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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. PAULSEN).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
January 24, 2012.

I hereby appoint the Honorable ERIK PAULSEN 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 17, 2012, 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.

AFGHANISTAN SITUATION

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

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, on January 12, CBS Evening News did a segment on just how impossible is the situation in Afghanistan. This is something I have been speaking out on for months and months and months, and I think CBS illustrated beautifully just how dire of a situation it is in Afghanistan. I will read excerpts from the report containing examples of just how inept the Afghan Army is.

''CBS News correspondent Clarissa Ward found one reason in the Pech Valley. Americans lost their lives there building a base called Nangalam. When they tried to hand over their gains to the Afghan Army, the base went to ruin.

''Army Major Guillermo Guillen, from southern California, is frustrated. 'You're relying on us to do all of your security for you. You need to be participating,' Guillen told an Afghan counterpart.

''On a recent patrol, some Afghan soldiers were not wearing helmets. One chatted on his cell phone.

''The United States military left Nangalam base last February, handing over to Afghan forces. But within weeks, things went badly wrong.''

Remember, Mr. Speaker, this is a CBS national report.

''Enemy forces returned to roam freely through the valley. The Afghan commander deserted. Hundreds of his soldiers followed.

''The Afghan forces that remained ransacked their own base. All the electric wires have been pulled out. Anything of any value was taken. You can see the wire hanging out of the light.''

Mr. Speaker, ''A new Afghan Army unit has been brought in with a new commander, Colonel Turab. U.S. officers have nicknamed him 'Honest Abe.' And he was honest to a fault about the prospects of the Afghan Army.''

Mr. Speaker, listen very carefully: '''It will take about 30 years' for the Afghan Army to be ready, Turab said through a translator. 'And if they are reformed and the corruption is removed,''' it will take about 10 years.

How many $10 billion a month do we have to spend? How many young men and women have to die for a failed policy? History has proven you will never, never change Afghanistan no matter what you do.

This poster beside me is a wife in tears whose husband was killed in Afghanistan, and the little girl, as you can see, Mr. Speaker, is looking at the flag. She has no idea that her daddy is dead. She will know one day that her father died to prop up a corrupt leader named Karzai and a corrupt government, and then she will learn from the history books as she gets into high school that no nation has ever conquered Afghanistan and no nation will ever conquer Afghanistan.

As we listen to the President tonight and he talks about the state of affairs, I hope he will mention that he intends to bring our troops home now, not in 2014. In 2014, I do not know how many young men and women have to lose their legs, their arms, and die. So I hope both parties will come together this spring and talk about bringing our troops home now, not 2014.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I will ask God to please bless our men and women in uniform and their families, to bless the families who have given a child dying for freedom in Afghanistan and Iraq, and ask God to please continue to bless America.

[From cbsnews.com, Jan. 12, 2012]

NANGALAM: A SYMBOL OF THE AFGHAN WAR'S TROUBLES

(By Clarissa Ward)

Most Americans in Afghanistan are doing their best in a war that's now in its 11th year. Why has it taken this long?

CBS News correspondent Clarissa Ward found one reason in the Pech Valley. Americans lost their lives there building a base called Nangalam. When they tried to hand over their gains to the Afghan army, the base went to ruin.

This is one part of Afghanistan that America thought it could finally leave. But U.S. troops are back, trying once again to train their Afghan allies.

Army Major Guillermo Guillen, from Southern California, is frustrated.

''You're relying on us to do all your security for you. You need to be participating,'' Guillen told an Afghan counterpart.

On a recent patrol, some Afghan soldiers were not wearing helmets. One chatted on his cell phone.

Printed on recycled paper.

''We're not going to be here forever, you need to take care of yourself,'' Guillen said.

The U.S. military left Nangalam base last February, handing over to Afghan forces. But within weeks, things went badly wrong.

Enemy forces returned to roam freely through the valley. The Afghan commander deserted. Hundreds of his soldiers followed.

''I believe there was some of (feeling of abandonment) amongst the (Afghan) soldiers. It's probably what led to some of their leadership leaving,'' Guillen said.

The Afghan forces that remained ransacked their own base.

All the electric wires have been pulled out. Anything of any value was taken. You can see the wiring hanging out of the light.

Just about everything else that could be moved was sold for cash.

Without American support, the Afghan army refused to resupply the base. The soldiers were living in filth.

For the U.S. military, it was an embarrassing example of what might happen when security is handed over to Afghan forces across the country, and so four months after leaving, a small group of U.S. troops was sent back in.

Today, American contractors are back on the base repairing the damage, with U.S. taxpayers footing the bill, again.

A new Afghan army unit has been brought in, with a new commander, Colonel Turab. U.S. officers have nicknamed him ''Honest Abe.''

And he was honest to a fault about the prospects for the Afghan army.

''It will take about 30 years'' for the Afghan army to be ready, Turab said through a translator. ''And if they are reformed and the corruption is removed, ten years.''

''They understand what they're doing. They understand what's required. It's just getting them to do it without coalition support,'' Guillen said.

The U.S. exit strategy depends on them doing it without support. Not in 30 years, and not in ten. They have just two years before the vast majority of American forces are scheduled to leave the Pech Valley—and all of Afghanistan—for good.

IN MEMORY OF FORMER CONGRESSMAN ED JENKINS

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

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the life, leadership, and legacy of our former colleague and a friend of many in this house, Congressman Ed Jenkins.

My colleague, JOHN LEWIS, has brought many of us together on this floor or in other public statements to say what an honor it was to serve with Eddie Jenkins, how much we all learned from him. The humor as well as the intellect he brought to his work was definitely, definitely an asset to the work of the Congress.

Eddie Jenkins was a proud son of Georgia. If you heard him say it, you would agree, a self-described country lawyer from Jasper, a public servant dedicated to his constituents, to advancing the interests, hopes, and aspirations of his neighbors down there in Georgia, and in securing future prosperity for all and opportunity for all Americans.

It must be a true honor for Congressman Jenkins and his family that this tribute has been organized and led by the conscience of the Congress, a man of extraordinary leadership and character and a fellow representative from the State of Georgia, Congressman JOHN LEWIS.

Congressman Jenkins will long be remembered as a leader willing to work across the aisle, negotiate and build coalitions on behalf of the greater good. He will be remembered in textile mills across the South as a champion of the industry, a defender of good-paying jobs for local workers in small towns and communities across the region for small businesses. He will be remembered as a champion of the Ways and Means Committee for his expertise on the Tax Code, for his wisdom and leadership, with the respect he earned even when his colleagues disagreed with him. And he will be remembered for his legendary tough questioning during the Iran-Contra hearings, a scene that reflected and embodies his strong will, deep character, and core principles—his pursuit of the truth, his commitment to transparency and accountability, and his firm belief in the sanctity of the rule of law.

Congressman Jenkins served his community and our country as a lawyer and a congressional staffer, in the Coast Guard, and as a Member of the House of Representatives. He'll be missed by his friends in Congress, by his friends he served in Georgia, by his neighbors, and loved ones.

We only hope that it is some comfort to his wife of 51 years, Jo; his daughters, Janice and Amy; his brothers, sisters, grandsons, and his entire family that so many share grief at this sad time.

Thank you, Mr. Jenkins, for a life of service to the Congress and the country. Thank you, Mr. LEWIS, for providing this opportunity for us to honor a person we were proud to call a colleague and friend.

□ 1010

THANK YOU TO MY FRIEND, GABBY GIFFORDS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Ohio (Mrs. SCHMIDT) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. SCHMIDT. Mr. Speaker, today I really just want to say thank you to a young woman who for the last time in her legislative career as a Member of Congress will grace our presence this evening at the State of the Union, and I'm talking about my good friend, GABBY GIFFORDS. I think the world will all know GABBY as the courageous heroine who, on January 8, 2011, was met by an unbelievable mad person who changed her life and the life of so many, but I really want to tell all of us in this body what a great individual and humanitarian she was for all of us.

She was sworn into office on January 4, 2007. She came out of the State legislature in Arizona, so her background was in the State legislature, as mine is. She currently represents southern Arizona, the Tucson area, which has the Davis-Monthan Air Force Base and Fort Huachuca in Sierra Vista. She is the leading champion on border security, energy independence, and the needs of military families and veterans, which she knows so well because she is married to an active military veteran, Mark Kelly, who not only flew umpteen missions as a naval pilot but also flew into space as a NASA astronaut.

On January 8, when she was having Congress On Your Corner at a supermarket in northwest Tucson, an ordinary morning, and many people were there, she was met by a madman who not only changed her life, but ended the life of 9-year-old Christina Taylor Green; Dorothy Morris; John Roll, chief Federal judge for Arizona; Phyllis Schneck; Dorwan Stoddard; and Gabriel Zimmerman. Twelve others, including Giffords' staff members Ron Barber and Pat Simon, were wounded. She was treated initially nearby and then flown to the TIRR Memorial Hermann Rehabilitation Hospital in Houston. She continues to be rehabilitated, and it is remarkable how far this young woman has come.

She was a Fulbright Scholar, but more importantly, she is my friend. You see, in the House we have a little bipartisan softball team. We play folks like the NRCC young folks and the DCCC young folks, and now recently we're are playing the press corps. She was a member of our team, and she was a really good member.

I wish GABBY well as she moves to a new direction in her life, and I pray each and every morning and each and every evening that God will continue to allow her to become a complete human being again. She is a great lady, a great friend of this House, a great friend of the folks in Tucson and surrounding Arizona.

Mr. ENGEL. Will the gentlewoman yield?

Mrs. SCHMIDT. Yes, I will yield to my friend, Mr. ENGEL from New York.

Mr. ENGEL. I thank the gentlewoman for yielding to me, and I think that her taking the floor this morning is the best example of bipartisanship that people say Congress doesn't have enough of, and I think that those of us that believe in bipartisanship need to do more and more of this.

The attack on GABBY was really an attack on all of us, an attack on Congress, and something that's really unthinkable. I'm very happy that she will be here this evening for the State of the Union Address by the President.

I got to know GABBY very well because my son attended the University of Arizona in Tucson and graduated from there, and he was campaigning for her, and I actually got to know her before she even was a Member of the House. I think that all of us can say that she has been one of the most collegial, friendly, hardworking and dedicated Members of Congress.

We go out there, all of us, on both sides of the aisle every day and meet with thousands and thousands and thousands of constituents. I think that she embodied the best of what Congress has to offer. I am sorry that she is resigning, but I know that she's doing what she feels is best for her State of Arizona and also best for her. I know that we all wish her Godspeed, and I know we all wish her as speedy a recovery as we can get.

