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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. WEST).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
November 15, 2011.

I hereby appoint the Honorable ALLEN B. WEST to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 5, 2011, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes each, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

A NATIONAL REDISTRICTING COMMISSION

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Americans are understandably frustrated by the political process. Attention has appropriately been directed to the perversion of Senate rules that slow the Senate's legislative process to a crawl with very real consequences for the ability of the Federal Government to function.

Concern has also been expressed about the House of Representatives. The health care debate revealed the deepest of divisions and some of the most inflammatory language and action in history. The budget battles of the 112th Congress, especially the artificial crisis surrounding meeting our debt ceiling obligations, extend and amplify that trend.

Experts across the political spectrum agree that part of this divisiveness arises from the very nature of congressional districts. Both parties have developed into an art form the ability to manipulate redistricting: packing in partisans of a single party, punishing opponents and protecting incumbents. Just look at the maps published in ''Roll Call'' this week, the ''Top 5 Ugliest Districts: Partisan Gerrymandering 101.'' Sadly, it's practiced by both political parties. We should all be concerned when politicians have more influence picking their voters than voters have picking their politicians.

Now, some progress has been made to insulate the redistricting process by creating a few independent commissions and some guidelines, but the problems persist. Look at what has happened in Florida to try and circumvent those reforms and, more recently, the actions of Arizona Governor Brewer firing the independent head of the supposedly independent commission. The process remains woefully inadequate, highly politicized and subject to what normal people would regard as political abuse. For many politicians, the temptation to place partisan objectives above the public interest is just too tempting. In the last decade, we saw the culmination of this trend in 2003 when Texas conducted a hyper-partisan, mid-decade, second reapportionment process.

Americans deserve better.

Congressional representation should not be a political blood sport that protects incumbents, disenfranchises legitimate interests and allows people to achieve with surgical reapportionment what they couldn't do honestly at the ballot box. As we approach the 50th anniversary of the landmark Baker vs. Carr Supreme Court case that required one person/one vote, it's time to revisit that process.

I would propose that we would establish a national commission, composed of ex-Presidents, retired Federal justices, previous congressional leaders, housed in an independent, professional agency, not unlike what Iowa has done successfully for decades. These distinguished and independent experts would establish uniform criteria and congressional district lines for each State to respect the communities of interest—the ethnic, cultural and historic boundaries—rather than just partisan affiliation. Indeed, we may even consider competitiveness to be a positive outcome. It would then be approved by Congress with an up-or-down vote like we do with base closings. We may even fix the outrage that denies American citizens of the District of Columbia, our Nation's capital, voting representation. Congress should enact these proposals now while the abuse of the process is clear in everyone's minds—well before the next Census in 2020.

The ebb and flow of our history has shown that highly political gerrymandering can backfire, that political tides can change. Nobody knows which party is going to be in charge 10 years from now. Having a system that guarantees fairness will guard against the destructive and highly partisan maneuvering that we see now.

Americans deserve better.

When citizens are treated fairly and all politicians play by the same rules, government works better. Meaningful political reform is seldom easy. It takes time to educate the public and policymakers and to refine the concepts. I am hopeful there will be careful consideration of this proposal as a way to make the House of Representatives fair, more representative and

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more effective for this century. Given the challenges we face, America deserves no less.

THE KEYSTONE XL PIPELINE—PAGE II

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the folks I represent down in southeast Texas are concerned about many things; but two things they are concerned about probably the most are jobs and energy, because, you see, in southeast Texas, that's still the energy capital of the United States. I probably represent more refineries than any Member of Congress.

There is an answer to jobs and energy, and it's called the Trans-Canada pipeline, commonly called the Keystone XL pipeline.

The plan is for our allies in Canada to ship crude oil from Alberta, Canada, through a pipeline all the way from Alberta, Canada, down to Port Arthur, Texas. Most Americans have never heard of Port Arthur, Texas, but it sits on the gulf coast, really close to the Louisiana-Texas border. It is part of that energy development going all the way back to Spindletop days in 1901—the energy capital of the world. The plan has been, for several years, to ship that crude oil down to American refineries and have them refine.

That decision, or that request to get a permit, started about 3 years ago, and no decision has been reached yet on whether to build it or not to build it. The latest development is that the administration has decided: Still, we'll not make a decision until 2013, after the elections.

That's unfortunate because these are times when we need American jobs, and this pipeline would create American jobs in America—thousands of American jobs—and then there is related industry all up and down the area where the pipeline will be built to Port Arthur, Texas. Then it will give us crude oil, energy that we can use from a stable ally. Instead of having to ship oil in from all over the world—from the Middle East primarily—we will have a stable ally where we can bring crude oil into the United States.

About how much oil are we talking about?

Well, it's about 700,000 barrels a day. That's just a number—most people can't relate to that. I really can't—but that's about as much crude oil as we buy from Venezuela and bring into the United States. When the pipeline is fully completed, it will be 1,200,000 barrels a day. Now, that's a real number. How much is that? That's about as much oil as we bring in from Saudi Arabia; yet we could bring that in from Canada to our refineries in southeast Texas.

Pipelines are the safest way to move crude oil—the safest way, Mr. Speaker. It's safer than rail; it's certainly safer than trucks; it's safer than bringing it in on ships from overseas; and it's safer than barges, because pipelines have a history of being the most environmentally safe, as they should be safe. In fact, the new pipelines that are developed are taking newer technology. They put a machine in the pipeline—it's called a pig machine—which goes through the pipeline with the crude oil and looks for dense or even small leaks which would automatically shut the pipeline down. Nobody wants a leak in a pipeline—the people who build it or the people who live in that area—but the administration has decided, primarily the State Department has decided, not to make a decision until 2013.

□ 1010

The Prime Minister of Canada is very disappointed that the United States will not be a partner in this crude oil development. But there is a country that will take that Canadian crude oil, and it's China. So we may not see the pipeline built from Alberta to Port Arthur, Texas; but we may see that pipeline built from Alberta to their west coast where they could pipe that crude oil off to their west coast and sell it and put it on tankers going to our buddies, the Chinese, who are eager to take that crude oil.

Recently, however, there was a development that the pipeline folks, the TransCanada people who want to build a pipeline, have started to work with the legislature in Nebraska. Nebraska is primarily the holdup where the environmentalists have gone and said they can't build a pipeline here for a bunch of reasons. The new plan is to build that pipeline to the east, the northeast of Nebraska. Hopefully they will work out something. Unfortunately, the State Department said last night or this morning, Well, nothing has changed. So it seems like delay, delay, delay is still the answer.

We need to get crude oil to our refineries someway. What is the answer? What is the answer for those who say that they don't want a pipeline? There is no answer. And until we get to that green energy that we all want to get to eventually, we have to get that crude oil and have it refined not only into gasoline and jet fuel but into the byproducts, plastics that we all use. And the answer, Mr. Speaker, I think is, we need to pick a horse and ride it, sign up, and build that pipeline immediately.

And that's just the way it is.

INCOME INEQUALITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. CICILLINE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, last month the Congressional Budget Office released a report that examined household income distribution between 1979 and 2007. The most disturbing figure to me in this report is that the top 1 percent of income earners have seen their average real after-tax household income grow by 275 percent. Middle-income Americans saw an increase of 40 percent over the same period of time.

This report illuminates a sad fact: Income inequality in our country is growing at a staggering pace. The report is pointing out what many of my constituents tell me as I travel around my district from Cumberland to Pawtucket to Newport, from community dinners and talking to business owners: This economy is not working for the majority of middle class families. In fact, the hardworking middle class of our country is being hollowed out, a middle class made up of people that are just trying to provide a good life for themselves and their families. My real fear is that if we let that happen, we'll never get it back.

Those here in Washington need to remember that our job is to help people and to strengthen the middle class of this country. The way back to prosperity is not to ignore the problem; it's through investing in workforce retraining, infrastructure, housing, and education for tomorrow. We can't wait any longer. Now is the time to act. We need to work together in a bipartisan way to get our economy and our country moving again.

I have introduced legislation, the Make It in America Block Grant, designed to help small to medium-sized manufacturers retool, retrofit their facilities, and train employees so they can sustain their current workforce, create jobs, and better compete in the 21st century economy. We need to develop new efficient and effective ways to fund much needed investments in our Nation's crumbling infrastructure, including legislation to create a national infrastructure bank which will attract private investment in vital infrastructure projects.

American families will not feel or share an economic recovery until we stabilize our distressed housing market. We not only need to mitigate our foreclosure crisis but undertake bold actions to prevent the next wave of foreclosures from occurring. Congress needs to pass critical housing legislation, like the Preserving Homes and Communities Act, introduced by Senator JACK REED and Representative ELIJAH CUMMINGS, which would improve home loan modification programs, including creating an appeals process for homeowners denied a loan modification, limit foreclosure-related fees, and respond to robosigning misconduct by forcing mortgage servicers to prove they actually have the legal right to foreclose on a property.

I believe that each and every American must be guaranteed access to an affordable higher education, including vocational education, regardless of their economic status. We need to protect the funding of Pell Grants, named for my home State Senator, the late Claiborne Pell, which are one of our

Nation's most significant college financial aid programs. We must also guarantee that our education system is preparing young people for career readiness, which I have worked on to ensure that we're offering more training options to young adults, moving them along on career pathways, and strengthening public-private partnerships so that business and government are working together to build and improve our workforce.

I recommend to my colleagues that they all read this report, if they haven't already. I also ask that they join me in renewing our commitment to keep fighting for middle class families as we work to help our country every day here in the Congress of the United States. It's time to get America back to work and to strengthen and support the hardworking middle class of this country, the hardworking middle class that's built this country.

AFGHANISTAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) for 5 minutes.

Mr. JONES. It's a sad day in America when a major general in the United States Army cannot give his honest opinion about our war in Afghanistan without losing his job.

Last week Major General Peter Fuller gave an interview in which he commented on the Afghan Government and the President of Afghanistan, Mr. Karzai. And I want to quote the general, Mr. Speaker. These are his words: ''erratic and isolated from reality,'' that is the leader of Afghanistan. He continued by saying: ''Why don't you just poke me in the eye with a needle! You've got to be kidding me. I'm sorry, we just gave you $11.6 billion, and now you're telling me, 'I don't really care'.''

That's what our young men and women are doing; they are dying and losing their legs for this erratic leader of Afghanistan.

Let me further state, in a December 8, 2010, Washington Post article, while meeting with General Petraeus and former Ambassador Eikenberry, President Karzai said he has three ''main enemies'': the Taliban, the United States, and the international community. ''If I had to choose sides today, I'd choose the Taliban.'' Yes, that's the erratic leader our young men and women are dying for.

Just last month during a television interview, President Karzai stated, ''If ever there's a war between Pakistan and America, Afghanistan will side with Pakistan.''

These are not the statements of a leader for whom United States servicemembers should give life and limb.

On May 12 of this year, Lieutenant Colonel Benjamin Palmer and Sergeant Kevin Balduf, both from my district, Camp Lejeune and Cherry Point, were in Afghanistan, with the sole purpose to train Afghan officers, when one of the trainees opened fire and shot and killed Lieutenant Colonel Palmer and Sergeant Balduf as they sat down for lunch. They both were killed by an Afghan trainee. And, Mr. Speaker, these two little girls on this poster are the daughters of Sergeant Balduf, Eden and Stephanie. They're standing at their father's service at Arlington.

The tragedy for these little girls is not just the fact that their daddy gave his life for this country, trying to help the Afghans learn to be policemen; but the day before he was killed, Sergeant Balduf emailed his wife, Amy, and he said, ''I don't trust them. I don't trust them for anything, not for anything at all.'' The next day, he and Colonel Palmer were shot dead by the people that we're spending $10 billion a month on in Afghanistan. And we're telling the American people, We've got to cut programs for your children and our senior citizens.

I'm asking that President Obama and Congress do everything to defend the truth and encourage military leaders to be honest with the American people as to what is happening in Afghanistan, and I will submit a letter that I wrote to President Obama regarding General Fuller.

Mr. Speaker, as we move forward with this debt supercommittee that's going to be making recommendations, I hope that my colleagues in the Republican Party will join those of us, the few of us in the Republican Party, as well as some of the Democrats, and let's bring our troops home before 2014. Yes, when you read in the paper we're bringing our troops home, it's 2014. How many more little girls and little boys have to go to their father's or mother's funeral? Why doesn't America wake up and demand that Congress bring our troops home before 2014?

With that, Mr. Speaker, I will close, as I always do, from the bottom of my heart to ask God, please bless our men and women in uniform. I ask God to please bless the families of our men and women in uniform. I ask God, in His loving arms, to hold the families who have given a child dying for freedom in Afghanistan and Iraq. And I ask God to bless the House and the Senate, that we will do what is right in the eyes of God and God's people.

Mr. Speaker, last night on ABC, I was so touched to see GABRIELLE GIFFORDS, one of our colleagues, making such a strong effort to come back to the Congress. I wish her the very best in my heart, and I ask God to bless her and her husband.

Dear God, I ask You, please give wisdom, strength, and courage to the President of the United States, where he will do what is right in the eyes of God. And God, please continue to bless America.

NOVEMBER 7, 2011.

President BARACK OBAMA,
The White House,
Washington, DC.

DEAR PRESIDENT OBAMA: It was with great sadness that I learned that a senior military officer was relieved of his position for telling the truth. Major General Peter Fuller should receive praise from the American people, not the scorn of military leadership. His comments about Afghan leadership being ''erratic'' and ungrateful for the United States' financial assistance and military training are correct.

In a December 8, 2010 Washington Post article, while meeting with General Petraeus and former Ambassador Eikenberry, President Karzai said he has three ''main enemies''—the Taliban, the United States and the international community. ''If I had to choose sides today, I'd choose the Taliban.'' Just last month, during a television interview, President Karzai stated ''. . . if ever there is a war between Pakistan and America, Afghanistan will side with Pakistan.'' These are not the statements of a leader for whom U.S. service members should give life and limb.

On May 12 of this year, Lieutenant Colonel Benjamin Palmer and Sergeant Kevin Balduf, both from my district, were in Afghanistan with the sole purpose to train Afghan officers when one of the trainees opened fire and shot and killed Lt. Col. Palmer and Sgt. Balduf as they sat down for lunch. In an email to his wife shortly before he died, Sgt. Balduf said ''I don't trust them; I don't trust them for anything, not for anything at all.'' These two families quickly learned why.

Mr. President, the day after you visited the wounded at Walter Reed at Bethesda, I went and visited severely wounded Marines from my district, which includes Camp Lejeune. One Marine looked me in the eye and asked why we were still in Afghanistan. I had to tell this Marine and his mother that I did not know, and that I believed it was time to declare victory and bring our troops home before 2014. As of October, 1,812 U.S. service members have died in Afghanistan. How many more families will give a loved one for a corrupt leader?

Maj. Gen. Fuller spoke the truth and does not deserve this fate. As Commander in Chief, I hope you will support and demand the truth for the American people. If our military leaders cannot tell the truth, then America is in deep trouble. Mr. President, you can right a wrong by reinstating Maj. Gen. Fuller to his previous position.

Sincerely,

WALTER B. JONES,
Member of Congress.

□ 1020

DO-NOTHING OPTION

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

Mr. DEFAZIO. Eight days until the so-called supercommittee is to report. They're limping toward failure; although perhaps now they've found the way Washington always loves to do things—let's kick the can down the road. Let's pretend we did it. Let's say we'll adopt some future tax measures in the next 12 months that will get us to their rather modest goal of $1.2 trillion of deficit reduction over 10 years. I tell you what, the do-nothing option is starting to look a lot better. Now, that's something that Congress is really good at doing—nothing.

So what happens if we do nothing? Well, first you get the sequestration. There's much gnashing of teeth about that. But Congress will have discretion

within accounts, within the Defense Department and elsewhere to find those cuts, which would be relatively modest over a 10-year period. But then the better thing with the do-nothing option is if Congress really, really can do nothing and continues to do nothing for the rest of this session, then all the Bush tax cuts go away and that means $4 trillion of additional revenues with a little bit of shared sacrifice. It hits the people at the top mostly, takes them back to the Clinton-era rates of taxes. That's without closing tax loops and going through all that. Just let the Bush tax cuts expire; that would take care of 40 percent of the deficit problem over the next 10 years. Add in the sequestration from the failure of the committee another 1.2, plus the 1.3 we passed last summer, suddenly we're up to 67–70 percent of the projected deficit. That's pretty much what we need to do around here. And you can do it in an honest way, which is with revenues and spending reductions. That's how we balanced the budget in the 1990s. You can't do it all with just stopping cuts. Stop pretending that that'll work. It won't work.

Now, there'll be much gnashing of teeth, particularly on Wall Street, about oh, Congress can't get things done, and we're worried. And the crooks are the unindicted co-conspirators at the ratings agencies. The same people who rated designed-to-fail mortgage collateralized debt obligations as AAA-plus investments are now concerned about the government of the United States and how it conducts itself in its honesty and dealing with these difficult problems. Well, you know, maybe they should take a look at the do-nothing option, too. If they're really concerned about debt reduction, the do-nothing option is the best.

And then finally this week, Congress will have a chance to vote on a balanced budget amendment, the same one that passed in 1995. Let's think of what the world would look like today if the one that passed the House in 1995 had become the law of the land. We wouldn't have had 10 years of Bush tax cuts at a cost of $5 trillion of new debt and no jobs. We wouldn't have had the wars fought on the credit card. We would have had to vote every year because we didn't declare war, and under this balanced budget amendment if you don't declare war and you have an overseas emergency, you have to vote every year on the spending. Maybe we wouldn't have spent those many hundreds of billions and trillions of dollars.

And, finally, the prescription drug benefit designed to subsidize the pharmaceutical industry with borrowed money and that gives seniors a donut hole, we wouldn't have had that either.

Now, I have liberal friends over here who say: Oh, we can't have a balanced budget amendment. That would be horrible. Well, just think, if those things hadn't happened and we didn't have $14 trillion of debt today, wouldn't we be in a place to make the investments we need to put America back to work and not burdening our kids with a mountain of debt? Think about it. A balanced budget amendment works both ways. This one's honest. It doesn't say supermajority for taxes. It doesn't say supermajority for cuts. It says you figure it out. You were elected, you figure it out. And do it in a way that both builds a country with a sustainable economy and gives us a financial future that isn't a huge burden to our kids.

CONGRATULATING WAYZATA GIRLS SOCCER CHAMPIONSHIP

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

Mr. PAULSEN. Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate the Wayzata High School girls soccer team on winning this year's Class 2A State championship. This is a team that embodies the philosophy of practice makes perfect. Every day throughout the season, this team would practice penalty kicks just in case a big game would depend on it.

And when it came down to the championship game, when regulation time ran out, when overtime passed, 10 minutes extra of overtime, the State title would be decided by a penalty kick shootout. In the end, it was Wayzata's practice of the fundamentals that really did pay off when Chelsey Ulrich scored the game-winning goal in that shootout.

So congratulations to the student athletes of Wayzata High School and the girls soccer team, as well as the coaches, for being great student athletes and for a job well done.

INVESTING IN AMERICA

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

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Speaker, in a few days our Congress will see the reporting out of the work of the supercommittee. This is a big deal, and it's something that the American people, I pray, focus their attention on. It's a big deal because it is true, and I say this as a proud liberal Member of this Congress, that we do need to make sure that we reduce our country's long-term deficit. We need to do that because programs I care about like Head Start, home heating oil for seniors, programs that are going to help develop our human capital, get crowded out when we say we just don't have enough money. We do need to make sure that we can live within the budget of this country.

But the question is not what we are going to cut, but what are we going to spend on. That's the real question. The deeper question is what are we going to invest in because the fact is, whether we do only stimulus and spend a lot of money in the hope that we increase aggregate demand, or whether we do what Republicans suggest, which is to cut everything and just have austerity, neither one of those solutions will really put America on the track that it needs to be on.

The fact is that we need to invest in this country because as we look around, this country, the land of opportunity, is not making the investments that it needs to make in order to be the world leader in the years to come. We need to invest in infrastructure, Mr. Speaker. Let's start by talking about greening America. We need to retrofit old buildings. We need to invest in a smart grid. We need to invest in renewable energy—wind, solar, things that will really help power our Nation and make us less dependent not only on foreign oil but oil altogether—fossil fuels. We need to reduce that dependency.

We need to invest in transit and roads and bridges. In my own City of Minneapolis, we saw a bridge fall 65 feet into the Mississippi River because it had not been adequately maintained. People think, oh, that's Minneapolis's problem. If they think that, they're wrong. Bridges all over this country are in critically bad shape, and we need to invest in making sure that they are not only safe but are adequate for the future; well fitted so that they can accommodate transit and other sorts of things that can move people around and not just be dependent upon cars. We need to invest in a smart grid so we use energy efficiently and we can power our society in efficient and important ways.

But not only do we need to invest in infrastructure, we need to invest in our people. We need to invest in skills training. This should start, Mr. Speaker, with early childhood education. Any economist who studies this will tell you, the investments you make in little kids, zero to six, pay off for a lifetime. And yet we don't have universal kindergarten or universal early education. We have millions of children across this country whose young minds could be being developed by the age of 3 or 4 or 5; and yet they're not. They are languishing at home and they are being, in some cases, baby-sat by the television or even worse. Some don't have adequate nutrition. Mr. Speaker, we need to invest in the earliest, youngest Americans so they can have success throughout a lifetime.

We need to do something immediately about the awesome debt burden that our young people in college are shouldering. This has the potential, as young people who are in their 20s and 30s should be buying houses, buying cars, should be saving for their retirement, they're paying back student loans. This is going to have a long-term negative effect on our economy, and we need to do something about it right now.

There are a lot more things to talk about, but one of the things I don't

want to leave off the table is that we also need to reduce our military spending. I'm fully in favor of supporting our veterans. I believe this is an important, worthwhile investment for their health, their education and for their welfare, but there are a number of military armaments and machines that we simply don't need. We don't need to depend on a nuclear arsenal, in my view. We need to engage in international agreements to cut the nuclear weaponry arsenal and inventory in the world.

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We need to make sure that we begin to shut down some of these bases we have all across the country—as many as 174 bases. Do we need this kind of military footprint? I don't think so.

So, Mr. Speaker, let me just say that tomorrow we're going to have a group of leading economists at 11 o'clock to come together and offer their views about the proper direction for prosperity for America. Tomorrow the Congressional Progressive Caucus at 11 a.m. will convene, and we'll have a number of great economists whom we invite everybody to come listen to, including Jeffrey Sachs. I've run out of time, Mr. Speaker, but I urge people to attend tomorrow The Way Forward for America.

DEBTOR NATION

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

Mr. TERRY. ''It is the debtor that is ruined by hard times.'' That was said by our 19th President, Rutherford B. Hayes. It is a timely and insightful comment.

The United States now is the debtor. We are $15 trillion in debt, rising at a yearly clip of $1.5 trillion with really no institutional control to stop that.

Yes, we're in hard times—9 percent-plus unemployment for 3 years straight. A report the other day said the real unemployment rate from those that have just given up is probably closer to 15 percent—16 million to 20 million Americans. Our savings, decreasing, mostly because of the dollars that are going towards buying bonds or selling bonds to China.

Now, before us this week, though, is probably one of the most important votes that this Congress will take this year, and that is to pass an amendment to our Constitution forcing this body to balance its budget. Now I know it's stunning to many people that our Constitution didn't have that. There were lots of fail-safes built into our Constitution, and I think that our Founding Fathers never thought that deficit spending other than at a time of war would ever occur in our country, but it has, and it's become the norm.

Why has it become the norm in Congress? Simply answered, because you can. There's nothing to stop it. The easiest way, the most political way so you never have to say ''no'' is to deficit spend. My friends, that has to end. It has to end this congressional session.

Now, the balanced budget amendment is a simple one. It says, basically, we cannot spend more than our revenues. That's what most State constitutions have, that's what the Nebraska constitution has, and that's what the city charter for Omaha has. I spent 8 years on the Omaha city council. We had to have a balanced budget. You have to make tough decisions. I've been there when people have come and said, we need new water parks or we need something else. We on the city council, because we had to live by a balanced budget, had to make a decision of raising taxes, cutting somewhere else, or saying ''no.'' Those are your only three options.

Well the time has come that Congress needs the institutional barriers to spending, and it's the balanced budget amendment. It will be the institutionalized discipline that has been lacking here for decades. The time has come to pass it.

I want to leave this one general point, both disappointing and hopeful. There was an article in USA Today, November 4 or so, 11, 12 days ago, where it quoted the Democratic leadership saying to their own people, kill the balanced budget amendment. They want to preserve the right to deficit spend our future away at $1.5 trillion per year. Fortunately, as we have heard from one Democratic Member, he's not following the Democratic leadership's orders here. I hope that we will get enough of our Democratic friends who believe in fiscal discipline to join us. It takes two-thirds of both the House and the Senate to do that. It will be a close vote. So on something as simple as saying that our expenditures can't exceed our revenues, I ask for all of my colleagues' support.

TRUTH-TELLING ABOUT THE WAR IN AFGHANISTAN: A FIREABLE OFFENSE

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

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, sometimes it seems like the surest way to get in the most trouble is to tell the truth about the war in Afghanistan. Witness the case of Major General Peter Fuller, whom Congressman WALTER JONES just talked about. General Fuller was one of our troop commanders in Afghanistan until he decided to speak his mind. After President Karzai made the outrageous statement that he would back Pakistan in a war against the United States, Major General Fuller delivered a colorful and candid on-the-record reply. He said, ''Why don't you just poke me in the eye with a needle?'' He said this of President Karzai, whom he also described as erratic and ''isolated from reality.''

He added that the Afghan Government doesn't properly appreciate the enormous sacrifices Americans are making on Afghanistan's behalf, especially at a time when we have major economic challenges right here at home.

And what was Major General Fuller's reward for telling it like it is? What did he get for expressing the frustration so many Americans feel? He was thrown immediately under the bus. He was fired, relieved of his command by General John Allen, who admonished General Fuller for ''inappropriate public comments.'' An interesting choice of words: ''inappropriate public comments.''

As Time magazine pointed out, the implication there seems pretty clear: What Major General Fuller had the audacity to say out loud—that the Karzai regime is feckless and corrupt—is what most people secretly believe. Time correspondent Mark Thompson put it this way: ''It is not a good sign when what everyone is saying privately cannot be stated publicly. In that case, only the troops—the ones dying—and the taxpayers—the people employing both Allen and Fuller—are kept willfully in the dark.'' The writer Christopher Hitchens put it even more bluntly, saying that to silence Fuller ''is to establish a stupid culture of denial in the ranks.''

Throughout this decade, Mr. Speaker, this decade that we've been at war, the failure of our government to level with us has been a persistent problem.

□ 1040

Whether it's the phony weapons of mass destruction in Iraq or prisoner abuse and torture or just the refusal to let soldiers' coffins be photographed—that was during the Bush administration—over and over again the American people have been fed a steady diet of misleading spin and outright lies. But the people who are paying for this war in blood and treasure deserve much better. They are tired of propaganda. They are owed an honest accounting of what's going on, what obstacles we face, and what kind of progress we're making—or not making.

Major General Fuller had enough respect for the American people to tell them the truth. By refusing to dish out the same phony platitudes, he may have lost his job, but he maintained his integrity. If the continued rationale for this war is built on a lie that no one must expose, then surely that's a sign that this mission is beyond repair.

The real solution is not to cover up everything that's going horribly wrong in Afghanistan. The solution is to recapture our integrity as a nation and end this war once and for all, not in 2014, not at some uncertain date in the future—now. It's time now to bring our troops home.

APPROVING KEYSTONE PIPELINE WILL CREATE JOBS AND BOOST AMERICAN ENERGY INDEPENDENCE

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

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, President Obama has been going around the country saying that he is taking action through Executive order because ''we can't wait'' on the Congress. However, he has just said that he is going to put the largest job-creating project in America on ice.

When it comes to creating jobs and providing additional resources for energy, the President can wait. In fact, he's putting the Keystone pipeline off until after the 2012 election. That is nonsense and hypocritical.

This pipeline will not only create tens of thousands of jobs, it will also help to dramatically reduce our dependence on oil from despotic Middle Eastern petrostates. By blocking and delaying this important project, the Obama administration is standing squarely in the way of economic growth and energy independence.

It's time to get serious about approving this pipeline. It has broad support, and its builders have demonstrated a strong willingness to do what it takes to reduce potential environmental impact, even going so far as to propose changing its route.

Mr. Speaker, this project makes sense for our economy and for our national security and energy independence. It's long past time the Obama administration stopped blocking its progress, because the American people can't wait on this issue.

But the President again seems oblivious to the fact that we have a real unemployment rate of approximately 26 million people. I want to read some information put out by the Republican Conference this morning.

''According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the number of Americans who are either unemployed, underemployed, or not searching because they've been discouraged by the job market has reached 26 million people. In October, nearly 14 million workers were unemployed, with an additional 8.9 million working part time because they could not find full-time work. There were also 2.5 million workers who were available for work but had stopped actively searching because of the economic conditions. All told, over 16 percent of the U.S. workforce is now unemployed or underemployed.'' And yet the President won't make a decision on the Keystone pipeline that would create tens of thousands of jobs.

Republicans, though, have taken action. We have over 20 bills sitting in the Senate, introduced by Republicans but passed by a bipartisan House majority, and these will all create jobs in this country.

Mr. Speaker, I urge the American people to go to jobs.gop.gov and click on ''track legislation'' for them to see the evidence of what Republicans are promoting in the House of Representatives that is being stopped in the Senate. Yes, there is a do-nothing part of the Congress, Mr. Obama, but that is in the Senate, which is controlled by the Democrats.

So again, I want to urge Americans to go to jobs.gop.gov and click on ''track legislation.'' Republicans have the will to help create jobs in this country through empowering small businesses and reducing government barriers to job creation, fixing the Tax Code, boosting competitiveness, encouraging entrepreneurship, maximizing American energy production, and paying down America's unsustainable debt burden and starting to live within our means.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

HONORING OUR NATION'S VETERANS

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

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, this past Friday was Veterans Day, the day we set aside to honor and remember the service of our Nation's veterans. I know that most of my colleagues attended veterans events throughout their districts. I was proud to be at the American Freedom Festival, honoring our veterans, at a jobs fair and a mega-concert at George Mason University.

Although Veterans Day originally honored those who fought in World War I, in 1954 it was expanded to include the remembrance of all veterans. And, indeed, every veteran deserves such honor. They all chose to risk their lives to protect us. They bravely answered the call of their Nation. But, sadly, too many died in defense of our freedom. Of course, such noble service would not be possible without the unwavering support of their families.

America is safer because of our veterans, from those who served overseas to those stationed here at home. We properly award medals for individual heroic actions, but it is their daily dedication, courage, and valor that makes each and every one of them an American hero.

There are more than 21 million veterans in the United States—73,000 in my district, the 11th District of Virginia, alone. We celebrate their commitment and their sacrifice, from the Revolutionary War to the Iraq war.

But our remembrance must not end simply by honoring their past service. Upon leaving the military, many veterans face significant challenges here at home. Although more must be done, the issue of providing care to our wounded veterans has been well documented. I was pleased to join many of my colleagues to support the largest single increase of funding for the Veterans Administration in history.

However, there is a growing crisis among our veterans. And I want to call attention to the troubling unemployment rate for post-9/11 veterans, which, at 12.4 percent, is one-third higher than the national average. And as the troops currently stationed in Iraq and Afghanistan begin coming home, it will only get worse.

These are America's heroes, men and women who risk their lives to protect our families. Congress repeatedly comes together in a bipartisan fashion to support our troops overseas. Ensuring that our troops have the equipment and personnel they need to accomplish their mission has been a priority, but it can't be the only priority. It is long past time that we show the same commitment to our veterans when they come home.

More than one in nine veterans who left the service in the past decade is currently unemployed. Jobs have to be our top priority. We've got to move beyond lip service. If we really want to help our veterans, hire them.

The President's American Jobs Act recognizes the overarching need to create jobs. Our economy cannot fully recover while so many Americans are unable to find work. The American Jobs Act provides incentives for companies, large and small, to hire additional workers, and it cuts taxes on every working American in order to further spur economic demand.

Most importantly, the American Jobs Act provides additional incentives to companies when they hire veterans. The Returning Heroes Tax Credit cuts taxes for businesses that hire unemployed veterans. The Wounded Warriors Tax Credit offers even greater tax cuts to businesses who hire unemployed veterans with service-connected disabilities. These dedicated men and women aren't looking for a handout; they're looking for an opportunity. And the Senate has already acted on a number of these proposals by the President.

I call on my colleagues to remember that recognizing and honoring the sacrifices of our veterans doesn't stop when they leave the service. They need jobs, and they need them now.

□ 1050

THE NATIONAL RIGHT-TO-CARRY RECIPROCITY ACT

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

Mr. NUNNELEE. Mr. Speaker, the right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed. The Second Amendment is one of the cornerstones of our liberty. That's why this morning I rise in support of H.R. 822, the National Right-to-Carry Reciprocity Act.

In Mississippi, approximately 45,000 people have concealed carry permits.

Now, those individuals in Mississippi that have a driver's license issued by our State can drive into Alabama or Tennessee or, for that matter, they can drive into Montana or Maine and their driver's license is recognized as being valid.

H.R. 822 applies that same principle to people with their concealed carry permits. This legislation does not require or authorize action by any Federal agency. New rules or regulations won't be needed to implement H.R. 822. It doesn't override any State or local law. A concealed carry permit holder would still be required to comply with the laws of the State he or she is in.

I support the National Right-to-Carry Reciprocity Act because it expands freedom for law-abiding gun owners, while respecting each State's right to set its own laws.

PROTECTING OUR CHILDREN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Before I talk about my topic of protecting our children, I want to acknowledge, first of all, the coming Thanksgiving and the many people who are impoverished in this Nation that we need to pay attention to and, particularly, our children, which is the largest percentage of those impoverished are children in the United States.

For that reason, I think it is important that as we begin this discussion on the supercommittee and its responsibility, that we look at the responsibility to the American people. And if we cannot fairly bring in revenue and balance the cuts on the most vulnerable, we should go to regular order.

Let me also welcome our troops that will be coming home. And I will be initiating in Houston an idea that every single school will have a welcome home troops all over the community, and not one tree will be left undressed, if you will, to make sure that none of our soldiers walk down any block in a lonely way and not know that they are welcomed and loved.

Thirdly, I'd like to say that as they are coming home, are we preparing to use their many talents that they have learned, particularly those who understand homeland security, putting them to work for the Homeland Security Department.

I also want to create jobs. And one of my constituents is ExxonMobil, who has struck a contract with the Kurds dealing with oil and gas in Iraq. Lo and behold, the very country that we've shed blood for, no matter whether you were green energy or for or against fossil fuel, it is about jobs and about work here in the United States.

The audacity of the Iraqi Government to suggest they want to intrude on that contract and to have a say on that contract, well, when lives were lost, American lives were lost, they didn't have too much of a say. Americans were willing to stand up and be counted. And I'd hope the Iraqis would allow a fair contract to go forward.

It seems that every time America's involved in helping the Iraqi people through the Iraqi Government there's always a negative response. Some of us are a little tired of that.

Mr. Speaker, I rise particularly today to talk about our children. As the co-chair and founder of the Congressional Children's Caucus, I noted already the disaster that children are experiencing. In my own home State, food stamps hit a record in Texas. We know that Governor Perry is running for President, but in his home State we're facing a crisis with the number of people on food stamps.

We're also facing a crisis because the policy agency for education, the Texas Education Agency, is deciding to go throughout the State of Texas and to save money on education by closing school districts, small school districts in particular. They're too fearful of closing the big ones. And I represent many of them, and I love them all and bring money to them and encourage them to educate their children. But there's something about school districts that are too big to fail.

