try to require that small businesses operate differently, and what we found out is they didn't work. The 1099 provision, free trade, those tariffs and duties that

prevented that free trade, this 3 percent holding provision, what is the common ground, Mr. Speaker? Congress is doing too much in regulating. America is doing too much in regulating this country.

I ran on that premise, Mr. Speaker. The challenge is we are not doing too little. The problem is that we are doing too much and burdening those small businesses.

The former soviet bloc countries, Mr. Speaker, have learned from that example. They have flat tax rates, no exemptions, no exceptions, and their tax collections went up.

Mr. Speaker, folks can't pay taxes if they don't have a job. You can't pay income taxes if you don't have a job. And you can't have a job if you don't have opportunity in your society.

The Fair Tax, Mr. Speaker, H.R. 25, goes right to the heart of these jobs issues. Repealing those burdensome taxes, repealing those regulations, and making sure everybody gets a fair shake, because that is what America is all about.

REPEALING THE 3 PERCENT WITHHOLDING TAX

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

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, there are 14 million Americans out of work. They need jobs. This economy needs jobs. Unfortunately, jobs have not been a focus for the House Republican leadership thus far. While private sector job growth has dwindled, House Republicans have repeatedly placed partisanship above policy. It's long past time we vote on a jobs bill.

The President's American Jobs Act contains a number of important jobs initiatives which have traditionally enjoyed bipartisan support: tax cuts for businesses, tax cuts for workers, tax cuts to employ veterans, and investments in critically needed infrastructure in this country. Unfortunately, the Senate Republicans voted to kill this job creator and the House Republican leadership hasn't even brought it up for debate.

Today, however, we have a small opportunity to help small businesses and provide them with greater predictability by repealing the burdensome 3 percent withholding requirement on government contractors, vendors, farmers, and Medicare providers. The President has called for its repeal, and this is a bipartisan bill supported by many of us on both sides of the aisle.

The 3 percent withholding regulation became law under President Bush in 2005 in a Republican Congress. The original intent may have been to ensure tax compliance among a very small number of bad actors, yet the sledgehammer approach that was adopted is creating far more challenges than the problems we're trying to solve. Since then, a number of bipar-

tisan efforts have delayed its implementation, but temporary measures, at best, leave businesses uncertain and wary about future investment.

My district here in the National Capital region is probably home to more Federal contractors than any other in Congress, and I routinely hear from them about this issue everywhere I go. They report that the 3 percent withholding will unduly restrict their cash flows, increase project bond costs, and imperil their ability to expand and create jobs.

In addition, this burdensome regulation won't just harm the private sector. It actually hurts State and local governments that contract with private companies subject to the withholding requirement. I know from my experience as chairman of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors that this regulation would create an accounting nightmare for our local and State partners. An estimated 20 percent of counties throughout the country have more than \$100 million in annual expenditures that would be subject to this withholding. As county chairman of such a jurisdiction, I worked diligently with an open RFP process to ensure the lowest cost and value for our taxpayers.

This will be an administrative nightmare for State and local governments, which would be forced to undergo the collection and forwarding of the unnecessary withholding to the IRS. The cost to the Department of Defense to be compliant with this regulation is they would have to withhold more than \$17 billion from private companies every year.

Furthermore, many businesses subject to the requirement would either have to increase their business or stop bidding on projects with local governments. Either way, whether competition is limited or prices are increased, counties would be forced to pay higher costs to vendors, further burdening local taxpayers at a time they can't afford it. We need to partner with the private sector to spur economic growth and recovery from this recession. This regulation would serve only as a roadblock to that effort.

The Government Withholding Relief Coalition represents more than 140 trade associations, State and local governments, and stated that the total cost of the 3 percent regulation would be \$75 billion over the next 5 years. Repealing it today will provide businesses with greater predictability and remove undue government intrusion into their operations. With greater predictability, America's businesses will be better able to invest in job creation. We can provide that predictability today.

I urge my colleagues to vote to support small businesses and vote for H.R. 674.

HONORING THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE MOTHER BACHMANN MATERNITY CENTER

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

Mr. FITZPATRICK. There's much debate on the floor of this House about the plight of the uninsured. We need more discussion about health care solutions, and we need more praise for those health care professionals in our communities who do the hard work of providing health care for the poor and the uninsured without government mandate and without government involvement.

I rise today to honor the 20th anniversary of the Mother Bachmann Maternity Center, part of St. Mary Medical Center in Langhorne, Bucks County.

For over two decades, the Mother Bachmann Center has been providing women of Bucks County with the health care they need, regardless of their ability to pay. Certified nurse midwives provide obstetrical care to women who are uninsured and are underinsured. Women who would otherwise go without quality medical care during their pregnancy have access to a wide range of services, including nutrition education, financial counseling, and prenatal and delivery care.

The Mother Bachmann Center is also able to partner with Catholic Social Services in order to identify patients at risk for postpartum depression and to offer them social support and important counseling services.

This Center aims to provide a continuum of care to new mothers and their families who are in need. St. Mary and its partners offer emergency housing in 10 local apartments, where families receive financial counseling, parenting skills instruction, and computer education to help them in their search for employment. The Mother Bachmann Center also offers confidential domestic violence evaluations and resource referrals in partnership with a local nonprofit agency that helps women and helps families in crisis.

This Center is just one part of a larger group of community programs, including the Children's Health Center and the Family Resource Center, that serve expecting and new mothers of Bucks County through St. Mary Medical Center.

The Mother Bachmann Center is a prime example of charitable organizations and community groups coming together to address an important issue with effective local solutions. St. Mary Medical Center, with this center, has provided the community of Bucks County with an alternative to handouts from the State, local, or Federal Government. These types of programs not only provide quality health care services, but they also empower women to take charge of their pregnancies and navigate their first trials as a new mother.