I know we haven't seen the last of her. She will come roaring back and will continue to make tremendous contributions to this country for years to come. So I want to thank the gentlewoman for doing this. I think that both of us standing here today shows the American people that Congress can work together and should work together, and in the fine tradition of GABBY GIFFORDS, we are going to make sure that we all continue to work together.

HONORING 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF 93 WXRT

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

Mr. QUIGLEY. Mr. Speaker, Chicago is a city of many treasures. From the architecture to the museums and cultural institutions, from the sports teams to our food, there are many, many reasons to celebrate the Windy City. But with so much to do, see, and eat, some of our city's finest features do not make it onto most tourists' to-do lists. But if you want to share with the visitors some of the true heart and soul of Chicago, drive down Lake Shore Drive with our lake on one side and our beautiful skyline on the other and 93 WXRT on the radio.

I have tried to explain to my children about the vast wasteland that was music radio in Chicago before XRT. Forty years ago, all you had was the same 10 songs on AM radio. Then came XRT, with a rich, diverse playlist, with a passion and an integrity unmatched even today. No coincidence it became a 24-hour station in 1976, demonstrating our city's unique commitment to independent thinking and an unbridled celebration of art and music.

Like many others, XRT linked me to a new world. XRT encouraged me to leave my sterile environment and travel to the Earl of Old Town to listen to Steve Goodman and my first concert at the Aragon Ball Room to see Mott the Hoople and the New York Dolls, not to mention other famous haunts that played host to greats like Iggy Pop, David Bowie, Muddy Waters, Frank Zappa, Roxie Music and the like.

Thank you, XRT, for 40 great years. You made me a better person. And when your kids turn their dial to 93, they will find Lin Brehmer, ''your best friend in the whole world.'' Lin has been the morning voice of XRT for the last 20 years and is a Chicago institution unto himself. For 20 years, Lin has been there with us to celebrate all things Chicago, from commiserating with us over another Chicago Cubs loss to suggesting the perfect restaurant for a post-concert dinner. He shares with us the best of the city and makes sure we better understand the world with ''Lin's Bin.'' He helps us discover new sounds, rediscover old favorites and provides an unparalleled soundtrack to our days.

A celebrated fixture in radio, Lin has received a variety of honors throughout his illustrious career. In 1990, he was honored as Music Director of the Decade by Hard Report.

Lin's musical sensibilities are nicely summed up by his motto, borrowed from the writing of Gerard Manley Hopkins: ''Flesh fade and mortal trash fall to the residuary worm, you and I might as well rock and roll.'' Dubbed the Reverend of Rock and Roll early in his radio career, Lin sought to put together a radio program unlike any other.

Now, more than 35 years since he first hosted a radio show in Albany, New York, Lin has succeeded in doing that and so much more.

Radio isn't Lin's only passion; he is also quite the accomplished foodie, never going anywhere without a food guide in his car and his self-described ''eating pants,'' an outfit with enough give to accommodate another Chicago meal—oh, that Wiener Circle. His favorite restaurants in Chicago include a wide variety of cuisine for an even broader array of occasions. His recommendations have included ''best upscale Mexican restaurant for when you want to leave the kids at home'' and the very specific ''best late night steak burrito.'' I'm sure he also enjoys splitting a cinnamon roll with our friend and his colleague, Teri Hemmert, another Chicago jewel, at her favorite table at Ann Sather's Restaurant on the north side.

Lin Brehmer is a man who helps us discover the best about Chicago, and in doing so, has become a Chicago treasure himself. We appreciate and applaud his career as one of our city's finest radio personalities and most recognizable voices, and look forward to the music experiences and food he will help us discover in his next 20 years. Thank you, Lin, for always reminding us why it's great to be alive.

PUTTING PEOPLE BEFORE POLITICS

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

Mr. DOLD. Mr. Speaker, I know in just listening to some of the comments that I'm joined by I think all of my colleagues in welcoming GABBY GIFFORDS back to this body for this evening's State of the Union Address, and certainly our thoughts and prayers are with her for a full and speedy recovery as she continues to make strides.

Mr. Speaker, this past month, I've had the opportunity, as many of my colleagues have, to travel throughout our districts, and as the number one manufacturing district in our country, it's no surprise that people are frustrated and concerned about jobs and the economy.

□ 1020

I know that's common because when I talk to my colleagues on the other side of the aisle and my colleagues over on this side of the aisle about the number one issue we face, they also say it's jobs and the economy. So whether you're a Republican or a Democrat or an independent, I think we can all come together and agree that we need to find the common ground to spur economic growth.

It's time that we work together in a bipartisan way to pass legislation that empowers job creators and puts America back to work. I firmly believe that if we put people before politics and progress before partisanship and find common ground, we will move our country forward. If you have an idea that is going to move our country forward, I think that we ought to vote on it and move it forward immediately.

Mr. Speaker, today marks the 1,000th day that the United States Senate has not passed a budget. As someone that ran a small business before coming to Washington, sitting around kitchen tables, Americans are wondering how they tighten their belt, how they balance their budget.

But the point there is that they have a budget. Small businesses all across the land can't operate without a budget. Big businesses can't operate without a budget. American families generally can't operate without a budget. And yet we here in Washington have not had a budget in far, far, far too long. You could build the Empire State Building two and a half times in the time that it has taken the Senate to even pass their version of a budget. This is just plainly unacceptable for the American public.

Put something forward. Let us know where we should be putting our priorities. And that, unfortunately, creates an enormous inefficiency. Can you imagine trying to figure out where you're supposed to spend your resources, what you're supposed to spend your money on in terms of trying to move your family forward without a budget?

There is a tremendous amount of uncertainty, Mr. Speaker, out there and I hear it from people each and every day, uncertainty that Washington is creating. Excessive regulations, there's no question about that. We look at Dodd-Frank. In Dodd-Frank, frankly, we've got 400 rules and regulations, over 200-some-odd that have yet to even be written. What it does is it paralyzes small businesses. People are sitting on their hands. They're not moving forward; they're not hiring people. This is something that we here in this body have an opportunity to change. We can provide that level of certainty, and I think that we must.

We're going to hear a lot about a do-nothing Congress, and frankly, I get frustrated when I hear about that. This body has passed over 30 jobs bills and sent them across the courtyard to the other side of the Capitol where they sit on HARRY REID's doorstep. Now, these aren't partisan bills, Mr. Speaker; these are bills like Access to Capital for Job Creators that passed this body by over 400 votes. That's wildly bipartisan, something that we agree upon, my colleagues on the other side of the aisle and my colleagues on this side of the aisle; and yet they're sitting on HARRY REID's doorstep, and they won't even come up for a vote. This is the frustration that I think the American public has.

Washington needs to move forward. We need to address jobs and the economy. We need to address the out-of-control spending that has happened, yes, on both sides of the aisle. We need to figure out a way that Washington can tighten its belt so that we do not bury our children and grandchildren under a mountain of debt and jeopardize the very fabric of the American Dream.

Mr. Speaker, I talk to my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, and I do sense that there is a frustration. There is a concern that we may be the first generation of Americans that leaves our country worse for our children and grandchildren than we received from our parents and grandparents. For me, this is absolutely unacceptable, which is why I think that we have to find that common ground—find the common ground and move our country forward.

I certainly hope tonight we talk about a united America, we talk about a vision that unites us as opposed to one that divides us. This will be an opportunity. And I hope it's about jobs and the economy, the out-of-control spending, and making sure that hard-working American taxpayers are moving forward.

This is our time. It's time we all come together to put America back to work.

RECOGNIZING CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL OF SERVICE FOR YOUTH RECIPIENT SALLY WHITE

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

Ms. SEWELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Sally White, a remarkable young lady from the Seventh Congressional District of Alabama who was a recent recipient of the Congressional Gold Medal of Service for Youth Award.

Sally is a driven, committed, and determined young lady who is destined for success. She is currently a senior at Thomasville High School in Thomasville, Alabama, and has a 4.32 grade point average. She has been a member of the varsity cheerleading squad for 3 years and was captain of the squad this year. She was also named a Universal Cheerleaders Association All-American.

Sally has been involved in the Thespian Drama Honor Society for 6 years and attended the International Thespian Festival in Nebraska where she worked with theater students from around the world. She is a member of the National Honor Society, attended Alabama's Girls State, and is a Thomasville Chamber Ambassador.

Sally has been very passionate about public service and mission work. She traveled to Ecuador for 2 weeks in the summer of 2010, planting trees to raise money for village schools. Sally serves as a volunteer for the summer reading program at the Thomasville Public Library and volunteers in the extended day program at Thomasville Elementary School to assist young students with homework.

Sally plans to pursue a college degree in either biomedical or chemical engineering. After college, she plans to attend graduate school to earn a Ph.D. or medical degree. Her ultimate goal is to one day work in the medical research field to develop cures for this Nation's most troubling diseases.

Sally is one of 14 youth in the State of Alabama who has received the Congressional Gold Medal of Service Award since its inception by Congress in 1979. The award provides a unique opportunity for young people to set and achieve personal challenging goals that build character and foster community service. Unlike many other awards, recipients do not win the Congressional Gold Medal of Service. They earn it. Sally earned this accolade by setting and achieving goals in four program areas: volunteer public service, personal development, physical fitness, and explorations. In her more than 800 hours of community service, she strengthened her commitment to public service and realized the power that one individual can make in one's community and in this world.

I had the great privilege of presenting the Congressional Gold Medal of Service Award to Sally 2 weeks ago on January 11, 2012, during a student assembly at Thomasville High School. I was impressed by Sally's poise, grace, and strength and her commitment to helping others. When asked about the award, Sally stated: ''Receiving the Congressional Gold Medal of Service for Youth Award has been a tremendous honor for me. I am thankful for the love and support I have been provided while working towards this award. I am extremely humbled by this honor.''

Sally's principal, Mr. Kyle Ferguson, expressed the sentiments of her teachers, advisers, and mentors when he stated: ''Sally White is without a doubt one of the most driven, goal-oriented, and conscientious young people that I have ever encountered. She is certainly operating at a level far beyond her years. We are honored that she has been with us through her high school years.''

Sally White is an excellent role model and a wonderful example of servant leadership. We should all aspire to work as hard as Sally for the good of others and for our own personal development. I want to applaud Sally's teachers, family members, friends, and the Thomasville community for helping to shape and nurture an outstanding student.