But the North Forest Independent School District, where hundreds of community leaders and children and parents and teachers came out on Sunday to stand up against a so-called revocation notice that would close down this school district that has all the need to survive, 7,500 students, a high school that they are putting together and repairing and getting children to learn, 1,200 students in this high school; middle schools, elementary schools, a preschool that is renowned and respected by all.

But the TEA wants to cut the budget and save its own neck by cutting small school districts. And so my plea to my Governor, Governor Perry, join with me and the many citizens that you represent, and stand against the TEA to close a majority minority school district, the last remaining majority minority school district with great history in the North Forest Independent School District community, taxing themselves to ensure that their children have more resources, and are joined with the Houston Community College System so that their children are getting college preparatory credits.

They want to live. They want to survive. Don't belt tighten and save your necks and your jobs on the backs of our children. Don't disregard and discriminate against small school districts which are all over America on behalf of large school districts.

And Governor Perry, I think we can work together. As we worked together against the Confederate flag license plate, we can work together on this matter.

Let me close by focusing on an issue that has taken this country by storm. And as I read the indictment I don't want to point out one name versus another, the alleged perpetrator in this Penn State fiasco. But I will say that this is a disgrace. I will be introducing legislation to have zero tolerance for sexual abuse of children and to stop any Federal funds going to anyone, any entity, any State that has a situation where children are sexually abused.

Mr. Speaker, it is a disgrace, and the Federal Government must stand up against it. I, for one, am going to do so. Enough is enough. We have to protect our children.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

GOVERNMENT MONEY ISN'T FREE

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

Mr. HECK. Mr. Speaker, Washington seems to have forgotten that government money isn't free, and it is the American taxpayers who support its spending habit. Simply put, the Federal Government doesn't respect your hard work, your discipline, your sacrifice or your unwavering commitment to self-reliance. We must change that.

The time to force accountability, leadership and respect is long past due, and the balanced budget amendment to the Constitution may be the only solution. A balanced budget amendment would force Washington politicians to exercise necessary fiscal restraint and better judgment when debating where and how to spend American taxpayer dollars.

The days of borrowing money and passing the debt on to our families and small businesses would be over, and Washington would be forced to live within its means, just like you and I.

The government should be doing a few things very well, instead of a lot of things poorly. It should help give people peace of mind. But its insatiable appetite for spending does exactly the opposite. Our small businesses face uncertainty created by a government that funds its misadventures with borrowed money and higher taxes.

Washington's spending habit will rot our economic foundation to the core and destroy the American Dream as we know it. The government can't spend its way out of a recession, but it can help create an environment of confidence and predictability that America's job creators, work force and families are seeking.

President Barack Obama has said that the Nation needs a balanced approach when addressing Washington's unsustainable spending. But one only has to ask, what's more balanced than a balanced budget amendment? Forty-nine of 50 States have balanced budget requirements, and a CNN poll shows that 74 percent of the American people support a balanced budget amendment.

This is not a partisan fight. This is a commonsense solution to an undeniable problem that is plaguing our economy.

□ 1100

Still there are those who oppose a balanced budget amendment because they believe Washington ought to be able to hold the line on spending. I wish we could trust that to happen, but over the last decade, both parties have spent taxpayer dollars at unsustainable levels. It is time to change direction and move forward with an approach that will rescue our economy with real and lasting results.

With America's total debt exceeding the gross domestic product for the first time since World War II, we cannot afford to make this issue about politics. It must be about saving our economy and securing the future of our country for our children and our grandchildren.

The debate in Washington comes down to this: Should we hold the government accountable or not? We must seize this opportunity to change Washington's culture of deficit spending. We must pass a balanced budget amendment.

SEXUAL ASSAULT IN THE MILITARY

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

Ms. SPEIER. I rise again today to draw attention to the epidemic in our military of rape and sexual assault. Nineteen thousand women and men each year are raped or sexually assaulted in the military. Shockingly, almost one-third of female veterans of all generations say they have been sexually assaulted or raped while in the military, and more than 70 percent say they experienced sexual harassment while serving.

In 2008 the Department of Veterans Affairs reported a total of 48,106 female veterans and 43,693 male veterans screened positively for military sexual trauma.

The prosecution rate of sexual assault is alarmingly low. Only 8 percent of sexual assailants were referred to courts-martial or military court compared with 40 percent of similar offenders in the civilian system. This travesty is not being addressed, and I will continue to speak out on this floor until it is. Survivors can email me at stopmilitaryrape@mail.house.gov if they would like to speak out.

Today, I would like to tell the story of one of the 8 percent that were prosecuted, the story of Colonel Michael Robertson, who commanded Fort Bliss' 31st Combat Support Hospital at Camp Dwyer, a military base and airfield in the Helmand River Valley in Afghanistan.

Last week, Colonel Robertson was convicted by a military judge of 14 charges, including having pornography on his government computer, sexually harassing three women, and assaulting five women. Eight women that served under his command testified at great cost to their careers and their privacy. Colonel Robertson routinely touched them without permission on their breasts, thighs, and buttocks, and encouraged them to look at pornography on his computer. Some testified the harassment occurred daily. Sadly, the military careers of these eight women who bravely did the right thing are almost assuredly destroyed.

A major who filed a claim against Robertson said, ''I don't know if my career was in jeopardy for doing the right thing. Who in the corps who supported you is going to trust you in the future?''

Despite repeated warnings, Colonel Robertson also emailed pornography to friends and female subordinates. A lieutenant colonel who was the chief nurse under Robertson's command said his command split the staff and created a toxic environment.

What makes the defense's answer to all of these actions? That all of these jokes and the touchings were attempts to boost morale. How much more outrageous must the excuses become before we do something about it?

So what is the punishment for someone in the military convicted of 14 counts of assaulting and harassing his subordinates who he was assigned to protect? Is he sent to prison for being a predator? Is he stripped of his standing the military? Oh, no. Colonel Robertson was ordered to pay a $30,000 fine over 3 months and spend 3 months in prison. Colonel Robertson will retire from the Army when he finishes his sentence. His conviction won't affect his Army retirement or his Federal health insurance, and he will not be required to register as a sex offender.

It doesn't take a military expert or a psychologist to figure out that sexual assault and harassment hurts not only the individual victim but undermines unit cohesion, morale, and overall effectiveness.

The absolute failure to address this behavior is hurting our military. Like Colonel Robertson, the majority of assailants are older and of higher rank than their victims. They abuse not only their authority but also the trust of those they are responsible for protecting.

The current military structure serves as a safe haven for sexual predators. They either are never brought to justice at all, or they receive a sentence like Colonel Robertson's that doesn't come close to matching their crime.

That's why this week I'll be introducing a bill that would fundamentally change how sexual assaults are handled in the military. My bill will take the prosecution, the reporting, the oversight, the investigation, and the victim care of sexual assaults out of the hands of the normal chain of command and place the jurisdiction in the hands of an impartial office staffed by experts, both military and civilian.

I've become painfully aware that if DOD continues to address this issue at its current pace, the epidemic of military assault will never end.

BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT

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

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, thank you very much. I appreciate the time.

I'm coming to the floor today with joy in my heart, and candidly I would like to come to the floor every day Mr. Speaker, but I don't always get to. But today, I'm here because we're voting on a balanced budget amendment this week. The first time in 15 years.

Now, I'm a freshman in this House, Mr. Speaker. I've been watching the process for a long time, but I've only had a voting card for 10 months. And I came to this Congress to do the big things, not to argue about the petty things. And I tell folks, Mr. Speaker, that very rarely are we arguing about the petty things, that there's a constituent focus to absolutely everything that we do. But the big things. The big things that change the direction of this country that ensure that this experiment in democracy, that our Republic, survives for another generation.

Fifteen trillion dollars in debt, Mr. Speaker.

Do you remember, Mr. Speaker, you don't have the gray hair that I do, but back in the days of Ronald Reagan we were running $200 billion and $300 billion annual deficits. And folks thought the world might be coming to the end. Now, it put the Soviet Union out of business, but it was big money. Who'd of thought we would come to a day where we're actually running $1.4 trillion, $1.5 trillion, $1.6 trillion deficits every year?

Mr. Speaker, as you know, in the people's House where the people's will gets done, we have choices here. In my district, for example, folks want to tax less and spend less. I hear it every day. Rob, tax less and spend less. I'm sure I've got some colleagues on the other side of the aisle whose constituencies want to tax more and spend more.

That is a legitimate debate for us to have in this House. We should have it. But we ought to be able to agree that spending money we don't have harms the future of this Republic. That spending money we don't have mortgages the future of everyone under the age of 20 and threatens the security of everyone over the age of 60.

A balanced budget amendment is one of those things that we can agree on, one of those issues that is not Republican, it's not Democrat, it's not conservative, it's not liberal—it is American.

Thomas Jefferson said if he could have added but one amendment to the Constitution, it would have been one to abolish the power of the government to borrow, because with that one amendment alone, he would be certain of the security of these United States.

Mr. Speaker, that chance is here with us this week for the first time in 15 years.

Now, I confess when I came to Congress, Mr. Speaker, I didn't expect to

have to vote for a balanced budget. I just thought we were going to be able to do the right thing and balance the budget on our own. I thought that's the job of the Congress. Do what you're supposed to do. Do what's right. Why do you need an amendment to the Constitution to do what's right? Mr. Speaker, it turned out to be a bigger job than I anticipated. The disagreements turned out to be more fundamental than I anticipated, and the desire of constituents back home turned out to be more complicated than I anticipated. This is our opportunity, though.

I have a copy of the Constitution that we have here. It's right behind my job creators card. And I keep it behind the job creators card because balancing the budget in this country has everything to do with preserving economic opportunity in this country and everything to do with growing our economy in the generation to come. My copy of the Constitution has a little space right there after amendment number 27. A space right here, Mr. Speaker, where we can put amendment number 28 today and ensure that our Republic survives for another generation.

You see what's going on in Europe. There but for the grace of God go we. This is our opportunity. It is not a divisive issue.

□ 1110

It is not an issue that divides north or south, east or west, Republicans or Democrats. It is an issue that unites America. It was a huge bipartisan vote in 1995, and it will be a huge bipartisan vote today.

I hope your telephone lines, Mr. Speaker, are ringing as are mine. If not, why not, Mr. Speaker? Why hasn't everyone in your district called to say, Please support the balanced budget amendment? Why, Mr. Speaker, hasn't everyone in my district called to say, Please support the balanced budget amendment?

Raise taxes, lower taxes; cut spending, raise spending—that's an American decision that we get to decide, but borrowing and putting off those tough decisions to another day is immoral. We have a chance this week to change that.

RECESS

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

Accordingly (at 11 o'clock and 10 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess until noon.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

PRAYER

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

Loving and gracious God, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

Help us this day to draw closer to You, so that with Your spirit, and aware of Your presence among us, we may all face the tasks of this day.

Bless the Members of the people's House. Help them to think clearly, speak confidently, and act courageously in the belief that all noble service is based upon patience, truth, and love.

May these decisive days through which we are living make them genuine enough to maintain their integrity, great enough to be humble, and good enough to keep their faith, always regarding public office as a sacred trust. Give them the wisdom and the courage to fail not their fellow citizens nor You.

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

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. 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. Will the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. FUDGE) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. FUDGE 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

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain up to 15 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

HONORING CAPTAIN DALE GOETZ

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

Mr. LAMBORN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Captain Dale Goetz, who was killed in Afghanistan by the enemy on August 30, 2010, in service to his country and his God. Captain Goetz, you see, was a chaplain and Baptist minister. The last time the Army lost a chaplain in combat was in 1970 at the height of the Vietnam War.

The picture by me shows the memorial service at Fort Carson, Colorado, for Captain Goetz and other brave soldiers who made the ultimate sacrifice. If you look closely, you will see that in place of a rifle there is a cross. Chaplains, you see, are unarmed.

Captain Goetz leaves behind three sons—Landon, Caleb, and Joel—and his loving and devoted wife, Christy.

Captain Goetz will always be remembered by his family and friends who survive him and by his fellow soldiers for whom he gave so much. They will remember his love of country, his bravery under fire, his devotion to others, and, most of all, a heart fully committed to the Lord and Savior he served and loved so fully.

''Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends.''

VOTING RIGHTS

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

Ms. CHU. There was a time when women and minorities could not vote in this country. People were jailed and even killed for the right to vote. But because people fought back, every U.S. citizen gained the right to vote—that is, up until now.

This year, an unprecedented 42 bills were introduced in various States to deprive you of that right. States have passed voter ID laws that would stop 21 million legal U.S. citizens from voting, including your grandmother who was born in this country and lived here for 82 years. Why? Because she no longer drives and doesn't have a picture ID.

These laws would stop early voting and voting by mail, so that if you know you have to travel out of town or have an operation on Election Day, you would be deprived of casting your vote. This threatens the very basis of our democracy.

We must work together to protect every American's right to vote.

CONGRESS MUST PASS BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT

(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. Madam Speaker, on Friday, Congress will have the opportunity to vote on the balanced budget amendment. This legislation will limit Congress from spending more than it receives in revenues unless both the House and Senate agree with a three-fifths vote.

Under the current President, the national debt has increased at 34 percent and grown to almost $15 trillion. With the Federal Government borrowing 42 cents for every dollar it spends, it is past time to take action fulfilling the first bill, introduced by my predecessor, the late Chairman Floyd Spence, for a balanced budget amendment.

The passage of the balanced budget amendment will help grow the economy and create jobs. I hope both parties will come together and pass the balanced budget amendment, which will put America back to work and promote small business job creation.

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

IRAN

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

Mr. QUIGLEY. Madam Speaker, if anyone had any doubt that Iran was pursuing a nuclear weapon, they can stop their questioning. Iran is pursuing nuclear weapons, and according to a new report by the International Atomic Energy Agency, they could have a bomb within a year.

Iran is not only developing the material for a nuclear weapon, but, as the report makes clear, they are also pursuing the means to trigger and deliver a nuclear bomb, posing a threat to our ally Israel, our troops, and the entire region.

Given the report's findings, claims by Iran's leaders that their nuclear program is peaceful are no longer credible, and the window for action to stop them is shrinking. We must execute crippling sanctions immediately. Specifically, we must put in place debilitating sanctions on the Central Bank of Iran, a crucial financier of Iran's nuclear program.

There can being no doubt that Iran is pursuing a nuclear bomb. There can be no doubt that we must and will do what it takes to stop them.

HONORING RON ROONEY FOR SERVICE TO MEDICAL COMMUNITY

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

Mr. CRAWFORD. Madam Speaker, I'd like to take this time to honor a constituent from my district, Mr. Ron Rooney. Mr. Rooney is president and CEO of the Arkansas Methodist Medical Center in Paragould, Arkansas. The Arkansas Methodist Medical Center has provided Arkansans with the highest quality medical care available for over 60 years and has continued to raise their standard of service under Mr. Rooney's leadership.

Mr. Rooney graduated from George Washington University with a master of business and health care administration and has used his expertise in health care to benefit his community for the past 40 years.

In addition to his duties as president and CEO, Mr. Rooney remains active in the health care community nationwide. As a member of the board of directors of VHA, Mr. Rooney helps provide best practices for nonprofit hospitals throughout the United States. He previously served as chairman of the Arkansas Hospital Association and remains active on the organization's governmental relations committee.

As the son of a doctor, Ron Rooney has been surrounded by health care his entire life. He has raised his own family with his wife, Lois, his four children and seven grandchildren. Mr. Rooney remains committed to his profession, and his contribution to health care in Arkansas and his community is immeasurable.

I want to say happy retirement after several, several years—decades—of service. Mr. Rooney, we appreciate your service.

THE STOCK ACT

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

Mr. WALZ of Minnesota. Madam Speaker, I rise today to urge—no, to implore—my colleagues to support the STOCK Act and ask Speaker BOEHNER to bring this bill to the floor immediately.

On Sunday night, the CBS news program ''60 Minutes'' highlighted a problem of potential insider trading on Capitol Hill. Unlike other Americans, Members of Congress and their staffs are not held legally responsible for profiting from nonpublic information they gain in their official positions. It's outrageous. When I came to Congress several years ago, I couldn't believe it wasn't already a law.

At a time when Americans are understandably frustrated with bickering and gridlock here in Congress, the one thing we can do is restore their trust in the system. This legislation is a big step in that direction of restoring that trust. It's very simple. It asks that if you are a Member of Congress and receive information, you cannot trade stocks to profit from those.

It's a simple bill. I ask Speaker BOEHNER to allow this bill to come to the floor. Let's make sure that the American people—may differ with us on ideas, and healthy debate is fine, but they must not believe the system is corrupt and people are gaming the system.

I ask that this be brought to the floor, and I encourage my colleagues to vote for it.

□ 1210

SURVEY SHOWS SMALL BUSINESS CONCERNED ABOUT BIG GOVERNMENT, OUT-OF-CONTROL SPENDING

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

Mr. HULTGREN. Madam Speaker, last week I saw the results of a survey of the businesses from the National Federation of Independent Business. I want you to hear some of the concerns of the small businesses of the 14th Congressional District of Illinois.

Eighty-eight percent of the small businesses support repeal of ObamaCare, something we've been working hard to achieve here in the House of Representatives. Ninety percent support passage of a balanced budget amendment, something this body will be voting on later this week, of which also I strongly support.

Small business knows, as I do, that the way that we get our economy moving again is by shrinking the size of government, bringing confidence back to job creators, and getting Washington bureaucrats off the backs of our Nation's small businesses. We're working hard to do just that with the forgotten 20 bills that are now sitting over in the Senate, and I look forward to continuing their fight.

I also want to take this opportunity to say happy birthday to Christy and Kaden. I wish I were home with you today.

THE AMERICAN JOBS ACT

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

Mr. BACA. Madam Speaker, the poverty rate in California and the Inland Empire has risen from 11 percent to 17 percent. My constituents are hurting and it's time for Congress to live up to its responsibility.

But in the 45 weeks since the Republicans took control of the House, they have failed to pass a single bill that creates jobs for the American people. The American Jobs Act contains bipartisan ideas, keeps our teachers, firefighters and cops on the jobs, provides tax cuts to help small businesses grow and hire more workers, helps to rebuild our crumbling roads, bridges and airports, puts more of our veterans who are returning troops back to work.

This is a balanced approach to help fix the American jobs crisis. It's long past overdue. We need to bring it up for a vote. The 14 million Americans looking for a job can't wait any longer. They need a job.

Let's act now. Let's pass the Jobs Act.

BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT

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

Mr. BERG. Madam Speaker, 15 years ago a balanced budget amendment failed by a single vote in the Senate. Since then, our debt has tripled, largely due to President Obama's increased spending. In fact, it took our Nation over 200 years to accumulate the same amount of debt as we've accumulated in the last 2½ years.

In North Dakota we know that you can't do the same thing over and over again and expect different results. This week, Congress has the opportunity to get it right.

In North Dakota we balance our budget. We work to leave that next generation better off. Washington could learn a lot from North Dakota, and that's why I will proudly vote for a balanced budget amendment this week.

ROSA PARKS DAY

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

Ms. FUDGE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to applaud the State of Ohio as the first State to pass legislation designating December 1 as Rosa Parks Day. House Bill 421, introduced in 2005 by then State Representative Joyce Beatty, who is with us today, honors the life and legacy of the mother of the Civil Rights Movement.

Ohio continues to honor Rosa Parks with an annual statewide tribute on December 1, and it is entitled ''The Power of One.'' This tribute, which is a partnership between the Ohio State University, the Ohio Historical Society, the Ohio Civil Rights Commission and the Central Ohio Transit Authority, celebrates the day when Rosa Parks took a stand by staying seated. It includes a children's assembly that welcomes 800 school children to learn and be inspired by her legacy.

I am proud to recognize the great State of Ohio for commemorating Rosa Parks' legacy of inspiration and courage, and our State's ongoing commitment to educating young people about civil rights.

PASS THE BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT

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

Mr. LANKFORD. Madam Speaker, in my district, we disagree a lot about football, but we strongly agree that the Federal Government must balance this budget. As a freshman, I've seen firsthand this body will only make the hard decisions when they have to make the hard decisions.

Though we don't agree that we need to balance the budget every time and every place, we do understand that, as a Federal budget over the course of a year, we must balance our budget. We don't do that because the Constitution doesn't require it. It's time to change that reality.

In 1995 this body overwhelmingly approved a simple balanced budget amendment, and it required that we would balance our budget each year. It failed in the Senate by one vote, passed overwhelmingly in the House. If it had passed both bodies and been ratified by the States, within 10 years we would have balanced the budget by 2005. Our total debt in 2005 was $7.5 trillion. It is now $15 trillion.

In just 6 years we doubled our debt. Now we stand here again debating if this is the best language or the best option for a balanced budget amendment. If we fail to pass it this year, 10 years from now some freshman congressman will stand at this microphone and berate the 2011 Congress for delaying again the decision and passing on to their generation an even bigger debt.

Let's build the wall around the Federal checkbook, and let's pass this simple budget amendment.

REBUILDING OUR INFRASTRUCTURE

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

Mr. SIRES. Madam Speaker, I rise today to bring attention to the great need to update our Nation's infrastructure and, in particular, bridges. Bridges play a vital role in moving people and goods, and far too many of our bridges are falling into a state of disrepair.

Our Nation has a total of 600,000 bridges, with over 65,000 being deemed deficient. That means 11½ percent of our Nation's bridges are considered deficient and require significant maintenance, rehabilitation or replacement. In the New Jersey portion of New York City metropolitan area, over 8 million vehicles cross a deficient bridge every day.

The infrastructure in the United States is crumbling, and the backlog of deficient bridges is growing. Congress has not been able to pass a long-term transportation funding bill for 2 years. We are still working on a fiscal year 2012 budget that will provide States with important transportation funding.

This year the construction industry has been suffering from unemployment rates of up to 20 percent. Investing in bridges will create jobs today, keep Americans safe, and ensure economic development for the future.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to pass legislation to strengthen our transportation infrastructure and put people back to work.

THE MURDER OF AYMAN LABIB

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

Mr. PITTS. Madam Speaker, while we have watched courageous democracy, human rights, and leaders of minorities stand up to thugs and extremists and demand a free and peaceful Egypt, deeply disturbing cases are occurring where the spotlight is not shining.

Reports indicate that on October 16, Ayman Labib was in his Arabic class when his teacher told him to get rid of the cross tattooed on his wrist. When Ayman said it was a tattoo, the teacher asked the other students, what are we going to do about this, and incited the students in the class to attack Ayman. He tried to flee, but ultimately the students, with the support of their teachers, murdered this young man.

Egyptian media, controlled by the military government, has tried to deny the sectarian reasons for this brutal murder. After the new anti-discrimination law put into place after October 9, when Egyptian security forces ran over Copts with bulldozers, will those teachers, adults and students be brought to justice for this brutal murder?

The Egyptian military must bring the perpetrators to justice. Otherwise, their tacit approval of this act will only bring further violence and bloodshed.

APEC

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

Ms. HANABUSA. Madam Speaker, my home State of Hawaii just hosted an APEC, and I'd like to thank the people of the State for their patience and understanding.

There were 21 Asian Pacific countries represented at this event. Our President was there, as was the Presidents of China, Russia and the Prime Minister of Japan, to name a few. It's important to note that what was dominating the conversations was the rising dominance of China.

The President, our President asked China to end the policies of keeping the yuan artificially low, and it is artificially low at 28 to 30 percent. Think about what it would mean to us, our economy, if they would just reevaluate. It would support 1.6 billion jobs. It would increase our GDP by $285 billion in just 18 months, and our deficit would be reduced between 670 to $800 billion in just 10 years.

Madam Speaker, why haven't we taken up the issue of the reevaluation of the yuan? Our Senate passed it in October, the Currency Exchange Rate Oversight Act. It is time for us to act. The United States must maintain its dominance and its position.

Please, bring that bill up to our floor.

□ 1220

RHETORIC AND REALITY

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

Mr. FLORES. Madam Speaker, there is a difference between President Obama's rhetoric and the reality for the American people.

He says we can't wait for more U.S. manufacturing and construction jobs. He says we can't wait for more American middle class jobs. He says we can't wait to wean ourselves off of Middle Eastern oil. He says we can't wait to reduce our foreign trade deficits. He says we can't wait to reduce our Federal budget deficit. These are the things he says, but they aren't the things he's doing.

By delaying the Keystone XL Pipeline project, he's putting the American people in continued jeopardy by doing the following: He is killing U.S. manufacturing construction job opportunities. He is keeping us hooked on Middle Eastern oil and sending billions of dollars each week to terrorist-friendly countries, hurting our security and our

international trade deficit. He is eliminating one of the tools to reduce the Federal deficit.

Instead, he keeps wasting billions of dollars of our children's and grandchildren's futures on failed Washington programs like Solyndra, Beacon, and building cars in Finland.

If the President is serious about creating good, shovel-ready, American middle class jobs based on Main Street solutions and not Washington solutions, he would move forward with the Keystone XL project right now. We can't wait for Main Street job solutions.

BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT

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

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Madam Speaker, last night I held a telephone town hall meeting, and I spoke with hundreds of my constituents about the pressing issues facing America today.

Many people on the call spoke about the need for a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution, and an overwhelming majority replied in a survey that there should be a balanced budget amendment. I was pleased to report to them that the House will be voting this week on a balanced budget amendment that will help Washington get its fiscal house in order. And it will reverse the dangerous practices of saddling our future generations with insurmountable debt.

A balanced budget amendment, Madam Speaker, is not a radical idea. It is a normal expectation for hardworking taxpayers, families, and businesses, as well as State governments. Why not the Federal Government, Madam Speaker?

THE GOP'S JOB PROPOSALS

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

Mr. YARMUTH. Madam Speaker, the average American household has lost $8,000 of income over the last few years. If we want to put a number on the economic crisis facing our country right now, that should be it.

If you ask the average person how to get $8,000 back into the pockets of American families, you'd get some pretty good answers. But if you ask the average congressional Republican, you'd get an answer that's so out of touch with reality you'd think they were creating policy by playing Mad Libs. Mad Libs, the children's game where you provide random words to complete a story you haven't seen. That seems like the only conceivable explanation for the Republicans' so-called jobs proposals.

Think about how they fill in this blank: The best way to get Americans back to work is—poison our air and water, get rid of consumer protections, end Medicare. It's like they haven't read the question. It's no surprise Americans find the GOP's Mad Libs economics maddening. It's time to stop playing games and start getting to work on building an economy that works for all Americans.

KEYSTONE XL PIPELINE

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

Mr. YODER. Madam Speaker, both parties in this Congress have espoused support for job creation. In fact in this House daily, both Republicans and Democrats have said the economy and jobs should be our top priority. The President has stated in recent months that he would pivot his time and energy to a focus on jobs.

Yet, last week this administration pivoted away from jobs again when it effectively delayed until 2013 the construction of the Canadian Keystone XL pipeline, and along with this delay, killing the potential to create 20,000 jobs. This $7 billion pipeline would bring oil from Canada to refineries in the United States, and it is expected to add billions of dollars of investment in the American economy.

With the economy continuing to struggle, we can't wait to create these new jobs.

The American people are tired of seeing their government say one thing and do another. It's time for the rhetoric to meet the road, and I urge this administration to reconsider its decision, to reconsider this delay, and to unify this country back to a focus on jobs.

JOBS AND FINANCE REFORM

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

Ms. LEE of California. I rise to call on Republicans to wake up to the needs of Americans, millions of Americans, mind you, and to create jobs.

The Republican-led Congress has led almost an entire year without enacting a single piece of jobs legislation. Madam Speaker, America cannot wait.

Republicans continue to ignore the crisis of unemployment and poverty in America and instead keep bringing more bills to bail out the wealthy. Let's stop bailing out Wall Street and bring some real relief to Main Street. Let's stop wasting time pretending that markets can regulate themselves. We need strong oversight so that we have no more Bernie Madoffs and bank bailouts. Let's stop wasting time pretending that tax cuts for the wealthy pay for themselves. We need corporations and the wealthy to pay their fair share.

Last week, Madam Speaker, I held a jobs fair. Thousands showed up. People want to work. This is a national emergency. Let's reignite the American dream by passing the American Jobs Act now.

IRAQ MILITARY EQUIPMENT TO SOUTHERN BORDER

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Madam Speaker, the troops in Iraq will be home by Christmas. Also coming back to America is a large amount of military equipment. Why not send some of that taxpayer-funded equipment to secure our southern border? Our border sheriffs say they are outmanned, outgunned, and out-financed by the drug cartels.

Today, I've introduced legislation which mandates that 10 percent of certain military equipment coming back from Iraq will go to our southern border. If there's an urgent need, the equipment could be kept by the Department of Defense. This equipment includes Humvees, night-vision equipment, and surveillance UAVs.

This is not a new idea. The Department of Defense already has a program for distribution of surplus equipment. My legislation will simply utilize this already-existing program, expand it, and allocate resources to our southern border.

Americans have paid for this equipment to bring safety and security to the people of Iraq. It's time we use this equipment to protect our own citizens from the invasion of the drug cartels.

And that's just the way it is.

FAILURE IS NOT AN OPTION

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

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. Madam Speaker, failure is not an option. Let none of us forget that we work for the American people, and they expect us to do our job. World markets are watching, balance is demanded; $1.2 trillion in deficit reduction is the minimal target we must meet.

Current Federal spending is 25 percent of the GDP. It's too high. But revenue is only 14 to 15 percent of the GDP. It's too low. It is the height of irresponsibility to ignore either one of those two data points.

It might be easy, but it's not rocket science. It requires both parties to do what a clear majority of Americans want us to do: break out of our respective straitjacket orthodoxies.

I was proud to join a hundred bipartisan Members of this body urging the supercommittee to go big—find $4 trillion in deficit reduction. Such efforts would reduce the debt to a more manageable percentage of GDP, reassure markets, preserve our Nation's triple A bond rating and provide the stability to get America's economy growing again.

I urge my colleagues on the supercommittee to join us and go big for America.

□ 1230

VOTER ID LAWS

(Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Instead of Republican legislatures across America, Madam Speaker, focusing on creating jobs in their States and working with this Congress to create jobs, we find ourselves shackled by 40 States implementing voter ID laws—laws/provisions that limit voting by requiring the presentation of photo identification that, however, is limited to State-authorized voter ID, which has a negative impact on our seniors, laws that exclude the most common forms of ID—student IDs and Social Security cards. But they offer no alternate procedures. Changes requiring limitations or the outright elimination of early voting opportunities bury us to first-time voters, such as the elimination of same-day registration.

Madam Speaker, couldn't we do better than to counter the 15th Amendment, which indicates that there should be no laws that would thwart anyone's right to vote, or even the 24th Amendment that indicates that we should not have a poll tax to allow people to vote?

Rather than creating jobs through passing the American Jobs Act or standing up and denouncing the sexual abuse of children, which is a crisis and an outrage, we are stopping people from voting by putting in place voter ID laws. Voter suppression, the Constitution will not tolerate it—the 15th Amendment and the 24th Amendment. Let us open this opportunity for all people and fight the real issues that the American people want us to address.

IT'S TIME FOR A JOBS AGENDA

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. There is a lot of talk about the supercommittee and debt reduction; but, Madam Speaker, what we need is a supercommittee for jobs.

Here's the deal. If we can create more jobs, we can reduce our deficit; but my Republican friends have gone out of their way to talk about everything on this House floor except jobs. They refuse to bring the President's jobs bill to the floor; they refuse to invest in our roads, bridges, and infrastructure; and they're threatening to cut medical research, Medicare, and funds for education. All they seem to care about is making sure that the top 1 percent of income earners is protected from paying its fair share.

It's time for a new agenda, Madam Speaker. It's time for a jobs agenda. It's time for the Republican leadership to focus and to get to work.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 822, NATIONAL RIGHT-TO-CARRY RECIPROCITY ACT OF 2011

Mr. NUGENT. Madam Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 463 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 463

Resolved, That at any time after the adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 822) to amend title 18, United States Code, to provide a national standard in accordance with which nonresidents of a State may carry concealed firearms in the State. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Judiciary. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. It shall be in order to consider as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the five-minute rule the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on the Judiciary now printed in the bill. The committee amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be considered as read. All points of order against the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute are waived. No amendment to the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be in order except those printed in the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole. All points of order against such amendments are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. Any Member may demand a separate vote in the House on any amendment adopted in the Committee of the Whole to the bill or to the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. EMERSON). The gentleman from Florida is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. NUGENT. For the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Worcester, Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN), 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. NUGENT. 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 Florida?

There was no objection.

Mr. NUGENT. I rise today in support of House Resolution 463, a rule which provides for the consideration of an important piece of legislation, H.R. 822, the National Right-to-Carry Reciprocity Act of 2011.

I am proud to sponsor this rule, which provides for a structured amendment process that will allow Members to have a thorough debate on a wide variety of relevant and germane amendments to H.R. 822. We have allowed 10 amendments to this bill—two Republican amendments and eight Democratic amendments. Even on a contentious bill, a bill where it would be easy to shut down the process, we not only are allowing amendments, but of those that we will be debating on the floor, the vast majority are Democratic amendments.

We did this not because it was the easy thing to do; we did it because it was the right thing to do. It brought transparency to the debate, and it is in keeping with the promises that the Republican Party made to the American people for a freer, more open process.

Madam Speaker, until coming to this body 10 months ago, I had spent my entire career as a cop, the last 10 years as sheriff of Hernando County, Florida. During my 38 years in law enforcement, I found that disarming honest citizens does nothing to reduce crime. If anything, all it does is keep law-abiding citizens from being able to defend themselves from violent criminals. Although I know this just from my anecdotal experience, research backs up the claim.

For example, statistics indicate that citizens with carry permits are more law-abiding than the general public. In my home State of Florida, only 0.01 percent of nearly 1.2 million permits have been revoked because of firearm crimes committed by permit holders. Additionally, evidence indicates that crime declines in States with right-to-carry laws. Since Florida became a right-to-carry State in 1987, Florida's total violent crime and murder rates have dropped 32 percent and 58 percent, respectively.

Because of this evidence, as well as my firsthand experience, I am a proud defender of our Second Amendment right: ensuring ''the right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed.'' My history as a law enforcement officer is also why I am a proud cosponsor of H.R. 822, the National Right-to-Carry Reciprocity Act of 2011.

H.R. 822 is a good, bipartisan bill, which enhances the constitutional rights of law-abiding gun owners. Today, if I drive from my home State of Florida into Georgia, Georgia recognizes that my Florida driver's license is still valid even once I cross the State line. H.R. 822 would require States to recognize each other's legally issued concealed carry permits in the same

way. This legislation would take a comprehensive approach to helping law-abiding citizens navigate the patchwork of State concealed carry laws.

H.R. 822 does not—let me repeat—does not create a national concealed carry permit system nor does it establish any nationalized standard for a carry permit. H.R. 822 respects the States' abilities to create their own gun usage laws as well as their own permitting processes.

I am sure that we will hear arguments from my colleagues on the other side of the aisle saying that H.R. 822 somehow makes it easier for people to get a gun. Let me assure you that, again, this is not the case. This legislation does not mandate that anyone suddenly be given a gun nor does it relax any of a State's current permitting laws.

□ 1240

During my nearly 40 years as a cop, I learned you just can't talk about guns. When you're talking about gun crime, you need to look at two distinct classes of guns: there are legal guns, and there are illegal guns. I can tell you, as a cop, you don't worry about the legal guns, the guns that people bought from an authorized source, that they registered with the proper authorities, that they took the necessary classes to learn how to use responsibly, and that they got their legal concealed carry permit. In my experience, you worry about the illegal guns, guns that somebody purposefully bought off the radar, either because they aren't legally allowed to own a gun or because they're going to use them for illegal purposes.

H.R. 822 doesn't get into that difference. What it does is ensures that legal gun owners don't accidentally break a law simply because they brought their fully permitted gun into another State. This legislation gives peace of mind to Americans traveling across State lines with a legally registered, concealed firearm, knowing that they can practice their constitutional right to bear arms.