On behalf of the Seventh Congressional District, the State of Alabama, and this Nation, we recognize and congratulate Sally White for receiving the Congressional Gold Medal of Service for Youth Award for her hard work, dedication, and community involvement. It is with great pride that I ask my colleagues in the House of Representatives to join me in honoring Sally White for her exemplary commitment to public service.

□ 1030

NATIONAL SCHOOL CHOICE WEEK

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

Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, all around the Hill today, you will see Members of Congress wearing a red button, ''1,000 Days,'' a reminder that it has been 1,000 days since the United States Senate has passed a budget for the United States of America; 1,000 days of acting irresponsibly.

I want to pause and tell you that last year on January 8, just 3 days after being sworn in as a new United States Congressman, we were informed of the tragic incident that happened in Arizona; and I want to let the gentlewoman from Arizona, GABBY GIFFORDS, know that I'm going to be honored that she will be on the floor with us today. The prayers of my family and of the members of the South Carolina delegation and our State go out to her and her family and the folks in Arizona that she represents every day, and we will continue to do that long after her service to this country.

Mr. Speaker, this week is National School Choice Week. All across our country, students and families are rallying for National School Choice Week, a grassroots campaign dedicated to the idea that all students, regardless of background, should have the opportunity to choose the school that most effectively motivates them to learn. For too long, we have made increases in spending and new standards from Washington our focus, which have, sadly, strangled our parents' and teachers' ability to help our students succeed.

Now, with that, I want to give a shout-out to the Nation's teachers who have to deal every day with complying with the mandates that come from Washington, D.C., while they struggle to educate the children of our country. Instead of propelling them to success, the United States has fallen to 14th in

the world in reading, 17th in science, and 25th in math, compared to other countries, according to the 2009 edition of the Program for International Student Assessment. Those numbers are astonishing.

As proud Americans, we will not accept the consequences of failure, of letting our children fall behind the rest of the world. Parents are demanding results in education for their children; and Washington should listen to their message, which is, simply: We know how to reform education in our States; get Washington out of the way and watch us succeed.

Education should be returned to the States, the local communities, and to parents, just where our Founding Fathers left it when they designed this great government.

This is the reality we face: Our country, the United States of America, stormed the beaches of Normandy. We raised the flag over Iwo Jima. We fought for and won the freedom of other nations all around the globe. We ventured into space and landed the human race on the Moon. We inspired the collapse of the Berlin Wall. But before all of this, we invented the lightbulb, the automobile, the television, the telephone, discovered the art and science of flying.

Our inventions, though, are not as much the reason for our greatness as they are the result of it, because at the very beginning, at our founding, we declared to the world this belief: ''that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness—that to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.''

The truth in that Declaration reminds us that our people will succeed and prosper, and our students will learn and achieve when we preserve the liberty of every parent to choose the educational environment that's best for their children. And if we do so, imagine how our children will lead the world through another century marked by the rise of freedom and the innovation that freedom inspires.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I want to end by echoing the words of Mr. JONES from earlier when he said: May God bless the men and women in uniform, may God bless their families, and may God continue to bless the United States of America.

FROM HUMBLE BEGINNINGS TO THE HIGHEST OFFICE

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

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, last week, I came to the floor of the House to challenge the utilization of words because words matter. Candidates who are charging each other with a variety of sins decided to call President Barack Obama, who tonight will give us the State of the Union, the ''food stamp President.''

For many of us who know our history, we might recall that in the 1940s and beyond, there were many who were on government cheese. In fact, many people I know today smile about that government cheese and peanut butter that they were given. They include doctors and lawyers and leaders of this Nation, teachers, people who are expanding opportunities for others.

This Nation is a great country, and we are reminded that many who start from humble beginnings can ascend to the highest office or the barons and the leadership of corporate America. So the negative connotation of ''food stamp President'' is to denigrate those who receive it rather than to suggest that there are opportunities in this Nation that no other country can provide.

So, Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about and look forward to the President's State of the Union as he speaks about income equality and challenges us, as a Nation, to come together, to move forward on expanding jobs, such as the President's American Jobs Act. But I raise for thought the problem of how we will come to that point.

I'm looking at an article that suggests that ''Made in the USA'' may be a relic of the bygone. It uses one of our most famous, one of our most imitated companies in the world, Apple, which speaks to the genius of America. I will never step away from acknowledging that we are the inventive, the innovative, the genius, the creative population because we've been given freedom by our Constitution. But when you ask the question why the iPhone is manufactured elsewhere and you hear comments about why the genius of this particular company has not been translated into a number of jobs, why decisions have been made to move manufacturing overseas, and you ask the question where is the corporate social responsibility, for example, and where is the generosity in terms of hiring American workers, well, we know that the international economy is intertwined. Companies once felt an obligation to support American workers even when it wasn't the best financial choice. We call that ''American generosity.'' But I understand the bottom line.

So it is important that we begin to look at the items that the President is talking about, jobs skills training, and to find a way to restore the modern manufacturing that will bring more jobs to America.

Why do these companies move overseas? In this article, it suggests because of the supply chain and the way factories can be put up and put down in these foreign countries. Now, you tell me why we can't do that. I believe we can. It is all about focus and logistics. And tonight, as the President expands on his Kansas speech about how we are a great Nation, I'm looking for ways to end that income inequality, to come together and make sure that those who make much can have the ability to share those dollars but yet still make a grand profit. I want to see us improve our supply chains and logistics. I want to see us get factories up and bring them down.

We restored the American auto industry by commitment, dedication, and sacrifice. At last I heard, General Motors now is the number one manufacturer of automobiles in the world. How did it come about? Because Democrats came together and joined around, with a bipartisan support, the idea that we can create jobs; we can manufacture jobs.

Let me just say this: I will accept the challenge tonight that the President will offer, and I will realize that a food stamp family today providing for their children are the presidents and CEOs and astronauts and inventors of tomorrow. That's the kind of Nation that we are.

I say it always, and I will say it again. ''Food stamp'' is a denigrating term when you say ''food stamp President,'' as if the President does not want to create jobs. We're tired of the buzzwords and innuendo about certain groups, but I believe that we have a way of coming out of this.

Mr. Speaker, now is the time. It is an urgency of now. It is the justice and equality that Martin Luther King and many other great leaders spoke of. It is this mosaic Nation of people from all walks of life that have shown the world we're the greatest Nation in the world. I'm looking forward to pursuing that in the 21st century, building jobs and saying, ''God bless America.''

□ 1040

ACCEPTING THE MANTLE OF LEADERSHIP

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California. Mr. Speaker, first I would just say to the gentlelady who just spoke that I do not doubt that the President wishes to create jobs. The fact of the matter is he just doesn't know how. The record would suggest that.

When I first came to this House, the year was 1979, January. We were in the midst of what history has shown us was a failed Presidency. We had something called the misery index. We had unemployment rising. We had inflation rates around 20 percent. We had, by all gauges, a difficult time, a time that many people looked upon with despair, and many suggested that the issues were so large and the problems so great that no President could possibly deal with it, no Congress, and the American people could not.

It was just prior to that time that I met a gentleman from Georgia, Mr. Gingrich, as we were both freshman Members elected. And we began talking about the fact that our party had

not been in the majority for well over a generation, that there seemed to be a lack of a vision for the future, and that there was an acceptance of mediocrity and failure and second-class status for America.

Our belief was, at that time, that we could come together with a number of other Members and try and at least give voice to a new idea, a new vision, a more positive vision for America. We worked together with other Members and formed what was called the Conservative Opportunity Society because we thought that that was a positive vision for the future of America, consistent with Republican principles and, more importantly, consistent with and expressive of American principles. We thought it was an antidote to what we saw leading us at that time as the liberal welfare state. I think history has shown that, with the election of Ronald Reagan and the embracing of the Conservative Opportunity Society vision of America, that America could turn around.

We are confronted with what I believe to be a failed Presidency at the present time. We are confronted with questions and some great despair in families around America for the failure of an opportunity for jobs. And I would suggest that, at this point in time, it is appropriate for those who have visions, those who are ready to challenge the conventional wisdom, those who believe that America's best days are ahead, not behind, to come to the fore.

There are those who look at the faults of Newt Gingrich. I'd like to suggest that he was the one person that I know that had a vision in this House of how this House could be changed, how we, working as an institution, could work with a President to make changes and, ultimately, how this side of the aisle could, for the first time in a generation, actually be the majority.

Following his ascendency to Speaker of the House, we actually had balanced budgets. We actually had some bringing down of some of the size of the Federal Government. We actually had some progress around the country. So I would say, for those who look at the faults of others, let's look at their accomplishments.

This is a time when it seems to me we ought to be serious about the future of America. We ought to be bold about the future of America. We ought to have some confidence in the greatness of America, the greatness of its people, not necessarily the greatness of its government. We need to have a good governmental structure that allows the greatness of the American people.

There are some on the Presidential debate scene today who are willing to challenge us with bold ideas. That has been done in the past and has proven successful. It seems to me we should not shrink from the future; we should embrace the future. We should, in fact, be leaders of the future.

I am not one elected to this House to be satisfied that the future of America for my children and my grandchildren is any less than what it was for me as a child growing up. I will not stand here and allow us to act in vain so that the sacrifices of my parents, some call the Greatest Generation, I say one of the greatest generations, will have been in vain. They worked hard. They accepted the challenges of the future with an innate confidence in the goodness of the American people, the capabilities of the American people, and, yes, the common sense of the American people.

My hope is that as we go forward in this year, those of us who seek office for both the House, the Senate, and Presidency will accept that mantle of leadership that has been cast upon us from those in the past.

PENALIZING UNEMPLOYED AMERICANS

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

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my concern that Republicans are attempting to penalize unemployed American citizens who do not have a high school diploma. Last month, House Republicans included a provision in the payroll tax cut bill, which is presently in conference, to establish an educational requirement for recipients of benefits.

The provision, Mr. Speaker, would require recipients of unemployment benefits to have at least a high school diploma or a GED or be enrolled in classes to obtain such a degree. This requirement, Mr. Speaker, would affect an estimated 248,000 workers in the first 3 months of enactment, and disproportionately affect older workers, forcing certain unemployment recipients to either enroll in adult education programs or forego the benefits they need to support their families. This is a disgrace.

In 2010, half a million workers age 50 or over who received unemployment insurance lacked a high school diploma. For most of these individuals who have worked more than 30 long years, returning to high school makes very little sense. They are the bricklayers and the carpenters and sanitation workers and housekeepers in our communities.

In the case of workers under the age of 50, adult education might be useful, but is largely unattainable. Currently, State and local adult education programs do not have the capacity—we know that—do not have the capacity to meet this demand. Waiting lists for these programs are proliferating and certain to worsen due to a 20 percent decline over the past decade in Federal funding for adult education programs and $1 billion in cuts to job-training programs in fiscal year 2011.

Creating an educational mandate as a condition of eligibility to receive unemployment insurance benefits, Mr. Speaker, is punitive. It's misguided. It's egregious, even by current Republican standards.

While there are certainly benefits to receiving at least a high school education, establishing a blanket policy that denies unemployment benefits to low-skill workers who have lost their jobs due to no fault of their own, without ensuring they have unrestricted access to educational opportunities, sets up hundreds of thousands of Americans to fail.

It seems incredibly cynical to require participation in adult education and job training as a condition of receiving unemployment benefits while simultaneously eliminating meaningful Federal support for these programs.

Mr. Speaker, it is unconscionable to put additional strings on this crucial relief that do nothing, nothing to address the real causes of the current unemployment crisis. It is a difficult time to be unemployed in America. It is a difficult time to be unemployed in America, but House Republicans seem determined to make it even more difficult.

I urge my colleagues to join me and stand up against this education mandate and fight for policies that can actually help bring the unemployment crisis to resolve.

RECOGNITION OF CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK

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

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, starting January 29 of this year, Catholic schools across the country will initiate their annual observance of Catholic Schools Week. The theme for this year is ''Catholic Schools: Faith. Academics. Service.''

The 2012 theme emphasizes the principles of Catholic school education, which families in my district and across the country highly value. The theme focuses on three priorities that are distinct to Catholic schools. Children are taught faith, not just the basics of Christianity, but how to have a relationship with their God; academics, in which Catholic schools are held to very high standards.

Earlier this year I was proud to recognize the Nativity of our Lord Catholic School in Warminster, Pennsylvania, for receiving the 2011 National Blue Ribbon of Excellence Award.

□ 1050

Finally, the third principle in the 2012 theme is service, the giving of one's time and effort to help others. It is taught both as an expression of faith but also of good citizenship.

Schools typically celebrate Catholic Schools Week with mass, open houses, and activities for students, families, parishioners, and the community at large. In addition to this year's list of activities, some schools in my district will host events welcoming families

from schools with which they will be merging. While the Archdiocese of Philadelphia contemplates its plans for continuing to provide students with a rigorous academic curriculum in concert with spiritual values, families and parishioners can reflect upon the three principles of Catholic Schools Week—faith, academics, service—not simply as a theme but also as a guide for their future decisions.

Mr. Speaker, Catholic Schools Week is truly a time to demonstrate the intangible value of Catholic education. I'm extremely grateful for the hard work and dedication of the administrators, faculty, students, and parents who've created an environment fostering academic excellence, spirituality, and service.

POVERTY IN AMERICA

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

Ms. LEE of California. As the founder of the Congressional Out of Poverty Caucus, I rise again today to remind this body about the crisis of poverty in America, which really should prick the conscience of every Democrat and Republican. As we begin to consider legislation for this year and budgets for the fiscal year 2013, we must do more to help millions of Americans living in poverty.

We must do more for the millions of Americans who are looking very hard for a job and working hard every day to move up the ladder of opportunity, really trying to remove these very difficult barriers.

We must not balance our budgets on the backs of the most vulnerable, the poor, and low-income individuals, and we cannot allow any budget cuts or authorize new spending on programs that will increase poverty or increase income inequality in America.

We also must commit to taking bold steps to reducing the devastating impact of poverty in America, and that is by creating jobs. It's inexcusable and immoral to fail to take the strongest possible action to bring immediate help to those Americans in need.

We cannot continue down the path that leads to increasing poverty, inequality, and income disparities which focus more and more wealth in the hands of the few and leave millions of Americans behind. With nearly 50 million Americans in poverty and half of all Americans in low-income households, we cannot wait. We must act now.

Mr. Speaker, poverty doesn't just hurt families and the children who grow up in families trapped by poverty, but it costs our Nation hundreds of billions of dollars in lost productivity and slows the Nation's economic growth. We must act to strengthen funding for programs that not only prevent hunger, homelessness, crime, and maintain access to education, but we all must create initiatives to demand goods and services which boost our economy. That means that small businesses across America need customers, and they need customers right now.

So we must extend the expiring unemployment benefits. We can't abandon the millions of job seekers before they find a good job. We should also immediately add an additional 14 weeks of tier I unemployment benefits for the millions of Americans who have completely exhausted their benefits after 99 weeks. Far too many Americans have exhausted all of their unemployment benefits and are still unable to work. We must not abandon these 99ers.

To achieve these ends, we must ensure that we protect the efficient and effective programs we already have in place and provide strong investments that spur immediate job growth. And we have the resources to do this if we commit ourselves to increasing fairness in taxation to ensure that the wealthiest Americans pay their fair share and enact a reasonable Tax Code that includes financial transactions which will not only raise vital revenue but set some limits to the wild, out-of-control speculation and vulture capitalism that nearly brought down this entire economy.

Also, we must take a bold approach in how we allocate the large savings from our defense budgets as we bring our troops home from abroad.

I'm confident that the President will speak to the moral and economic crises of income inequality and will not forget the long-term unemployed, the poor, our seniors, our students, and the middle class in his State of the Union speech tonight.

I hope the Republicans and Democrats in this body take heed and tomorrow pass the American Jobs Act for the good of the country.

SMART SECURITY: TO CREATE AN AMERICA BUILT TO LAST

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

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, tonight when the President of the United States addresses our Nation from this Chamber, we will hear some good news on the national security front. The end of the Iraq war, for example, is an impressive accomplishment, one that wouldn't have happened if bold progressives hadn't called for our troops to be brought home way back in 2005.

I'm also pleased the President's leadership will make it possible for our military strategic review to call for significant reductions in defense spending.

But on both of these fronts, ending our current wars and long-range national security strategy, I'm hoping for proposals that are bigger and bolder than what we've heard to this point.

Bottom line, Mr. Speaker, we need to end the war in Afghanistan, and we need to end it now, not 2014. Not at whatever other later date the military brass decides is appropriate. After nearly 1,900 American deaths and more than 10 years of bloodshed and mayhem, we owe it to our troops and to their families, as well as American taxpayers, to bring them home.

This war is not just a moral disgrace, not just a humanitarian disaster, Mr. Speaker; it's a strategic failure. We're spending at least $10 billion every month to prop up a regime in Afghanistan that is ineffective on its best day and downright corrupt on its worst.

Afghanistan continues to be racked by poverty and violence, and my belief is that by continuing to have military boots on the ground, we're encouraging more animosity towards the United States, giving the Taliban a recruitment tool, and thus, undermining our security.

Mr. Speaker, we need a new security program. We need a new security paradigm, an entirely fresh way of thinking about how to keep our Nation safe. Won't we make more friends and win more hearts and minds if we extend a hand of friendship to the rest of the world instead of rattling the saber at the first sign of trouble?

Actually, that's the heart of my SMART security platform. Why are we spending pennies on humanitarian aid for every dollar we're spending on weapons and warfare? Instead of a military surge, we need a civilian surge, one that lifts people out of poverty, rebuilds infrastructure, promotes education, especially for women and girls, and combats malnutrition and global health problems around the world.

SMART security is a renewed commitment to diplomacy, multilateralism, and peaceful conflict resolution. It would support a dramatic downsizing of the military industrial complex. Believe it or not, the Pentagon consumes 56 percent of discretionary spending with a budget bigger in real dollars than it was at the height of the Soviet threat. And with SMART security, we can reverse that.

Tonight I'm told the President will sound the theme of an America built to last. But no Nation, Mr. Speaker, that exists in a state of semipermanent warfare can be built to last. I worry about how we can be built to last when we have enough nuclear warheads to blow the world to smithereens many times over.

Now is the time, Mr. Speaker. Our common humanity compels us to bring the troops home from Afghanistan and implement a SMART security agenda. Now is the time.

□ 1100

HONORING THE LIFE OF FORMER REPRESENTATIVE ED JENKINS

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

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize and celebrate the

life of Ed Jenkins, a fellow Georgian, a dedicated public servant, and a good friend. I had the honor of serving on the Ways and Means Committee alongside Congressman Jenkins.

Born in the small town of Jasper, Georgia, Congressman Jenkins would often describe himself as a country lawyer, but he was a country lawyer with an extensive knowledge of the tax system. He was knowledgeable; he was very informed. He was an advocate for the people and industries of Georgia. He was a champion of the South's textile industry and a fierce protector of the local economy.

Although often soft-spoken, Ed Jenkins bravely pressed for the facts of the Iran-Contra affair. He believed the American people deserved to hear the truth, and he was not afraid to speak out, he was not afraid to speak up.

He was thoughtful, considerate, a brave negotiator and an unbelievable, just excellent colleague. When I first came to Congress, he was so helpful and so caring. I learned so much from him. He was a good man, a decent human being. I never heard him say a mean thing about anyone.

I only wish we had more Members of Congress on both sides of the aisle, with not just his demeanor, but with the pride he took in this institution and this Congress. He was very proud to be a Member of Congress and proud to be a member of the Ways and Means Committee, and that pride made him a powerful leader.

I can remember over the years each time the Ways and Means Committee came together for a reunion. He would always show up long after he retired from the Congress.

I was so sad to hear of his passing and would like to express my deepest sympathy to his wife, Jo; his daughters, Janice and Amy; and his entire family. As a Nation, we greatly benefited from his service. As a colleague, I learned so much from his example and his friendship.

He will be deeply missed by the people of Georgia, the people of this Nation. He made a lasting contribution to our country; and we must never, ever forget this good and great man.

TRIBUTE TO FORMER REPRESENTATIVE ED JENKINS

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

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank Congressman JOHN LEWIS and his staff for reserving time this morning for Members of the House to come to the floor to pay tribute to my friend, one of Georgia's former and notable legislators, the late Congressman Edgar Lanier Jenkins. Ed died January 1 of this year.

The poet Longfellow wrote: ''Heights by great men reached and kept were not obtained by sudden flight but, while their companions slept, they were toiling on upward in the night.'' It was no sudden flight for Ed Jenkins, born in Young Harris, Georgia, to rise to prominence in Washington, DC under the dome of this great Capitol. No, it was the result of hard work and humble sacrifice.