Again, I am proud to be a cosponsor of H.R. 822 and support its passage.

With that, I encourage all my colleagues to vote ''yes'' on the rule, ''yes'' on the underlying legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. I thank the gentleman from Florida for yielding me the customary 30 minutes, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, first of all, let me rise in opposition to this restrictive rule, yet another restrictive rule. A lot of good amendments were not made in order, and Members do not have the right to offer amendments as they see fit during this debate. So I would urge my colleagues to vote ''no'' on the rule for that reason.

Madam Speaker, another week and another hot button social issue is being brought to the floor by this extreme Republican leadership. A few weeks ago, this House debated an abortion bill. That's months after we considered legislation to defund Planned Parenthood. This Republican leadership has tried to overturn the Clean Air Act and the Clean Water Act this year, simply because their corporate constituency demands it. And now we're turning to guns.

We're about to debate legislation that makes it easier to carry concealed weapons in the United States. In fact, we're considering a bill that will make it easier for convicted felons. Yet what do Americans want most of all right now? Are they screaming for a lengthy debate on abortion issues? Do they want us debating whether or not we need to reaffirm our national motto? Are they clamoring for more lenient gun laws?

No, Madam Speaker. The American people want jobs, J-O-B-S, jobs. But my Republican friends are either too stubborn to listen or just don't care enough to do something about the problem. Maybe they are just covering their eyes and plugging their ears, hoping that this crisis will magically disappear. That may work for a 6-year-old who's scared of ghosts, but that's not how you govern a country.

Our unemployment rate is 9 percent. There are just under 14 million unemployed Americans; millions more are earning less now than they were before the economic crisis simply because they were forced with the choice to take a lower-paying job or face unemployment. And what's the Republican response to this problem? Not a jobs bill. In fact, the Republicans haven't brought up a jobs bill once in this Congress. So what, then, is their response to the jobs product? Surprise, surprise; it's a gun bill.

Madam Speaker, what are we doing here? This is nuts. This isn't what the American people sent us here to do. The irony is, many of the new Republicans were allegedly sent here because of their opposition to Federal encroachment on States' rights, but here we are debating a bill that imposes the Federal role on States and undermines States' laws.

This is crazy in normal times, Madam Speaker. It's even crazier today. And unlike the resolution reaffirming our national motto that we debated a few weeks ago, this legislation will have real impacts on people's lives. Madam Speaker, people will be hurt because of this legislation. People, in fact, may die because of this bill. Don't take my word for it; look at the facts. The bill obliterates State and local eligibility rules for concealed weapons. It eliminates the State's discretion to honor another State's permits. It requires States with responsible restrictions—like my home State of Massachusetts—to allow people with permits from States with lax laws to bring concealed weapons into those States. Simply, it allows a person to bring a hidden loaded gun into a State where, under today's laws, they are currently ineligible to carry a concealed weapon.

Now there are reasons that States don't allow certain people to carry concealed weapons, and each State is different. My home State of Massachusetts doesn't issue concealed weapons permits to people who have specific dangerous misdemeanor criminal convictions or alcohol abuse problems, as well as people who have not completed firearm safety training, people who do not have a good character, or those who are under the age of 21.

I would like to insert into the RECORD a letter from the Massachusetts Secretary of Public Safety and Security in opposition to this bill.

But under this bill, a person who is convicted of spousal abuse in one State could go to a second State for a concealed weapon permit. When they get that permit, this bill allows that felon to bring their weapon into Massachusetts even though they would not be eligible for a concealed weapon permit under Massachusetts laws.

Now my friends on the other side of the aisle will say that this bill is necessary, that more guns mean less crime, that people need to be able to protect themselves. Well, that's not how our Nation's mayors see it. Mayors Against Illegal Guns strongly oppose this bill because it makes our cities less—not more—less safe. Mayors Against Illegal Guns, founded by Boston Mayor Tom Menino and New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg, is made up of over 600 mayors of all political stripes, united to respect the rights of law-abiding gun owners while keeping guns out of the hands of criminals and other dangerous people. And I'm especially grateful for the national leadership of Mayor Tom Menino, who has long been a champion on this issue.

Not only do more than 600 mayors in this coalition oppose this bill, but so do the International Association of Chiefs of Police, Major Cities Chiefs Association, the Police Foundation, the National Latino Peace Officers Association, and the National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives. In fact, not only does the American Bar Association oppose this bill, but so does the Association of Prosecuting Attorneys.

I would like to insert into the RECORD the statement by the Mayors Against Illegal Guns in opposition to H.R. 822.

Madam Speaker, Massachusetts is fortunate to have a number of anti-gun violence leaders in the Commonwealth. In addition to Mayor Menino, we are home to Stop Handgun Violence and, specifically, its founder John Rosenthal. Gun safety laws work. They keep our citizens safe. In fact, Massachusetts has the most comprehensive and effective gun violence prevention laws and initiatives and the lowest firearm

fatality rate per 100,000 population of any urban industrial State and second lowest overall behind Hawaii.

Every day more than 150 Americans are shot, and 83 die from gun violence in the United States. A child under 20 years old dies from gun violence every 3 hours, eight kids every single day. We could fill Fenway Park three times over with the 110,000 kids under 20 years old killed by guns in the past 30 years, and there is still no national law requiring criminal background checks for all gun sales in the U.S. In fact, in 33 States, there is no background check requirement or even proof of ID for private gun sales. And today we're going to make it even easier for these people to carry concealed weapons.

Massachusetts is the leader in gun violence prevention. We should be working to prevent gun violence, not encouraging it with legislation like this. Madam Speaker, Federal preemption of Massachusetts law will only result in more innocent and largely preventible gun deaths in my home State. The same holds true for nearly every State of the Union. In fact, preempting State gun laws will make this entire country less safe, and I cannot and I will not support legislation that makes our neighborhoods and our cities and our States less safe.

Madam Speaker, let me conclude by saying, if we want to combat crime, if we want to make our neighborhoods safer, I would urge my colleagues on the other side of the aisle to join with us and bring the President's jobs bill to the floor. Let's provide people with jobs and economic security. Let's revitalize our neighborhoods that are struggling now in poverty. That's what we should be doing, not debating a bill to make it easier to carry concealed weapons. I urge my colleagues to vote ''no'' on the rule and vote ''no'' on final passage of the bill.

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS, EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF PUBLIC SAFETY AND SECURITY,
Boston, MA, November 10, 2011.

Hon. HARRY REID,
Majority Leader, U.S. Senate,
Washington DC.
Hon. JOHN BOEHNER,
Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.
Hon. MITCH MCCONNELL,
Minority Leader, U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.
Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
Minority Leader, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR REID, SENATOR MCCONNELL, SPEAKER BOEHNER, AND MINORITY LEADER PELOSI: I write to express my strong opposition to H.R. 822, the National Right-to-Carry Reciprocity Act, legislation that would force Massachusetts to recognize concealed carry permits granted by other states, even when those permit holders could not meet standards required by Massachusetts law.

To protect vulnerable people, many states have set standards for carrying handguns that include criteria beyond an applicant's ability to pass a federal background check. Right now, Massachusetts does not issue concealed carry permits to people who have certain dangerous misdemeanor criminal convictions or alcohol abuse problems, as well as individuals who have not completed firearms safety training, who do not have good character, or who are under the age of 21. H.R. 822, however, would permit citizens of states with less strict laws to freely carry concealed weapons in our state.

Varying state standards make it very difficult to know if a carry permit from another state is valid. If a police officer is unsure about whether a person is carrying a gun legally or illegally, especially during a traffic stop, it may result in a situation which could escalate dangerously.

National concealed carry reciprocity is opposed by more than 600 mayors, including the mayors of Boston, Cambridge, Springfield, and Worcester; local law enforcement, including the Massachusetts Chiefs of Police Association and the Commissioner of the Boston Police Department; seven state attorneys general, including Martha Coakley, Attorney General of Massachusetts; the International Association of Chiefs of Police; the Major Cities Chiefs Association, representing the police chiefs of 56 major U.S. cities; the National Black Police Association; the National Latino Peace Officers Association; and the National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives.

I urge you to support Massachusetts' law enforcement officials and the Commonwealth's right to make its own decisions about how to protect public safety.

Sincerely,
MARY ELIZABETH HEFFERNAN,
Secretary.
MARIAN J. MCGOVERN,
Colonel, Massachusetts State Police.

MAYORS AGAINST ILLEGAL GUNS

''NATIONAL RIGHT-TO-CARRY RECIPROCITY ACT OF 2011,'' SPONSORED BY REP. STEARNS (H.R. 822)

Bottom line: This bill would override the laws of almost every state by forcing each to accept concealed handgun carry permits from every other state, even if the permit holder would not be allowed to carry or even possess a handgun in the state where he or she is traveling. That policy would undercut states' rights and create serious problems for law enforcement. For those reasons, more than 600 mayors, major national and local police organizations, and domestic violence prevention organizations oppose national concealed carry reciprocity and Congress rejected similar legislation in 2009.

States Decide Criteria for Concealed Carry Permits Based on Their Public Safety Needs: Almost all states issue licenses to carry concealed firearms, but the criteria for such permits differ widely, and each state makes its own decision about whether to accept other states' permits based on their respective public safety needs.

Licenses issued: 44 states require permits to carry concealed handguns.

Illinois and Wisconsin do not allow concealed carrying.

Alaska, Arizona, Vermont, and Wyoming allow concealed carrying without a permit.

Criteria Vary Based on Public Safety Needs: Each state with permitting has its own eligibility standards. Those criteria include:

Dangerous misdemeanants: At least 38 states, including Indiana and Pennsylvania, prevent people from carrying concealed weapons if they have certain dangerous misdemeanor criminal convictions beyond domestic violence misdemeanors, which prohibit gun possession under federal law.

Safety training: At least 35 states, including Nevada, require the completion of a gun safety program, many of which include live fire training, or other proof of competency prior to the issuance of a carry permit.

Age restrictions: At least 36 states, including Colorado and Missouri, prohibit individuals under the age of 21 from obtaining concealed carry permits.

Law enforcement discretion: At least 24 states, including Alabama, give permits based on law enforcement discretion.

Alcohol abuse: At least 29 states, including New Mexico and South Carolina, prohibit alcohol abusers from obtaining a concealed carry permit.

Good character: At least 14 states, including Maine, require applicants to demonstrate good character to obtain a concealed carry permit.

Good cause requirement: At least 12 states, including North Dakota, require applicants to demonstrate that he or she has ''good cause'' for obtaining a concealed carry permit.

Short permit renewal period: At least 36 states, including Arkansas, require permit holders to renew their permit at least every five years.

Residents: At least 27 states require applicants to be residents of the state or have some other close tie to the state.

States Decide Whether to Offer Reciprocity: Each state has its own laws on what other states' permits to accept, if any.

30 states recognize permits only from selected states—typically from states with equivalent or higher standards; and

9 states do not recognize any out-of-state permits.

Of the other 11 states, 7 states allow carrying by all out-of-state permit holders, 3 states allow carrying by non-residents without a permit, and Illinois does not currently allow any form of concealed carrying.

What Would H.R. 822 Do? H.R. 822 would require each state to accept concealed carry permits from every other state, usurping each state's right to set its own public safety laws. Those eligible include anyone who holds a concealed carry permit issued by any state and except for those barred under federal law.

Narrow exceptions to reciprocity:

A person cannot obtain a permit from a state that grants permits to non-residents and then use that permit to carry in their own state of residence. However, under H.R. 822, a person can obtain a non-resident permit and use it to carry in 47 other states.

They must carry a government-issued photo ID and their state license.

How Would H.R. 822 Endanger Law Enforcement?

Threatens Safety of Police Officers: H.R. 822 would create serious and potentially life threatening situations for law enforcement officers.

For example, during traffic stops, it will be nearly impossible for law enforcement officers to verify the validity of 48 different carry permits—forcing officers to make split-second decisions for their own safety in an already dangerous situation.

H.R. 822 would also enable criminal traffickers to travel to out of state gun markets with loaded handguns in the glove compartment, exposing police to unnecessary danger.

Weakens Law Enforcement's Ability to Detect Criminals:

Inability to prevent gun trafficking: Gun traffickers who have concealed carry permits would be able to bring cars or backpacks full of guns into destination states and present their permit if stopped. As a practical matter, to arrest the traffickers, police would have to observe them in the act of selling guns.

Inability to determine if individuals are in compliance with laws of other states: Officers would have to distinguish between real and fake carry permits issued not only by their own state, but by every state. And in

many cases, officers would have to determine whether a person is entitled to carry a gun, which would depend on their state of residence and is nearly impossible to verify quickly.

Legislative History: In 2009, the Senate defeated the Thune Amendment, a similar legislative proposal to preempt state concealed carry laws.

Who Opposes National Concealed Carry Reciprocity?

Mayors: Over 600 members of the bipartisan coalition of Mayors Against Illegal Guns.

Law Enforcement: Major national law enforcement organizations, including: International Association of Chiefs of Police; Major Cities Chiefs Association, which includes the Police Chiefs of 56 major U.S. cities; the Police Foundation, National Latino Peace Officers Association; National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives.

State and Local Law Enforcement Organizations: Alabama Association of Chiefs of Police, California Police Chiefs Association, Colorado Association of Chiefs of Police, Connecticut Police Chiefs Association, Massachusetts Police Chiefs Association, Minnesota Chiefs of Police Association, Virginia Association of Chiefs of Police, and Wisconsin Association of Chiefs of Police.

Association of Prosecuting Attorneys.

American Bar Association.

National Network to End Domestic Violence—a coalition of 56 domestic violence victim advocacy organizations.

Faiths United—a coalition of over 30 national religious groups.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. NUGENT. Madam Speaker, my colleague on the other side of the aisle talks about a jobs bill. We're not talking about it right now. But if you look at this card, we have over 20 jobs bills that have passed out of this body that are sitting in the Senate today.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, at this time I am proud to yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from New York, the ranking member of the Rules Committee, Ms. SLAUGHTER.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

This is a serious piece of work for me today because less than a year ago, one of our colleagues from Arizona was shot in the head while she was trying to convene with her constituents outside a supermarket. The mayhem was awful. A little 9-year-old girl named Christina-Taylor Green, a baseball fan who just came to see her Congresswoman, was killed. And by all accounts, an extraordinary Federal judge named John Roll died as well as some of GABBY's staff. Numbers of people were wounded. And yet the only person ever considered by this House would be the guy and his right to have that gun. What about the rights for the rest of us? Are we going to have to learn to dance up and down the street to try to escape the bullets? What happens to us? What about an amendment for us to ensure that we can be safe?

The statistics of people now being killed in places of worship, the rising number of people in law enforcement who face unspeakable and awful things because we won't do our job here to disarm people who are mentally ill.

I would like to insert into the RECORD an article from the New York Times on how easy it is for felons, including the mentally ill, to regain their gun rights.

□ 1250

When are we going to reinstate in this House the automatic weapons ban, and why don't we outlaw guns that are so powerful that they serve no purpose at all in a civilized society? When will we allow the Federal authorities to computerize gun sale records so it is easier to hold guilty individuals responsible for their gun crimes?

In the age of iPhones and Androids, our police are tracing gun crimes with scraps of paper and handwritten notes. Surely that is a more important job for us to do here than what we're doing—to say you can carry a concealed weapon anywhere you want to go because that's who we are. Apparently, the Republican majority wants that.

Based on today's bill, they think it is more important to pass legislation that will make it easier to carry a gun to a public gathering, easier to carry a loaded weapon into NFL stadiums, easier to carry a gun to the grocery store on Saturday noon, or into your temple or your church. What in the world? How can we ever explain that to people who have had gun deaths in their family?

The horrible shooting of our colleague wouldn't have been stopped with the passage of today's bill, and no one is made safer by allowing guns into public space. And since last January, Congress hasn't considered a single piece of legislation that would make it harder for a mentally ill individual to get a gun. We have done nothing at all to make sure that another nightmare like the one in Tucson doesn't visit our country yet again, leaving innocent children, men, and women victims to a loaded gun. And yet the only person we care about here is the gun owner.

The only legislation we are considering will make it more convenient to carry your gun even in States that don't want it. Realizing this fact really puts the morality of this agenda into perspective.

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. I yield the gentlelady an additional 1 minute.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. This Congress should be considering legislation that will help the American people, not legislation that fulfills an ideological agenda, which is what we've been doing all year. I urge my colleagues to vigorously oppose today's legislation.

[From the New York Times, Nov. 13, 2011]

FELONS FINDING IT EASY TO REGAIN GUN RIGHTS

(By Michael Luo)

In February 2005, Erik Zettergren came home from a party after midnight with his girlfriend and another couple. They had all been drinking heavily, and soon the other man and Mr. Zettergren's girlfriend passed out on his bed. When Mr. Zettergren went to check on them later, he found his girlfriend naked from the waist down and the other man, Jason Robinson, with his pants around his ankles.

Enraged, Mr. Zettergren ordered Mr. Robinson to leave. After a brief confrontation, Mr. Zettergren shot him in the temple at point-blank range with a Glock–17 semiautomatic handgun. He then forced Mr. Robinson's hysterical fiancée, at gunpoint, to help him dispose of the body in a nearby river.

It was the first homicide in more than 30 years in the small town of Endicott, in eastern Washington. But for a judge's ruling two months before, it would probably never have happened.

For years, Mr. Zettergren had been barred from possessing firearms because of two felony convictions. He had a history of mental health problems and friends said he was dangerous. Yet Mr. Zettergren's gun rights were restored without even a hearing, under a state law that gave the judge no leeway to deny the application as long as certain basic requirements had been met. Mr. Zettergren, then 36, wasted no time retrieving several guns he had given to a friend for safekeeping.

''If he hadn't had his rights restored, in this particular instance, it probably would have saved the life of the other person,'' said Denis Tracy, the prosecutor in Whitman County, who handled the murder case.

Under federal law, people with felony convictions forfeit their right to bear arms. Yet every year, thousands of felons across the country have those rights reinstated, often with little or no review. In several states, they include people convicted of violent crimes, including first-degree murder and manslaughter, an examination by The New York Times has found.

While previously a small number of felons were able to reclaim their gun rights, the process became commonplace in many states in the late 1980s, after Congress started allowing state laws to dictate these reinstatements—part of an overhaul of federal gun laws orchestrated by the National Rifle Association. The restoration movement has gathered force in recent years, as gun rights advocates have sought to capitalize on the 2008 Supreme Court ruling that the Second Amendment protects an individual's right to bear arms.

This gradual pulling back of what many Americans have unquestioningly assumed was a blanket prohibition has drawn relatively little public notice. Indeed, state law enforcement agencies have scant information, if any, on which felons are getting their gun rights back, let alone how many have gone on to commit new crimes.

While many states continue to make it very difficult for felons to get their gun rights back—and federal felons are out of luck without a presidential pardon—many other jurisdictions are far more lenient, The Times found. In some, restoration is automatic for nonviolent felons as soon as they complete their sentences. In others, the decision is left up to judges, but the standards are generally vague, the process often perfunctory. In some states, even violent felons face a relatively low bar, with no waiting period before they can apply.

The Times examined hundreds of restoration cases in several states, among them Minnesota, where William James Holisky II, who had a history of stalking and terrorizing women, got his gun rights back last year, just six months after completing a three-year prison sentence for firing a shotgun into the house of a woman who had broken up with him after a handful of dates. She and her son were inside at the time of the shooting.

''My whole family's convinced that at some point he'll blow a gasket and that he'll

come and shoot someone,'' said Vicky Holisky-Crets, Mr. Holisky's sister.

Also last year, a judge in Cleveland restored gun rights to Charles C. Hairston, who had been convicted of first-degree murder in North Carolina in 1971 for shooting a grocery store owner in the head with a shotgun. He also had another felony conviction, in 1995, for corruption of a minor.

Margaret C. Love, a pardon lawyer based in Washington, D.C., who has researched gun rights restoration laws, estimated that, depending on the type of crime, in more than half the states felons have a reasonable chance of getting back their gun rights.

That universe could well expand, as pro-gun groups shed a historical reluctance to advocate publicly for gun rights for felons. Lawyers litigating Second Amendment issues are also starting to challenge the more restrictive restoration laws. Pro-gun groups have pressed the issue in the last few years in states as diverse as Alaska, Ohio, Oregon and Tennessee.

Ohio's Legislature confronted the matter when it passed a law this year fixing a technicality that threatened to invalidate the state's restorations.

Ken Hanson, legislative chairman of the Buckeye Firearms Coalition, argued that felons should be able to reclaim their gun rights just as they can other civil rights.

''If it's a constitutional right, you treat it with equal dignity with other rights,'' he said.

But Toby Hoover, executive director of the Ohio Coalition Against Gun Violence, contended that the public was safer without guns in the hands of people who have committed serious crimes.

''It seems that Ohio legislators have plenty of problems to solve that should be a much higher priority than making sure criminals have guns,'' Ms. Hoover said in written testimony.

That question—whether the restorations pose a risk to public safety—has received little study, in part because data can be hard to come by.

The Times analyzed data from Washington State, where Mr. Zettergren had his gun rights restored. The most serious felons are barred, but otherwise judges have no discretion to reject the petitions, as long as the applicant fulfills certain criteria. (In 2003, a state appeals court panel stated that a petitioner ''had no burden to show that he is safe to own or possess guns.'')

Since 1995, more than 3,300 felons and people convicted of domestic violence misdemeanors have regained their gun rights in the state—430 in 2010 alone—according to the analysis of data provided by the state police and the court system. Of that number, more than 400—about 13 percent—have subsequently committed new crimes, the analysis found. More than 200 committed felonies, including murder, assault in the first and second degree, child rape and drive-by shooting.

Even some felons who have regained their firearms rights say the process needs to be more rigorous.

''It's kind of spooky, isn't it?'' said Beau Krueger, who has two assaults on his record and got his gun rights back last year in Minnesota after only a brief hearing, in which local prosecutors did not even participate. ''We could have all kinds of crazy hoodlums out here with guns that shouldn't have guns.''

POWERFUL LOBBY PREVAILS

The federal firearms prohibition for felons dates to the late 1960s, when the assassinations of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Senator Robert F. Kennedy, along with rioting across the country, set off a clamor for stricter gun control laws. Congress enacted sweeping legislation that included a provision extending the firearms ban for convicted criminals beyond those who had committed ''crimes of violence,'' a standard adopted in the 1930s.

''All of our people who are deeply concerned about law and order should hail this day,'' President Lyndon B. Johnson said upon signing the Gun Control Act in October 1968.

Even the N.R.A. backed the bill. But by the late 1970s, a more hard-line faction, committed to an expansive view of the Second Amendment, had taken control of the group. A crowning achievement was the Firearm Owners Protection Act of 1986, which significantly loosened federal gun laws.

When it came to felons' gun rights, the legislation essentially left the matter up to states. The federal gun restrictions would no longer apply if a state had restored a felon's civil rights—to vote, sit on a jury and hold public office—and the individual faced no other firearms prohibitions.

The restoration issue drew relatively little notice in the Congressional battle over the bill. But officials of the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms identified the provision in an internal memo as among their serious concerns. Some state law enforcement officials also sounded the alarm.

When Senator David F. Durenberger, a Minnesota Republican, realized after the law passed that thousands of felons, including those convicted of violent crimes, in his state would suddenly be getting their gun rights back, he sought the N.R.A.'s help in rolling back the provision. Doug Kelley, his chief of staff at the time, thought the group would ''surely want to close this loophole.''

But the senator, Mr. Kelley recalled, ''ran into a stone wall,'' as the N.R.A. threatened to pull its support for him if he did not drop the matter, which he eventually did.

''The N.R.A. slammed the door on us,'' Mr. Kelley said. ''That absolutely baffled me.''

Until then, the avenues for restoration had been narrow and few: a direct appeal to the federal firearms agency, which conducted detailed background investigations; a state pardon expressly authorizing gun possession, or a presidential pardon. Felons convicted of crimes involving guns or other weapons, as well as those convicted of violating federal gun laws, were expressly barred from applying to the federal firearms agency.

By contrast, the restoration of civil rights, which is now central to regaining gun rights, is relatively routine, automatic in many states upon completion of a sentence. In some states, felons must also petition for a judicial order specifically restoring firearms rights. Other potential paths include a pardon from the governor or state clemency board or a ''set aside''—essentially, an annulment—of the conviction.

Today, in at least 11 states, including Kansas, Ohio, Minnesota and Rhode Island, restoration of firearms rights is automatic, without any review at all, for many nonviolent felons, usually once they finish their sentences, or after a certain amount of time crime-free. Even violent felons may petition to have their firearms rights restored in states like Ohio, Minnesota and Virginia. Some states, including Georgia and Nebraska, award scores of pardons every year that specifically confer gun privileges.

Felons face steep odds, though, in states like California, where the governor's office gives out only a handful of pardons every year, if that.

''It's a long, drawn-out process,'' said Steve Lindley, chief of the State Department of Justice's firearms bureau. ''They were convicted of a felony crime. There are penalties for that.''

Studies on the impact of gun restrictions largely support barring felons from possessing firearms.

One study, published in the American Journal of Public Health in 1999, found that denying handgun purchases to felons cut their risk of committing new gun or violent crimes by 20 to 30 percent. A year earlier, a study in the Journal of the American Medical Association found that handgun purchasers with at least one prior misdemeanor—not even a felony—were more than seven times as likely as those with no criminal history to be charged with new offenses over a 15-year period.

Criminologists studying recidivism have found that felons usually have to stay out of trouble for about a decade before their risk of committing a crime equals that of people with no records. According to Alfred Blumstein, a professor at Carnegie Mellon University, for violent offenders, that period is 11 to 15 years; for drug offenders, 10 to 14 years; and for those who have committed property crimes, 8 to 11 years. An important caveat: Professor Blumstein did not look at what happens when felons are given guns.

The history of the federal firearms agency's own restoration program, though, offers reason for caution. The program came under attack in the early 1990s, when the Violence Policy Center, a gun control group, discovered that dozens of felons granted restorations over a five-year period had been arrested again, including some on charges of attempted murder and sexual assault. (The center also found that many of those granted gun rights were felons convicted of violent or drug-related crimes.) In the resulting uproar and over the objections of the N.R.A., Congress killed the program.

A SUPERFICIAL PROCESS

In 2001, three police officers in the Columbia Heights suburb of Minneapolis were shot and wounded by a convicted murderer whose firearms rights had been restored automatically in 1987, 10 years after he completed a six-and-a-half year prison sentence and then probation for killing his estranged wife and a family friend with a shotgun. (The State Legislature had imposed the 10-year waiting period for violent felons after it discovered what Senator Durenberger had feared: that felons' gun rights would be restored immediately under the Firearm Owners Protection Act.)

What happened in the wake of the shooting is emblematic of how the issue has played out in many states, particularly where the gun lobby is powerful.

Two Democratic legislators sought to impose a lifetime firearms ban on violent felons, although they concluded that for their bills to have any chance of passing, they would also have to set up a process that held out a hope of eventual restoration. They were unable, however, to get their bills through the Legislature.

The issue was taken up the following year by Republican lawmakers, but it became wrapped up in legislation to relax concealed-weapons laws. Initially, a moderate Republican introduced a bill with a 5- to 10-year waiting period for regaining gun rights, but the waiting period was scrapped entirely in the law, written by gun-rights advocates, that was finally enacted in 2003. That law, which does not even mandate that prosecutors be notified of the hearings, requires judges to grant the requests merely if the petitioners show ''good cause.''

''The decision was, we have good judges and we trust them,'' said Joseph Olson, who helped write the statute as president of the advocacy group Concealed Carry Reform Now.

One man who has benefited from a Minnesota judge's gun rights ruling is William Holisky.

Mr. Holisky, an accountant who has struggled with bipolar disorder and alcoholism,

had gone out only a few times with Karen Roman, a nurse he had met online, before she broke up with him.

In August 2006, Ms. Roman was getting ready to work a night shift, putting on makeup in the bathroom of her home in Duluth, when she heard a truck pulling up and a loud boom. Moments later, she heard another boom and glass breaking. She hit the floor, calling out to her teenage son in the other room to do the same as she crawled to the phone to dial 911.

The police arrested Mr. Holisky later that night for drunken driving. Several months later, they charged him in the shooting as well. He pleaded guilty to second-degree assault with a dangerous weapon.

Around the same time, he also pleaded guilty to a felony charge of making terroristic threats against an elderly neighbor. The woman had reported to the police that someone—she suspected Mr. Holisky—had left her a threatening and obscene note. She had also reported a series of escalating incidents that included harassing telephone calls, his entering her apartment and someone's smashing her bedroom window. Mr. Holisky also had a misdemeanor burglary conviction from 2003, for breaking into an ex-girlfriend's house, as well as another misdemeanor conviction for violating an order of protection.

In Mr. Holisky's gun rights hearing in October 2010 in Two Harbors, a small town on the north shore of Lake Superior, Russell Conrow, the prosecutor in Lake County, argued that Mr. Holisky had not yet proved that he could stay clean, given that he had just gotten out of prison. Mr. Conrow also pointed out that there were two active orders of protection against Mr. Holisky.

''There were people still scared of him,'' Mr. Conrow said recently.

For his part, Mr. Holisky took documents from the plea agreement in his assault case, in which the prosecutor in neighboring St. Louis County agreed not to oppose the restoration of his firearms rights.

Mr. Holisky, who is 59, did not specify in his often-rambling petition exactly why he wanted a gun. He described his behavior in 2006 as an ''aberration.''

The county judge, Kenneth Sandvik, was set to retire in a few months. He knew Mr. Holisky's family from growing up in the community. Several weeks later, he ruled that Mr. Holisky had met the basic requirements of the law.

In an interview, Judge Sandvik said he had given considerable weight to the St. Louis County prosecutor's agreement not to oppose the restoration of gun rights for Mr. Holisky. But Gary Bjorklund, an assistant St. Louis County attorney, said in an interview that he had been focused on extracting a guilty plea that would send Mr. Holisky to prison and had thought no judge would take a firearms request from Mr. Holisky seriously.

Judge Sandvik acknowledged that he had not looked into the details of Mr. Holisky's assault case, arguing that his job had been only to review what the prosecutor had presented to him.

''We're not investigators,'' he said.

The ease with which Mr. Holisky regained his gun rights does not appear to be an anomaly. Using partial data from Minnesota's Judicial Branch, The Times identified more than 70 cases since 2004 of people convicted of ''crimes of violence'' who have gotten their gun rights back. A closer look at a number of them found a superficial process. The cases included those of Mr. Krueger, who criticized the system as insufficiently rigorous after winning back his gun rights in a perfunctory hearing, and of another man whose petition was approved without even a hearing, even though his felony involved pulling a gun on a man.

The ruling in Mr. Holisky's case prompted members of his family to write a series of frantic e-mails to Judge Sandvik and Mr. Conrow, warning of dire consequences.

It is not entirely clear whether Mr. Holisky, who did not respond to several requests for comment, is legally able to buy a gun at this point, because at least one of the outstanding orders of protection, which expires next year, appears to trip another federal prohibition. But Mr. Holisky has been writing letters to relatives in Texas, threatening legal action if they do not turn over his gun collection.

So far, they have refused.

A KILLER'S SUCCESSFUL PETITION

Just as in Minnesota, violent felons in Ohio are allowed to apply for restoration of firearms rights after completing their sentences. The statute is similarly vague, requiring only that a judge find that the petitioner has ''led a law-abiding life since discharge or release, and appears likely to do so.''

Only a handful of county clerks in Ohio said they could track these cases, producing records on several dozen restorations. They included people who had been convicted of first-degree murder, voluntary manslaughter, felonious assault and sexual battery.

The case of Charles Hairston in Cuyahoga County stands out.

Mr. Hairston was 17 in January 1971, when he shot a man to death in Winston-Salem, N.C. Mr. Hairston and a group of neighborhood toughs had been preparing to rob a local grocery store when the owner, Charles Minor, 55, closed up and headed for his car.

''I am fixing to get him,'' Mr. Hairston told one of his friends, according to witness statements to the police, before he pulled the trigger on a 20-gauge shotgun.

Mr. Hairston spent 18 years in prison before being released on parole in 1989. He moved to Cleveland and started working in heating and cooling, a trade he had learned behind bars.

In 1995, he pleaded no contest to a misdemeanor charge for allegedly grabbing and pushing his wife.

More seriously, later that year he was indicted on 60 counts of rape, felonious sexual penetration and gross sexual imposition; prosecutors charged that he had forced sex upon his stepdaughter, starting when she was 12. He was acquitted of the most serious charges and convicted only of corruption of a minor for one encounter at a motel for which prosecutors were able to provide corroborating evidence beyond the girl's detailed testimony.

Mr. Hairston, who denies the charges and is still fighting the conviction, filed his first gun rights restoration application in 2006 in Cuyahoga County but was summarily denied.

When he filed a new petition two years later, a judge thought he was ineligible and denied him again, though she wrote in her decision that she did not believe Mr. Hairston was likely to break the law again. But an appeals court ruled that the judge had misread the statute, and sent the case back for another hearing late last year.

The county prosecutor's office had vigorously opposed the restoration from the beginning. But Mr. Hairston, who took in several friends as character witnesses, told the judge he had grown up in prison.

''Nearly 40 years ago, you know, I was a dumb kid,'' Mr. Hairston said at his first hearing. He added, ''I am in a situation now where if, God forbid, if someone was to come into my home and attack me, my wife, there isn't a lot I could say about it, there isn't a lot I could do.''

In the end, the judge, Hollie L. Gallagher, granted his petition without comment.

Soon after the judge's ruling, Mr. Hairston obtained a concealed weapons permit from a neighboring county and bought a 9-millimeter semiautomatic handgun.

RETURNING TO CRIME

Erik Zettergren originally lost his gun rights in 1987 because of a felony conviction for dealing marijuana. A decade later, the police went to his house after being called by his ex-wife and discovered a cache of guns. He was convicted of another felony, unlawful possession of a firearm.

He relinquished his weapons to friends but eventually got them back, sometimes hiding them in an old car in his backyard, according to friends. Sometime after that, though, he became worried that the police might come after him again and turned over the guns—two long guns and a Glock pistol—to a friend, Tom Williams.

''I kept them under my bed,'' Mr. Williams said.

In December 2004, Mr. Zettergren successfully petitioned in Kittitas County—a three-hour drive from his home—to have his gun rights restored. (Like Minnesota's, Washington's law allows petitioners to apply anywhere.) Court records show he did not even have a hearing. Instead, his lawyer, Paul T. Ferris, who specializes in these cases, took care of the matter.

Right away, Mr. Zettergren retrieved his guns from Mr. Williams and soon obtained a concealed pistol license. He made something of a sport of showing off his Glock to friends. ''He was so proud of that thing,'' said Larry Persons, a friend. ''He was flashing it in front of everybody.''

Not long after, he would use it in the killing.

Washington's gun rights restoration statute dates to a 1995 statewide initiative, the Hard Times for Armed Crimes Act, that toughened penalties for crimes involving firearms. The initiative was spearheaded, in part, by pro-gun activists, including leaders of the Second Amendment Foundation, an advocacy group, and the N.R.A.

Although it drew little notice at the time, the legislation also included an expansion of what had been very limited eligibility for restoration of firearms rights.

''There were a lot of people who we felt should be able to get their gun rights restored who could not,'' said Alan M. Gottlieb, founder of the Second Amendment Foundation, who was active in the effort.

Under the legislation, ''Class A'' felons—who have committed the most serious crimes, like murder and manslaughter—are ineligible, as are sex offenders. Otherwise, judges are required to grant the petitions as long as, essentially, felons have not been convicted of any new crimes in the five years after completing their sentences. Judges have no discretion to deny the requests based upon character, mental health or any other factors. Mr. Gottlieb said they explicitly wrote the statute this way.

''We were having problems with judges that weren't going to restore rights no matter what,'' he said.