Although I didn't have the pleasure of serving in this body with Ed, as he retired from Congress in 1993 as I was beginning my first term, I and countless others from across the country looked to Ed as a role model. Ed came to me shortly after I was elected. He embraced me. He was always available to me for advice and counsel. Not only that, he and his friend of many years and his business partner, John Winburn, made it a point to offer continuous support for Democratic Members from the Georgia delegation, year in and year out; and Ed never asked for anything in return.

He was a humble and able country lawyer. He practiced in Jasper, Georgia. He was born in Young Harris. He attended Young Harris College. He was in the Coast Guard. For many years he served as an aide to former Congressman Phil Landrum of Georgia. He was elected to this body, and he served from 1977 to 1993.

As a member of the House Ways and Means Committee, he played an instrumental role in passage of key tax initiatives that benefited millions of working American families. He was a key figure in the investigation and uncovering the crimes committed during the Iran-Contra affair.

Ed, through his illustrious legislative career, always remained a passionate and loyal advocate of the South's manufacturing and textile industry. In 1985, he wrote and passed the Textile and Apparel Trade Enforcement Act, which was ultimately vetoed by President Reagan, but would have rolled back the textile imports from foreign countries by 40 percent. As a conservative Democrat from the South, Ed Jenkins often received praise from his constituents for putting their interests ahead of political ideology or party affiliation.

In his political life, he always embodied the adage of the turtle on the fence post, which was quoted so often by his childhood friend, former Georgia Governor and U.S. Senator Zell Miller. It goes like this: whenever you see a turtle perched on a fence post, you know one thing—he didn't get there by himself. Somebody put him there. Ed Jenkins always remembered who sent him to Washington.

Ed is survived by his beloved wife of 51 years, Jo Jenkins; two daughters, Janice Anderson and Amy Dotson; two brothers, Charles and Kenneth; three sisters, Marilyn Thomasson, Ella Battle, and Patti Chambers; and two grandsons. My wife, Vivian, and I would like to extend our sincere condolences to Ed's family, friends, and former constituents as they mourn the loss of our dearly departed friend.

There must have been something about the water at Young Harris College. It produced people who must have ingested something about public service: Zell Miller, Governor, Senator; Jack Brinkley, United States Congressman; Edgar Lanier Jenkins, United States Congressman par excellence.

Isn't it strange how princes and kings and clowns that caper in sawdust rings and common folks like you and me are builders for eternity. Each is given a bag of tools, a shapeless mass and a set of rules, and each must make your life as flown a stumbling block or a stepping stone.

Mr. Speaker, I'm so glad, and the people of Georgia and this Nation are glad, that Ed Jenkins was a stepping stone and not a stumbling block for a higher, better life for so many people across this country. We mourn his loss, but we are grateful that we knew him and that he passed this way.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA AND NATIONAL WWI MEMORIAL

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, this is a photograph of Frank Buckles. It was taken when he was about 16 years of age. He may have been 15; he may have been 17.

You see, Frank Buckles Jr. joined the United States Army in the great World War I, and he lied to get into the Army so he could serve America in France. They called them doughboys when they went to Europe. He drove an ambulance so he could rescue other doughboys who had been wounded and killed on the battlefield in Flanders and other places in Belgium and France.

After the great World War I was over with, he came back home to the United States, while 114,000 doughboys did not return alive.

Many of them died from flu that they had contracted in France and died in the United States. Four million served, 114,000 died, and Frank Buckles Jr. got to come home. After the war was over with, when the great World War II started, he was in the Philippines.

□ 1110

He was captured by the Japanese and held as a prisoner of war for 3½ years. And shortly before he was to be executed by the Japanese, he was rescued as other prisoners of war, Americans, Filipinos, were rescued.

He spent the remainder of his years in the United States. He drove a tractor in West Virginia until he was 107. And then last year, at the age of 110, Frank Buckles died. Frank Buckles had a mission before he died. It was to see that all who lived and died and served in the great World War I were remembered by this country. You see, he was the last doughboy. He was the last American who died from the great World War I.

This second photograph is a more recent photograph taken when Frank Buckles and I and others were at the

D.C. Memorial for World War I veterans. Frank Buckles and others, including myself, Members of the Senate and Members of this House, wanted to see that the D.C. Memorial, which was exclusively to remember the veterans from D.C., great Americans who lived, fought, and died representing our country in the great World War I, to see that this D.C. Memorial was expanded to not only honor the D.C. veterans who served, but all Americans who served in World War I. After all, it is on The National Mall where we have three other great memorials to the four important wars of the last century. You see, America built the Vietnam Memorial, then built the Korean Memorial, and then built the World War II Memorial. But there is no memorial on The National Mall for all Americans who served in the great World War I. And it is time that we do that, that we honor all that served, not just the few, but all of them.

So I've introduced legislation along with my friend from Missouri, EMANUEL CLEAVER, to have legislation that will do three things:

First of all, it will take this memorial that you see in the back of this photograph, the World War I D.C. Memorial. At the time this photograph was taken, it was in a state of disrepair. It has since been repaired by the National Park Service which oversees the memorial. Take this memorial, honor the D.C. vets and expand it to include and make it the District of Columbia and National World War I Memorial, maybe even give more recognition to the people of D.C. who built the memorial, the schoolchildren who collected money so it could be built many years ago, but make it a memorial for all who served in World War I.

The second thing it would do is also designate the Liberty Memorial in Kansas City as the World War I Museum, which would be in Kansas City, Missouri. You see, it is the museum in the United States that honors and recognizes the history of World War I.

And the third thing that this bill would do is set up a commission so America can commemorate World War I. You see, it's almost been 100 years since that war started. Not much is being said about World War I. I asked a person not too long ago what he remembers about World War I from history books, and he said, Isn't that the war where Snoopy fought the Red Baron?

Unfortunately, too many Americans know nothing about our history, and it's time we do something. And so we're going to have a commission to honor World War I and all who served. This commission is not going to be paid for by the taxpayers. There's no taxpayer money involved in any of this, but it'll be set up to make sure that America remembers the 100th anniversary, and that anniversary is coming up on us.

Mr. Speaker, it's one thing to die for your country. It's another thing, and the worst casualty of war, to be forgotten by your country.

And that's just the way it is.

REMEMBERING CONGRESSMAN ED JENKINS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. BARROW) for 1 minute.

Mr. BARROW. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the lifelong public service of my fellow Georgian, former Congressman Ed Jenkins. Congressman Jenkins was born in Young Harris, Georgia. He was a veteran of the Coast Guard and a graduate of Young Harris College and the University of Georgia Law School.

Congressman Jenkins represented north Georgia in Congress for 16 years, serving on the Budget Committee and the Ways and Means Committee. His service and his approach to service are a good example for all of us today. Those who knew him and served with him remember him as a levelheaded workhorse and a zealous advocate for the interests of his district, especially the textile and poultry industries. More importantly, he was willing to work in a bipartisan way to do what he thought was best for his constituents and his country.

After Congress, Ed Jenkins served as a member and as chairman of the University System of Georgia Board of Regents. Congressman Jenkins passed away on New Year's Day, but he is survived by a wife of 51 years, two daughters, two grandchildren, and thousands of friends and admirers. We've missed him a lot these last few years, and now we'll miss him even more.

STATE OF THE UNION, JOBS AND TRADE

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

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, tonight the President will speak to America and the world in the annual State of the Union Address. I'm eager to hear his ideas about additional job creation because job creation must be America's number one priority.

Back home in northern Ohio, we are seeing manufacturing starting to pick up. In Lorain, Ohio, Republic Steel is gearing up production. In Toledo, GM Transmission and companies like BX Solutions are bringing back jobs in the transportation and logistical services industry. And across our region, the auto sector is making major investments.

The Detroit auto show just wrapped up, and there is much to be optimistic about. For one, GM is officially back on top, claiming the title as the world's largest automaker, an amazing comeback for the American automotive industry. Our resilient autoworkers brought it roaring back, even after some here would have left it for dead.

Just between 2009 and last year, the U.S. auto industry created over 75,000 new jobs. We see the impact in places like Toledo, where Chrysler is expanding production at the Jeep plant, creating thousands of new jobs. In Avon Lake, Ford is investing. And GM's hot-selling Cruze is lighting up factory floors in northern Ohio, from Toledo and Defiance to Parma and Lordstown. However, we cannot forget that countries like China want to muscle in on the U.S. auto sector. If we want to see the U.S. auto industry in a continuing state of growth, creating jobs and building our economy forward, Congress must champion fair trade.

In December, the Congressional China Commission held a hearing on China's unfair trade practices. I used that opportunity to point out exactly how the government in Beijing blocks fair trade in U.S.-made cars and trucks. When Congress ceded China permanent normal trade relations, proponents promised that U.S. products would gain real access to the Chinese market. This has not happened. Would you believe that a Jeep Grand Cherokee costs $85,000 in China? That is three times what it costs here in the United States. And why? The Chinese Government has created an elaborate system of protective tariffs meant to keep U.S.-made trucks and cars out of China.

I asked the U.S. Trade Representative in December to develop a comprehensive strategy for addressing China's anticompetitive behavior. Main Street manufacturers are hard at work creating jobs along Ohio's north coast and throughout the Midwest, but it's overtime for the administration and Congress to get to work on the very real impact that the trade deficit has on lost U.S. jobs.

Economists estimate that for every billion dollars in trade deficit, we lose 15,000 jobs here. For 2011, our trade deficit with China alone will be close to $300 billion. If we do the quick, back-of-the-envelope math, this means that the U.S. ceded over 4.3 million jobs to China last year.

The entire U.S. trade deficit for 2011 is projected to reach an incredible $727 billion in the red, three quarters of a trillion. China accounts for 40 percent of it. Congress and the President must stand up for U.S. manufacturing and American jobs.

On December 15, the Chinese Government ratcheted up its attacks on our auto industry by levying an additional 21.5 percent antidumping duty and a 12.9 percent countervailing duty on top of their already unfair practices. That is why I and other Members are asking the President to take the Chinese before the World Trade Organization. We need official action to confront China's job aggression.

While the official unemployment rate is coming down here, we have a major fight to create more jobs in America.

□ 1120

In places like northern Ohio, there are still over 100,000 people out of work.

Greater Cleveland has over 75,000 people out of work, Toledo over 27,000, and Sandusky over 3,000. Our economy is still struggling forward. We can see how many jobs have been stamped out in not just the auto industry, but in manufacturing across our country due to unfair trade regimes. We need Congress and the executive branch to stand up and demand fairness for our companies, our workers, and our communities that are working so hard to build forward this country as our economy—our fragile economy—keeps rebounding. While it's rebounding forward, it could do a lot better with some help from the President and this Congress.