The statute's mix of strictness and leniency makes Washington a useful testing ground.

The Times's analysis found that among the more than 400 people who committed crimes after winning back their gun rights under the new law, more than 70 committed Class A or B felonies. Over all, more than 80 were convicted of some sort of assault and more than 100 of drug offenses.

There were cases like that of Mitchell W. Reed, disqualified from possessing firearms after a 1984 felony cocaine conviction. He also has seven misdemeanor convictions on his record from the 1980s, including for assault. In 2003, he successfully petitioned for

his gun rights in Snohomish County Superior Court.

His wife, Debi Reed, went with him to the hearing and said in an interview that she had been shocked at how easily his rights were restored. He immediately bought a 9–millimeter semiautomatic handgun.

The following year, she said, he beat her up for the first time. In 2008 he became more angry and violent, she said, in one instance putting a gun in her hand during an argument, pointing it at his head and saying he was going to frame her for murder. During another fight that year, he struck her with a gun, giving her a black eye, and held a loaded gun to her head.

Mr. Reed was ultimately arrested in 2009 and charged with harassing and threatening to kill his wife's ex-husband. While those charges were pending, he was arrested on second-degree assault charges after he beat up and tried to strangle his wife. The charging documents also mentioned the 2008 gun episode. He eventually pleaded guilty to third-degree assault and intimidating a witness, as well as fourth-degree assault and harassment.

Jason C. Keller, disqualified because of a 1997 burglary conviction, had his rights restored after a brief hearing in 2006. He waited a few years before buying a Hi-Point .40-caliber semiautomatic pistol, according to his girlfriend at the time, Shawna Braylock. But she did not trust him with the gun because of his temper, making him keep it at his parents' house.

In 2010, Mr. Keller left a Fourth of July party in the late evening, picked up his gun and drove to the house of a woman he knew. He fired several shots as she stood out front with her 9-year-old son; her 6-year-old daughter was sleeping inside. Mr. Keller pleaded guilty to drive-by shooting, a felony.

In Mr. Zettergren's case, his friends said they were shocked that a judge had restored his gun rights, because they knew he was receiving disability payments, in part because of mental health problems.

''Most of the people around here that knew him, knew that he could be dangerous,'' said Darrell Reinhardt, one of Mr. Zettergren's friends.

Mr. Zettergren's mental health issues, in fact, have been at the heart of his efforts to appeal his convictions for second-degree murder, second-degree assault and unlawful imprisonment. He had been in counseling since 2000, and several mental health experts had found he had post-traumatic stress disorder and major depression, saying he had a ''very high degree of psychological disturbance'' and suffered frequent ''flashbacks and disturbing images,'' according to a declaration from a forensic psychologist in one of Mr. Zettergren's appeal briefs. The post-traumatic stress, according to the psychologist, resulted from scenes he had witnessed years before, including his mother's death by electrocution and the shooting death of a friend.

None of this was reviewed by the judge who heard Mr. Zettergren's gun rights petition.

Donna Bly, the mother of Jason Robinson, Mr. Zettergren's shooting victim, considered suing the county for negligence over the decision but could not find a lawyer to take the case. She also tried bringing the issue up with a state legislator but got nowhere.

''This man did not deserve to have his gun rights back,'' she said.

Mr. NUGENT. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

In 2007 a Colorado man named Matthew Murray allegedly wrote online, ''All I want to do is kill and injure as many Christians as I can.'' Murray then went on to a shooting rampage, first killing two young students at a missionary training center outside of Denver. And then at a gathering of 7,000 people in and around the New Life Church in Colorado Springs, Colorado, with a rifle and a backpack full of ammunition, Murray entered the church and opened fire, killing two sisters. Murray was ultimately stopped and killed by a church member and a volunteer security guard, Jeanne Assam, who has a concealed-carry permit and once worked in law enforcement. Assam shot Murray several times, leading him to kill himself.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I would like to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Colorado, a member of the Rules Committee, Mr. POLIS.

Mr. POLIS. I thank the gentleman from Massachusetts.

In hearing the story of my friend from Florida and my colleague on the Rules Committee, again I think it just emphasizes that my State, Colorado, also has a concealed-carry process. We have a must-issue provision. Some of our county sheriffs were not issuing and were denying issuance unreasonably. Again, it highlights that this entire bill is a dangerous solution in search of a problem.

Colorado has reciprocal concealed-carry arrangements with over 30 States, including all of our neighboring States. So you can drive from Colorado to Wyoming in the north, to the south to New Mexico, and east or west, and you're in no danger about your concealed weapon permit not being recognized.

And, yes, there are some States that we don't have a reciprocal agreement from. For instance, the State of Nevada. I fail to be convinced that the proper venue for that is not for the people of the sovereign State of Nevada and the sovereign State of Colorado to elect leadership that will work on a reciprocal carry arrangement if that's what they want to do. If there is a real issue there, and my constituents are hampered by their ability not to have their Colorado concealed weapons permit recognized let's say in the State of California, that's a matter between the States.

Opening the door for Federal intervention in this very sensitive area opens the door to a Federal gun owner registry, which a number of gun rights advocates in my district have expressed a great deal of worry over, as well as opening the door for a whole host of other problems that can come from Washington, D.C., bureaucrats deciding where you can and can't take your guns rather than protecting our Second Amendment in the States.

Some other concerns have been articulated to me from some of the gun owner rights groups in the State of Colorado. They're worried about more onerous standards to acquire a permit. They're worried about a national database of permit holders. They're also worried about this particular provision nullifying the constitutional carry provisions that are on the books in Arizona, Alaska, Vermont, and Wyoming. And that States that have a popular election method of amending the Constitution are able to do so.

So again, what's the problem? I have not had any constituents contact me worried that they can't use their concealed weapons permit in a particular State. I think they are generally, and I have many concealed-carry license holders in my district. I don't happen to be one myself, but they are able to, again, in all the bordering States drive across State borders and not have to worry about relicensing or notifying authorities in those States. I think the gentleman from Florida articulated an example in Colorado where our concealed-carry permit holder helped save some lives, and I think that is a fine and good thing. Again, it is an area of State sovereignty.

I asked the chair of the Judiciary Committee yesterday in Rules whether he thought this provision was constitutionally required to protect the Second Amendment. He responded that no, the State does not have to have a concealed weapons system, a concealed-carry system under the Second Amendment. It is a matter of discretion or policy in that State.

I think this bill runs contrary to State sovereignty and to the privacy of individuals. That's why I encourage my colleagues to vote ''no'' on this bill.

Mr. NUGENT. The gentleman talks about States' rights. We agree, there are States that do not have concealed-carry permits. So it is within the States' rights to decide how they are going to regulate that particular issue in regards to weapons in their State.

Madam Speaker, I would like to yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from North Carolina, Dr. FOXX.

Ms. FOXX. I thank my colleague from Florida for handling the rule.

Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of this rule and the underlying bill. As a life member of the National Rifle Association and strong supporter of the Second Amendment to the United States Constitution, I am pleased to speak in support of H.R. 822, the National Right-to-Carry Reciprocity Act, which will help protect law-abiding American citizens' right to bear arms.

The Supreme Court ruled in District of Columbia v. Heller that ''the inherent right of self-defense has been central to the Second Amendment right,'' and in McDonald v. City of Chicago that the Federal Government can intervene to ensure that State and local governments are not restricting Second Amendment rights. Statistics show correlation between right-to-carry laws and a decrease in violent crime rates. According to NRA estimates based on the FBI's Annual Uniform Crime Report, States that have right-to-carry laws have 22 percent lower total violent crime rates, 30 percent lower murder rates, 46 percent lower robbery

rates, and 12 percent lower aggravated assault rates compared to the rest of the country.

Law-abiding citizens have the right to protect themselves from criminals and defend themselves with firearms. Throughout my career in elected office, I have worked with my colleagues to ensure that American citizens maintain their Second Amendment rights.

Each State has different eligibility requirements, and H.R. 822 maintains the State's ability to set its own eligibility. However, the bill would end uncertainty and confusion for concealed-carry permit holders when they travel.

Forty-nine States allow individuals to conceal and carry handguns, and the bill before us would allow individuals who hold a concealed-carry permit in their State of residence to carry that weapon in other States that allow concealed carry. Madam Speaker, this rule should be passed unanimously, as should the underlying bill.

□ 1300

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I would like to insert in the RECORD dissenting views from the Judiciary Committee, entitled, ''Loosening Restrictions on the Carrying of Concealed Guns in Public Does Not Improve Public Safety.''

Concealed carry laws have not made us safer. As a result, forcing states with strict permitting standards to recognize permits issued by states with weak standards would make us even less safe. Proponents of H.R. 822 have cited research by John Lott that has been widely discredited. In fact, as columnist Michelle Malkin has pointed out, Lott has been accused of fabricating a study on which he bases the claim that 98 percent of defensive gun uses involved mere brandishing as opposed to shooting. Malkin reported that Lott incorrectly tried to attribute the data to three different studies, and when another researcher offered to independently verify Lott's findings, Lott claimed to have lost all of his data in a computer crash. He also could not produce any financial records, contemporaneous records or any of the students who supposedly worked on the survey. 78 other studies conclude that guns are far more likely to be used in crime than in self-defense. One such study found that the number of criminal gun uses outnumbered the self-defense use of a gun by a factor of at least 4 to 1.79

At this time I am happy to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. BOREN).

Mr. BOREN. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 822, the National Right-to-Carry Act of 2011. The Second Amendment of the United States Constitution provides citizens with the individual right to keep and bear arms. This right enables Americans to use firearms for self-protection, for hunting, and for other lawful activities.

H.R. 822 would guarantee that individuals who are legally licensed to carry a concealed weapon in their home State could also legally carry a concealed weapon in another State. The bill seeks to protect our fundamental liberty, not restrict it. Just as one State recognizes a driver's license issued by another State, I believe States should recognize conceal-and-carry licenses issued by another.

Today, some States already have reciprocity agreements to recognize the conceal-and-carry laws of other States, while some do not. The result is a piecemeal system where a law-abiding citizen may be required to give up his or her weapon at a State line. If passed, this bill would streamline the system by making it more simple and uniform. H.R. 822 does not create Federal standards for obtaining permits nor does it require States to adopt a specific licensing system. Each State's right to determine its own permitting system will remain intact regardless of H.R. 822.

Since the founding of our Nation, American citizens have had the constitutional right to bear arms, and I believe this legislation is a commonsense solution to preserve that right. I urge my colleagues to vote ''yes'' on the rule today and to support final passage of H.R. 822.

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, at this time I would like to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER).

Mr. BLUMENAUER. It's sad that we're taking time that should be spent on the economy and making communities safer and stronger to facilitate, instead, less rational and less effective gun safety laws.

I deeply appreciate the gentlewoman from New York putting The New York Times article from last Sunday in the RECORD. The gentleman from Florida talks about his experience. Well, in that article is sad evidence. For example, in the State of Washington where that tragic occurrence occurred, since 1995, more than 3,300 felons and people convicted of domestic violence misdemeanors have regained gun rights. And according to the analysis provided by the State court system, of those, more than 400, about 13 percent, have subsequently committed new crimes, and more than 200 committed felonies including murder, assault in the first and second degree, child rape, and drive-by shooting.

The gentleman talks about evidence. Well, the study in the American Public Health Journal referenced in that article found that denying handgun purchases to felons cut the risk of their committing new gun or violent crimes by 20 to 30 percent. And another study by the Journal of the American Medical Association found that handgun purchasers with at least one prior misdemeanor—not a felony, a misdemeanor—were more than seven times as likely as those with no criminal record to be charged with new offenses.

I come from a State that would have its protections undermined by this proposal. Now, I think that the fact that we require character references, that people have to be 21 years of age, and that we prohibit concealed weapon carrying by dangerous criminals—those convicted of a misdemeanor such as assault, harassment, or driving while intoxicated—I think those are reasonable. That's the minimum in Oregon. And instead, the enactment of this legislation will enable a race to the bottom where the lowest common denominator will determine gun safety laws in Oregon. I think that's wrong.

I urge a rejection of the rule and the bill.

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I would like to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Virginia, a member of the Judiciary Committee, Mr. SCOTT.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Madam Speaker, this bill undermines public safety, and that's why law enforcement organizations oppose the bill. It's said that this is no national law established by this legislation. That's right, because if there were a national law, there would be national standards. This is actually worse. The law, in effect, will actually be the law of the State with the weakest concealed weapons permits that will essentially become the law of the land, because you could use that permit in any State. This bill allows people who are ineligible to get a concealed weapons permit in their home State to go to another jurisdiction and get a concealed weapons permit and use that concealed weapons permit anywhere in the country except their home State.

Now States have different minimum standards for concealed weapons, such as some require minimum training so that you know what you're dealing with. Others deny permits to certain sex offenders or domestic violence offenders. All of those minimum standards would be overridden by this bill because permits from other States will have to be recognized.

The basic controversy, Madam Speaker, presented by this bill is the question of what happens if more people carry firearms. Some people believe that if more people carry firearms, the crime rate will go down. The studies that I've seen conclude that if more people are carrying firearms, it is more likely that someone in their home or an innocent neighbor will be killed. That's more likely than the firearm being successfully used to thwart a crime.

We should not undermine public safety. We should allow States to set their own concealed weapons standards and defeat this rule, and if the rule passes, defeat the bill.

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I am happy to yield 1½ minutes to the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MCCARTHY).

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. I thank the gentleman.

Madam Speaker, I rise today in opposition to the rule for H.R. 822. As you know, this committee voted down a

motion to consider the bill under an open rule. This is such an important issue that we really need to have the entire Nation hear about it and have all of us have our voices heard.

I want to make sure that I get to speak on an amendment of mine that is going to be considered. Under my amendment, States would be required to proactively opt-in to the agreements called for by H.R. 822. This would restore the critical decision of who should be able to carry a concealed handgun in our communities back to where it belongs—to the local governments that have to deal with the policing and other consequences such as this provision will do. We also will hear about other amendments that would restore rights back to States and safety back to our communities and some sanity back into this debate.

Madam Speaker, I think it's extremely important that we look at this as a States' rights issue. My State has concealed weapons laws. We allow people to have concealed weapons. But there are other States that do not come up to our standard, and we don't want them coming into our State and telling us what to do. I suggest that we really look at this very carefully, and hopefully my colleagues will definitely vote for my amendment tomorrow when it comes up.

We can deal with this. The Supreme Court has said people have the right to own a gun. They also said localities have the right to make the laws safe for their constituents. I happen to believe that H.R. 822 and the way this rule is written is not good for the United States of America, it's not good for the people of America, and I know it's not good for my State of New York.

□ 1310

Mr. NUGENT. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. JOHNSON).

Mr. JOHNSON of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of the underlying bill and the rule. This is a critical issue with respect to Americans' basic rights.

Courts have held over almost a century and a half that the right to bear arms is simply more than the Second and the 14th Amendment. It decided in the case of Beard v. U.S. in 1895 that citizens were entitled to repel force by force, and entitled to stand their ground and meet any attack made on them by a deadly weapon. They then ruled 3 years ago in the D.C. v. Heller case, where they essentially declared self-defense as an inherent right central to the Second Amendment. And then in the case emanating in my State of Illinois, in the case of McDonald v. City of Chicago, further elaborated and extended that constitutional protection.

So the underlying bill and American citizens' right and the ability to carry firearms from State to State and to have that essential right built in, I think, is critical.

I rise in reluctant support, however, of the rule and the bill only from this standpoint, and that's the reason, in part, for my time here today, which I thank the gentleman for and I thank the Members of this Chamber for.

Illinois is unique in that we have no carry-conceal weapon law. We have no ability on the part of Illinois citizens to defend themselves. We have no right or ability on the part of Illinois citizens to exercise their Second and 14th Amendment rights. This bill, as it now reads, would extend the right only to other States—and I'm supportive of that because I think it's critical that we extend that right—but I am committed, as well as a number of my Illinois colleagues, and I think Second Amendment and fundamental rights Congressmen throughout the United States, to restore that right and to bring that right to Illinois citizens.

Time after time after time, as I visit the coffee houses, as I meet with individuals throughout the district, as I meet with people throughout the State, we are essentially denied in Illinois the rights and privileges of every other citizen of every other State in the Union except Illinois. That's a glaring deficiency, it's an omission, and I believe, frankly, that it strikes at the core of our constitutional guarantees.

I am going to continue to fight, not only on this bill, but on standalone legislation down the line and through the process to bring to Illinois the same rights, keep and bear arms, Second and 14th Amendment rights, that other citizens have throughout the country. It's extraordinarily important. It reaches at the essence of our Constitution, the essence of our guarantees as participants in a republic of civil liberties, and I believe that it is critical that we continue the fight now together with my colleagues, Congressman HULTGREN and others from Illinois who have joined me in this process.

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

Mr. NUGENT. I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. JOHNSON of Illinois. I appreciate the time.

I support the bill. I support the rule. But I also support—and I want to conclude by saying this—Illinois citizens' right to keep and bear arms that are being flagrantly denied by our Illinois legislature.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I would like to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia, a member of the Judiciary Committee, Mr. JOHNSON.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I rise in opposition to this rule and the bill, the National Right-to-Carry Reciprocity Act. It's the epitome of Federal arrogance that would impose its will on the 50 State legislatures in this country.

This bill tramples on our system of federalism and endangers the public safety by forcing States to allow the carrying of concealed firearms by out-of-state residents even if they have not met basic licensing or training requirements mandated for carrying in that State.

This total disregard for State laws may come as a shock to Americans who have always been told that these Tea Party Republicans want to shrink the scope of the Federal Government, but instead of creating jobs, we are here considering—strongly—a bill that is opposed by law enforcement officials throughout the States and throughout the country. This bill is nothing more than a piece of special interest legislation for the National Rifle Association.

Under this bill, States will no longer be able to set standards for who may carry concealed, loaded guns in public. States that prevent those convicted of violent crime from carrying a concealed weapon would no longer be able to enforce their State laws. The Second Amendment protects the right to bear arms, but it is not, ladies and gentlemen, absolute.

I urge my colleagues to oppose this rule and the underlying bill.

Mr. NUGENT. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. POMPEO).

Mr. POMPEO. I applaud the House for taking up H.R. 822, the National Right-to-Carry Reciprocity Act. As a veteran and a strong defender of the Second Amendment, I encourage all of my colleagues to support me in this important piece of legislation.

In Kansas, in 2007, we began to issue concealed-carry permits. Since then, Kansas has entered into agreements with many other States across the region to create interstate reciprocity. And while many States have similar agreements, they benefit only a portion of the American population that have this basic fundamental right to keep and bear arms.

The legislation and the rule we're considering today offer an opportunity for the Federal Government to facilitate cohesion between the States without extending its reach further into our laws than is necessary. The National Right-to-Carry Reciprocity Act would allow concealed-carry permits in one State to be legally recognized in another and accepted in every other State of the Union that has similar set of laws.

Under the bill, everyone is still required to follow the firearm laws in each of the different States in which they choose to carry. Our Founding Fathers considered this right to bear arms so important they put it in the Constitution. Allowing this reciprocity is a simple act of extending what our founders originally intended.

I hope that Congress will honor this principle by supporting this rule and passing this bill, which at its core does nothing more than protect the Second Amendment right of every Kansan and every law-abiding citizen.

Mr. NUGENT. Madam Speaker, I advise my colleague from Massachusetts that I have one remaining speaker.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Then I will reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. NUGENT. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. WOODALL).

Mr. WOODALL. I thank my friend on the Rules Committee for yielding.

I rise in strong support of this rule today. Now, I hear a lot of conversation about States' rights here on the House floor—federalism, you know, that debate that James Madison and Thomas Jefferson had more than two centuries ago. It's an important debate to have, and I hope we have that debate on every single thing that we do in this body. I hope we ask ourselves that question every single day: Is this a responsibility and a role the Federal Government ought to be playing, or should this be something that's left to the States?

Sadly, I've heard more of that enthusiasm today than I usually hear down here, but I welcome it—not as a step in the wrong direction, but a step towards that new beginning. I believe that we can absolutely come together around those kinds of uniting issues: Does the Federal Government need to be involved in this or does it not?

The reason I'm in strong support of this rule, however, is that it made 10 amendments in order. You know, this bill, this concealed-carry reciprocity bill—and in fairness, full disclosure, I'm literally a card-carrying member of the concealed-carry bandwagon. I've got my Georgia carry permit here in my pocket, I have since I was 22 and living in a neighborhood that I thought I needed some self-protection living in.

This is a discussion that this body has been trying to have for about 15 years. As long as I can remember watching Congress, this bill has been knocking around in Congress and no one has ever brought it to the floor of the House despite a broad bipartisan majority of the body cosponsoring it. I've always wondered why, because for Pete's sakes, if it's something that a majority of the body is going to cosponsor, then it ought to be something that the majority of the body is going to support, and we ought to bring it to the House floor and let the House work its will.

I'm still struggling with the underlying legislation, but I appreciate this leadership and this Rules Committee for bringing a bill to the floor when more than a majority of the House has cosponsored it. And I appreciate this leadership and this Rules Committee for giving us 10 amendments from which to choose to improve the bill. There are opt-in provisions if you're worried about federalism. There are honor State compact amendments if you're worried about federalism. There are study amendments with the GAO to sort out whether or not there are unintended consequences with regard to nonresident permits.

□ 1320

These choices are out there for us. Not only did this Rules Committee bring forward a bill that other Congresses have not had the courage to bring forward, but it brought it forward in a way that this body can work its will. Eight Democratic amendments, as I recall, two Republican amendments. That's the kind of House I came to Congress as a freshman to work in.

I appreciate the work the Rules Committee did to make this possible, and I appreciate, Madam Speaker, the work of the leadership in guiding us down this path.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I would like to insert into the RECORD an article from The New York Times, entitled, ''So Much for Small Government.''

[From the New York Times, Oct. 25, 2011]

SO MUCH FOR SMALL GOVERNMENT

House Republicans usually claim to be champions of both small government and states' rights, which makes it hypocritical, and downright reckless, that they are obsessed with taking away the authority of states to decide who is allowed to carry a concealed and loaded handgun.

On Tuesday, the House Judiciary Committee voted 19 to 11 for a measure that would do exactly that. Only one Republican, Representative Dan Lungren of California, joined the committee's Democratic members in voting against the bill.

This extreme legislation, the National Right-to-Carry Reciprocity Act of 2011, would obliterate state and local eligibility rules for concealed weapons and the state's discretion to decide whether to honor another's permits.

At least 36 states now set a minimum age of 21 for carrying concealed guns, and 35 states require some sort of gun-safety training. Thirty-eight states prohibit people convicted of certain violent crimes like misdemeanor assault or sex crimes from carrying concealed weapons.

The act would override those rules, requiring states with tight restrictions, like New York and California, to allow people with permits from states with lax laws to tote concealed and loaded guns in their jurisdiction. Wording added by the committee exempts people with a concealed-carry permit from one state from having to meet eligibility standards set by the state they are visiting.

The measure, pushed by the National Rifle Association, would undermine legitimate states' rights by nationalizing lenient gun rules most states have rejected for themselves. It would increase the chance for gun violence and make it harder to combat illegal gun trafficking.

Nevertheless, the full House is expected to approve the bill soon. That would leave it to the Senate, where a similar bill could surface any day, to protect Americans. Much will depend on Senator Harry Reid of Nevada, the majority leader. He voted for a similar measure two years ago while running for reelection. Nevada law enforcement groups oppose the bill, and the state recently ended reciprocity for concealed-carry permits with Utah and Florida out of concern about the weak licensing rules in those states. For the safety of the people in Nevada and elsewhere, he needs to lead in the right direction this time.

I would also like to insert into the RECORD an article by Frank Bruni, entitled, ''Have Glock, Will Travel.''

[From the New York Times, Oct. 24, 2011]

HAVE GLOCK, WILL TRAVEL

(By Frank Bruni)

Between the struggle to fold a sport jacket so it doesn't wrinkle, the 45-minute wait on a security line if I'm flying, the price of gas if I'm driving and the worry either way that I left the coffee maker on, I thought I was pretty well versed in the inconveniences and stresses of domestic travel.

Hardly! Things could be much, much worse, namely if I were a gun owner with a permit to carry a concealed firearm in my home state and an itch to do so in any other state I visited as well.

As matters now stand, I'd have to defer to the laws of those states, which vary widely. In some, my permit from back home would suffice, even if getting it required little more than proper adult identification, proof of residency and a smile. The smile might even have been negotiable. A scowl and a clean felony record and I was good to go.

Other states are sticklers, recognizing only their own concealed-carry permits and granting or withholding those based on such killjoy criteria as whether someone has a violent misdemeanor conviction, a history of alcohol abuse or any actual training in weapon safety. Some free country, ours.

Thank heaven for the National Rifle Association, its sights ever fixed on the forces that try to separate Americans from the deadly firearms they like to keep snug at their sides.

The N.R.A. is pushing a bill, the National Right-to-Carry Reciprocity Act of 2011, that would eliminate the gun-toting traveler's woes. Should it become law, any state that grants concealed-carry permits, no matter how strict the conditions, would be forced to honor a visitor's concealed-carry permit from another state, no matter how lax that state's standards.

Chris W. Cox, the N.R.A.'s chief lobbyist, recently wrote that the current situation ''presents a nightmare for interstate travel, as many Americans are forced to check their Second Amendment rights, and their fundamental right to self-defense, at the state line.''

Nightmare? I think that term better applies to the N.R.A., though it's not the first word that springs to mind when I mull its current effort.

Contradiction, hypocrisy: those words rush in ahead. The bill thus far has more than 200 Republican cosponsors in the House, many of them conservatives who otherwise complain about attempts by an overbearing federal government to trample on states' rights in the realms of health care, tort reform, education—you name it. But to promote concealed guns, they're encouraging big, bad Washington to trample to its heart's content.

Imagine how apoplectic they'd be if, on certain other matters, Washington forced their states to yield to others' values the way this bill, H.R. 822, would compel New York, Massachusetts and Connecticut to honor more permissive gun-control regulations from the South and West. As it happens these three Northeastern states all perform same-sex marriages, which more conservative states do not have to recognize.

It's not fair to talk only about Republicans. H.R. 822 has dozens of Democratic cosponsors as well, and when Democrats controlled Congress for the first two years of Barack Obama's presidency, they made no major progress on gun control. Reluctant to cross the N.R.A., they let it slide.

In 2009, when Harry Reid, the Democratic majority leader in the Senate, was about to enter a tough reelection battle in Nevada, he actually voted in favor of legislation highly

similar to H.R. 822. It was defeated. That same year President Obama signed a law permitting concealed guns in national parks.

The story on the state level has been just as sad over the last few years. Wisconsin recently approved concealed-carry legislation, leaving Illinois the only state in which civilians can't carry concealed firearms. Several states have enacted laws spelling out that concealed weapons can in many circumstances be carried into bars.

One was Tennessee, where a state lawmaker who sponsored the legislation, Curry Todd, sometimes carries a loaded .38-caliber gun. I know this because it was beside him when Nashville Cops pulled him over two weeks ago for drunken driving. They also charged him with carrying a firearm in public while intoxicated. At least that's still illegal.

New York, Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Jersey and several other states don't have reciprocity arrangements that allow someone like Todd to pay an armed courtesy call. That's because New York officials can deny concealed-carry permits on a case-by-case basis, whereas many other states—South Dakota, for example—don't put much stock in such scrutiny.

H.R. 822, now in the House Judiciary Committee, makes a mockery of our diverse values and strategies for public safety. If it were enacted, off to New York the South Dakotan tourist could go, 9-millimeter Glock in tow.

That's not liberty. More like lunacy.

I would also like to insert into the RECORD a letter to the leadership of this House signed by Martha Coakley, the attorney general of Massachusetts, opposing this legislation.

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS, OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL,

Boston, MA, November 9, 2011.

Re H.R. 822, ''National Right-to-Carry Reciprocity Act of 2011''.

Hon. HARRY REID,
Senate Majority Leader, Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, DC.

Hon. MITCH MCCONNELL,
Senate Republican Leader, Russell Senate Office Building, Washington, DC.

Hon. JOHN BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House, The Capitol, Washington, DC.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
House Democratic Leader, The Capitol, Washington, DC.

DEAR HONORABLE CONGRESSIONAL LEADERS: As the chief law enforcement officer for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, I am writing to express my strong opposition to H.R. 822, the ''National Right-to-Carry Reciprocity Act of 2011,'' which would permit individuals who are authorized to carry concealed firearms in their state of residence to carry concealed handguns in other states, forcing states to recognize all other states' permits to carry concealed firearms. Any legislation that would override the concealed carry laws of nearly every state is an affront to states' individual law enforcement efforts and should not be passed into law.

A national concealed carry reciprocity law would force states to recognize every other state's permit to carry concealed, loaded firearms, creating a lowest common denominator approach to public safety that would undermine state and municipal authorities, endanger police officers and make it more difficult to prosecute gun traffickers. As you know, states issue permits to carry concealed firearms, and each state establishes its own criteria in deciding who may carry concealed firearms within its jurisdiction. Indeed, laws permitting individuals to carry concealed weapons vary from state-to-state. For example, some states require residents to complete training and meet other conditions before obtaining a permit, while others do not.

National concealed carry reciprocity could create serious and potentially life-threatening situations for police officers. During police traffic stops, it would be nearly impossible for officers to verify every other state's carry permits. In addition, this legislation would make it easier for gun traffickers to travel across state lines with concealed, loaded firearms, exposing police officers to unnecessary danger and making our communities less safe.

This dangerous initiative is opposed by a broad coalition of national law enforcement organizations, including the International Association of Chiefs of Police, the Major Cities Chiefs Association, and the Police Foundation; more than 600 members of Mayors Against Illegal Guns; various state law enforcement organizations; faith leaders; prosecutors, including the American Prosecutors Association and the American Bar Association; and the National Network to End Domestic Violence, representing 56 domestic violence prevention organizations nationwide—a similar coalition to the one that helped to defeat this legislation on the floor of the Senate in 2009.

Massachusetts has some of most stringent firearms safety protections in the nation. By allowing out-of-state permit holders to bring concealed, loaded firearms into our communities where they would not otherwise be allowed to carry, this legislation would greatly undermine public safety in our Commonwealth. A national concealed carry reciprocity amendment puts our citizens and police at risk and takes away the ability of state and local government to carefully craft laws that protect the public.

I urge Congress to defeat this dangerous initiative.

Cordially,

MARTHA COAKLEY,
Massachusetts Attorney General.

Madam Speaker, we just heard from the gentleman from Georgia that we should somehow be grateful that the Rules Committee majority threw some crumbs our way. But the fact is this is not an open rule. This is not an open process. And for a majority that came in saying that everything was going to be open, they have not kept their promise, and this is far from it. A lot of good amendments were not made in order. Members don't have the right to offer amendments here on the floor.

I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, out of fairness, and especially my Republican friend, in keeping with your promise when you took the majority, please vote ''no'' on this rule.

I will also say, Madam Speaker, that I oppose this bill because it tramples on the rights of my State and it tramples on the rights of a number of States that have reasonable guidelines for who can carry a concealed weapon. And under this bill, those guidelines all go away, so the lowest common denominator carries the day. I don't think that's good for public safety. And if you care about States' rights, it's not goods for States' rights advocates either.

But I want to just spend my final moments just reminding my colleagues that we have an economic crisis before us. There are 14 million Americans without jobs. There are millions more who are underemployed.

We just came back from another congressional break. I don't know where you went on your congressional break, but if you went back to your district, I find it hard to believe that the most pressing issue that faces your constituency is trying to figure out a way to make it easier to carry concealed weapons from State to State to State. I just don't believe that that's what people are talking about, certainly not people in my congressional district. My people are talking about jobs.

When I'm at the airport, people are talking to me about jobs. That's what they want us to focus on, not on reaffirming the national motto of the United States as ''In God We Trust.'' I mean, we wasted a day on that. It didn't need reaffirming. There it is right up there in gold lettering above where the Speaker sits. It's on the back of the dollar bill. Why did we have to spend time debating that?

And today we're not talking about jobs; we're talking about a gun bill? Now, I know that the special interest lobbyist, the National Rifle Association, they like this and they want us to move forward on this. But put the special interests aside for a second and put your constituents first.

What do our constituents want us to do? They want us to fix this economy. We should be debating some of the components of the President's jobs bill or a jobs bill of your own. But we should be talking about how to put people back to work, not spending time here talking about how to make it easier to carry a concealed weapon from State to State to State. This is nuts that we're spending and wasting this time on this issue.

Madam Speaker, the gentleman from Georgia said a majority of Members favor this bill; therefore, we should bring it to the floor. Well, you know what? A majority of Members of this Chamber also support a bill to hold China accountable for the fact that China manipulates its currency and, as a result of that, if we actually held them accountable, we could actually create an estimated 1 million to 1.5 million jobs in America. A majority of Members of this House on both sides of the aisle support that, yet we can't get that to the floor. That will help create some jobs. I mean, there's bipartisan support for that. There's bipartisan support for the components of the President's jobs bill, yet you will not bring it to the floor. Instead, we're dealing with this stuff.

Again, this may be good for pleasing the special interests, but it is not what we should be doing in this Chamber. What's good for this country is to focus on the economy. What's good for this country is to focus on jobs.

I would say to my Republican friends, your indifference on the issue of jobs is shameful, is absolutely

shameful. There are millions of Americans out of work, millions underemployed, people worried about whether they can pay their mortgages, pay their heating bills, pay their prescription drug bills, whether they can afford to send their kids to college, and this is what we're spending our time on? Give me a break.

We need to refocus in this Congress. We need to get our priorities straight.

I'm going to tell you, at the top of the list is not reaffirming the motto of this country. It's not abortion bills or gun bills. What's at the top of the list is jobs. Let's put America back to work.

I urge my colleagues to vote ''no'' on this restrictive rule and vote ''no'' on the underlying bill, and let's bring a jobs bill to this floor.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. NUGENT. Madam Speaker, I am always amazed at what goes on in these Chambers. We hear from the other side of the aisle about talking about jobs, even though this House has passed 20—20, count them—jobs bills. If you don't believe it, read it.

We talk about issues about ''In God We Trust.'' I think it is something that we should affirm here in America, about our belief in God.

I believe that the Second Amendment is not a special interest group. I believe the Second Amendment needs to be protected at all costs. You've heard some in this House that would take away our right to even carry or possess a firearm.

Madam Speaker, in 40 years in law enforcement, it wasn't just guns that killed people; it was every object imaginable, from fists to feet to pipes to kitchen knives and baseball bats.

Madam Speaker, this is about the ability for those that have a legitimate carry permit to go across the State line and not be subject to arrest, someone who makes an honest mistake by going across the State line that doesn't have a reciprocity agreement with their current State and they have a carry permit.

Madam Speaker, this is more about what's right with America in regards to upholding our Second Amendment, our constitutional right. And so those that are in favor of doing away with all types of guns, I guess, it smacks that they disagree with our Founding Fathers and our Second Amendment right.

Madam Speaker, I support this rule and encourage my colleagues to support it as well. H.R. 822 protects the rights of legal gun owners throughout the United States.

I've heard this debate this afternoon about the dangers of gun crime. I completely agree. Guns are dangerous tools that need to be treated with respect. Guns can be used by people to kill other people. However, what I saw in those 40 years as a cop is we need to talk about these in broader terms. What we really need to do is talk about the difference between legal and illegal guns.

Most people who use a gun to kill a human being are not just using a gun they obtained legally, that they are licensed legally, that they got a legal concealed-carry permit for. When you look at the numbers of CCW permit holders that have actually violated the law, at least in the State of Florida, it's .001 percent.

There are people that are criminals, and they're criminals simply for having a firearm. Even in the State of Florida, a felon can't possess a firearm. The discussion of what to do with these folks and how to keep them from illegally possessing a firearm is another debate at another time.

Today we're talking about one thing. We're talking about legal gun owners to legally travel from one State to another that have a concealed weapons permit. I support that effort, and that's why I'm a proud cosponsor—and stand here today—of H.R. 822 and as the sponsor of this rule, H. Res. 463.

I encourage my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support this strongly—I underline ''strongly''—bipartisan legislation.

With that, 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.

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

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

□ 1330

COAST GUARD AND MARITIME TRANSPORTATION ACT OF 2011

Mr. LOBIONDO. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that, during further consideration of H.R. 2838 in the Committee of the Whole pursuant to House Resolution 455, the amendment by Mr. YOUNG of Alaska now at the desk be considered as though printed as the last amendment printed in the House Report 112–267 and be debatable for 10 minutes.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WOODALL). The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Amendment offered by Mr. YOUNG of Alaska:

Page 56, after line 3, insert the following (and conform the table of contents accordingly):

SEC. 612. CONVEYANCE OF DECOMMISSIONED COAST GUARD CUTTER STORIS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Commandant of the Coast Guard shall convey, without consideration, all right, title, and interest of the United States in and to the decommissioned Coast Guard Cutter STORIS (in this section referred to as the ''vessel'') to the Storis Museum, a nonprofit entity of Juneau, Alaska, if the Storis Museum agrees—

(1) to use the vessel as a historic memorial, make the vessel available to the public as a museum, and work cooperatively with other museums to provide education on and memorialize the maritime heritage of the vessel and other maritime activities in Alaska, the Pacific Northwest, the Arctic Ocean, and adjacent oceans and seas;

(2) not to use the vessel for commercial transportation purposes;

(3) to make the vessel available to the United States Government if needed for use by the Commandant in time of war or a national emergency or based on the critical needs of the Coast Guard;

(4) to hold the Government harmless for any claims arising from exposure to hazardous materials, including asbestos and polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), except for claims arising from the use of the vessel by the Government;

(5) to bear all costs of transportation and delivery of the vessel;

(6) to bear all costs of vessel disposal in accordance with Federal law when the vessel is no longer used as a museum; and

(7) to any other conditions the Commandant considers appropriate.

(b) MAINTENANCE AND DELIVERY OF VESSEL.—Before conveyance of the vessel under this section, the Commandant shall make, to the extent practical and subject to other Coast Guard mission requirements, every effort to maintain the integrity of the vessel and its equipment until the time of delivery.

(c) OTHER EXCESS EQUIPMENT.—The Commandant may convey to the recipient of the vessel under this section any excess equipment or parts from other decommissioned Coast Guard vessels for use to enhance the vessel's operability and function for purposes of a public museum and historical display.

Mr. LOBIONDO (during the reading). Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to dispense with the reading of the amendment.

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

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the original request of the gentleman from New Jersey?

There was no objection.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LOBIONDO. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 2838.

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

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 455 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill, H.R. 2838.

□ 1334

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill (H.R. 2838) to authorize appropriations for the Coast Guard for fiscal years 2012 through 2015, and for other purposes, with Mrs. EMERSON (Acting Chair) in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to the order of the House of today, an additional amendment has been made in order.

When the Committee of the Whole rose on Friday, November 4, 2011, amendment No. 8 printed in House Report 112–267 offered by the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. SLAUGHTER) had been disposed of.

AMENDMENT NO. 13 OFFERED BY MR. LANDRY

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 13 printed in House Report 112–267.

Mr. LANDRY. Madam Chairwoman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

At the end of title IV of the committee print, insert the following:

SEC. 409. ABILITY FOR U.S.-FLAGGED OFFSHORE SUPPLY VESSELS TO WORK IN OTHER COUNTRIES.

Any offshore supply vessel that is in compliance with the damage stability requirements of section 1.1.4 of the Guidance on Implementation of IMO Resolution A.673(16) for U.S. Offshore Supply Vessels may carry unlimited amounts of Grade D and E cargoes in addition to the unlimited amounts of drilling fluids outlined in such section 1.1.4 when such vessel is operating seaward of the United States boundary line.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 455, the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. LANDRY) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Louisiana.

Mr. LANDRY. Thank you, Madam Chairman.

My amendment is simple. It says that if another country is fine with having an offshore supply vessel carry a certain cargo in that country's water, then Coast Guard cannot object to it.

I bring this amendment because a company in my district is trying to get a vessel certified to operate in Mexico trying to preserve American jobs. Mexico has okayed the vessel and the AVS has said it has no objection. The only holdup is the Coast Guard. As a result, the company in my district currently has my vessel sitting at the dock and workers sitting at home and capital tied up fighting the regulation.

Again, my amendment is simple. It allows an offshore supply vessel to carry as much oil as it does drilling fluids when that vessel is operating outside of U.S. waters if that vessel is in compliance with the international safety standards for that class vessel.

This is a commonsense change. Drilling fluids have the same flash point as oil, as such, an equal risk. Thus, there should be a uniform standard for how much of that type of cargo the vessel can carry outside of U.S. waters.

Unfortunately, I don't believe that Congress needs to act on this matter. I believe that the Coast Guard can easily make the necessary changes by simply adopting commonsense language and listening to the host country.

For this reason, I would offer to withdraw my amendment if the chairman will promise to help me work with the Coast Guard to get this commonsense approach made and American workers back at work.

I yield to the chairman.

Mr. LOBIONDO. I thank the gentleman from coastal Louisiana.

As we discussed previously, we will be very happy to work with the gentleman to see if we can't figure out a way to do this, and I thank him for his cooperative efforts.

Mr. LANDRY. Madam Chairman, I ask unanimous consent to withdraw my amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. Without objection, the amendment is withdrawn.

There was no objection.

AMENDMENT NO. 15 OFFERED BY MR. PIERLUISI

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 15 printed in House Report 112–267.

Mr. PIERLUISI. I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 56, after line 3, insert the following new section:

SEC. 612. TRANSPORTATION OF PASSENGERS BETWEEN PORTS IN PUERTO RICO.

Notwithstanding chapter 551 of title 46, United States Code, a vessel of 100 gross tons or more not qualified to engage in the coastwise trade may transport passengers between ports in Puerto Rico.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 455, the gentleman from Puerto Rico (Mr. PIERLUISI) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Puerto Rico.

Mr. PIERLUISI. I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MICA).

Mr. MICA. I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I would like to yield to the gentleman from Texas for the purpose of entering into a colloquy.

Mr. OLSON. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Chairman MICA, H.R. 2838 requires standby vessels near oil rigs. Subsequent to Deepwater Horizon, five major ports have made numerous recommendations for improvements in oil spill prevention and response.

□ 1340

Do you agree that it would be preferable to review these recommendations and then make comprehensive decisions on prevention and response improvements rather than to act on a single, limited, expensive response strategy—standby vessels?

Mr. MICA. I agree with the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. OLSON. Will the chairman work with me as the process moves forward to look for oil spill prevention and response strategies that are more effective and less expensive than standby vessels?

Mr. MICA. I understand the gentleman's concern. We will work with him.

Mr. PIERLUISI. Madam Chair, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

My amendment will make a narrow and carefully targeted modification to the Passenger Vessel Services Act of 1886 as it applies to Puerto Rico. This amendment would authorize foreign-flagged vessels—in particular, large yachts and recreational vessels—to transport tourists and other paying passengers between ports within Puerto Rico.

My amendment would remove an outdated obstacle that makes it impossible for the United States to compete with foreign jurisdictions in the Caribbean region when it comes to attracting investment in nautical tourism. Puerto Rico has the highest unemployment rate in the U.S., and increased nautical tourism has the potential to create new American jobs and spur economic growth.

Current Federal law already allows foreign-flagged vessels to transport tourists and other paying customers from a port in Puerto Rico to any port in the Caribbean region outside of Puerto Rico, including to ports in the neighboring U.S. Virgin Islands, where the act does not apply at all. Yet, contrary to common sense, these very same vessels cannot be used to transport tourists and other paying passengers between Puerto Rico's own ports.

For example, individuals and businesses cannot charter larger, foreign-flagged yachts or recreational vessels for tourists and other customers who would like to sail between Puerto Rico's various marinas. My amendment would allow this to happen.

Madam Chair, the status quo simply defies common sense. Puerto Rico consists of multiple islands and is home to 3.7 million American citizens. It has over 700 miles of coastline and over 150 beaches. It is located in the heart of the Caribbean Sea, often recognized as the yachting capital of the world. It is surrounded by island nations like the Dominican Republic, Aruba, and the British Virgin Islands, all of which have established thriving nautical tourism industries. Yet the United States in general, and Puerto Rico in particular, have been unable to participate in this growing market.

According to the U.S. Coast Guard, there are a mere 30 or so recreational vessels now operating in the Caribbean that, under current law, are authorized to transport tourists and other paying customers between Puerto Rico ports. Nothing could better illustrate how the U.S. jurisdiction of Puerto Rico is being disadvantaged by present law.

As noted, the purpose of my amendment is simple and straightforward. Puerto Rico faces many economic challenges. The territory's current unemployment rate exceeds 15 percent. While the increased nautical tourism that my amendment would allow will not alone solve these problems, it does

have the potential to make a meaningful difference for the communities and constituencies I represent.

I hope my colleagues on both sides of the aisle will support this narrow amendment, which simply enables the United States to compete with foreign jurisdictions in the Caribbean's growing nautical tourism market.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LARSEN of Washington. Madam Chair, I claim the time in opposition.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. LARSEN of Washington. I reluctantly rise to object to the amendment offered by the gentleman from Puerto Rico, which would undermine the Jones Act.

The amendment would allow foreign-flagged, foreign-built, foreign-owned, and foreign-manned vessels over 100 gross tons to carry passengers within Puerto Rico. As such, this waiver would disadvantage U.S. maritime operators and U.S. seafarers who might otherwise provide such services. In its present form, we cannot support the amendment.

I commend the gentleman from Puerto Rico for his sincere efforts to expand maritime commerce in Puerto Rico, but I cannot support the amendment he has offered today.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Puerto Rico has 1 minute remaining, and the gentleman from Washington has 4½ minutes remaining.

The gentleman from Washington has the right to close.

Mr. PIERLUISI. In closing, Madam Chair, I hear that there is some opposition, but what frustrates me is that there are no specifics. I haven't yet heard a specific way in which my proposed amendment would harm any U.S.-flagged vessel or industry.

Indeed, the groups that are supposedly opposing have not been able to articulate any specific amendment that I could make to my bill to take care of their concerns. Rather, their concerns appear to be more of a generalized and of a vague quality, namely that they are concerned that allowing any modification or revision to the Passenger Vessel Services Act will eventually lead to other requests for modifications down the line.

I believe we have to be balanced. Puerto Rico has been economically going through a recession now for 5 years in a row, and this could make a difference. Helping Puerto Rico helps the U.S. We are talking, after all, about an American territory, about American jobs, and about the nautical tourism industry in Puerto Rico and the U.S.

I urge my colleagues to support my amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. LARSEN of Washington. Madam Chair, I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Puerto Rico (Mr. PIERLUISI).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. LARSEN of Washington. Madam Chair, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Puerto Rico will be postponed.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. YOUNG OF ALASKA

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to the order of the House of today, it is now in order to consider the amendment by Mr. YOUNG of Alaska.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Madam Chair, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 56, after line 3, insert the following (and conform the table of contents accordingly):

SEC. 612. CONVEYANCE OF DECOMMISSIONED COAST GUARD CUTTER STORIS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Commandant of the Coast Guard shall convey, without consideration, all right, title, and interest of the United States in and to the decommissioned Coast Guard Cutter STORIS (in this section referred to as the ''vessel'') to the Storis Museum, a nonprofit entity of Juneau, Alaska, if the Storis Museum agrees—

(1) to use the vessel as a historic memorial, make the vessel available to the public as a museum, and work cooperatively with other museums to provide education on and memorialize the maritime heritage of the vessel and other maritime activities in Alaska, the Pacific Northwest, the Arctic Ocean, and adjacent oceans and seas;

(2) not to use the vessel for commercial transportation purposes;

(3) to make the vessel available to the United States Government if needed for use by the Commandant in time of war or a national emergency or based on the critical needs of the Coast Guard;

(4) to hold the Government harmless for any claims arising from exposure to hazardous materials, including asbestos and polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), except for claims arising from the use of the vessel by the Government;

(5) to bear all costs of transportation and delivery of the vessel;

(6) to bear all costs of vessel disposal in accordance with Federal law when the vessel is no longer used as a museum; and

(7) to any other conditions the Commandant considers appropriate.

(b) MAINTENANCE AND DELIVERY OF VESSEL.—Before conveyance of the vessel under this section, the Commandant shall make, to the extent practical and subject to other Coast Guard mission requirements, every effort to maintain the integrity of the vessel and its equipment until the time of delivery.

(c) OTHER EXCESS EQUIPMENT.—The Commandant may convey to the recipient of the vessel under this section any excess equipment or parts from other decommissioned Coast Guard vessels for use to enhance the vessel's operability and function for purposes of a public museum and historical display.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 455 and the order of the House of today, the gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Alaska.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Madam Chairman, this is well explained in the unanimous consent by the gentleman from New Jersey.

I just urge the passage of the conveyance of the decommissioned Coast Guard Cutter STORIS to the nonprofit organization in Juneau, Alaska, for use as an historic memorial.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LARSEN of Washington. Madam Chair, I claim the time in opposition, but I do not oppose the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. Without objection, the gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Mr. LARSEN of Washington. I encourage my colleagues to support the Young amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 15 OFFERED BY MR. PIERLUISI

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, the unfinished business is the request for a recorded vote on amendment No. 15 printed in House Report 112–267 by the gentleman from Puerto Rico (Mr. PIERLUISI) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the ayes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The Acting CHAIR. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 322, noes 100, not voting 11, as follows:

[Roll No. 840]

AYES—322

Ackerman	Brooks	Conaway
Adams	Brown (FL)	Conyers
Aderholt	Buchanan	Cooper
Akin	Bucshon	Crawford
Alexander	Buerkle	Crenshaw
Amodei	Burgess	Crowley
Andrews	Burton (IN)	Cuellar
Austria	Butterfield	Culberson
Baca	Calvert	Davis (CA)
Bachus	Camp	Davis (IL)
Barletta	Canseco	Davis (KY)
Barrow	Cantor	Denham
Bartlett	Capito	Dent
Barton (TX)	Capps	DesJarlais
Bass (CA)	Capuano	Deutch
Bass (NH)	Carney	Dingell
Becerra	Carson (IN)	Dold
Benishek	Carter	Dreier
Berg	Castor (FL)	Duffy
Berkley	Chabot	Duncan (SC)
Biggert	Chu	Ellison
Bilbray	Cicilline	Ellmers
Bilirakis	Clarke (MI)	Engel
Blackburn	Clarke (NY)	Eshoo
Bonner	Clyburn	Farenthold
Bono Mack	Coble	Fitzpatrick
Boren	Coffman (CO)	Flake
Boswell	Cohen	Flores
Braley (IA)	Cole	Forbes

Fortenberry
Foxx
Frank (MA)
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Fudge
Gallegly
Garrett
Gerlach
Gibbs
Gibson
Gingrey (GA)
Gohmert
Gonzalez
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (MO)
Green, Al
Griffin (AR)
Griffith (VA)
Grijalva
Grimm
Guinta
Guthrie
Gutierrez
Hall
Hanna
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings (FL)
Hayworth
Heck
Heinrich
Hensarling
Herger
Himes
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Holt
Hoyer
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hurt
Israel
Issa
Jackson (IL)
Jackson Lee (TX)
Jenkins
Johnson (IL)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jones
Jordan
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly
Kildee
King (IA)
Kissell
Kline
Kucinich
Labrador
Lamborn
Lance
Landry
Lankford
Latta
Levin
Lewis (CA)
Loebsack
Lofgren, Zoe
Long
Lowey
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Luján
Lummis
Lungren, Daniel E.
Maloney
Manzullo
Marchant
Marino
Markey
Matheson
McCarthy (CA)
McCaul
McClintock
McGovern
McHenry
McIntyre
McKeon
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
Meeks
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (NC)
Miller, Gary
Moran
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Myrick
Napolitano
Neal
Neugebauer
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Nunnelee
Olson
Olver
Palazzo
Pascrell
Paul
Paulsen
Pearce
Pelosi
Pence
Perlmutter
Peters
Petri
Pingree (ME)
Pitts
Platts
Poe (TX)
Polis
Pompeo
Posey
Price (GA)
Price (NC)
Quayle
Quigley
Rangel
Reed
Rehberg
Reichert
Renacci
Reyes
Ribble
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)
Royce
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Ryan (WI)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schmidt
Schock
Schrader
Schwartz
Schweikert
Scott (SC)
Scott, Austin
Scott, David
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sessions
Sewell
Shuler
Shuster
Simpson
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Southerland
Stark
Stearns
Stivers
Stutzman
Sullivan
Terry
Thompson (MS)
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Tonko
Towns
Tsongas
Turner (NY)
Turner (OH)
Upton
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walberg
Walden
Walsh (IL)
Walz (MN)
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watt
Webster
Welch
West
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Wilson (FL)
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Wolf
Womack
Woodall
Yarmuth
Yoder
Young (FL)
Young (IN)

NOES—100

Altmire
Amash
Baldwin
Berman
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Black
Blumenauer
Boustany
Brady (PA)
Broun (GA)
Campbell
Cardoza
Cassidy
Chaffetz
Chandler
Clay
Cleaver
Connolly (VA)
Costa
Courtney
Cravaack
Critz
Cummings
DeFazio
DeGette
DeLauro
Dicks
Doggett
Donnelly (IN)
Doyle
Duncan (TN)
Edwards
Emerson
Farr
Fattah
Filner
Fincher
Fleischmann
Fleming
Garamendi
Green, Gene
Hahn
Hanabusa
Hastings (WA)
Herrera Beutler
Higgins
Hirono
Hochul
Holden
Honda
Hunter
Inslee
Johnson (GA)
Kind
King (NY)
Kingston
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latham
LaTourette
Lee (CA)
Lewis (GA)
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Lynch
Mack
Matsui
McCarthy (NY)
McCollum
McCotter
McDermott
McNerney
Meehan
Michaud
Miller (MI)
Miller, George
Moore
Nadler
Owens
Pallone
Pastor (AZ)
Peterson
Rahall
Roybal-Allard
Runyan
Sarbanes
Scalise
Schilling
Scott (VA)
Sherman
Shimkus
Speier
Sutton
Thompson (CA)
Tierney
Waxman
Woolsey
Young (AK)

NOT VOTING—11

Bachmann
Bishop (UT)
Brady (TX)
Carnahan
Costello
Diaz-Balart
Gardner
Giffords
Kinzinger (IL)
Murphy (CT)
Payne

□ 1417

Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee, Ms. WOOLSEY, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Messrs. CUMMINGS, LATOURETTE, Ms. DEGETTE, Messrs. PASTOR of Arizona, CONNOLLY of Virginia, LYNCH, Ms. SPEIER, Ms. EDWARDS, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Ms. BALDWIN, Messrs. LEWIS of Georgia, MCNERNEY, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. FLEMING, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER, Messrs. FATTAH, KING of New York, SARBANES, LANGEVIN, and LARSON of Connecticut changed their vote from ''aye'' to ''no.''

Ms. BUERKLE, Messrs. NEUGEBAUER, MCHENRY, Ms. JENKINS, Messrs. PEARCE, CRENSHAW, SCHWEIKERT, GARRETT, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Ms. HAYWORTH, Mrs. CAPPS, and Mr. BUCSHON changed their vote from ''no'' to ''aye.''

So the amendment was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated against:

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Chair, during rollcall vote No. 840 on H.R. 2838, I mistakenly recorded my vote as "aye" when I should have voted "no."

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Chair, today I recorded an erroneous vote on agreeing to Mr. PIERLUISI's amendment to H.R. 2838. I intended to vote "no" on rollcall vote No. 840, on agreeing to Mr. PIERLUISI's amendment to H.R. 2838.

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. POE of Texas). The question is on the amendment in the nature of a substitute, as amended.

The amendment was agreed to.

The Acting CHAIR. Under the rule, the Committee rises.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. CHAFFETZ) having assumed the chair, Mr. POE of Texas, Acting Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2838) to authorize appropriations for the Coast Guard for fiscal years 2012 through 2015, and for other purposes, and, pursuant to House Resolution 455, reported the bill back to the House with an amendment adopted in the Committee of the Whole.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the rule, the previous question is ordered.

Is a separate vote demanded on any amendment to the amendment reported from the Committee of the Whole?

If not, the question is on the amendment in the nature of a substitute, as amended.

The amendment was agreed to.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

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

MOTION TO RECOMMIT

Mr. LARSEN of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I have a motion to recommit at the desk.

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

Mr. LARSEN of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I am opposed to the bill in its current form.

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

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. Larsen of Washington moves to recommit the bill H.R. 2838 to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure with instructions to report the same back to the House forthwith with the following amendment:

At the end of the bill, add the following:

TITLE VIII—PROHIBITION ON CONTRACTOR FRAUD, WASTE, AND ABUSE

SEC. 801. PROHIBITION ON CONTRACTOR FRAUD, WASTE, AND ABUSE.

(a) PROHIBITION.—The Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating and the Secretary of the Army, acting through the Chief of Engineers, are each prohibited from awarding a contract or issuing a delivery order or task order to a person that the Secretary finds has been convicted of—

(1) fraud or a criminal offense in connection with obtaining, attempting to obtain, or performing a contract or subcontract with the Federal Government; or

(2) embezzlement, theft, forgery, bribery, falsification or destruction of records, making false statements, tax evasion, violating Federal criminal tax laws, or receiving stolen property.

(b) PERIOD OF DEBARMENT.—If a Secretary referred to in subsection (a) finds that a person has been convicted of a violation described in subsection (a), the person shall be barred from being awarded a contract or being issued a delivery order or task order from the Secretary for the 10-year period beginning on the date of the conviction.

(c) WAIVER AUTHORITY.—A Secretary referred to in subsection (a) may waive the application of subsection (a) in a specific instance if the Secretary determines that the waiver is necessary in the national security interests of the United States.

□ 1420

Mr. LARSEN of Washington (during the reading). Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the amendment be considered as read.

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

There was no objection.

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

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

The gentleman from Washington is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. LARSEN of Washington. Mr. Speaker, this final amendment prohibits the U.S. Coast Guard and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers from awarding contracts to felons convicted of contract fraud, waste and abuse.

It was just 1 month ago, Mr. Speaker, that a Federal magistrate judge indicted four individuals on an alleged bribery and kickback scheme regarding U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' contracts that defrauded U.S. taxpayers of a minimum of $20 million; taxpayer dollars wasted on BMWs, Rolexes, flat-screen televisions, first-class airline tickets, investment properties across the globe, and the list goes on. In exchange for these kickbacks, the contractors were guaranteed millions in sole-sourced, open-ended contracts with a total award potential of more than $1.7 billion—that's billion with a ''B.'' They were sailing high on taxpayer dollars while other Americans were struggling to stay afloat.

When they were arrested, the coconspirators had their sights set on a $780 million Corps of Engineers' contract. Fortunately, they were apprehended before this very large contract was awarded.

Similarly, in August of this year, a Federal court grand jury in Norfolk, Virginia indicted four coconspirators of multiple alleged criminal charges, including conspiracy, theft of public money, wire fraud, illegal gratuities, false statements and money laundering in connection with a kickback scheme involving Coast Guard vessel repair contracts.

Mr. Speaker, this August 2011 kickback scheme is particularly striking because of the Coast Guard's spectacular contract failures in recent history under the Deepwater program. We all may recall that under Deepwater, the Coast Guard's most infamous failure was the effort to lengthen the Coast Guard's existing 110-foot patrol boats to 123 feet and install new, upgraded information technology equipment. After eight boats were delivered, the Coast Guard determined that the lengthened hulls cracked and were unsafe.

We simply cannot afford to allow one more dollar of our limited Federal resources—of the taxpayers' limited resources—to be wasted. We can help root out these crony kickbacks with this final and straightforward amendment. This is a plain and simple vote to eliminate fraud, waste and abuse.

When you hear about contractors who engage in the largest corruption scheme in modern history, like those in the Army Corps, it's clear they need to be put in the penalty box. This final amendment simply says that contractors who rip off taxpayers can't get more contracts. Specifically, it prohibits the Coast Guard and the Corps of Engineers from awarding a contract to a contractor convicted of fraud or a criminal offense related to obtaining a contract or subcontract with the Federal Government.

It also prohibits a contract for a contractor convicted of embezzlement, theft, forgery, bribery, falsification or destruction of records, making false statements, tax evasion, violating Federal criminal tax laws, or receiving stolen property from participating.

This final amendment ensures that felons convicted of criminal offenses related to receiving government contracts and abusing the public trust will no longer stand to benefit from future Federal contracts for at least 10 years. This amendment will not kill the bill. It will simply immediately add this taxpayer safeguard, and then the House will vote on final passage of the bill right here and right now.

So I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to join me in supporting this final amendment, which will ensure that we bust waste, fraud, and abuse and throw those kickback cronies into the penalty box.

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

Mr. LoBIONDO. Mr. Speaker, I withdraw the point of order and claim the time in opposition.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The reservation is withdrawn.

The gentleman from New Jersey is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. LoBIONDO. Mr. Speaker, we've had a very bipartisan effort in coming to this point on this Coast Guard legislation in our subcommittee and in our full committee. And I must say I'm disappointed that, with all the cooperation and back and forth that we've had, this is an issue that's never been raised. But not withstanding that, bribery and kickbacks are illegal under any circumstances. This is redundant. It's already illegal to do these things.

I urge everyone to vote ''no'' on the motion to recommit and ''yes'' on final passage.

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.

Mr. LARSEN of Washington. Mr. 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 the motion to recommit will be followed by 5-minute votes on passage of H.R. 2838, if ordered, and adoption of House Resolution 463.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 189, nays 235, not voting 9, as follows:

[Roll No. 841]

YEAS—189

Ackerman
Altmire
Andrews
Baca
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
Hinchey
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
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (NY)
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McIntyre
McNerney
Meeks
Michaud
Miller (NC)
Miller, George
Moore
Moran
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Olver
Owens
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor (AZ)
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
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)
Speier
Stark
Sutton
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tierney
Tonko
Towns
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz (MN)
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watt
Waxman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Woolsey
Yarmuth

NAYS—235

Adams
Aderholt
Akin
Alexander
Amash
Amodei
Austria
Bachus
Barletta
Bartlett
Barton (TX)
Bass (NH)
Benishek
Berg
Biggert
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Bonner
Bono Mack
Boustany
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
Dold
Dreier
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers
Emerson
Farenthold
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Flake
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
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
Jordan
Kelly
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
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 (NY)
Turner (OH)
Upton
Walberg
Walden
Walsh (IL)
Webster
West
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Wolf
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Young (AK)
Young (FL)
Young (IN)

NOT VOTING—9

Bachmann
Brady (TX)
Diaz-Balart
Gardner
Giffords
Kinzinger (IL)
Murphy (CT)
Payne
Peterson

□ 1444

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 bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 822, NATIONAL RIGHT-TO-CARRY RECIPROCITY ACT OF 2011

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on adoption of the resolution (H. Res. 463) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 822) to amend title 18, United States Code, to provide a national standard in accordance with which nonresidents of a State may carry concealed firearms in the State, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

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

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 271, nays 153, not voting 9, as follows:

[Roll No. 842]

YEAS—271

Adams
Aderholt
Akin
Alexander
Altmire
Amash
Amodei
Austria
Baca
Bachus
Barletta
Barrow
Bartlett
Barton (TX)
Bass (NH)
Benishek
Berg
Biggert
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Bonner
Bono Mack
Boren
Boswell
Boustany
Brooks
Broun (GA)
Buchanan
Bucshon
Buerkle
Burgess
Burton (IN)
Calvert
Camp
Campbell
Canseco
Cantor
Capito
Cardoza
Carter
Cassidy
Chabot
Chaffetz
Chandler
Coble
Coffman (CO)
Cole
Conaway
Cooper
Costa
Costello
Courtney
Cravaack
Crawford
Crenshaw
Critz
Cuellar
Culberson
Davis (KY)
DeFazio
Denham
Dent
DesJarlais
Dingell
Dold
Donnelly (IN)
Dreier
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers
Emerson
Farenthold
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Flake
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
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
Heinrich
Hensarling
Herger
Herrera Beutler
Higgins
Hochul
Holden
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurt
Issa
Jenkins
Johnson (IL)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jones
Jordan
Kelly
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kissell
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
McIntyre
McKeon
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
Meehan
Mica
Michaud
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller, Gary
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Myrick
Neugebauer
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Nunnelee
Olson
Owens
Palazzo
Paul
Paulsen
Pearce
Pence
Petri
Pitts
Platts
Poe (TX)
Pompeo
Posey
Price (GA)
Quayle
Rahall
Reed
Rehberg
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Richardson
Rigell
Rivera
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross (AR)
Ross (FL)
Royce
Runyan
Ryan (OH)
Ryan (WI)
Scalise
Schilling
Schmidt
Schock
Schrader
Schweikert
Scott (SC)
Scott, Austin
Scott, David
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuler
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Southerland
Stearns
Stivers
Stutzman
Sullivan
Terry
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Turner (NY)
Turner (OH)
Upton
Walberg
Walden
Walsh (IL)
Webster
West
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Wolf
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Young (AK)
Young (FL)
Young (IN)

NAYS—153

Ackerman
Andrews
Baldwin
Bass (CA)
Becerra
Berkley
Berman
Bishop (NY)
Blumenauer
Brady (PA)
Braley (IA)
Brown (FL)
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Carnahan
Carney
Carson (IN)
Castor (FL)
Chu
Cicilline
Clarke (MI)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly (VA)
Conyers
Crowley
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
DeGette
DeLauro
Deutch
Dicks
Doggett
Doyle
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Farr
Fattah
Filner
Frank (MA)
Fudge
Garamendi
Gonzalez
Green, Al
Grijalva
Gutierrez
Hahn
Hanabusa
Hastings (FL)
Himes
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hirono
Holt
Honda
Hoyer
Inslee
Israel
Jackson (IL)
Jackson Lee (TX)
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kildee
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
McNerney
Meeks
Miller (NC)
Miller, George
Moore
Moran
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Olver
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor (AZ)
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Peterson
Pingree (ME)
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rangel
Reyes
Richmond
Rothman (NJ)
Roybal-Allard
Ruppersberger
Rush
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schwartz
Scott (VA)
Serrano
Sewell
Sherman
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Speier
Stark
Sutton
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tierney
Tonko
Towns
Tsongas
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz (MN)
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watt
Waxman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Woolsey
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—9

Bachmann
Brady (TX)
Diaz-Balart
Gardner
Giffords
Kinzinger (IL)
Murphy (CT)
Payne
Van Hollen

□ 1455

Messrs. CUMMINGS, CARNEY, Ms. BROWN of Florida, and Messrs. PALLONE, COHEN, PASCRELL, and LIPINSKI changed their vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

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.

EDEN PRAIRIE HIGH SCHOOL: SCHOLARS AND ATHLETES

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

Mr. PAULSEN. Aside from having one of the best academic programs in Minnesota, the Eden Prairie School District is now home to new State champions in two sports: boys' soccer and girls' volleyball.

Despite going up against an undefeated team, the Eden Prairie boys' soccer team struck early, scoring their first goal in the 4th minute of the 2A State championship. The Eden Prairie Eagles kept up the pressure, outshooting the opposition and winning the game 3–1 while capturing their second State championship since 2002.

Then this past weekend, in what the Minneapolis Star Tribune deemed

''epic,'' the Eden Prairie girls' volleyball team won the 3A State championship throughout five sets, by battling 32 tied scores and 14 lead changes, until Eden Prairie took the final set 22–20 to win the first State championship ever.

So congratulations to these fantastic student athletes at Eden Prairie High School and also to the coaches.

INCREASING JOBS AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

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

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I think there are three things that we need to do in America in order to increase jobs and economic growth.

Number one, we've got to drill our own oil. If you drive a car or if you use goods and services that come to you by a vehicle using an internal combustion engine, somebody had to drill for that gas. Now, do you really believe that Kuwait and Saudi Arabia and Libya are more environmentally sensitive than we are? Of course not. We can do it in an environmentally sensitive way and become oil independent.

Secondly, we need to have tax simplification. I'm outraged when I hear about people not paying their fair share of taxes. We need to have a Tax Code that is a half-an-inch deep and miles and miles wide so that everybody is paying their fair share.

Then, thirdly, we need to change the regulatory environment. Regulators don't need to approach businesses with an ''I gotcha. I'm against you'' attitude, but as more of a partnership—''Hey, we want to work with you on worker safety and environmental protection and product liability laws''—and things like this so that we can work for business and nurture responsible corporate citizenship.

I think we can do that, and that will increase our jobs and our economic growth.

HONORING THE COMMONWEALTH HEALTH CENTER VOLUNTEERS ASSOCIATION

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

Mr. SABLAN. Mr. Speaker, 25 years ago, a group of forward-thinking and civic-minded individuals realized the need for volunteer support and fundraising for the new hospital nearing completion in the Northern Mariana Islands. So was born the Commonwealth Health Center Volunteers Association. The volunteers have made tremendous contributions to our hospitals in Saipan, Tinian, and Rota, and have made an appreciable difference to the experience of every patient who receives health care in the Northern Marianas.

Since its founding, the group has donated over $2 million in medical equipment and supplies. Many of these donations include life-saving diagnostic and treatment equipment and other supplies that dramatically improve the quality of life for patients and their families.

The volunteers have withstood the many challenges that have faced our community over the past 25 years, and I think that's a good indication of their ability to successfully navigate the next 25.

Please join me in celebrating the wonderful men and women who founded and over the years staffed and supported the Commonwealth Health Center Volunteers Association.

Mr. Speaker, 25 years ago, there were two important developments to better serve the health needs of the people of the Northern Mariana Islands. One was the opening of the Commonwealth Health Center; the other, less publicly recognized, but also of great significance, was the formation of the Commonwealth Health Center Volunteers Association. A group of forward-thinking and civic-minded individuals realized the need for volunteer support and fundraising for the new hospital. An initial meeting was organized by the late Dr. Jose T. Villagomez, Gregorio S. Calvo, Juanita Dortch, Angie V. Guerrero, Norma Matthews, and Rosa T. Palacios. These founding individuals, and the many more who have answered the call for volunteers, have made critical contributions to the availability and quality of health care in our local community.

As in every corner of our country, we in the Northern Marianas have always faced the issue of bridging the gap between providing affordable health care and what the true cost of that care is. The CHC Volunteers Association has made tremendous contributions to our hospitals and has made an appreciable difference to the experience of every patient who receives health care in the Northern Marianas. Since its founding, the group has donated over $2 million in medical equipment and supplies which have benefited health care needs on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota. Many of these donations include lifesaving diagnostic and treatment equipment such as telemetry machines, nebulizers, and hemodialysis chairs. In fact, they have been responsible for the purchase of two mammography diagnostic units over the years. The availability of equipment such as this means lives have been saved. It also means our residents do not need to travel to receive medical care with the frequency they once did. The group's current goal is to raise funds for a hyperbaric chamber, which will cost approximately a quarter million dollars. This will help doctors heal their patients more effectively. Many of our residents suffer from diabetes, and the hyperbaric chamber can be used to assist in healing persistent wounds in these patients and decrease the need for amputations. Many of our residents and tourists alike enjoy deep-sea diving, and the equipment can also be used to provide lifesaving treatment in the event an individual suffers decompression illness. Other supplies the Volunteers provide are not lifesaving, but dramatically improve the quality of life for patients: new bedsheets, televisions, and reclining chairs, for example. These make extended hospital stays more tolerable than they once were.