REMEMBERING THE HONORABLE EDGAR LANIER JENKINS

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

Mr. LEVIN. I want to join my colleagues in remembering Ed Jenkins—and Mr. RANGEL, who served with him for all of Ed's service, as chairman, I will yield time to him after I say just a few words on behalf of Ed Jenkins.

The Ways and Means Committee is indeed a key committee, and Ed Jenkins was a key person. I was reading some of the tributes, and one of them noted what was said in the Almanac of American Politics about Ed Jenkins: ''He was a man who must be consulted on many key legislative issues.'' How true that was.

Ed Jenkins showed you could be both gentle and strong. He did not seek the limelight, but he shed light on so many issues. One example is the textile industry. He comes from an area that once reined close to supremely in terms of textile.

Ed never gave up. He introduced legislation. It passed, but because of a veto, it did not become law. But talking about shining light, he did expose the importance of the textile industry as part of the manufacturing base of this country, and in that sense, he was very successful. He also showed his grit when it came to the Iran-contra dispute, and he took on Oliver North in his strong though gentle way.

I close my remarks with memories of Ed Jenkins when he would come right up to where I now stand, and almost invariably he would say, well, I'm just a poor country lawyer. Well, that's about the only thing that he said about himself that wasn't true. He was more than a poor country lawyer. He had been an Assistant U.S. Attorney. But he had a lot of quiet dynamism.

And so, as we talk about Ed, we remember the many times he came forth to speak in his soft but often strong way. He was an important part of this institution. He served his district, he served his State, and he served the Nation with dignity, with pride, and with civility that is too short available today in this Hall.

So I join all of you from Georgia who represent that State and everyone who has spoken in sending our warmest regards to Ed's family, and say to all of you, you should remember your husband and dad not only as a wonderful family member, but someone who came here, often at sacrifice, and he did so in a way that indeed served this country.

I would now like to yield the balance of my time to someone who knew Ed so well who has served as chairman of our committee and who remembers Ed Jenkins with such affection, the senior member for the State of New York, CHARLES RANGEL.

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, how much time is remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman has 1 minute remaining.

Mr. RANGEL. I would like unanimous consent that we extend it to 2 minutes additional. This is the end of it for Ed Jenkins, and I did not know.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair cannot entertain the gentleman's request.

Mr. RANGEL. I would like to request the Chair recognize me for 5 minutes.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair cannot entertain the gentleman's request at this time.

Mr. RANGEL. Could the Chair tell me what request you might entertain so I can share my views for the late Ed Jenkins?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman has 1 minute remaining.

Mr. RANGEL. Well, rules are rules, and they have to be followed. I had really hoped that given my long acquaintance with Ed Jenkins that I would have the opportunity to share with his family and those that knew him.

Unfortunately, those of us that were raised in the village of Harlem have very few opportunities to meet white Southern gentlemen, and it took a long while when he came on the committee for me to even understand what Ed Jenkins was talking about. But it didn't take long for me to understand that people are people no matter where they come from; they love, they get angry, they work out things. Now is the time I think more than ever that we just need somebody like Ed Jenkins to cross that barrier that we seem to have in a partisan way, in such a deep, hurting, partisan way in this Congress.

SANDY LEVIN can tell you, whenever our chairman Dan Rostenkowski had a problem, there was no problem that Ed Jenkins would not take a look at and recognize that it was not a Democratic problem, it was not a majority problem, but it was a problem that the United States of America really faced.

Since the Chair cannot entertain, I will then go to Reverend JOHN LEWIS and find out how we can work out something in a faith tradition so that all of us will get a chance to know, enjoy, and love the memory of a great American, the former Congressman, Edgar Jenkins.

BYRON NASH LIVE

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

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, this weekend, I, along with my colleague Congresswoman SHEILA JACKSON LEE attended an event in Houston, Texas. It was styled ''Byron Nash Live.'' This event was well attended. As I approached the venue, there were literally hundreds of people outside. Most of them were young people, and it was raining as I approached the venue. I did ask one of the young people if he was going to be able to go in, and I was told that there was an overflow crowd, that it was standing room only, and that as a result, he would have to stand outside. But he assured me that he would be there for the duration of the event. He was there for ''Byron Nash Live.''

Byron Nash, a 24-year-old comedian, was giving a performance, if you will. This performance was attended by his mother, Gwen Nash; his father, Michael Nash; his grandfather and grandmother, Reverend James and Mrs. Nash as well. This event was a lively event. Byron received several standing ovations, and his life was spoken of throughout the entirety of the event.

This, in a sense, may have been his last performance in the physical world, for you see, Byron Nash made his transition, and this was his home-going celebration. It was truly a celebration. There were many who did mourn his death, but we all were there to celebrate the life that he lived. His life, while it was short, was a meaningful life because the true measure of one's life is not how long one lives, but rather, what does one do with the time that God gives.

□ 1130

In his short lifetime, Byron Nash made a very positive impression on a lot of young people—a lot of older people as well. But I was proud to see so many young people in attendance, so many young people who were there to pay their last respects to a young man who lived a life that we were, of course, eager to celebrate.

While his life is no longer in the physical world, we believe that his spiritual existence is one that we should celebrate continually, and we will remember him.

There is good reason for his life to symbolize something, because he passed because of a rare type of cancer styled renal medullary carcinoma. As of 2009, there were 120 cases—I'm sure more since then, obviously more, but 120 cases. Victims of this type of cancer live 1 to 7 months, thereabout. Not a lot of empirical evidence has been acquired. This type of cancer seems to attack those who suffer from sickle cell. If his life can mean something to those who still live and symbolize something as we go forward, it should be that we must do more to fight this type of cancer.

His grandfather has dedicated his life to a continuing effort to get the word out, get the message out that this type of cancer does claim the lives of young people. We can do more here in the Congress of the United States of America to help fight cancer in general and this specific type of cancer that is known to few. It is my hope that we will continue to allocate resources to fighting cancer such that this type of cancer can move to the front burner.

We've got to do more to prevent, to educate, and to make sure that cancer becomes a disease of the past in our lifetimes. It is my hope that Byron Nash's life would become the genesis for us to do more to fight not only cancer in general but for this specific type of cancer known as renal medullary carcinoma.

I will leave these words with all of those who are within the sound of my voice here and those who may be viewing at home, and especially to his family: I want you to know that we will do all that we can to make sure that he not only lived a decent life—as he did, and that is as recognized—but also that we will do all that we can to fight this dreadful disease and bring it to an end.

HONORING SERGEANT JOHN BAKER, JR.

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

Mr. SCHILLING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of the distinguished life of Sergeant John Baker, Jr.

Born in Davenport, Iowa, but raised within the 17th District of Illinois, in Moline, Sergeant Baker served in Vietnam as a proud member of the United States Army. His selflessness and heroism earned him the Medal of Honor, Silver Star, Bronze Star, and Purple Heart as he bravely fought for God and country. Sergeant Baker would humbly say that this Medal of Honor was not actually for him, that he had done what anyone would have, that the medal belonged to all servicemen, to all veterans.

Though he surely never would have said so himself, Sergeant Baker—the Quad Cities only Medal of Honor recipient—represented all that is good about our great Nation. Although he is no longer with us, the I–280 bridge named after John Baker, Vietnam veteran, and the monument will also serve as a constant reminder of who Sergeant Baker was and what he did for us all.

Godspeed, Sergeant Baker. God bless you for your outstanding service, your remarkable courage, and your modest heroism.

WISHING SENATOR MARK KIRK WELL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) for 5 minutes.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, tonight, when we listen to the President give his State of the Union speech, one of our colleagues, unfortunately, will not be here, and that is Senator MARK KIRK, who served in this body as a Member of Congress for many years and, before that, was a staffer on the Foreign Affairs Committee.

MARK, Senator KIRK, as we all know, is fighting against a terrible stroke that he had just yesterday. I want him and his family to know that all of our thoughts and prayers are with him as he battles this stroke, and hopefully he will make a full recovery.

I just was devastated when I heard about it because anyone who knows MARK knows what a terrific Senator he is, what a great colleague he is, someone who has always reached across the aisle in a bipartisan way and someone that I have just tremendous respect for. When he was sworn in as a Senator, I was very pleased that he invited me to stand with him on the Senate floor when he was sworn in.

So, again, I just want MARK and his family and friends, of which I am one, to know that our thoughts and prayers are with him as he battles this stroke. We have confidence that he is in good hands with the doctors and will make a full recovery.

MARK, again, is the kind of person who epitomizes what bipartisanship is all about, what Americanism is all about. MARK was a cochair, when he was in this body, of the Albanian Issues Caucus with me, has been a strong supporter of the State of Israel, and we've worked together on a number of these issues.

So, MARK, we're with you. We're going to be watching, and we have confidence that you will recover fully and come back to this body. America needs you, and we're thinking of you.

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 36 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

Reverend Dr. Kate Braestrup, Maine Warden Service, Lincolnville, Maine, offered the following prayer:

St. Francis of Assisi advises us to pray constantly. If necessary, he says, use words.

God, our prayer today arises from a house of words, from a Nation rooted in words. We do not derive our identity as Americans from our color or our creed, from our wealth or power, nor even from the land itself, though we do love the land.

Rather, by Your grace, America is America through its words: That all men are created equal, that all are endowed with inalienable rights—life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness—these beautiful, necessary words.

God, may every word spoken and written from this Chamber contain an echo of those words. May our words, too, be necessary and true. May our words remember and inspire the brave, compassionate action that is and always has been America's finest prayer.

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 New York (Ms. HAYWORTH) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. HAYWORTH 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.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed without amendment a bill of the House of the following title:

H.R. 3237. An act to amend the SOAR Act by clarifying the scope of coverage of the Act.

The message also announced that the Senate has agreed to without amendment a concurrent resolution of the House of the following title:

H. Con. Res. 96. Concurrent resolution providing for a joint session of Congress to receive a message from the President.

The message also announced that the Senate has passed a bill of the following title in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 1134. An act to authorize the St. Croix River Crossing Project with appropriate mitigation measures to promote river values.

The message also announced that pursuant to the unanimous consent agreement of December 17, 2011, by the President pro tempore and the Majority Leader during the adjournment of the Senate and pursuant to the provisions of Public Law 106–398, as amended by Public Law 108–7, upon the recommendation of the Majority Leader, and in consultation with the Chairman of the Senate Committee on Armed Services and the Senate Committee on Finance, the Chair on behalf of the

President pro tempore announces the reappointment and appointment of the following individuals to the United States-China Economic Security Review Commission:

William A. Reinsch of Maryland for a term beginning January 1, 2012, and expiring December 31, 2013 (reappointment).