All of this has been accomplished through the CHC Volunteers' unwavering commitment to improving the quality of health care in the Northern Marianas. Every year, the group sets about fundraising with an awe-inspiring vigor: they host a Thanksgiving raffle, an annual Christmas bazaar, walkathons, concerts, and pancake breakfasts, just to name a few. The Volunteers have supported our community in other important ways as well, such as sponsoring health conferences and public education programs. They have also served as an important link between the Commonwealth Health Center and other charitable organizations and businesses. The Volunteers have come a long way since their initial fundraising, which was accomplished by selling cold drinks and snacks from two portable coolers at the hospital. They now operate a full-service gift shop at the hospital to help fund their endeavors.

A testament to the enduring nature of the CHC Volunteers Association is that some of the original volunteers are still actively involved. Twenty-five years after committing to do what they could to improve local health care, Mrs. Amparo LG Tenorio, Mrs. Rita V. Tenorio, and Mrs. Rieko M. Guerrero are still volunteering. The Volunteers have withstood the many challenges that have faced our community over the past 25 years, and I think that's a good indication of their ability to successfully navigate the next 25. Their continued success not only benefits hospital patients, but it serves our entire population. It is important for the youth of today to see all that can be accomplished through good intentions and hard work. The group also serves as a constant reminder of the importance of volunteerism, which is alive and well in the Northern Mariana Islands.

Please join me in celebrating the wonderful men and women who founded, and over the years staffed and supported, the Commonwealth Health Center Volunteers Association.

□ 1500

WHEN YOU MAKE IT IN AMERICA, EVERY AMERICAN CAN MAKE IT

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan). 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. Mr. Speaker, we are going to spend the next hour talking about what's on the minds of most every American: jobs. How do we get a job? What's it going to take to finally go back to work? There's a lot of pain out there, and there's a lot of suffering. And people really wonder what this Congress is going to do to help alleviate this crisis of unemployment.

I want to just share a couple of stories and then ask my colleague from New York (Mr. TONKO) to join me. I was at a meeting that was set up in Berkeley, California, at the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, one of the premiere laboratories in the United States. And the director of the lab was talking about technology transfer; that is, research, the product of that research coming out of the laboratories,

and then jobs being created from that, and new businesses, the entrepreneurial spirit. As he went through his story, I suddenly was so upset, not by the research, not by the technology transfer, but rather by the fact that his final statement was, ''And this company is moving to China to manufacture the product of this research.'' And I thought to myself, How can that be, that the investment of the American people in the research, the education of the engineers and scientists, and then this research coming out of the laboratory and all of the development work, but finally we find that the whole thing winds up in China?

So what we want to talk about today, at least in part, is this: making it in America. What are the governmental policies that will, once again, create a situation where we will be making it in America, and the director of the laboratory won't be telling me in a meeting that, Gee, this great idea is moving offshore so that the manufacturing will take place in China? The reason he said that the manufacturing was going overseas is that there was no capital formation, no capital available. So I'm going to spend just a few moments on this before I turn it over to my colleagues.

Here is what's important. This is where innovation is, and this is where innovation fits into our economy. If you take a look, over the last decade, the enormous growth in the sales of the innovation companies, it's grown from about $1.5 trillion to $3.1 trillion. And all of this is in an innovation economy. So this is exceedingly important in the job growth of this country.

Another thing to keep in mind is this: The innovative companies create the jobs, and they grow quickly. Just looking at the total GDP—the innovation companies that I showed in the previous chart, the total volume, over 21 percent of the American GDP is in these innovation companies. So why is it that this new company can't find the capital to build a manufacturing facility in the United States? Well, one of the reasons is Wall Street and all the games that are going on on Wall Street. But there's also another one. And this is particularly important to California. That is venture capital and IPOs, the initial public offerings.

If you take a look at this, you will notice that a decade ago, we had a lot of public offerings. And over the last several years, we've seen a decline in the public offerings. What the public offerings do is to free up capital by going out to the public, offering stock. That money then comes back to the venture capital firms, and this whole process goes round and round and over and over again, creating jobs in innovation. This is something we're going to have to address, and legislation is going to be introduced in the weeks ahead to address this part of making it in America.

So with that as an introduction to one piece of this larger picture of making it in America, I would like to yield to Mr. JOHN LARSON of the great State of Connecticut, who is our caucus leader.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. I thank the gentleman from California. I thank him for his leadership on this issue, as he has repeatedly taken to this floor in talking about what I think is thematically something that America is in tune with, and that's the understanding and the commitment that we need to return to manufacturing, we need to return to our industrial base, we need to enhance our innovative skills, we need to make things here in America. So Make It in America has become our agenda. Over the last several weeks, there have been more than 1,000-plus town forums and hearings where people have discussed the concept of creating jobs and making things here in America. We all know that for every manufacturing job, that creates four other service-sector jobs. And this is vitally important.

I visited a company with its president, Bing Murphy. The company is called Industrial Air Flow Dynamics. IAFD is a manufacturer in the State of Connecticut. They make everything right here in America. They compete with foreign companies. They're begging to make sure that they get more skilled workers lined up to do something that is extraordinarily unique in manufacturing.

And a recent study and survey in the State of Connecticut indicated that in the State alone, 2,500 manufacturing jobs were going unfilled because of a lack of skills or the appropriate training, and the need, oftentimes, for the small entrepreneur and manufacturer, who doesn't have a huge human resources department, to sort through applicants and to make sure that there's this opportunity for them to do that. But we're hoping to pilot and lead the way in making sure that we're matching skills with manufacturers as we continue to focus on making things here in America. We all know, as the gentleman from California has pointed out, that when you make it in America, every American can make it.

We have an opportunity that is quickly going to disappear, and that is the supercommittee. We have taken the position within the Democratic Caucus that there's a very simple equation: that job creation equals deficit reduction. Let me say that again: Job creation equals deficit reduction. We know from CBO scoring that just getting unemployment—which is at an unacceptable level of more than 14 million-plus Americans and 25 million Americans that are underemployed—that if we get the figure of 9.1 percent unemployment to below 7 percent, we cut the deficit by a third. There is no other silver bullet. There is no other item before us that brings that extraordinary relief that I know people on both sides of the aisle desire.

□ 1510

This supercommittee, by embracing jobs has an opportunity, unprecedented opportunity without a cloture vote that is used to block, and has been used in the Senate, for over 497 bills that we've passed, or without poison pill amendments in the House to allow an up-or-down vote on job creation, the President's proposals, the proposals that have been put forward by our colleagues on the other side of the aisle. And while we may disagree in terms of our approach and methods, we all agree about jobs and so why not embrace this opportunity to create jobs.

If this should fail, it will fail because we didn't embrace job creation. We didn't embrace the concept of making things here in America. We didn't do what Bing Murphy has been doing back in Connecticut, and other manufacturers, focusing on and refusing to do anything other than the patriotic thing, which is to invest in your people, invest in a commitment to America, invest in our manufacturing base so that we can put this country back to work, grow the economy and lower the deficit at the same time.

Americans simply want one thing. As they sit across their dinner tables this evening and have these discussions with their spouses, all they want is the simple dignity that comes from a job. We have an agenda. We have an opportunity. Let's not spoil this chance. Let's take advantage of this opportunity that we have before us to unite the country, put them back to work by making things here in America.

I commend the gentleman for his ongoing work, and I commend our colleagues that have come to the floor this evening to express this deep and abiding concern about jobs, deficit reduction, putting this country back to work, embracing innovation, embracing education, and investing in Americans so that we can succeed.

Thank you so much, and I commend the gentleman from California.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. LARSON, thank you so very much. You speak well of Connecticut and you speak well for Connecticut.

I guess we are going to do our East-West show here. I would just point out before we go there that America has lost about 40 percent of its manufacturing jobs in the last 20 years. We can rebuild it. Most of the economic indicators are that America can be competitive in manufacturing. We need to have a level playing field, so China currency is an issue.

Mr. TONKO, you've been involved in this innovation economy for a long time. As I recall, you ran the State of New York's innovation efforts before you became a Member of Congress. So please share with us today your thoughts, and we'll begin once again the East-West show.

Mr. TONKO. Thank you, Representative GARAMENDI, and thank you for bringing us together for some very thoughtful dialogue about the highest

priority that is held by Americans coast to coast, and that is job creation, job retention. Make no mistake about it, there is no other higher priority.

I agree with the previous statements made by the gentleman from Connecticut. Representative LARSON spoke of the absolute simplistic equation of job creation and retention equals deficit reduction. It doesn't get plainer, simpler, or more sound than that. It is about creating jobs, reducing the deficit. The job growth will move forward in resolving several of our major issues out there.

You know, your focus, Representative GARAMENDI, on the initial public offerings, the IPOs as they're referenced, they have dropped precipitously, and knowing that then is a downward spiral that doesn't find the sort of investing that is absolutely essential is a very troubling notion. You know, many will talk about just leaving it to the capitalist model, let it just work on its own. Well, it's obvious we need to prime the pump in many areas.

You talked about my role in the State of New York. When I served as the head of the New York State Energy Research Development Authority, we found that investing from the public sector sources leveraged tremendous amounts of private sector capital. We see it in this global race. This global race on clean energy and innovation is driven by a robust competition. What we find are the counterparts, the competitors to our American industries are helped along the way with a co-investing, if you will, that comes from their native country. There are those economies out there that are co-investing with their private sector. Here we are asked to cut dollars for research and development, cut dollars for partnerships, cut dollars for incentives that will inspire that sort of robust quality that is essential if Americans are going to compete and compete effectively well. So our trends are out there. They are well documented.

We saw that we ignored manufacturing as a sector of the economy. We ignored agriculture, and we focused primarily on service sector. And then very narrowly within that service sector with the financial sector. We know what happened. We turned our back, let the watchdog leave the cage and allow for freestyle to go amuck. And what happened? Across this country people who had invested all their life savings into the trusted hands of portfolio activity were found without any sort of return. And then America's economy was brought to its knees.

That is not the kind of outcome we want here. So we have said hey, let's go forward and we have witnessed now the growth of some 2.8 million private sector jobs. That's after a trend with the Bush recession of 8.2 million jobs lost. Just this past election day, I think you can see some trends out there that are finding the public swing to the Democratic message because they know it is about job creation and job retention. They know it is about investing in the tools and the tool kits that get us those jobs. We are an ideas economy, and we need to invest in those ideas, build the prototype, allow it to move to a manufacturing sector and be robust in our attempts. Make it in America is the mantra to which we have brought the conference, the Democratic conference, of this House.

We are talking in straightforward language about revitalizing America's manufacturing sector. We can do it and we can compete keenly if we do it smarter. We don't necessarily have to do it cheaper. We have to do it smarter.

I have talked in my tours with manufacturing throughout the 21st Congressional District in the capital region of New York State, I have talked with a number of manufacturers. We have done tours. We have visited and heard front and center from the leadership squad: there are thousands of jobs in this country from coast to coast for which skill sets have to be developed. If we move to an automated phase of manufacturing, there are qualities, there are skills, the academics, the analytical skill sets that are required in order for us to move forward aggressively.

Now there is a sophistication in our society, a sophistication that finds us creating product lines not yet on the radar screen. People will suggest, they will lament that the glory days of manufacturing have passed us by. No, we need to move forward aggressively and proactively in creating the agenda that will develop the products of the future. If someone is to suggest that every idea out there, every concept of a product has been conceived, designed, engineered, manufactured, produced, we are kidding ourselves. And so this is an investment in the future. This is a visionary attempt to pull us along into an area that was ignored and ignored, that found that ignoring of the manufacturing sector found us falling into the woes of a recession. And so it's time now for us to do it smart, to do it in a way that invests in our manufacturing base, celebrates the empowerment that small business brings to the fabric of our economy, the small businesses, the economic engine that provides the jump start to our economy. They need the assistance, and that has been our effort here: talk about revitalizing manufacturing, supporting small business, moving forward with education, higher education, and research and development to move the ideas economy along. That's America at her best. That's her pioneer spirit, and let's continue to move in that direction.

Again, thank you for bringing this dialogue to the floor.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. TONKO, thank you very much. The view from New York is very similar to the view from California. We've lost 40 percent of our manufacturing jobs. We can get them back. We need a level playing field. China currency issues are very much on the mind of the Democrats. We want to make sure that China currency is no longer used to the advantage.

But there is also something here, and I will take just a couple of seconds before I turn to my friend from Texas, American manufacturing does exist. It's the great middle class. I want to give you one example where public policy makes all the difference. Near Sacramento, there is a very large and very new heavy manufacturing facility in place. It stretches about a quarter mile, maybe almost a half mile. It is thousands of square feet of buildings, and in those buildings they're manufacturing trolley cars, streetcars, light rail, and they're also manufacturing locomotives. The company is a German company. In fact, it's one of the largest manufacturers in the world—it's Siemens—and they have moved to Sacramento to manufacture these pieces of equipment, transportation equipment, because Federal law said that the money from the Federal Government must be used to buy American made equipment—buy American-made equipment so that we will, once again, make it in America.

□ 1520

Now I happen to have two bills that do that, that extend that stimulus bill law into the future not only for transportation but also for solar systems, wind, and renewed green energy system. Our tax money supports it. Let's use our tax money to rebuild the manufacturing base by buying it in America.

I know the view from Texas is also similar. I've heard SHEILA JACKSON LEE, the honorable Representative from the area of Houston, speak on this issue. She's joining us here today on the floor.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. I thank the gentleman from California and my colleagues from Ohio, Alabama, Minnesota, and New York. I think that is a sufficiently far reach to know that this is a national issue. Mr. GARAMENDI, we thank you from your perch as an insurer, meaning your experience in insurance, which is also a source of funding sometimes. As the insurance industry invests, you know that America is not broke and that America can, in fact, create jobs and do it by manufacturing.

So I'm delighted to see the Make It In America theme continue over and over again. And let me just share some statistics, because as the supercommittee works, one of the challenges is whether or not they are focusing on creating jobs or just cutting taxes for those who do not need tax relief.

Eighty-two percent of Americans say it is important for Congress to produce legislation this year to reduce the Federal deficit through a balanced plan combining spending cuts and also ensuring that all Americans pay their fair share. In a couple of days, will that occur or will we have the same old same old, which is protecting the rich

and not allowing a fair, equal assessment of one's responsibility?

Eighty-four percent of Americans say it's important for Congress to reach a new Federal spending agreement to create jobs rehabilitating schools, improving needs and public transit and preventing layoffs. And 60 percent of those surveyed think the Federal Government should pursue policies to reduce the gap between the wealthiest few and the less well-off Americans. Well, that is what we're talking about today.

I notice that Mr. GARAMENDI had a poster on IPOs are down, particularly small IPOs, and that is a source of cash for investing back into small businesses and manufacturing. We did a survey of the manufacturing companies in our district. My friends, you can turn the corner in your neighborhood and find a building that is making something. We do not have to look for the large conglomerates. I'm delighted that we bailed out the auto industry. They are doing well. But you know them. You know they'll go to Detroit. You know they make big things and not little things. But we actually found that our manufacturers were embedded—by the way, our zoning is nonexistent, so we have a little bit more flexibility. But we found these companies embedded in neighborhoods, down the street and around the corner from different neighborhoods. They are right there amongst us.

And the question is are we going to go into the 46th week when our friends on the other side of the aisle do not focus on how to enhance Make It In America? What I would suggest is that the payroll tax relief would help that is in the—pass the jobs bill, and access to credit, making sure that banks give access to credit so that the startups can have the equal playing field.

But also, my friend, these companies want to expand. When I visited small businesses, happened not to be manufacturers, they all said: Can we have money to expand, to create new offices, new services in the doctors' office, new ways of exploring resources for a small energy company?

So I'm here today to challenge the friends on the other side of the aisle, the Speaker, ready to challenge him to say: You come from Ohio, a working family. You get it, Mr. Speaker. Work with our leader, NANCY PELOSI. Work with our leadership, from the chairman of the caucus who has been so eloquent, JOHN LARSON, on jobs to the whip that talks about Make It In America, Mr. HOYER, and, of course, our vice chair and, of course, our assistant leader, Mr. CLYBURN, and our vice chair, Mr. BECERRA. All of these folks, if I have not left out anyone, have been talking time after time of Make It In America. But more importantly, we are not broke. If we can insist on letting our small businesses and our manufacturers get a leg up and we stop giving giveaways to those who are the beneficiaries of the Bush tax cuts and begin some new concepts in funding, I think we can make it.

I want to close by simply saying to my friends in the private sector, you complain when we talk about pass the jobs bill. Frankly, I think it's a commonsense approach—payroll tax relief, hiring the chronically unemployed, putting to work teachers so that class sizes can go down, educating your next workforce, firefighters, police, et cetera. It is well documented that our large companies have a very flush cash flow. It is well documented that our major banks, our multinational banks, are well endowed with resources. My plea is that all of us become patriots, not party belongers, not card-carrying sign wavers as it relates to what party you're in, and begin to invest in America.

Frankly, our President has stabilized—stabilized—the economy. It's not where we want it to be. It's not bleeding. It's not where we want to go, but it's on the surge up. The numbers will show that it can do that.

We need the kind of partnership with the private sector that is long overdue, and we need the support by our government of supporting our manufacturing. We can come back. Before you know it, we will be percolating along and being the leader, if you will, of manufacturing, businesses, job creation, and investment as not arrogantly so but the model for the world in how do you invest in your people. And I'm looking forward to that starting with supporting a number of initiatives that are already suggested and certainly some that I'm introducing.

But I am just delighted that we have the thinkers that realize that investing in America is not the end but the beginning of a greater and greater America.

Mr. TONKO. Thank you, Representative JACKSON LEE, for your outstanding leadership on behalf of the Texas district that you represent with your outstanding leadership on this floor. You're so right. Everywhere we turn, you can see job creation and what it means to the local regional economy.

I have a touring concept that we do in our district, and we have a roundtable discussion routinely held with the small business community. And it is just profound to go around and see how many people are investing in manufacturing out there; and their product delivery is powerful, and the fact that they're exporting is an encouraging and enthusiastic thought. So it's all about showcasing what can happen.

And just think of it on a grander scale when we provide the underpinnings of support, when we invest in that concept of manufacturing and move forward with the incubator networks and all of the activities that nourish this sort of comeback story that is so essential right now after this economy was brought to its knees by an approach that was hard-hearted to manufacturing. It ignored what was happening. The same is true in agriculture, and we will maybe talk about that in a few minutes.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. You're absolutely right.

Just one point about Make It In America and the idea of companies such as Siemens, our colleague from California, indicated, that they are in California, rightly so. And we should be very, very strong in making sure that our Federal dollars—this is not selfish. We are probably more expansive and liberal than many other countries around the world to ensure that if you're using our Federal tax dollars, you build it and make it in America, and you spread it.

There's a company called Caf, and I know that they're located in New York. We want them to spread some of that construction and building work down in Houston, Texas, because they're building a light rail with $900 million, potentially, of Federal dollars.

So we can do this together, make everybody happy, create jobs, and insist upon putting our families, our young people, and America first in job creation, building buildup and making it in America.

I thank the gentleman.

□ 1530

Mr. TONKO. Absolutely. And I think it is about investing, the key word; investing our way to a stronger tomorrow, investing our way to opportunity, investing our way to prosperity. I see it all the time. The dollars that were invested from State sources, public sources, and some Federal dollars into the capital region of New York that I represent leveraged tremendous private sector dollars with an investment in the bottom-line calculation in nanotechnology, in semiconductor science, in chip manufacturing, and in green collar workforce development. These dynamics are so powerful that they have lifted that region to the first of all hubs in America for job growth of the green collar variety, and in the top five as a hub for high-tech growth. So it happens. When you invest, it happens.

Now, speaking about sound voices for a resurgence in our private sector job growth, in our public sector support networks, for those employees, a tremendously dynamic voice from our new freshman class, Representative TERRI SEWELL from the great State of Alabama.

Representative, thank you for joining us this afternoon. And I know that you've been a very powerful voice for job creation, job retention in our economy.

Ms. SEWELL. Thank you very much. I am indeed delighted to join my colleagues in discussing making it in America.

I think you will all agree that any playbook about job creation must have as its cornerstone the creation of jobs in our small businesses. And so today I rise in support of small businesses and entrepreneurs across the Seventh Congressional District of Alabama, and indeed this Nation.

As America recovers from our economic recession, we must continue to make strategic policy decisions that benefit our economy and encourage job creation. Small businesses play a critical role in our economy. They provide jobs, they spur innovation, they indeed strengthen our economy.

Small businesses are the backbone of our economy and are responsible for generating half of the Nation's gross national product as well as employing over half of its workforce. In fact, over the past decade and a half, America's small businesses and entrepreneurs have created 65 percent of all new jobs in this country. That is why I introduced H.R. 1730, the Small Business Start-Up Savings Account Act. More entrepreneurs will benefit if they are provided better incentives that will allow them to save and start a new business.

On average, an entrepreneur who wants to launch a new business spends on average $80,000 in their first year in startup costs. Entrepreneurs often go into debt to start their own businesses. Many even use their savings from their retirement accounts to build the capital they need to run those small businesses. This bill will allow entrepreneurs to save up to $10,000 per year tax free so they can start their own small businesses. Once an individual starts their small business, funds from a savings account can be used for their operating expenses.

The government can't guarantee a company's success—I think all of us would agree with that—but the government can knock down barriers that prevent hardworking Americans from starting their own businesses.

Innovation is the key to keeping America number one, and small businesses have always been at the forefront of American innovation. We can't expect to start and continue to be competitive in a global economy without making small businesses and the creation of small businesses the centerpiece of our playbook.

As we continue to build our economy, we must give entrepreneurs incentives and the tools they need to prosper right here in America. When American small businesses are given the opportunity to grow and thrive, they help rebuild our country, our country's middle class, and strengthen our economy. We must recommit ourselves to helping create businesses right here in America.

My colleagues have been talking about rebuilding in America and investing in what's good in America. Our small businesses are where it's at. They create the bright and prosperous future that we as Americans want to ensure. Small businesses will help to out-innovate and out-build our other competitors globally. I urge my colleagues to join with me in standing up for small businesses and entrepreneurs across this great Nation and support H.R. 1730, the Small Business Start-Up Savings Act. Now is the time to blend bold, new initiatives with commonsense solutions so that we can strengthen our economy and create jobs right here in America.

I thank my colleagues for letting me join them in this hour in promoting all that is good in America, and in promoting innovation and entrepreneurship right here in America by supporting our small businesses.

Thank you very much.

Mr. TONKO. You are most welcome, Representative SEWELL.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 5, 2011, the gentleman from New York (Mr. TONKO) will control the remainder of the hour.

Mr. TONKO. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Representative SEWELL, absolutely right on in your focus as to the strengthening and the value added of small business.

H.R. 1730 is a powerful response to the needs of small business, making certain that the savings opportunities, especially in those early startup years, are made more valid and more available to small business as a network. Certainly the small business community is a tremendous corporate citizen in the fabric of our communities, and they get tethered into our communities in a way that enables them to grow and prosper, all while adding jobs and providing the intellect and innovative sort of spirit, which is important.

Speaking of colleagues who have been outstanding voices on job creation, job retention, we know that Ohio has been in the news lately. And we have one of those voices from Ohio serving in the Democratic Caucus, one whom I am very proud to know and work with. Representative TIM RYAN, representing communities like Youngstown and Akron, has been a very powerful force in acknowledging that it's investing in job creation that is our number one concern right now.

We've seen what's been happening in Ohio. There is an outburst of pride coming from that State about the activism that is really speaking to and empowering the middle class. And we empower the middle class by providing jobs.

Representative RYAN, thank you so very much for being that outstanding voice.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. I thank the gentleman.

He hit the nail right on the head when he was articulating the kind of things, whether in New York or Ohio or anywhere in the country, really what the essence is, and that's resuscitating manufacturing back in the United States. And that needs to be a goal throughout the country because of what it does for the local economy and what it does for the States, what it does for tax revenue, what it does for the creation of intellectual property, because there are many people on the factory floor actually thinking about how this product can maybe be made differently, manufactured differently, how value could be added to it. It is very important. But what it's going to take, in part, and what's been happening in Ohio is a coalition, I believe, of working class people, of small business people who recognize that we have to make investments into our States and into our country.

And what happened in Ohio last week with the referendum that was trying to dismantle the bargaining rights of public employees, police, fire, teachers—the very people that we need to protect our communities so that we can have good, strong, vibrant small businesses, the very people who are educating our kids and our students who are eventually going to go into these businesses—were under attack.

The upside to this whole thing is that a coalition formed in Ohio, a coalition of working class people who get educated, get trained, have master's degrees, protect us, go into burning buildings, we call them when we get in trouble, they deal with all of the societal problems that go into their classroom, but they are committed to educating our young people. Eighty-two out of 88 counties in Ohio helped beat back this attack, and with over 61 percent of the vote in Ohio, beat back this attack. And the real upside to this whole thing is that a lot of people who are in this coalition of police, fire, teachers, public employees, as well as the private sector unions—the autoworkers, the steelworkers, the plumbers, the pipefitters, the piledrivers and millwrights and the ironworkers and sheet metal workers, there were a lot of these people who used to watch Fox News. They used to listen to Rush Limbaugh. They used to listen to Glenn Beck. And they said, in story after story, after campaigning for this for months, that they realized what's been happening here. They've realized this assault that's been coming in and funded campaigns across the country, big money coming in to try to divide the middle class and try to dismantle the agenda. And I believe that this coalition, Mr. Speaker, is an opportunity for us to have the political coalition needed to recognize what investments we have to make back into our country. That's what happened in Ohio.

□ 1540

People are recognizing that they've been trying to get us divided, who's in a union, who's not in a union, who's in a public sector union, who's in a private sector union, who's black, who's white, who's gay, who's straight; just divide the middle class, divide the working class. And this coalition came together.

And I believe that if we're going to have the kind of investment, if we're going to resuscitate manufacturing in the United States, if we're going to realize that the government certainly can't do everything, but it has to do something, it has to make these investments into engineers and good, solid

public schools, and community colleges, and colleges and Pell Grants, so that you can have the work force available to ignite this kind of economic development that's needed around our country.

These are about investment. And to have 2 to $3 trillion in transportation and infrastructure investments that need to get made, we now need a political coalition to say, hey, let's make these investments. Akron, Ohio does not have $1 billion to finance their combined sewer problem, so let's put these building trades workers back to work, which is going to generate revenue for the City of Akron and Youngstown and Cleveland and Pittsburgh and all these others, which is going to increase their coffers, that they will have money to spend on police and fire and teachers and investments back into the community, and then partner with the private sector.

Ultimately, at the end of the day, the private sector has got to come in and drive this revolution, without a doubt. But it is time for us to make the investments necessary that are going to allow the private sector to come in here and make the private investments that will lead to job creation. So the bills that we have and that we're offering are an alternative vision.

I'll tell one quick story. We were having a conversation one day, a Member of Congress and I, one from the other party, talking about investments into the semiconductor industry. And they were down here lobbying, the semiconductor industry was down here lobbying on investments that need to be made.

And one of our colleagues said well, that's why we're giving you tax cuts, so that you guys in your business can make these investments. And the four or five CEOs said, you don't understand. We're talking about billions of dollars that need to get invested in order for the semiconductor industry to go in and partner and use the technology and the research that has been developed.

So it's the government's job to plant the garden, to till the soil, the sunlight, the water, to grow the plant, and then let the private sector come in and pick the fruits and the vegetables that they may need. That's what we've always done in this country, whether it was military research, NASA, NIH, that's what we did, and that's been a recipe for success for us.

So I'm excited about what's going on in Ohio because I think we finally have the political coalition that is needed to give politicians and leaders in the State and country the backing that they need to push this kind of agenda.

Mr. TONKO. Representative RYAN, what a great coalescing going on in Ohio, and what a statement by the middle class, of people of all backgrounds coming together speaking with one voice, based on a common thread of jobs, the dignity of work, powerful statement. And we should all be motivated and inspired by that outcome.

You talked about government's role to plant the garden. Let me just talk about another sector just to associate with that element of agriculture just for a bit here this afternoon.

Why such a struggle on this House floor to get the dollars for farmers who were impacted by natural disaster?

I saw record flooding in my district. We had wonderfully productive soils in the upstate regions of New York State. You would think that it wasn't part of some industrial sector, that there wasn't an ag sector in our economy. All they were asking for was to have debris removal dollars, to have farm land restoration, crop land restoration dollars at a time when we were impacted by the ravages of Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee. Was that too much to ask?

Well, I'm happy to see that the push here in this House coming from those of us who have visited those districts and really pushed the agenda are able to account for $338.6 million being added so that we can take programs like the Emergency Conservation Program, the Emergency Water Protection Program, and allow for restoration of farm land, debris removal and all the activities that will drive productivity back to the farm.

All they were asking for was a chance to recover from the forces of Mother Nature. And if you can't assist in a situation like that, if it took this tug of war, if it took advocacy, if it took putting a bill in the House to really push everyone to move on behalf of our farmers—you know, I voted against that original package because they said zero additional aid for the ag community. Unacceptable.

So you talk about government planting the garden. That's just a sampling of investing that was critical so you could keep those ag forces going, those ag related jobs. Absolutely critical, not only to our economic recovery, but to the nutritional impact that it bears for all of America's families.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. If the gentleman will yield, I think there's really something to this idea that there's a lot of things that happen that support our economy that we take for granted, that we don't see all the time. And I think what you're talking about, with farmers, you know, food just arrives at the grocery store. You know, a lot of us don't pay enough attention to all the intricacies that go into that getting there.

The same with the police, same with the fire, same with the teachers. You take it for granted that this is always going to be there. But these people who are sanitation workers in your city or town are essential to the functioning of our commerce, and so we've got to pay attention to this stuff and reinvest back into it.

Mr. TONKO. And it took putting the flood lights on to the situation, where in the middle of tragedy we're looking to change the rules; we are looking for offsets in order to provide assistance to our national farmers' impacted farms under water, valuable farm land being eroded away. And we changed rules? I mean, it was unacceptable.

And just speaking to that hardheartedness was an exercise for me that was a learning curve because it took every bit of providing evidence, from pictorial evidence to documentation of loss that finally moved this House to respond to the needs of our farmers.

So, that being said, it's about, I think, investing, as has been said here in this special order hour. It's about investing and believing in America. The middle class needs that empowerment. They deserve and require it.

Think of it. None of the strata can survive without a powerful middle class. Someone needs to build the product, someone needs to purchase the product. Enhancing the purchasing power, growing consumer demand will drive private sector jobs growth. More expectation, more desire to buy products, you put more people on, you develop product line.

It works. It's a simplistic thing to follow. It's a pattern that's sensible. And so what we want to do is make certain that we empower that middle class. We've seen a lot of outbursts about the social and economic injustice out there, and it's about providing a reasonable approach so that our middle class can be vibrant again.

I think it's what people were stating a week ago at the polls. They were saying, we're listening to the Democrats' message; we're embracing it and we're shifting our loyalties. We're now choosing to side with those who are talking about a wise approach, investing in job creation, which equals deficit reduction. Basic, simple, sound.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. And I don't think anybody's of the illusion that somehow a coalition like this is going to agree on every issue. But what happened in Ohio was that there was a prioritization of what really matters, of what are the fundamental issues that it means to be an American, and what's the recipe that America always had that led to our success.

It wasn't an accident that we jumped the Soviet Union in the race to space. It was a concerted effort on behalf of the government, private industry and the people in the country. And we had this recipe that was investments and infrastructure and research and education and making sure we had good regulations in the financial industry. And we were the world power for a long, long time, and we still are.

But we've seen the decrease in wages or stagnant wages for 30 years, and attacking the workers now to say, as they were in Ohio, that it's your fault. You're making too much.

There was a great placard at one of the rallies. The guy said, I make $30,000 a year, I have a Master's Degree and I'm the problem. So this is the kind of coalition I think we need.

I think it gets to, hopefully, a new alternative vision for the country and for

our government which, to me, is it's not about government being too big or too small. It's about the government working.

And if the people, the working class people see that the government is working, that it is regulating its markets, making wise investments, recognizing the value of education and the investments we need to make, then they're going to vote in who's ever doing that.

But this shrink it and drown it in the bathtub and don't make the kind of investments that we made for so many different years is not a recipe for success. It's a recipe for disaster.

□ 1550

Mr. TONKO. I think the people feel at risk when they believe that those who have this highest concentration of wealth have just so much influence on the outcome in Washington that it's unacceptable. And they now know who's paid the price.

You know, the middle class, when given the opportunity, remains silent, or at least mildly content. When you take that away and you then involve this unjust outcome to impact them, then they get angry.

So the outburst here is we need the investing. We want our children to have the opportunity to reach for the American Dream. It has always been the passion that drives this country. And when you talked about the global race on space during the JFK years, President Kennedy acknowledged up front we're going to do this, not because it's easy, but because it's hard.

People know that these are tough decisions, but they also want to hear the commitment. They want to hear conviction. Are we going to support, are we going to be the underpinnings of human infrastructure, the development of a workforce, training, retraining, education, higher education; incentives that provide for research so you can be a land of discovery, a land of creating product line, of traveling into new spheres of influence that can just express the magnanimous quality of America and all she offers?

When you suffocate those areas of potential, you're denying the middle class its chance at the American Dream. And that's what this is about. People see undue influence coming from a very few and denying the vast majority their chance at the American Dream. And that's what this Nation has always been about. It's been there as an ideal. It's been a beacon of hope. It's seen as a garden of opportunity, and we need to culture, move that culture forward in a way that is driven by sound programs, sound projects, sound policy. It's about the programs, projects, and policies.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. And a respect for the workers who are ultimately going to elevate this. And we see that within manufacturing, how the ideas and the intellectual property that come from the factory floor are driven by those workers who are sitting there every day thinking about how this can be done better.

We have so much potential within the workforce that is undeveloped, untapped, and not utilized properly that could lift us up and help us create this whole new economy that is going to get created somewhere by somebody somehow, and it might as well be us. And if we make the proper investments, we have the talent and the creativity in the country to make it happen. But I think it gets back to having a general respect for the workers.

We had firefighters that I met make 30 runs in one day on a rig and get paid 40-some thousand dollars a year. And the runs aren't like me and you running over to vote. They're runs into burning buildings.

Mr. TONKO. With a lot of weight on your back.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Carrying oxygen tanks and everything else. And there just has been a disrespect for that kind of work—the sanitation worker, the custodian, the teacher—pushing the blame of all society's problems onto these public workers in that instance.

Then, now in Ohio, for example, they're coming in and they want to make it a right-to-work State. So those building trade folks who we're going to try to get back to work, there's 20 percent unemployment in the trade. We're trying to get them back to work with the infrastructure investments that we need to make. To say to them, ''You're not going to be allowed to have a fundamental right of collectively bargaining and to be able to negotiate contracts, and it's going to diminish the wages and everything else,'' similar to what happened or what they wanted to do in Ohio—it's about respecting these people. And when you respect them, they'll come to perform, but it takes those investments and that general appreciation.

Mr. TONKO. And essential services that are performed.

You talked about water and sewer opportunities, the construction projects that we require. It's about human infrastructure, capital infrastructure, physical infrastructure. If we feed that with soundness of investment—not just spending and throwing money at something, but with an accountable plan, one with a vision, one with goals, one that embraces a soundness of future—we are ahead of the race of anyone else out there. We can maintain the soundness of leadership in this global economy if we believe in ourselves, if we believe in the American Dream, if we invest.

We've been joined by Representative JOHN GARAMENDI from the great State of California. He kicked us off. The hour came into my hands, and now you're back to revisit. So we thank you Representative GARAMENDI, again, for serving as inspiration to really get the thought process moving and verbalize where we are as a powerful conference in this House and where I think we've attached to the great thinking out there, the overwhelming thinking of Americans.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. TONKO, thank you very much for carrying on; and, Mr. RYAN, thank you for your insight into what is so obvious. The American people do not want their rights taken away from them. They have the right of collective bargaining; you're quite correct about that.

Excuse me for having to step out. My constituents from California were here in town, and interestingly enough, they were talking about one of the jobs programs that we really need to do.

I represent the central valley of California, the great California Delta, the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, the largest estuary on the west coast of the Western Hemisphere, and there's always been severe flooding problems in that area. So they were asking about how are we going to fund the necessary flood projects.

It's been a long, long history of the Federal Government through the Corps of Engineers supporting the construction of levees and other flood protection devices. But all of that seems to be ramping down as this mania of cut, slash, and burn the budget occurs around here.

Now, the President offered the American Jobs Act; and in the American Jobs Act, there's $50 billion for infrastructure, part of which is water systems, sanitation systems, road transportation systems, but also flood control systems—desperately needed in our area. We could probably employ a couple hundred thousand construction workers immediately if somehow this House were to pass the American Jobs Act.

So I'm just thinking about the relationship of what we're talking about here on the floor and what my constituents were talking about, the necessity of developing water projects as well as flood control. We really ought to do that, because we can take these unemployed construction workers, several hundred thousand of them who are now receiving unemployment checks—they're tax takers. We can put them to work building the infrastructure, the foundation for tomorrow's economy, and they become taxpayers.

You started off this conversation with something that is so very, very true—I guess Mr. LARSON did—and that is the best way to deal with the deficit is put Americans back to work. It was an interesting side bar to our work here on the floor; but it fits so well with what we're talking about here, which is jobs, putting people back to work, using our collective powers of citizens of this great country to employ people by building the foundation for future economic growth. And you mentioned education as one of those pieces. There's so much to do.

If you would kind of wrap us up. I think we've got 3 or 4 minutes, and we can go from there.

It's been a good afternoon sharing our thoughts about how we can create

jobs, get Americans back to work, get our economy back to work. And the President's laid out a good, bold program.

Incidentally, it's paid for. We're not going to borrow money to put these construction workers back to work. It's paid for. The way it's paid for is that those 1 percent of Americans, the superwealthy who've had an income of more than a million dollars a year after all of the deductions—that's after adjusted gross income, a million dollars or more—they have enjoyed enormous tax reductions over the last 11 years, what we would ask is some basic fairness, that they contribute to putting Americans back to work with a small increase in their taxes over and above a million dollars. No increase below.

Mr. TONKO. Well, I think to just match some words to what your most recent statement was, we have to think back, too, and look at recent history to have it speak to us. We borrowed totally for the millionaire-billionaire tax cuts and for two wars that were being fought, and now we wonder why we have a problem, a deficit situation, and why we want to blame the worker.

Now, look. We say it's about investing in the human fabric, in the core individual, making certain that the skills that can be unleashed by that investment are put into a work situation that can enable us to be a nation of discovery, a nation of innovation, of design, of invention. That's America in her greatest moments, and I think those moments lie ahead of us.

I'm optimistic that if we do this plan of investment, we will see tremendous growth in our economy. We will see our competitive edge in the global market get all the sharper and more keen. However, it takes that investment. It takes that vision, laser sharp, and it takes the commitment to stand up against this tide to just slash and burn, as you indicated, after so many were witnessing that the very few were given a gift for which we borrowed.

□ 1600

Now we're asking for someone else to have their turn—America's middle class.

Pursuing the American Dream deserves that sort of attention. It deserves the dignity of work. It deserves the respect of those who lead this Nation, and for them to do it in a fashion that is going to respond in fullest measure.

Representative GARAMENDI, it has been a pleasure to join with you on the floor.

Mr. GARAMENDI. The gentleman from New York says it so eloquently.

Long ago, I did a study of the California economy. We decided there were basically five things that needed to be done, and now, from the Federal level, I'd add a sixth. They are the things that you've been talking about:

Education, the best education in the world, so that our workers are capable of carrying on the new tasks.

Research, as I discussed earlier, from our laboratories and our universities of the new products.

We need to make sure the research is there and then take the research out of the laboratories and create the new products—making it in America because manufacturing matters.

The fourth thing is the infrastructure, which I was discussing and that I know you discussed while I was gone here, and laying the foundation upon which the economy will grow—transportation, communication, sanitation, water-flood protection—all of those infrastructure items.

Then we need to always think in this context about our Nation's security and use our money wisely to provide the kind of defense and security that we need. That's also an energy issue, which we didn't bring up today but that we will the next time we talk.

Finally, the sixth thing is one that I think is so very, very important, which is the willingness to change. What we did yesterday will probably not work today or tomorrow, so we must always be willing to change and not be stuck back in the 1790s, but rather deal with the reality of the world in which we live today and change our systems and be willing to adapt and change.

Mr. TONKO. This has been a Special Order hour that I've enjoyed. I thank the gentleman from California.

Mr. GARAMENDI. And I thank you.

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

GOP WOMEN'S HOUR: A BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. RIBBLE). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 5, 2011, the gentlewoman from Ohio (Mrs. SCHMIDT) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mrs. SCHMIDT. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Today, I really want to talk about something that I think is very critical for this Nation. It's about how we get our spending in order.

I came from local government before I got here and then State government before I got here. Actually, I came from a household where I ran the checking account for my husband and myself and our family. In all cases, I balanced things. When I made out my bills once a month, I did what this lady is doing right here: I balanced the checkbook first to see how much money I had in the account so I knew how much I was spending and, more importantly, whether I was overspending, so that next month I could ratchet back on the spending to balance things out. When I was a township trustee, the same thing. We looked at our revenue sheets and our income sheets at every single meeting twice a month and balanced things out. In Ohio, like 49 other States, we have to balance our State budget, in our case, every 2 years.

So you can imagine the surprise I had when I got to Congress and realized we don't balance our budget at the Federal level, that we don't balance our checkbook. I was amazed why we don't do this. Maybe that's the reason we continue to have bloated spending that is weighing down, not just the future that lays before us, but our children's future and their children's future.

In 1982, Ronald Reagan said regarding a balanced budget that only a constitutional amendment will do the job. He said, We've tried the carrot and it failed. With the stick of a balanced budget amendment, we can stop government's squandering, overtaxing ways and save our economy.

Man, that was 29 years ago. I've got to repeat that because that's kind of like where we are today.

Only a constitutional amendment will do the job. We've tried the carrot and it failed. With the stick of a balanced budget amendment, we can stop government's squandering, overtaxing ways and save our economy.

Ronald Reagan was right. In fact, in 1995, under legislation that was in the House, which was controlled by the Republicans under Newt Gingrich, they tried to pass a balanced budget amendment. Lost it by one vote. I believe tomorrow or the next day or sometime this week, under the leadership of JOHN BOEHNER, we're going to try this same thing again. I just think it's imperative that we don't lose that vote.

The American people, I believe, are on the side of myself and my female colleagues who are going to join me here this afternoon, because the American people get the fact that we are not balancing the checkbook. When we don't balance the checkbook, we don't know what we're spending. If we don't know what we're spending, we don't know how to correct our past mistakes and plan appropriately for the future.

So, in the last election in 2010, when a lot of seats were changed in this very room, I believe it was a mandate by the citizens of our great Nation who said, Enough is enough. Stop the spending and stop it now. The United States is staring down the barrel of a $15 trillion accumulation of debt. $3.7 trillion of new debt in just 2 years is more than a figure, my colleagues—it is a wake-up call.

When President Obama took office, he said he would correct the problem, and in 2009, he put out an $821 billion stimulus program to stimulate the economy. Of course it cost us over $1 trillion with interest because, you see, we didn't balance the checkbook, so we really didn't know what that was going to cost. Guess what? It didn't stimulate the economy. It didn't resolve unemployment.

For the last 33 months, it has been over 8 percent. In fact, for 31 of 33 months, it has been at 9 percent or higher. In October of this year, 14 million workers were unemployed, with an additional 8.9 million working part

time because they couldn't find full-time work. There were 2.5 million workers who were available for work but who had to stop actively searching because of poor economic conditions. All told, over 16 percent of the United States workforce is now unemployed or underemployed. I truly believe it's because we can't get our fiscal house in order right here on Capitol Hill, and I believe the linchpin in all that is a balanced budget amendment.

I'm going to turn right now to one of my colleagues to have her weigh in on this, the gentlelady from the good State of Alabama.

Mrs. ROBY. I thank my friend from Ohio for yielding, and I do appreciate the opportunity to spend time again with my GOP women colleagues here on the floor to talk about these important issues.

With your visual here on the floor, I think you have really done a great job of encapsulating what the issue is, which is that hardworking American taxpayers are balancing their budgets every single day. That's why almost 75 percent of Americans are with us on this. They want this balanced budget amendment, and this is a bipartisan action that can be taken in order to restore fiscal sanity. We know that every day there are more and more Americans who are out of work and that there are more and more Americans who have just given up looking for a job. We're not setting a real good example here in Congress when we can't get our fiscal house in order.

□ 1610

I just want to point back to our jobs agenda, the 22 bills that we have sitting over in the hands of the Senate right now that we know will get government out of the way so that the private sector can do what they do best, and that is create jobs. You know, there are so many men and women, small business owners throughout this country that are looking to us to reduce the size of government, get the job-killing regulations out of the way. And they have capital to invest, to create jobs, but they're not doing it because of the uncertainty associated with what's going on right here in Washington, D.C.

Here we have a proposal before us. We have a way for us to restore this fiscal sanity; and that is for us to balance our budget, not spend more money than we bring in. We've talked about this before when we were down here during the debt ceiling debate. You can't pick up the phone and call your credit card company and say, Hey, I owe you all this money, and I can't make my monthly payment, and I can't make the interest payment, so can you make me another loan just so I can pay the interest payment on the money that I already owe you? That's where this Federal Government is right now. Now if you can't do that from your kitchen table with the bills that you owe, why in the world should the Federal Government be allowed to do that either?

So I would just say to my colleagues on the other side of the aisle in both the House and the Senate, let's do this together. Let's do this for the American people. Let's do this for all the people that are out of work who are looking to us to lead by example and get our fiscal house in order, just like the millions of hardworking, tax-paying Americans do every single day.

Thank you for the opportunity again to share this hour with you.

Mrs. SCHMIDT. I thank my colleague from Alabama.

I would just like to add with all of this that I think the reason why we have such uncertainty in the marketplace with the job creators is because they're looking at us and are saying, You lack fiscal discipline here on Capitol Hill.

One of my colleagues said to me, Well, why do we need a balanced budget amendment to do this? Well, quite frankly, because it will tie our hands and force us to do what every single American is doing across the Nation, which is looking at their cash on hand to figure out how much they've got and how much they can spend, balancing the checkbook before they even attempt to pay a bill. And if you don't have it in the form of an amendment, future legislators will be able to undo anything we do here today or tomorrow, and that's why the amendment is critical. It will force us to do what 49 out of 50 States already do, which is what local governments do all across Ohio and across the Nation, which is what families do at their kitchen table each and every month, if not more than a month, balance the checkbook and figure out what's in there.

I now would like to yield to my other good friend, the gentlewoman from Kansas.

Ms. JENKINS. I thank the gentlelady for yielding, and I thank you for your leadership on this important issue.

As a CPA who spent nearly two decades helping American families chart their way toward fiscal responsibility, I can tell you that if you want to get serious about getting your finances in order, then the very first thing you have to do is balance your budget. If we want to see our economy moving again, if we want to see the job market growing again, if we want to ensure that we remain the most powerful and prosperous nation on Earth, then we must balance our budget.

Yet if we've learned one thing over the past few years, it's that we can't expect Washington to balance its books on its own. To really force the tough spending decisions and to ensure we spend our money as efficiently as possible, we must require that Washington balance its budget. To put it frankly, America needs a balanced budget amendment. We came close 16 years ago; but since then, our national debt has grown from $4 trillion to $15 trillion. We're facing a crisis. We need a balanced budget amendment, and we need it now.

But if you don't want to take my word for it, you can take the word of our colleagues from across the aisle who, in the past few years, have said things like this: ''The issue of balancing the budget is not a conservative or liberal one, nor is it an easy one; but it is an essential one.'' Or again, I quote a friend from across the aisle, ''I'm proud to be part of a coalition that is actively working to begin putting our country back on secure economic footing. The balanced budget amendment won't achieve that all by itself, but it will help ensure that we don't repeat the mistakes that helped create our current situation.'' And finally, again, I quote a friend from across the aisle, ''This amendment would send a strong signal to the financial markets, U.S. businesses, and the American people that we are serious about stabilizing our economy for the long term.'' And what did the Democrat leadership say about this very issue in past years? They said they would welcome it. But what are they saying today? No. They're whipping against it.

It is time for our friends across the aisle to put our children before their politics. Stop fighting this landmark achievement out of sheer partisan spite, and do the right things. We all need to support this measure not because it's easy, but we need to show the courage because this is what matters. So let's come together to take a stand for fiscal responsibility, show our kids and grandkids that we cherish their future, and pass the balanced budget amendment.

Mrs. SCHMIDT. I thank my colleague from Kansas. And I couldn't agree with you more. The passage of a balanced budget amendment will legally prevent us from spending more than we take in. It is the only method guaranteed to control our spending. By controlling our spending, we will lower the deficit, which will lower interest rates, which will contribute to greater economic growth. The passage of a balanced budget amendment will provide job creators with a better understanding of the economic environment in which they can expect to do business—that's called certainty—thereby encouraging investment and expansion. I could go on and on.

I will now turn to my good friend from Florida because I want to hear your thoughts on this balanced budget amendment.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. I thank the gentlelady from Ohio for yielding to me, and I congratulate her for her leadership on this very important fiscal issue that really permeates throughout our society and throughout our families and throughout the entire budgetary crisis that we find ourselves in.

I'm so pleased that for the first time in nearly 15 years the House will be voting this week on a constitutional amendment to balance the Federal

budget. As a mother and a grandmother, I have long supported this proposal. It will ensure that we fix the burden—and that's what it is, the burden of endless deficits that has fallen on future generations. Unfortunately, as you know, Mrs. SCHMIDT, the need for this amendment has never been greater. A constitutional amendment can set us on a path to long-term fiscal stability and restore confidence after decades of deficits.

Two years ago, the United States experienced its first trillion-dollar Federal budget deficit. We thought things were bad then. Last year, we experienced our second trillion-dollar deficit. We thought things were bad then. This year, our annual deficit has reached over $1.3 trillion, the third trillion-dollar-plus deficit in our Nation's history. It took the United States over 200 years, from the presidency of George Washington to the presidency of Bill Clinton, to amass the amount of debt that was added since the year 2006. That is shocking. And according to the U.S. Treasury Department, our Nation's debt currently stands at nearly $15 trillion. Think of that astronomical amount, $15 trillion, which amounts to—how much is that per person? Because the figure is so large that we can't fathom, we can't really appreciate what it is. It amounts to a $47,900 tax for every living American. The debt has sharply increased to nearly 100 percent this year, the highest level since World War II. These are alarming statistics.

Growing debt increases the probability of a sudden fiscal crisis during which investors would lose confidence and the government could lose its ability to borrow at affordable rates. If we do nothing, the annual deficit will grow to consume nearly one-fifth of the entire U.S. economy, and the debt would grow to Greece-like levels of over 100 percent. I believe that just as our families and neighbors—like the lady you show there on that poster—have had to tighten our belts during this recession, well, then, the Federal bureaucracy must do the same.

□ 1620

While the budget reforms that we have passed in the House were a good start, only a constitutional amendment can ensure that we will not stray from the path of a balanced budget as we did 10 years ago. A constitutional amendment will help ensure a future of stability for our children and for our grandchildren.

So I urge all of our colleagues on both sides of the aisle to vote in favor of this balanced budget amendment. It's history in the making this week, and I thank Mrs. SCHMIDT for her leadership and for trying to straighten out this fiscal insanity mess that we find ourselves in.

Mrs. SCHMIDT. I thank my good friend from Florida.

As I said a moment ago, a balanced budget amendment will legally prevent us, tie our hands from spending more than we take in. It's the only method available to control spending in Washington, and it will lower our interest rates which will contribute to economic growth.

This balanced budget amendment is a job creator because it puts certainty back into the marketplace. It will remove legislative gimmicks—you know, the kind of accounting gimmicks that say we've cut when we really haven't—from the budgeting process because it will be just like what this woman is doing with her checkbook, how much in, how much is going out, are we in the black or are we in the red.

Since the passage of a balanced budget amendment, or the attempt to pass a balanced budget amendment in 1995 by a bipartisan House and its subsequent failure by one vote in the Senate, the national debt has grown by $9 trillion. You know, if we just had that courageous person in the Senate in 1995 to say yes, I dare say we wouldn't be in the position we are in today. The passage of a balanced budget amendment would be a key step to rebuild, restore, and regain the American public's trust and confidence in the United States, and not just the confidence for the Americans to have in us, but the confidence for our creditors around the world.

This resolution does a couple of things. It prohibits outlays for a fiscal year except for those repayment of debt principal from exceeding total receipts for that fiscal year except those derived from borrowing unless Congress by a three-fifths rollcall vote, none of this voice vote, rollcall, we have to put our card in the machine and show how we vote up on the wall, authorizes a specific excess over the outlay. So if you have to overspend, three-fifths of us are going to have to agree to overspending.

It requires a three-fifths rollcall vote of each Chamber to increase the public debt limit. Again, none of these shenanigans about a voice vote when we're all in the corners of the hallways or back home. Each and every one of us are going to have to take our voting card and put it in the machine and Americans are going to see how we voted right on that screen.

It directs the President to submit a balanced budget to Congress annually. Wouldn't that be a breath of fresh air?

It prohibits any bill to increase revenue from becoming law unless approved by a majority of each Chamber by again a rollcall vote. That means putting your card in the machine and having it displayed on the wall.

It authorizes waivers of those provisions when a declaration of war is in effect or under other specified circumstances involving military conflict. So again, in a case of national emergency where we would be placed in harm's way, it allows for those provisions to occur.

My fellow friends in this Chamber, it is so important that we think about doing this and doing it this week because I do not believe we can wait any longer. You know, the United States, as was said before, has spent almost $15 trillion of accumulated debt, 3.7 of new debt in just 2 years. It's an alarming figure. No wonder our bond creditors are looking at us and shaking their fingers.

Our spending driven debt crisis poses a lethal threat to our country's economic recovery, our national security and our sovereignty and the standard of living for future generations. And, Mr. Speaker, I have a stake in these future generations because not only do I have a wonderful daughter and a great son-in-law, but I have the two best grandsons a grandmother could ever have. And I look at them and I see such potential in their eye. And I look at them and I remember how my ancestors came from Ellis Island with nothing but pennies in their pockets, maybe not even pennies, how my own father started with nothing and worked and worked and worked to put food on the table and give us the promise for a better future. How me, from an ordinary beginning, born and raised on a farm, could end up serving in the U.S. Congress. All of that is the fabric of the American dream. All of that is the potential that we can be and we should be, and I see it being threatened by our overspending.

Mr. Speaker, about 10 days ago I took the Staten Island ferry to Staten Island. You know me, I'm a runner. I was doing my 90th-whatever marathon it was. My friend, my cousin, said let's take the ferry and we did. It reminded me of the critical juncture we are in in our Nation.

On the way down in the cab, where you catch the ferry is real close to the World Trade Center. My daughter lived in New York during the time of the attack on the World Trade Center. I had just taken her to the Windows of the World for dinner just 3 weeks before those towers came crashing down. So I said to the cab driver: Would you mind driving me around, I want to see what the new building looks like. You know, I saw the rebirth of the brick and mortar of that emblem in New York.

And then I got on the boat, on the ferry. The sun was coming up and it was dancing across the water, and I saw Ellis Island. I thought: Wow, my ancestors came through there; my own grandfather with nothing came through there and ended up in Cincinnati. And then I saw the Statue of Liberty. I thought: Oh, my gosh; that's the beacon of hope. That is where people from across the globe want to come to America because they know they have the chance to be the best person they can be. They have the choice and the chance and the opportunity to be what they want to be, to chart their own destiny. And there are so few places around the world that give them that choice.

And then we landed, got to the bridge, the Verrazano Bridge, where we

start the marathon. Because I was in the second wave, we started with ''America the Beautiful'' and then they sang ''New York, New York,'' you know, the Frank Sinatra song. Actually, it wasn't ''America the Beautiful,'' it was ''God Bless America,'' but I digress. And I started to cry. And it wasn't just soft tears, these were tears running down my face and I cried because I realized we are at a crossroad. We could lose all of this. All of this could be lost because we're allowing ourselves to become obese with debt. Let me repeat that, obese with debt.

You know, our First Lady likes to talk about obesity in America. And yes, it's a problem, but we have become obese with debt and we have no road map to get out of it. The road map to get out of it is a balanced budget amendment because it says you can't spend more than you take in. You can't do it. And oh, if you decide in this Chamber to do it, we're going to see how you vote. And it's not just going to be 51 percent, or 50 plus one, it's going to be three-fifths of everybody in this Chamber. And we're going to have to show America how we voted right there on that wall. So if you're going to overspend, you better dog on well have a good reason to do it.

Again, let me repeat what this measure does. It requires the Congress not to spend more than it receives in revenues unless a supermajority, three-fifths vote and a rollcall vote to provide otherwise.

It requires a corresponding three-fifths vote to raise that debt ceiling; again, a rollcall vote.

It requires the President to submit a balanced budget to this auspicious body. It requires him to do that—him or her.

□ 1630

It requires a majority rollcall vote for any proposed bill to increase taxes. So if we want to do this by increasing taxes, you've got to have three-fifths to do that. It also provides for a limited exemption in times of war and serious military conflict. So it protects us in case we have a national strike against us. And it would take effect beginning the fifth fiscal year after the ratification by the States, because my friends, the problem is our national debt crisis.

I would now like to turn to my good friend from North Carolina.

Mrs. ELLMERS. I thank my good friend from Ohio. Thank you for holding this Special Order. The American people are ready for solutions, as you know. We are working so hard here in the House on coming up with those solutions. We will be voting on a balanced budget amendment—and I'm very excited about that—as has been required by the Budget Control Act that we passed in August.

I'm here now as one of those new freshmen. And it is amazing to me and, of course, we all know that for over 200 years we've functioned without the Federal Government having to be held to—

Mrs. SCHMIDT. May I ask a question? When you do your bills, do you do what this lady is doing and balance your checkbook first? What would happen if you didn't do that?

Mrs. ELLMERS. Absolutely. All of our homes, we all live by budgets. The American people have had to redo their budgets over and over and over again. Why? Because of the economy that we're in today, because of the cost. And yet the Federal Government does not do this. Now we are up to what, 930 days that the Senate has not passed a budget? We passed our budget. We passed a budget in the House. The President had a budget. But his budget called for over $1 trillion more of spending that we were not taking in.

Mrs. SCHMIDT. So it didn't balance, did it?

Mrs. ELLMERS. It didn't balance, and it didn't pass in the Senate. Ours did not come up for a vote. So Washington continues to function without a budget. And yet, again, our households function with a budget. Mothers and fathers are up at 3 o'clock in the morning worrying about how they're going to pay the bills this month, and yet the Federal Government just says, it doesn't matter. We can just continue to spend money. As long as we don't have a budget, we can spend as much we want.

That is the problem. And the American people are tired of this. They are tired of us just with our open checkbook writing, having to raise the debt ceiling to take care of the bills that have already been submitted and the interest that we have to pay.

The balanced budget amendment that we're talking about passing passed the House in 1995, went on to the Senate, missed passing by one vote. Where would we be today in our economy if that had passed back then? The Federal Government would have been held to a vote, they would have been held to a budget, and we wouldn't be deciding these things. We wouldn't be having to pass continuing resolutions that the American people look to us in Washington and say, where is the leadership? How can it possibly be that that's the way they're functioning? And yet this is what we have to do to keep Washington running because Washington does have a purpose. We have to provide for the national defense, we have to take care of our seniors, and we have to take care of those individuals who cannot take care of themselves. And yet, without a budget, we have no way of deciding how much that will be. And so we continue on.

This version makes it harder to raise taxes. This version is substantial. The balanced budget amendment says that in order to raise the debt ceiling, the future Congress will have to have a three-fifths majority to vote in each Chamber in order to raise the debt ceiling. That will become even more difficult.

This is what the American people are calling for us to do. They're crying out for leadership. If we pass this balanced budget amendment in the House and it goes on to the Senate and passes there as well, then it will move on to the States for ratification. This will be historic. We will now be saying to the Federal Government, you must adhere to a budget. It's as simple as that. The most basic function of any household and of any business is to have a working budget in place, and yet the Federal Government, in its arrogance, says, no, we do not. Therefore, we are stuck in this situation that we, as you know, are dealing with every day, trying to figure out how we're going to pay for the things that we have that the American people need.

Under President Obama, the national debt has increased 34 percent. Clearly, it is time to stop. Clearly, the American people are saying to us, come up with a solution. We're dealing every day here in Washington with trying to make it through, trying to build a foundation for the future. This balanced budget amendment will be a tool that we can use so that our children and our grandchildren will know prosperity, and we will ensure it. It's time to get it done.

Thank you so much for letting me speak on this issue.

Mrs. SCHMIDT. I thank you for your attention in this matter, and you're absolutely right. We've got to get control of the spending and get control of it now.

It reminds me of when you're trying to go on a diet. And so if I'm trying to go on a diet back home—believe it or not, every once in a while I have to watch what I eat—I don't sit there and have every candy bar in the world out in front of me and open them up. That only entices me to want to eat it. So if I'm going to go on a diet, I don't buy the candy. I buy an apple, I buy bananas, I buy something that is filling and good for me. But I certainly don't tempt myself with something that I know is only going to be wasted calories and put on weight. And yet, we don't do that here at the Federal level. We say, well, it's okay, we'll cut spending tomorrow, but we'll spend today. If we had a balanced budget amendment, we couldn't have that attitude. We'd have to look at every single dime that is in our checking account and account for it before we built a new program.

Look at how many attempts there are for new programs, small and large, right here in this body. You've been here 11 months. How many programs and ideas have come before you and you've had to say, can we afford it? But here we don't have to answer that question. We have the freedom to do it. We may not be able to afford it, but I'm not balancing the checkbook, so we don't know. It doesn't matter. It's okay.

No, it's not. We have to force ourselves to do what's right for America, and not just here in 2011, but in 2111

and 2211 and beyond. Our protection, the only protection that we have is with a balanced budget amendment because it ties our hands to future spending. It forces us to balance that checkbook and do what's right for America.

As we are looking at this, we know that the American public is with us on this. Ninety-five percent of Americans believe that the deficit problem is what's ruining our Nation, and almost 75 percent of those that recognize that the problem is the debt and the deficit, almost 75 percent say a balanced budget amendment is the right tool to make the answer. Stop the spending.

I turn now to my good friend from the State of Washington.

□ 1640

Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS. Thank you so much, to my good friend from the State of Ohio, for organizing this Special Order this evening focused on the balanced budget amendment and having the Republican women come together to the talk about the importance of the balanced budget amendment.

We stand together tonight from all across this country as businesswomen, teachers, doctors, farmers, mothers, educators, nurses, and attorneys committed to restoring America's prosperity, committed to getting our fiscal house in order, committed to stopping wasteful spending, and committed to putting Americans back to work. And that's why we stand together united in support of the balanced budget amendment.

As a mom of two young children, I am greatly concerned about the growth of government spending and the government debt. I believe it hurts our economy today and threatens our children tomorrow.

James Madison said that the trickiest question the Constitutional Convention confronted was how to oblige a government to control itself. History records not a single example of a nation that spent, borrowed, and taxed its way to prosperity, but it offers us many, many examples of nations that spent and borrowed and taxed their way to economic ruin and bankruptcy. And history is screaming this warning to us, that nations that bankrupt themselves aren't around very long, because before you can provide for the common defense and promote the general welfare and secure the blessings of liberty, you have to be able to pay for it.

Not long after the Constitutional Convention, Thomas Jefferson said, if he could make one change to the Constitution, it would have been to limit the Federal Government's ability to borrow money. Ronald Reagan said there were two things he wished he would have accomplished while in office, and that was a line-item veto and a balanced budget amendment. As has been mentioned, we came one vote short in 1995. And I can't help but think what a different world we would be in today, both economically and as it relates to national security, if we had that balanced budget amendment in place.

Forty-nine States already have a balanced budget amendment. Seventy-four percent of Americans are demanding it. The House Republican women will join together in strong support of a constitutional amendment that will forever change the way Washington spends money. This is our time, this is our moment, and we must seize it.

Thank you again for yielding me some time.

Mrs. SCHMIDT. And I thank you, my good friend, for that eloquent view and argument for the balanced budget amendment because we are at a crisis, we are at a threshold, we are at a fork in the road in our country. And if we don't get this spending under control, your children and my grandchildren—they're about the same age—are going to have a really tough time charting their own destiny.

This is America. This is the place where streets are ''paved in gold,'' and it's the gold of sweat from the Americans before us, the Americans that are here with us now, and the Americans of our future. But if we don't stop the unbridled spending in Washington, our future is not going to be able to continue to pave the way with gold.

This spending has to stop. To say we'll do it tomorrow is not enough. We have to force ourselves into fiscal discipline. And the only way to do that, the only legal way to bind us is through a constitutional amendment, because the Constitution says one legislative session can't bind a future legislative session with anything unless it is written in the Constitution. That means what? A balanced budget amendment. If we're going to control the spending, we have to have the balanced budget amendment.

I think we're going to take this historic vote on Thursday or Friday. This is not a partisan vote. This is what is right for our future. Three-quarters of Americans get it. That woman that balanced her checkbook on this picture gets it. My family that's back home, my brothers and sister and nieces and nephews that are probably balancing their own checkbooks sometime this week, they get it. The local government that I used to represent, they have to do it, they get it. The State legislature that I came from, they just balanced theirs on June 30 of this year, they get it. I think it's insane that we don't do the same thing.

Mr. Speaker, this week we're going to do something that is right for America. It's not a partisan thing. It's not a bipartisan thing. It is an American thing. It is what will preserve for us the American Dream, not just for our children, but their children and their children. It will promote economic security and national security. It will say to the world we're ready to stand as a nation with a firm financial foundation. It has to happen with a balanced budget amendment.

I yield to my good friend, if you have anything to add.

Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS. You said it well. This is an issue that Americans get. All across this country, families have been making very tough decisions. Small business owners, local governments, States have had to make very difficult decisions because they don't have the luxury that the Federal Government does to either continue to borrow or print money to cover everything that we want to spend money on.

Mrs. SCHMIDT. You know, you're right. If I could go back a little bit, the local government that I represent, they have to ratchet back their revenue spending because their revenues are not what they used to be. The State that I represent, Ohio, they've had to ratchet back on their spending because guess what they have to do? They have to balance their budget. They can't go in the red.

Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS. I don't pretend for a moment that the balanced budget amendment will solve all our problems, but I do believe that it will force Congress to start living within its means, start setting priorities, start having that debate over what is the appropriate role of the Federal Government? How can services be better delivered? What can we send back to the States? That's the debate that we need. That's the debate that the balanced budget amendment will force.

We came one vote short in 1997. It included JOE BIDEN's vote. He voted for the balanced budget amendment in the Senate because it was what the people wanted, and he felt it was important to be on the side of the people. And that's why we need to just continue to elevate this issue, make sure that Americans are calling their Members of Congress, their Senators and asking for this vote on the balanced budget amendment. This is one of the most important votes that we will take during our time in Congress, and this is one that we need to make sure that we pass.

Mrs. SCHMIDT. I thank you, and I thank you for your time because I know you've got a busy schedule and you've got those two adorable children that you want to throw some love to. And the best love that we can give to our children and our grandchildren is the balanced budget amendment.

Ronald Reagan was right in so many ways, but he was right in 1982 when he said, if we are going to resolve our overspending, it has to be through a balanced budget amendment. My good colleagues, 29 years later, we've got to hear his words and act on them because, if we don't, 29 years from now, I'm not sure if we will be the greatest nation that we are today.

My good friends across the aisle want to talk about how we create jobs, and we do need to create jobs. Our President, as I said earlier, had this stimulus bill that he thought was going to create jobs, and it didn't create any jobs. And then just a few months ago

he rolled out a new jobs bill of a half trillion dollars that he thought was going to create jobs, but I just don't think that it's going to create jobs either. It's just going to add to our national debt. And the reason why he can do all of these things is because he doesn't have to do what this lady does each and every day, and that's to balance the checkbook. Americans want a checkbook that's balanced.

I would like to show another visual. I'd like to talk about what a few other people said in addition to Ronald Reagan.

Ben Franklin: ''Creditors have better memories than debtors.''

George Washington: ''As a very important source of strength and security, cherish public credit. One method of preserving it is to use it as sparingly as possible.''

□ 1650

Oh, my good friends in the House, if we had only utilized his words, to use it sparingly as possible.

Both sides have been part of the problem. This is not a Republican or a Democrat sin. This is a sin from past Congresses. This is a sin we can rectify.

Thomas Jefferson: ''The principle of spending money to be paid by posterity under the name of funding is but swindling futurity on a large scale.'' The principle of spending money to be paid by posterity under the name of funding is but swindling futurity on a large scale.

He was saying you can't spend your way out of debt. You can't spend today, put the burden on your children of tomorrow and expect a healthy economy. No Nation has ever been successful in doing that. We in America will not be successful in doing that, and that's why we have to have the balanced budget amendment.

My good friends in the House, this week is a very important week for America. We need to pass the balanced budget amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF MOTIONS TO SUSPEND THE RULES

Mr. NUGENT, from the Committee on Rules (during the Special Order of Mrs. SCHMIDT), submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 112–285) on the resolution (H. Res. 466) providing for consideration of motions to suspend the rules, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

WE NEED A BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 5, 2011, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) is recognized for 30 minutes.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate so much the comments of my friend from Ohio, from Washington State, good people, good observations. It's an honor to serve with devoted people like that.

Spending is at an all-time crisis. We do need a balanced budget amendment. There's no question. We have got to have a balanced budget amendment.

The great Senator from the State of Texas, Phil Gramm, joined forces and got a bill referred to as Gramm-Rudman through. That was supposed to force, legislatively, the House and Senate to only spend within the revenue coming in. But since it was legislation, since both bodies can create such legislation, then both bodies can undo such legislation. Just like both bodies can create a debt ceiling bill, as occurred late July, early August this year, both bodies can decide to do something different a few months later. That's the problem with legislation. That's why we do need a balanced budget amendment.

Now, the bill that was brought through committee this year, this 112th Congress, titled H.J. Res. 1, it passed out of committee, the Judiciary Committee. It says that the purpose is proposing a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution of the United States. Massive number of cosponsors. And it was a good bill. It was, it is.

And all gratitude goes to Mr. BOB GOODLATTE. He has been a strong proponent for advancing a balanced budget amendment for numerous Congresses for many years, and he has done a good thing with this bill. I appreciated his also including an amendment that I brought to committee that was passed in committee and is part of the joint resolution. But it's House Joint Resolution 1. It's a good bill. It's to provide for a balanced budget amendment.

In section 1 it simply says:

> Total outlays for any fiscal year shall not exceed total receipts for that fiscal year, unless three-fifths of the whole number of each House of Congress shall provide by law for a specific excess of outlays over receipts by a rollcall vote.

Well, you might think that would be sufficient just to say total outlays cannot exceed total receipts. But those of us who've been around Congress long enough know that's not good enough unless you add, as Mr. GOODLATTE does in Section 8:

> Total receipts shall include all receipts of the United States Government except those derived from borrowing.

If Section 8 is not in there, some Member of Congress down the road, if the balanced budget amendment were made into law as an amendment to the U.S. Constitution, would be clever enough to say, hey, it doesn't say you can't borrow. It just says you can't have outlays exceed total receipts. Well receipts, if you get loans, you've got money coming in, even from loans, well, that ought to be good enough.

So we need Section 8 that says total receipts include all receipts except those derived from borrowing. That's a good provision to have in there because we know that this body, different parties in charge, different groups in here, as Members of the House and Senate, have always had people that found a way, found a loophole, found a way to get around the laws, the Constitution.