Carte P. Goodwin of West Virginia for a term beginning January 1, 2012 and expiring December 31, 2013, vice Patrick A. Mulloy of Virginia.

WELCOMING REVEREND DR. KATE BRAESTRUP

The SPEAKER. Without objection, the gentleman from Maine (Mr. MICHAUD) is recognized for 1 minute.

There was no objection.

Mr. MICHAUD. Mr. Speaker, it is my honor today to welcome Reverend Kate Braestrup to the House of Representatives.

In 1996, Kate's husband, Maine State Police Trooper James ''Drew'' Griffith, was tragically killed in a car accident while on duty. At the time of his death, Drew was beginning to prepare to become a Universalist Unitarian minister. Kate decided to pursue Drew's dream and began attending the Bangor Theological Seminary in 1997. She was ordained in 2004.

Since 2001, Kate has served as the chaplain for the Maine Warden Service, providing counsel for the families of loved ones lost in Maine's wilderness. An accomplished writer and minister, Kate has authored several books, including the national best seller ''Here If You Need Me.''

Kate is a true asset to our State. Her remarkable devotion to helping others has made her an invaluable public servant and a beloved member of the community.

It is my honor to welcome Reverend Braestrup to the House.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. POE of Texas). The Chair will entertain up to 15 further requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

WORKING TOGETHER TO CREATE JOBS

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

Ms. HAYWORTH. Mr. Speaker, last November I hosted a jobs fair in New York's Hudson Valley. A thousand local residents came to meet with nearly 40 local employers, all seeking work, of course, all offering work.

At Christmas I was very happy to receive a card from one of our residents. She had found a job at our jobs fair. So the question I have as we approach the President's State of the Union tonight is: How can we multiply this story by 14 million? And I think we can do it if we work together, House and Senate and President, to free American enterprise to create jobs.

Washington cannot regulate or tax us into growth, but we can work together to lift burdens and bring the Federal Government to the right size to serve, and not to suffocate, a strong and healthy economy.

I stand ready to work with our colleagues to pursue this. It is simple common sense.

STUMBLING BLOCKS TO AMERICA'S ECONOMIC RECOVERY

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

Mr. KUCINICH. One of the biggest stumbling blocks to America's economic recovery is that corporations can legally buy elections and then influence policies which move millions of jobs out of America which escape taxation by offshoring profits, which cash in on wars, which press military industrial spending through the roof.

While we pledge allegiance to the red, white and blue, corporations, whose only allegiance is to green, are selling out America; and they're becoming ever more powerful because of a Supreme Court decision in Citizens United, which effectively turns this government into an auction where policies may go to the highest bidder.

We must stand up for America. We must reclaim our Nation. House Joint Resolution 100 is a constitutional amendment which aims at taking all private money out of elections and returning government to the people.

I urge my colleagues to support H.J. Res. 100 so that we can break the golden shackles which are imprisoning this government right now and so that we can get rid of corporate influence once and for all. No private money in elections. Support H.J. Res. 100.

□ 1210

SENATE MUST REACH A BUDGET

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

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, we have now reached a thousand days since the Congress of the United States has adopted a budget. It's not the fault of the House of Representatives. We passed a budget. We passed one last year and are going to pass another one this year. The President has proposed a budget every year, and nobody here much liked it. That's okay. He at least proposed a budget. What we haven't seen is the other body at the other end of the Capitol adopt a budget at all. They don't like the House budget; they don't like the President's budget. And they don't do anything.

The fact is, if we're ever going to get our financial house in order, we have to have a budget, just like families, just like businesses. It's time for the other body to pass a budget. It's time for the President to call on the other body, which is controlled by his party, to pass a budget. I hope he'll do that tonight. Because the fact is we've got to get this country working again. It's all about jobs. And the fact that the Congress can't operate under a budget and get its fiscal house in order is hindering that job growth because it's affecting the financial markets in a negative way.

So to the other body: Pass a budget.

CONGRESS MUST CREATE JOBS

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

Mr. BACA. Mr. Speaker, it has been more than a year since the Republicans took control of the House of Representatives. What do the American people have to show for it? We still have not passed a single bill to create jobs. We have had a vote to end Medicare as we know it. And we have had a vote to slash college fund aid for the American young people.

Fourteen million Americans are without jobs. Families are hurting, and they need our help. Let's get to work now on extending the payroll tax cut and unemployment benefits for a full year.

Many of my constituents rely on unemployment benefits to put food on the table and keep a roof over their heads. I urge the conference committee to get started and work on it today.

Forget about the tax break for millionaires and billionaires and companies that ship jobs overseas. Let's create jobs and help the middle class, and extend the payroll tax and unemployment benefits today.

SENATE MUST PASS A BUDGET

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

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, it was April 29, 2009, 1,000 days ago, when the Democrat-controlled Senate last passed a budget. Back then, Solyndra was not a household name. General Motors was not yet bankrupt. Billy Mays was still selling OxyClean, and my good friend, Tebow from Gainesville—no one knew about Tebowtime.

Since then, the Federal Government has added $4.1 trillion to the national debt. Our fiscal situation is in shambles. Entitlement spending is growing while defense spending is being cut, and the policies of a bigger and bigger government and higher taxes have not been successful.

When the Senate last passed a budget, CBO predicted that the deficit for 2011 would be $693 billion. Today, it's $1.3 trillion. A budget is the first and

most basic step that must be taken towards reining in historically high levels of spending and massive government growth.

It is time for the Senate to do their job.

CANCER RESEARCH

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

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, I bring to this House and the Nation great news from Roswell Park Cancer Institute in Buffalo. Roswell Park is the first comprehensive cancer institute in the entire Nation.

Today, they are launching a clinical trial to test the use of a cancer vaccine as therapy to kill cancer cells and to prevent a relapse of the disease. The vaccine is designed to boost the body's immune system to fight and destroy cancer cells.

The vaccine has shown early promise in treating ovarian, bladder, brain, and breast cancer. The vaccine's exciting potential is a direct result of many years of cancer research. For cancer research to be effective, it has to be sustained over the longer term. It can't stop and start because you lose promising research and promising researchers.

So my message to Congress today is that the only failure in cancer research is when you quit or you're forced to quit because of a lack of funding. I urge my colleagues to fully fund cancer research in the 2012 budget.

SENATE MUST PASS A BUDGET

(Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, today is day 1,000; 1,000 days since the Senate Democrats last passed a budget.

To put that in perspective, I asked my Twitter followers and my Facebook friends to tell me what they've done in the last 1,000 days. I'd like to share some of the comments.

One says, Between my home and my small business, over 60 monthly budgets have been taken care of, and they are getting harder and harder to balance.

Another said, Cut our family debt by $60,000 in 1 year, removed two car payments, and finished my bachelor's degree while working full time being a father and getting ready for a business launch.

Another said, Finished 75 college credits, watched over 100 films, directed 16 hours of TV, and tutored over 1,000 hours.

Final one. My son made one overseas deployment, started his second one, finished his master's degree at Georgia Tech since the last budget.

Mr. Speaker, one thing is very clear: The American people are working hard. The House of Representatives, we are working hard with 27 jobs bills and counting fast. The only question, Mr. Speaker, is when will the Senate join us.

PRIORITIES AS A CONGRESS

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

Ms. FUDGE. Today I rise to address the importance of setting our priorities as a Congress.

It seems that some of my colleagues have lost sight of what is important. We should be focused on putting teachers, firefighters, and construction workers back to work; creating jobs by investing in infrastructure; improving America's schools; giving the middle class a tax cut; putting money in the pockets of consumers; helping small businesses thrive and grow; keeping Americans in their homes; committing to our veterans and making sure they can get jobs when they return from duty; protecting Social Security and Medicare; and making sure we are investing in this great Nation so our children have an opportunity to get ahead.

It's time we take a step back and reevaluate our priorities. The American people deserve it.

NATIONAL SCHOOL CHOICE WEEK

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

Mr. HULTGREN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support National School Choice Week.

School choice means empowering families to make the best decision for their students and helping them learn in an environment that best suits their child's needs and interests. We must work to ensure that every student has access to quality, public education, but some families may choose alternatives like charter schools, private schools, or home schools.

State and local governments, as well as the Federal Government, should do their part to pass legislation making it easier for students to choose the school that best suits them.

My wife and I have tried to choose the schooling that is best for our children, and I trust that our decision will help them have the best education possible.

I want all families and all students to have that same opportunity, choosing the education forum that best suits their students.

YEARLONG EXTENSION OF MIDDLE CLASS TAX CUTS

(Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, for every single job that is created, there are four people waiting for that job. So I rise today, Mr. Speaker, to voice my support for a yearlong extension of the payroll tax cut for middle class Americans.

Unfortunately, my Republican colleagues tried until the very last minute to raise taxes on the middle class just before the holidays. But the American people spoke up and let the Congress know that they would not stand for it.

We cannot wait for another last-minute fix. We need a yearlong extension of the payroll taxes and unemployment insurance now. We cannot afford to take more risks with the incomes of more than 160 million Americans the way the Republicans did in 2011.

Remember, we need to create jobs. There are four people for every one job there is. That means we need more jobs. That means we need to support the President's jobs bill.

□ 1220

BUDGET

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

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I am here today to speak about something that is nearly 3 years in the making. Some 1,000 days ago, in April of 2009, the Senate passed a budget, and that's the last time we've seen any attempt from them to set Washington's agenda and rein in government spending.

Without a budget, how can government set its priorities? Without priorities, how can American citizens have any confidence in how their tax dollars are being used? The short answer is they can't.

With a $15 trillion debt, the United States faces its greatest fiscal challenge in history. Washington must find a way to get its finances in order while preserving programs for our seniors, protecting our services for future generations, and providing our economy with the certainty to create much needed jobs in America.

The House will soon pass a budget that does this, and I urge the President to call for action during tonight's State of the Union address.

HONORING JANUARY 28 GROUP

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

Mr. CARNAHAN. Mr. Speaker, this Saturday, January 28 at noon, Iraq war veterans will be honored by a returning heroes parade in downtown St. Louis. This is significant not only because these war veterans deserve this welcome home, but because St. Louis is the first city in the Nation to hold such an event.

The organizers are simply called the January 28 Group, a grassroots organization which launched a social network

campaign to raise awareness and money to stage the parade and a veterans' resource event to follow. The January 28 Group is partnering with St. Louis-based veterans service organizations, including The Mission Continues, which works to help veterans transfer their military leadership skills to civilian life.