A good example of that, no, a great example of that is the ObamaCare bill. Article I of the United States Constitution, section 7 makes very clear that any bill that raises revenue, increases the amount of revenue, it has to start here in the House. It can't originate in the Senate. It has to start in the House. That's where the founders wanted bills involving taxes in any way, that raise revenue at all, had to start in the House.

Over the years, people found a way around that. And we saw that with the ObamaCare bill. The election of SCOTT BROWN in the Senate made clear that they were going to have to do something different than what was originally planned in order to get the ObamaCare bill passed. So they took a House bill—they knew they couldn't wait on the House to do anything. They were going to have to start it.

So to get around the clear requirement of the Constitution that bills that raise revenue, as did the President's health care bill—raised taxes quite a bit actually—they said, okay, we're going to take a House bill that's already passed the House. They took one that provided a tax credit for first-time homebuyers who happened to be veterans. That was the basic intent of the bill.

Beginning with line 1, page 1, the Senate then deleted every word and substituted therein 2,400, 2,500 pages of ObamaCare. That way the Senate could say, hey, it didn't originate here in the Senate. This is a bill that originated in the House. We just struck every single word and put in the Senate bill.

Well, that violates the intent of the Constitution because, clearly, that health care bill did not originate in the House. But that was deemed to be a loophole in the rules and in the constitutional law, and so it's been gotten away with before and it was gotten away with on that bill.

So we know games get played like that. If you don't specify that receipts do not include borrowed money, then somebody's going to figure that out and use it and probably get away with it. So it has to be in there.

The rule has now been reported from the Rules Committee about the balanced budget amendment version that we're going to be taking up. And people keep referring to it as a clean balanced budget amendment. That's the one we're going to take up, one that does not have anything else other than total outlays must not exceed total receipts.

□ 1700

Now, in this House Joint Resolution 1, it has another provision that says:

> Total outlays for any fiscal year shall not exceed 18 percent of economic output of the United States, unless two-thirds of each

House of Congress shall provide for a specific increase of outlays above this amount.

It goes on in section 3:

The limit on the debt of the United States held by the public shall not be increased unless three-fifths of the whole number of each House shall provide by law for such an increase by a rollcall vote.

That means in order to increase the debt ceiling, you can't do it with one more than 50 percent, that also will require three-fifths to raise the debt ceiling.

Section 4 is a requirement that the President transmit to the Congress a budget for the United States Government. That's a proposed budget for that fiscal year. ''Total outlays do not exceed total receipts.''

Well, we've already seen with the Senate, seen previously the President can just choose to ignore that, not because it's not a matter of law. The law requires the Senate to pass a budget. They've chosen to ignore that, to violate the law. They have violated the law. They continue to refuse to follow the law. But, unfortunately, it's another loophole in the law even though they're required to pass a budget, and the Senate's failed to do so for going on a thousand days now. There is no enforcement mechanism of what we do to the Senate if the Senate violates the law by not submitting a budget, so we've seen games get played. The games continue.

Now, in this House Joint Resolution 1, section 5 says: ''A bill to increase revenue''—in other words, raising taxes—''shall not become law unless two-thirds of the whole number of each House shall provide by law for such an increase by a rollcall vote.'' So, in other words, a supermajority is required in the House and the Senate in order to raise taxes.

Now, of course, section 6 makes an exception for war. As it says: ''The Congress may waive the provisions of this article for any fiscal year in which a declaration of war is in effect.'' It's a war exception because we know in times of war we have to do whatever has to be done in order to provide for the common defense and to ward off those who would destroy this country that we love.

So I think those are all important.

But now we're going to be taking up something that is so important to the country, a balanced budget amendment. And I believed when I was elected in 2004 a balanced budget amendment is very important to become a part of the Constitution through the amendment process, and I still believe that. My beliefs have not changed. But in my over 6½ years now here in Congress, it's become very clear to me that unless we have a constitutional cap on spending, the House and Senate will not be able to control themselves. And all one need do is look at who's paying the taxes now.

We're told somewhere between 50 percent and 53 percent of all of the adult Americans will pay all of the income tax. We're now told over 47 percent of American adults are not paying any income tax. When a country has close to 50 percent who are not paying any income tax, then you're always going to have a situation where there is a hue and cry among those who are getting money from the government and not paying money in not to cut spending but to raise taxes.

I feel like having a cap on spending is so important that even though I really appreciate and think a supermajority to raise taxes is a good idea, I think it would be okay to let that go. If we have a cap on spending, the provision that would say it takes three-fifths to raise the debt ceiling, if we have a balanced budget amendment and a cap on spending, I think we can let those go.

But I've become increasingly convinced that if we don't have a cap, a maximum amount of spending—and the best way we've seen, I'm open to other ideas, but the best proposals have indicated a percentage of our gross domestic product is the best thing to take a percentage of and make that the maximum amount the government can spend. If we don't do that, I've seen repeatedly, whether the Republicans are in charge or the Democrats are in charge, we can't control spending. No better example than what's been going on lately.

We have a President in the White House who has threatened that he'll veto a bill that makes cuts that he doesn't want. He's threatened to veto a bill that tries to rein in the extra trillion dollars of spending that he immediately came in and spent.

I mean, good grief. It would seem that since this body, under control of Speaker PELOSI for 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, that we had spent more money than in history, that we could at least go before the big Wall Street bailout, October of 2008, we could at least go back to 2007 spending. That was spending that was created by the liberal Congress headed by Speaker PELOSI. Surely we could go back to 2007 before we added an extra trillion dollars and then President Obama added a trillion dollars, and then we keep adding that extra trillion dollars that we didn't spend in 2007 and actually wasn't spent until fiscal year 2009 because it was so late in 2008. We'd already passed October 1. We're in 2009 spending. Why couldn't we go back to 2008 levels of spending before we added an extra trillion, before this President ran up spending to about $1.5 trillion more than we were bringing in in receipts?

It just seems so grossly ridiculous to have a President come in and increase and say: We're going to have this big, over a trillion dollars in added spending we've never had before. And, by the way, if you dare try to cut any of this spending, I'm going to veto the bill.

So we don't cut spending. We had the biggest wave election last November since the 1930s. Over 80 new Republicans coming into the House of Representatives. Having met them, gotten to know them, these are good people. These are good Members of Congress. They came with the right motivation. They were elected by people who had the right motivation. They want to see this country thrive and not just survive but really prosper and protect liberty. They were driven by those beliefs. They were driven by the same desire that I have that motivated me to run for Congress in 2004.

I do not want to be a part of the generation that gave our children a lesser country than we inherited. That's why so many of us work so hard. We don't want to be that generation. This country could go on for 200 more years and still be the greatest, freest land in the history of the world, but not with the level of spending that we have embraced.

□ 1710

So I've come to see, when you look at what has happened with that wave election coming in and when you go back and look at our conservative Republican pledge made by wonderful people I love serving with, that we pledged to the American people. I didn't write that pledge, but I agreed to it. It said we were going to return spending to pre-stimulus, pre-bailout levels. We promised that. We pledged that. Not only that, we said, Here is our marker. We promise you we're going to cut at least $100 billion in the first year if you put us in office. That's our pledge.

Everybody who took that pledge meant it. Then we had a wave election after that pledge, and wonderful, wonderful people came into this body with the intention of keeping the pledge.

We got to the spring of this year. Well, actually, we got to December—Speaker PELOSI was still in charge. There was more money given away by Congress in December than in any lame duck session in the history of the country, which was after the most conservative wave election since the 1930s. Actually, that wasn't a conservative election back in the thirties, but this was a wave election. A powerful majority of Americans wanted restraint on spending, and with the wonderful people who were elected and sent up here, we had the biggest giveaway last December of any lame duck session in history.

Then we come in at the first of this year, still with the best of intentions. We still knew, Okay. Just forget about December because we're going to keep our pledge. Then some realized, Gee, we're up against an awful lot of people who don't pay any income tax, and they don't want any cuts in spending. We may not get enough in the Senate to do what we promised, so let's do a compromise. It was with the best of intentions. There was nothing ill-intended about working out a compromise with the Senate.

The way it should have worked is for this House to pass the bill that they believed was appropriate. It was for this House to pass a bill that cut $100

billion off of spending and then wait and demand for the Senate to pass something, because the Senate just seemed to have trouble passing anything. It's why the President is 50 percent right when he says this is a do-nothing Congress, because the Senate has been doing nothing. They've got our bills piled up down there, led by able leadership here in the House. They're letting them pile up down there. They're not going to pass them. They don't want to create those jobs or it might look good for Republicans who are driving the agenda. So they're just going to let them die down there unless the American public makes it very clear: You either pick up those Republican bills in the Senate and pass them or over 20 Democratic Senators won't be back come January 2013. Maybe that will motivate them.

In the meantime, we should have forced them to pass something. Then it would go to conference, and then a compromise would be worked out. That's how the system was intended to work. Then we could say to our constituents here from the House, where the Republicans have the majority, You see what the House passed. This is what we believe. We passed what we said we would. If you want this to become law as we passed it in the House, you've got to give us the majority in the Senate, and we'll do that.

As it is, all we have is a majority in the House. This is the only place we can pass it. We had to work out a compromise in the conference committee, and that's why we got what we did. But in the meantime, if you want what the House passed before the compromise, give us the Senate next year and you'll get it. That's the way the system was designed to work.

Then it allows the Senate to say, Look, see all these giveaway programs that we passed here in the Senate? We had to drop some of these giveaway programs in the conference committee because, the dadgum fiscally responsible Republicans in the House, they wouldn't go along with all the giveaways, so we had to cut some in conference; but if you want more and more giveaways like we're passing in the Senate, then give us back the majority in the House, and you'll get more and more giveaway programs. That's the way the system is supposed to work.

Then in November next year, the American voters can say either they want a majority in the House to have more giveaway programs like the Senate has passed or they can say we want more fiscal responsibility as we found in the House by virtue of the bills they passed. The problem has been that we have been negotiating with the Senate to see what we think they might pass and then shoot at the target that they say they might pass in the Senate rather than passing what we believe in in the House.

This summer, it is to the Republicans' credit in the House that we passed a bill called Cut, Cap, and Balance. There were some issues and concerns I had, but overall it was a good bill and it passed. We should have demanded that the Senate pass something that would go to the conference committee with our Cut, Cap, and Balance and that we would work out a compromise from there, but that's not what we did. We turned around and passed a debt ceiling increase that had been negotiated and, basically, was what the Senate said they might be willing to pass, and we got it passed.

My point being, we keep passing bills that really haven't cut spending. With the wave election like we had and with a big group coming in, we couldn't control spending? We couldn't get a majority to pass it in the House to cut $100 billion in spending? What are the hopes in the future?

The time has come for a balanced budget amendment with a cap on spending. I think that cap on spending is so important to help future Congresses, to help this country last. I think it is so important that I think we can forget about the two-thirds to raise taxes. I think we could forget about some of the other provisions if we just have those two things: one, a balanced budget requirement where outlays do not exceed the receipts and where the receipts don't include borrowed money; number two, a cap on spending. We've seen time and time again we haven't been able to control spending even with the incredibly good Representatives that were added last November.

With regard to the debt ceiling and bringing down the spending, good grief. We added over $1 trillion. We're spending nearly $1.5 trillion more than we're bringing in in receipts—and we can't find $100 billion to cut from that? I mean, good grief. This House this year had agreed to a 5 percent cut in our legislative budgets. We did that to ourselves. Most of America has no idea about that. Then for next year, we're going to have a little over a 6 percent cut in our legislative budget. Most of America has no idea about that either, but we did it.

The only way that's going to really make a difference in the deficit is if we make that demand of every other agency, of every other department, of every other amount of discretionary spending and if we say, Look, we did it to ourselves, that gives us the moral authority to say, You're cutting your budget 5 percent next year and 6 percent the year after that, and we're going to bring this down 11 percent over the next 2 years. Then, voila, we have met the requirement that was put upon the supercommittee.

You see some problems with the so-called supercommittee. There are some great people on there. The people who were put on there from the House and the Senate, the Republicans, they're friends and they're good people. PAT TOOMEY—there's not a more conservative guy anywhere—he was even willing, from the reports, to have a framework that actually raised revenue like the demand had been made by the Senate Democrats and by the President. Some of us were wincing at it—ooh—but he was willing to do that. It looked like the Democrats were so impressed—gee, this is great. So I'll tell you what. This may be the deal that works. Then they went back and talked to their Democratic leadership, whoever that is, and they came back and said, We can't work out a deal here.

That should have made it pretty clear, when the agreement was made to cut hundreds of billions of dollars from our national security and at the same time cut hundreds of billions of dollars from Medicare, that some people on the other side of the aisle have realized, if we go into next year's election and if the only cuts to Medicare have been the $500 billion that ObamaCare did last year—that the Democrats rammed through against the will of the Republicans in the House and the Senate and against the people across America—we're going to be toast next November. So, if we could have this failure of the supercommittee and if all this doesn't work out and if all these hundreds of billions are cut from Medicare, then we can tell them the Republicans did it instead of ObamaCare, which AARP thought was a good idea.

□ 1720

They'll forget about that if we have those cuts this year because we blame the Republicans.

Mr. Speaker, may I inquire how much time is left.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan). The gentleman from Texas has 55 seconds remaining.

Mr. GOHMERT. Let me finish up by saying, we need a cap on spending.

And with respect for the veterans, let me finish with a prayer from George Washington, just a small excerpt since my time is so short. It's Washington's prayer:

> Almighty God, we make our earnest prayer that Thou wilt keep the United States in Thy holy protection; and Thou wilt incline the hearts of the citizens to entertain a brotherly affection and love for one another and for their fellow citizens of the United States at large, and particularly for their brethren who have served in the field.

Those are our veterans. I'm a veteran. I didn't serve in combat. But thank God for those willing to make the ultimate sacrifice for our liberties. Now we should not squander it.

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

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported and found truly enrolled a bill of the House of the following title, which was thereupon signed by the Speaker:

> H.R. 398. An act to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to toll, during active-duty service abroad in the Armed Forces, the periods of time to file a petition and appear for an interview to remove the conditional basis for permanent resident status, and for other purposes.

BILLS PRESENTED TO THE PRESIDENT

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, reports that on November 4, 2011 she presented to the President of the United States, for his approval, the following bills.

H.R. 368. To amend title 28, United States Code, to clarify and improve certain provisions relating to the removal of litigation against Federal officers or agencies to Federal courts, and for other purposes.

H.R. 818. To direct the Secretary of the Interior to allow for prepayment of repayment contracts between the United States and the Uintah Water Conservancy District.

ADJOURNMENT

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

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 5 o'clock and 22 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Wednesday, November 16, 2011, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of Rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

3838. A letter from the Under Secretary, Deparmtent of Defense, transmitting a letter on the approved retirement of Lieutenant General Dana T. Atkins, United States Air Force, and his advancement on the retired list in the grade of lieutenant general; to the Committee on Armed Services.

3839. A letter from the Under Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting a letter on the approved retirement of Vice Admiral Adam M. Robinson, Jr., United States Navy, and his advancement to the grade of vice admiral on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

3840. A letter from the Under Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting a letter on the approved retirement of Lieutenant General Eric B. Schoomaker, United States Army, and his advancement to the grade of lieutenant general on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

3841. A letter from the Under Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting a letter on the approved retirement of Lieutenant General Francis H. Kearney III, United States Army, and his advancement to the grade of lieutenant general on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

3842. A letter from the President and Chairman, Export-Import Bank, transmitting a report on transactions involving U.S. exports to Ethiopia pursuant to Section 2(b)(3) of the Export-Import Bank Act of 1945, as amended, pursuant to 12 U.S.C. 635(b)(3)(i); to the Committee on Financial Services.

3843. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Employee Benefits Security Administration, Department of Labor, transmitting the Department's ''Major'' final rule — Investment Advice — Participants and Beneficiaries (RIN: 1210-AB35) received October 27, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

3844. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the first biennial report concerning the Food Emergency Response Network mandated by the FDA Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

3845. A letter from the Director, Defense Security Cooperation Agency, transmitting Transmittal No. 11-19, pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

3846. A letter from the Director, Defense Security Cooperation Agency, transmitting Transmittal No. 11-34, pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

3847. A letter from the Director, Defense Security Cooperation Agency, transmitting Transmittal No. 11-39, pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

3848. A letter from the Assistant Secretary of the Army, Civil Works, Department of Defense, transmitting the 2011 list of U.S. Army Corps of Engineers projects that have been identified as candidates for de-authorization; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

3849. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Special Local Regulation for Marine Events; Temporary Change of Dates for Recurring Marine Events in the Fifth Coast Guard District, John H. Kerr Reservoir, Clarksville, VA [Docket No.: USCG-2011-0545] (RIN: 1625-AA08) received October 24, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

3850. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; East Coast Drag Boat Bucksport Blowout Boat Race, Waccamaw River, Bucksport, SC [Docket No.: USCG-2011-0672] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received October 24, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

3851. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; M/V DAVY CROCKETT, Columbia River [Docket No.: USCG-2010-0939] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received October 24, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

3852. A letter from the Attorney, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; TriRock Triathlon, San Diego Bay, San Diego, CA [Docket No.: USCG-2011-0789] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received October 24, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

3853. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; Ryder Cup Captain's Duel Golf Shot, Chicago River, Chicago, IL [Docket No.: USCG-2011-0847] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received October 24, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

3854. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; Head of the Cuyahoga, Cuyahoga River Cleveland, OH [Docket No.: USCG-2011-0825] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received October 24, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

3855. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Deduction for Qualified Film and Television Production Costs [TD 9552] (RIN: 1545-BJ24) received October 26, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

3856. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — 2012 Cost-of-Living Adjustments to the Internal Revenue Code Tax Tables and Certain Other Tax Items (Rev. Proc. 2011-52) received October 26, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

3857. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Applicable Federal Rates — November 2011 (Rev. Rul. 2011-25) received October 26, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

3858. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Guidance Regarding the Treatment of Stock of a Controlled Corporation under Section 355(a)(3)(B) [TD 9548] (RIN: 1545-BH49) received October 26, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

3859. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Eligibility for Exemption from User Fee Requirement for Employee Plans Determination Letter Applications Filed After January 31, 2011 [Notice 2011-86] received October 26, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

3860. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Salvage Discount Factors for 2011 (Rev. Proc. 2011-54) received October 26, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

3861. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Disregarded Entities; Excise Taxes and Employment Taxes [TD 9553] (RIN: 1545-BH90) received October 26, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

3862. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Unpaid Loss Discount Factors for 2011 (Rev. Proc. 2011-53) received October 24, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

3863. A letter from the Chief Privacy Officer, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Privacy Office third quarterly report for fiscal year 2011; to the Committee on Homeland Security.

3864. A letter from the Chief Privacy Officer, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting a report entitled, ''DHS Privacy Office 2011 Annual Report to Congress''; to the Committee on Homeland Security.

3865. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting a report entitled: ''Implementation of Recovery Auditing at the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services''; jointly to the Committees on Energy and Commerce and Ways and Means.

3866. A letter from the Board Members, Railroad Retirement Board, transmitting the Board's budget request for fiscal year 2013, in accordance with Section 7(f) of the Railroad Retirement Act; jointly to the Committees on Appropriations, Transportation and Infrastructure, and Ways and Means.

3867. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Energy, transmitting proposed legislation to restore the Restricted Data (RD) category certain information that has been removed from that category pursuant to section 142 of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended; jointly to the Committees on Energy and Commerce, Intelligence (Permanent Select), and Armed Services.

3868. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Transportation, transmitting a draft of proposed legislation entitled ''Pipeline and Hazardous Material Transportation Safety Reauthorization Act of 2011''; jointly to the Committees on Transportation and Infrastructure, Energy and Commerce, Science, Space, and Technology, and the Judiciary.

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. NUGENT: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 466. Resolution providing for consideration of motions to suspend the rules (Rept. 112–285). Referred to the House Calendar.

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. POE of Texas (for himself and Mr. CARTER):

H.R. 3422. A bill to require the Secretary of Defense to transfer at least 10 percent of certain military equipment returning from Iraq to Federal and State agencies; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. CRENSHAW (for himself, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS, Mr. PAUL, Mr. HARPER, Mr. YOUNG of Florida, Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky, Mr. DEUTCH, Mr. CARNAHAN, Mr. BISHOP of New York, Mr. HOLT, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts, Mr. BURTON of Indiana, Ms. NORTON, Mr. MICHAUD, Mr. TOWNS, Mrs. EMERSON, Mr. DIAZ-BALART, Mr. WOLF, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. KLINE, Mr. VISCLOSKY, Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia, Mr. KING of New York, Mr. POE of Texas, Mr. ROTHMAN of New Jersey, Mr. GALLEGLY, and Mr. MILLER of Florida):

H.R. 3423. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for the tax treatment of ABLE accounts established under State programs for the care of family members with disabilities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means, 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 Mr. HOLT (for himself, Mr. ANDREWS, and Mr. SIRES):

H.R. 3424. A bill to establish a program under which the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency shall provide grants to eligible State consortia to establish and carry out municipal sustainability certification programs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, 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 Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California (for himself, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. HINOJOSA, Mr. BISHOP of New York, Ms. WOOLSEY, Mr. KILDEE, and Mr. LOEBSACK):

H.R. 3425. A bill to provide subsidized employment for unemployed, low-income adults, provide summer employment and year-round employment opportunities for low-income youth, and carry out work-related and educational strategies and activities of demonstrated effectiveness, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia:

H.R. 3426. A bill to amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to require the closure of oil storage and processing facilities that have spilled oil multiple times near residential neighborhoods, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. DOGGETT (for himself, Mr. PETERS, Mr. STARK, Mr. BLUMENAUER, and Mr. RANGEL):

H.R. 3427. A bill to provide for the availability of self-employment assistance to individuals receiving extended compensation or emergency unemployment compensation; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committees on Financial Services, Small Business, and Appropriations, 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 Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts:

H.R. 3428. A bill to amend the Federal Reserve Act to replace the Federal Open Market Committee members representing the Federal Reserve banks with additional members appointed by the President, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. PALAZZO (for himself and Mr. SCALISE):

H.R. 3429. A bill to authorize the use of certain offshore oil and gas platforms in the Gulf of Mexico for artificial reefs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. ROTHMAN of New Jersey:

H.R. 3430. A bill to direct the Federal Communications Commission to extend the final deadline for private land mobile radio licensees to migrate to narrowband technology by 2 years; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. SENSENBRENNER:

H.R. 3431. A bill to prohibit the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency from granting a waiver under section 211(f)(4) of the Clean Air Act for any fuel or fuel additive that will reduce fuel efficiency or cause or contribute to engine damage; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. SMITH of Washington (for himself, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Ms. SCHWARTZ, Ms. LEE of California, and Mr. HINCHEY):

H.R. 3432. A bill to authorize voluntary grazing permit retirement on Federal lands managed by the Department of Agriculture or the Department of the Interior where livestock grazing is impractical, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committee on Agriculture, 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 Mr. CARNEY (for himself, Mr. POLIS, Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia, Mr. PERLMUTTER, and Mr. SCHRADER):

H.J. Res. 87. A joint resolution proposing a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution of the United States; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. MCGOVERN:

H.J. Res. 88. A joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States to clarify the authority of Congress and the States to regulate corporations, limited liability companies or other corporate entities established by the laws of any state, the United States, or any foreign state; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

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. POE of Texas:

H.R. 3422.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 1 of Section 8, of Article 1, in the United States Constitution.

By Mr. CRENSHAW:

H.R. 3423.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the U.S. Constitution

By Mr. HOLT:

H.R. 3424.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I of the Constitution of the United States

By Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California:

H.R. 3425.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1, 3, 18 of the U.S. Constitution; Article I, Section 9, Clause 7 of the U.S. Constitution.

By Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia:

H.R. 3426.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1 of the Constitution

By Mr. DOGGETT:

H.R. 3427.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution that grants Congress the authority, ''To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the forgoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.''

By Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts:

H.R. 3428.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I Section 8, Clause 3 (the Commerce Clause).

By Mr. PALAZZO:

H.R. 3429.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

According to Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the Constitution.

By Mr. ROTHMAN of New Jersey:

H.R. 3430.

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, Section 8, Clause 18 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. SENSENBRENNER:

H.R. 3431.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the U.S. Constitution

By Mr. SMITH of Washington:

H.R. 3432.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article IV Section 3. ''The Congress shall have Power to dispose of and make all needful Rules and Regulations respecting the Territory or other Property belonging to the United States . . .''

By Mr. CARNEY:

H.J. Res. 87.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article V of The Constitution.

By Mr. MCGOVERN:

H.J. Res. 88.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article V

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions as follows:

H.R. 10: Mr. AMODEI and Mr. WALSH of Illinois.

H.R. 58: Mr. AMODEI.

H.R. 104: Mrs. BLACKBURN.

H.R. 178: Mr. HASTINGS of Florida.

H.R. 361: Mr. WALSH of Illinois.

H.R. 376: Ms. RICHARDSON, Mr. BARTLETT, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, and Mrs. MALONEY.

H.R. 396: Mr. MICHAUD.

H.R. 607: Mr. NADLER.

H.R. 721: Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. MCNERNEY, Mr. GRAVES of Missouri, Mr. LATTA, Ms. FOXX, Mr. MANZULLO, Mr. LUETKEMEYER, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mr. MILLER of Florida, Mr. REICHERT, Mrs. EMERSON, Mr. CRENSHAW, Mr. MCCARTHY of California, Mr. SULLIVAN, and Ms. GRANGER.

H.R. 763: Mr. CANSECO.

H.R. 780: Mr. RANGEL.

H.R. 862: Mr. COOPER.

H.R. 885: Mrs. NAPOLITANO.

H.R. 959: Mr. DIAZ-BALART.

H.R. 984: Mr. DESJARLAIS.

H.R. 1111: Mr. RIBBLE.

H.R. 1148: Mr. SHERMAN, Mrs. CAPPS, Ms. HANABUSA, Mr. GUTIERREZ, Mr. MORAN, Mr. OWENS, Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, and Mr. SHULER.

H.R. 1161: Mr. MATHESON.

H.R. 1164: Mr. LATTA.

H.R. 1173: Mr. KLINE and Mr. SMITH of Nebraska.

H.R. 1175: Mr. CARTER, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, and Mr. FITZPATRICK.

H.R. 1176: Mr. JONES.

H.R. 1179: Mr. FARENTHOLD.

H.R. 1183: Mr. KING of New York.

H.R. 1186: Mr. SCHWEIKERT and Mr. THORNBERRY.

H.R. 1221: Mr. ISSA.

H.R. 1288: Mr. COSTELLO and Mr. HASTINGS of Florida.

H.R. 1385: Mr. GERLACH.

H.R. 1386: Mr. BUTTERFIELD and Ms. LEE of California.

H.R. 1475: Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan.

H.R. 1489: Ms. WILSON of Florida.

H.R. 1509: Mrs. HARTZLER and Mr. KLINE.

H.R. 1513: Mr. LOBIONDO, Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, Mr. COHEN, Mr. CLAY, Mr. HANNA, and Mr. FITZPATRICK.

H.R. 1581: Mr. AMODEI and Mr. HULTGREN.

H.R. 1639: Mr. AKIN, Mr. POE of Texas, Mr. KISSELL, Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan, and Mr. OWENS.

H.R. 1659: Mr. LARSON of Connecticut.

H.R. 1661: Mr. LATTA.

H.R. 1697: Mr. TERRY.

H.R. 1744: Mrs. ROBY.

H.R. 1756: Mr. HECK.

H.R. 1781: Ms. HAHN, Mr. CUMMINGS, and Ms. VELÁZQUEZ.

H.R. 1815: Mr. LOEBSACK, Mr. SCHRADER, and Mr. REYES.

H.R. 1951: Mr. MICHAUD.

H.R. 1956: Mr. NUNNELEE and Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina.

H.R. 1980: Mr. COURTNEY and Mr. GOWDY.

H.R. 1996: Mr. MCCLINTOCK, Mr. CRAVAACK, and Mrs. MYRICK.

H.R. 2014: Mr. WELCH and Mr. MATHESON.

H.R. 2016: Mr. LEVIN and Ms. MCCOLLUM.

H.R. 2040: Mr. GARRETT, Mr. CONAWAY, Mr. SOUTHERLAND, and Mrs. ROBY.

H.R. 2052: Mr. KISSELL.

H.R. 2071: Mr. SCHOCK.

H.R. 2077: Ms. HAYWORTH.

H.R. 2082: Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California.

H.R. 2108: Mr. BOREN, Mr. BUCHANAN, and Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia.

H.R. 2131: Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. BACHUS, and Mr. KISSELL.

H.R. 2139: Ms. CLARKE of New York, Ms. LEE of California, Ms. NORTON, Ms. BORDALLO, Mrs. BLACKBURN, and Mr. STARK.

H.R. 2229: Mr. BOSWELL.

H.R. 2234: Ms. WOOLSEY and Mrs. NAPOLITANO.

H.R. 2238: Mr. WALZ of Minnesota.

H.R. 2245: Mr. REYES.

H.R. 2284: Mrs. NAPOLITANO.

H.R. 2299: Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER, Mr. BONNER, and Mr. COLE.

H.R. 2335: Mr. SIMPSON, Mr. HERGER, and Mr. DENHAM.

H.R. 2342: Mr. MORAN.

H.R. 2412: Mr. TIERNEY, Mr. GRIMM, Mr. KING of New York, Mr. HONDA, and Mr. TURNER of New York.

H.R. 2492: Mr. KLINE, Mr. JOHNSON of Illinois, and Ms. HAYWORTH.

H.R. 2514: Mr. SESSIONS.

H.R. 2528: Mr. RIBBLE.

H.R. 2559: Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. TOWNS, Mr. CLEAVER, and Mr. CICILLINE.

H.R. 2563: Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois.

H.R. 2568: Mr. WEST.

H.R. 2569: Ms. CLARKE of New York.

H.R. 2580: Mr. TURNER of New York, Mr. HANNA, Mr. MEEKS, Mr. OWENS, Mr. TOWNS, Mr. FATTAH, Mr. HOLDEN, Mr. ROTHMAN of New Jersey, and Mr. MORAN.

H.R. 2632: Mr. FITZPATRICK.

H.R. 2657: Mr. BISHOP of New York and Ms. BALDWIN.

H.R. 2672: Mr. BRADY of Texas.

H.R. 2746: Mr. HOLT and Mr. FORTENBERRY.

H.R. 2758: Mr. CICILLINE.

H.R. 2827: Ms. JENKINS.

H.R. 2833: Mr. PEARCE.

H.R. 2874: Mr. GARRETT.

H.R. 2918: Mr. GARRETT.

H.R. 2959: Mr. POE of Texas.

H.R. 2972: Ms. MOORE.

H.R. 2982: Mr. MCINTYRE.

H.R. 3000: Mr. NUNNELEE and Mr. COFFMAN of Colorado.

H.R. 3010: Mr. ISSA, Mr. DONNELLY of Indiana, Mr. WHITFIELD, Mr. JONES, Mr. KING of Iowa, and Mrs. LUMMIS.

H.R. 3012: Mr. JACKSON of Illinois.

H.R. 3039: Mr. WEST.

H.R. 3044: Mr. NUNNELEE.

H.R. 3050: Mr. RIBBLE, Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas, and Mr. BENISHEK.

H.R. 3059: Ms. JENKINS, Ms. WOOLSEY, Ms. NORTON, Mr. JACKSON of Illinois, and Mrs. LOWEY.

H.R. 3067: Mr. LYNCH, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. FILNER, Ms. TSONGAS, Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. SARBANES, Mr. ELLISON, Ms. NORTON, Mr. LATOURETTE, Mr. TIBERI, Mr. MCCOTTER, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. GERLACH, Mrs. EMERSON, Mrs. BIGGERT, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. DOLD, Mr. BISHOP of New York, Mr. LATHAM, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. PETERSON, Mr. BOSWELL, Mr. LUJÁN, Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut, Mr. DEFAZIO, and Ms. MATSUI.

H.R. 3068: Mr. RIBBLE.

H.R. 3086: Ms. WOOLSEY, Mr. ISRAEL, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. CONYERS, and Mr. MILLER of North Carolina.

H.R. 3090: Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina and Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas.

H.R. 3095: Mr. CANSECO.

H.R. 3126: Ms. WOOLSEY.

H.R. 3159: Mr. PAYNE, Mr. FLORES, and Ms. BALDWIN.

H.R. 3162: Mr. BASS of New Hampshire, Mr. HARPER, and Mr. LUETKEMEYER.

H.R. 3187: Mrs. LUMMIS and Mr. TONKO.

H.R. 3194: Mr. AMODEI.

H.R. 3202: Mr. MICHAUD.

H.R. 3210: Mr. ROHRABACHER, Mr. COBLE, and Mrs. ELLMERS.

H.R. 3213: Mr. CANSECO.

H.R. 3236: Mr. MICHAUD.

H.R. 3245: Mr. BARTLETT.

H.R. 3256: Mr. COBLE.

H.R. 3272: Mr. PALAZZO.

H.R. 3290: Mr. KLINE.

H.R. 3307: Mr. AMODEI, Mr. INSLEE, and Mr. LOEBSACK.

H.R. 3308: Mr. BROUN of Georgia and Mr. WEST.

H.R. 3325: Mr. POLLS, Mr. CARNAHAN, Mr. HOLT, Ms. HIRONO, and Mr. PRICE of North Carolina.

H.R. 3334: Mr. HOLT.

H.R. 3346: Mr. BRALEY of Iowa, Mr. FARR, Mr. LANGEVIN, Ms. HAHN, Mr. FILNER, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. CLARKE of Michigan, Mr. GUTIERREZ, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. ACKERMAN, Ms. RICHARDSON, and Mr. PRICE of North Carolina.

H.R. 3352: Mr. KING of New York.

H.R. 3365: Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS and Mr. CHAFFETZ.

H.R. 3367: Mr. REED.

H.R. 3368: Ms. DELAURO, Mr. OLVER, and Mr. DOGGETT.

H.R. 3387: Mr. TURNER of New York.

H.R. 3403: Mr. NUNNELEE, Mr. YOUNG of Florida, and Mr. MARINO.

H.R. 3405: Mr. JACKSON of Illinois, Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, Mr. STARK, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, and Mr. MEEKS.

H.J. Res. 13: Mr. FLORES.

H.J. Res. 80: Mr. GRIJALVA and Mr. FARR.

H.J. Res. 83: Mr. SIRES.

H.J. Res. 85: Mr. CARTER and Mr. NUNNELEE.

H.J. Res. 86: Mr. FILNER and Mr. CICILLINE.

H. Con. Res. 72: Mr. KEATING.

H. Con. Res. 82: Mr. BUCSHON.

H. Res. 98: Mr. CRAWFORD.

H. Res. 111: Mr. MULVANEY, Mr. LATTA, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. DESJARLAIS, Mr. YOUNG of Indiana, Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan, and Mr. WALSH of Illinois.

H. Res. 134: Mr. CARNAHAN and Mr. RUNYAN.

H. Res. 220: Mr. COSTELLO, Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, and Mr. KUCINICH.

H. Res. 282: Ms. BALDWIN.

H. Res. 356: Mr. BILIRAKIS, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, and Mr. JONES.

H. Res. 367: Mr. MANZULLO.

H. Res. 378: Ms. NORTON.

H. Res. 397: Ms. LEE of California.

H. Res. 450: Mr. KISSELL, Ms. BORDALLO, and Mr. POLLS.

H. Res. 452: Mr. TONKO, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, and Mr. SCOTT of Virginia.

H. Res. 460: Ms. RICHARDSON, Ms. BORDALLO, Ms. LEE of California, Mrs. MALONEY, Mr. ISRAEL, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. LANCE, Mr. RUSH, and Ms. HAHN.