They say Missouri is the ''Show-Me'' State, but this time the compassionate and patriotic people of St. Louis are showing the Nation just how quickly you can mobilize to give back to those who have given so much to our Nation.

I salute you all, and wish you success for the returning heroes parade at noon this coming Saturday, January 28, in downtown St. Louis.

CONSEQUENCES OF NOT HAVING A BUDGET

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

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, there are consequences of not having a budget. One of them is you don't make proper plans. How else can you explain the Obama administration going so long and crying so loudly, Gee, we can't find $10 billion to cut, much less $100 billion? We certainly aren't going to cut a trillion even though we increase spending by a trillion.

And we find out last week from the Obama OMB that there is $687 billion sitting in accounts that's been appropriated. It's unobligated. It's unspent, sitting there, and they're still demanding more and more money.

America can't afford it. It's time to claw back the money before it's spent on other Solyndras and to give us a budget at the other end of the building.

CLEAN ENERGY IN MAINE

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

Ms. PINGREE of Maine. Mr. Speaker, I want to talk for a minute about some exciting developments in clean energy in my State of Maine.

Last week, Energy Secretary Chu released a report detailing the enormous potential for tidal energy off of U.S. coasts. There is enough there to meet up to one-third of our needs, and he singled out Maine, saying, ''These resources can create new industries and new jobs in America.''

He's right, and we're proving it. The Ocean Renewable Power Company of Portland is building a tidal power project in Maine that, if all goes as planned, will start producing clean, American-made electricity as early as this summer.

Meanwhile, we're welcoming one of the biggest energy companies in the world to our State. Statoil from Norway is considering a pilot project of large-scale wind turbines that would produce clean electricity while floating out of view off our coast. Experts say up to 15,000 jobs can be created in my State by offshore wind, good-paying American jobs that will help us regain our energy independence.

This is good news off our coast, Mr. Speaker, for Maine and our country.

VISION OF AN AMERICA BUILT TO LAST

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

Ms. HANABUSA. Mr. Speaker, the President will deliver the State of the Union tonight. I expect to hear his vision of an America built to last.

Mr. Speaker, let's listen together. Let's remember together. We must remember how and why we are the greatest Nation in the world. We must remember those American values that built this Nation. We must remember how, in building this Nation, the middle class emerged and how they are our backbone and how they are our foundation.

Hard work, pride, and being a just and fair Nation is what makes us great. Let us look to the past. Remember its lessons to build the future.

FUTURE OF MIDDLE CLASS

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

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, the State of the Union address tonight is going to be very important, and I agree with President Obama that this is a make-or-break moment for the middle class and those trying to reach it.

And what's at stake is the very survival of the basic American promise that if you work hard, you can do well enough to raise a family, own a home, and put a little bit away for retirement. We can either settle for a country where a shrinking number of people do really well while more Americans barely get by, or we can build a Nation where everyone gets a fair shot, he says, everyone does their fair share and everyone plays by the same rules.

We found out today that, especially when it comes to taxes, there really are different rules for the rich. Mitt Romney released his taxes. He made $42 million over the last 2 years and paid at about a 14.5 percent rate because most of his income is in capital gains.

Look at the tax brackets. If you make $8,500 as a single person, you're in a 15-percent tax bracket. Is that fair? I don't think so.

AMERICANS LIVING ON EDGE TODAY

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

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Too many of our fellow Americans are living on the edge today and have been for far too long. The last thing they need is another showdown at the Not-OK Corral.

They need jobs. They need to save or go back into their homes. And for those who have been living in poverty or those who used to be in the middle class but are now struggling to survive below the poverty level, they need us to help provide the opportunity to help lift them and their families out of poverty and to a better life. Our President is coming to us tonight to again offer us some opportunities to do all of these things and more and to restore our country's economic health.

So let's not put our fellow Americans through another cliffhanger on things that are important to their well-being. Let us pass the payroll and unemployment insurance extension, fix the Medicare payment issue without drama, and come together to work on the bipartisan measures that the President will ask us to pass for our people and our country.

INCLUDE PUERTO RICO IN SSI PROGRAM

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

Mr. PIERLUISI. Mr. Speaker, today I introduced legislation that would extend the SSI program to Puerto Rico, the United States Virgin Islands, and Guam.

SSI provides cash assistance to blind, disabled, or elderly individuals who have limited or no income. Although SSI applies in the States, it does not apply in Puerto Rico, which instead receives a block grant to assist its most vulnerable residents.

Of all the disparities that Puerto Rico faces because of its territory status, this is perhaps the most harmful. Puerto Rico's annual grant is about $35 million. By contrast, the Nation's poorest State, with almost 1 million fewer residents, received over $740 million in SSI funding in 2010.

While in the States beneficiaries receive about $500 each month, Puerto Rico residents receive only $70. Residents of Puerto Rico are American citizens, but when it comes to SSI, their citizenship is second class.

I hope my colleagues on both sides of the aisle will support this bill.

□ 1230

RETURN ''SESAME STREET'' TO PALESTINIAN AIRWAVES

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

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Speaker, I brought a friend to the floor with me today. As we all know, this is Elmo. This guy taught us our 1, 2, 3s, but he also taught us tolerance and understanding. For the past several years, he's been doing the same thing for children in the Palestinian territories. Because of ''Sesame Street'' in Palestine,

Palestinian kids grow up with the same positive role models as we did.

But recently, ''Sesame Street'' has been off the air. Now Palestinian kids are left watching Farfour. This is Farfour right here. He's a mouse who is the main character of a Hamas TV show. Instead of tolerance and understanding, Farfour promotes violence and anti-Semitism.

This Congress approved funding for ''Sesame Street'' in Palestine last year, but because of the position of certain individuals in Congress, that means the money is being held up. There's no Elmo, but there is Farfour, trafficking and teaching extremism.

I'm not the only one who wants Congress to release the funding. Even the Israeli Government wants it released. Let's get good funding to the people of Palestine so that they can grow and strengthen their own society. Let the funding flow and give something for Farfour to compete with—Elmo.

CHALLENGING US TO DO OUR BEST

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

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to welcome our colleague, Congresswoman GABRIELLE GIFFORDS, GABBY GIFFORDS, back home to this House, a place that she served ably and is serving ably today, to thank her for her courage and to thank her for accepting the challenge of what an American hero is. Many have called her that; for in the course of this enormous tragedy, she stood tall and still continues to do that today.

I want to thank the medical professionals, the emergency medical professionals, and many in Houston, Texas, TIRR, one of the best renowned rehabilitation hospitals in the world.

But most of all, as Congresswoman GIFFORDS comes back, let us give as a gift, both on behalf of the American people and this Congress, that we can work together to improve the lives of all Americans. That I believe would be her challenge, and that would be her call. As she comes back today, serving the people of Arizona and serving the American people, we want to say: Thank you, Congresswoman, for your courage and for being a model for the American people and challenging us to do the best.

IMPROVING OUR ECONOMY

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

Mr. HIMES. Mr. Speaker, in 9 hours the President will stand on this podium behind me to deliver the State of the Union address. I remember the first time he did that. I sat in this Chamber as one of our colleagues called the new President a liar. And that was not the low mark in the partisanship that has earned this institution its historically low approval ratings by the American public.

We'll be sitting in bipartisan fashion today, and I guess that's good; but let's make it something more than symbolic. Let's think in our responses to this speech what is in this speech that we can find common ground to get done.

I have a suggestion. I don't care if you're a Republican or Democrat, northern or southern, rich or poor, you need roads. You need railways, you need a good electrical grid for your economy to flourish. We're going to invest the money in those things at some point to fix them to be world leaders. Why not do it soon? Why not do it soon when it would help our economy and help millions of out-of-work Americans go to work with dignity. Improving our infrastructure is the way to improve our economy.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote incurs objection under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken later.

WORLD WAR II MEMORIAL PRAYER ACT OF 2011

Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2070) to direct the Secretary of the Interior to install in the area of the World War II Memorial in the District of Columbia a suitable plaque or an inscription with the words that President Franklin D. Roosevelt prayed with the Nation on June 6, 1944, the morning of D-day, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2070

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''World War II Memorial Prayer Act of 2011''.

SEC. 2. PLACEMENT OF PLAQUE OR INSCRIPTION AT WORLD WAR II MEMORIAL.

The Secretary of the Interior—

(1) shall install in the area of the World War II Memorial in the District of Columbia a suitable plaque or an inscription with the words that President Franklin D. Roosevelt prayed with the Nation on June 6, 1944, the morning of D-Day;

(2) shall design, procure, prepare, and install the plaque or inscription referred to in paragraph (1); and

(3) may not use Federal funds to prepare or install the plaque or inscription referred to in paragraph (1), but may accept and expend private contributions for this purpose.

SEC. 3. COMMEMORATIVE WORKS ACT.

Chapter 89 of title 40, United States Code, (commonly known as the ''Commemorative Works Act'') shall not apply to this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. JOHNSON) and the gentleman from the Northern Mariana Islands (Mr. SABLAN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Ohio.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Today, I rise in support of legislation that I sponsored, the World War II Memorial Prayer Act of 2011.

This legislation directs the Secretary of the Interior to install at the World War II Memorial a suitable plaque or an inscription with the words that President Franklin Roosevelt prayed with the Nation on the morning of the D-day invasion.

This prayer, which has been entitled ''Let Our Hearts Be Stout,'' gave solace, comfort and strength to our Nation and our brave warriors as we fought against tyranny and oppression. The memorial was built to honor the 16 million who served in the Armed Forces of the United States during World War II and the more than 400,000 who died during the war.

Prior to introducing the legislation, I spoke to many World War II veterans in Ohio and asked them if they thought putting this prayer on the memorial would be appropriate. The answer was a resounding yes.

Furthermore, the Nation's largest service organization, the American Legion, is supportive of this legislation. The American Legion in a support letter said that this legislation would bolster the meaning of the memorial and would also give strength and encouragement to future generations.

It seems to me that if the remaining veterans of World War II are supportive of the prayer being added, we as a country should honor that request.

Unfortunately, the administration and the Department of the Interior don't think it's that easy. Last year, the Department of the Interior testified before the Natural Resources Committee that this legislation would ''necessarily dilute the central message of the memorial.'' Now, I don't know how the administration came to this position because I don't see how a nondenominational prayer that gave solace and comfort and strength to our Nation during one of the most pivotal days of World War II and one of the most memorable days in our Nation's history would dilute the central message of the memorial. In fact, I think it would do exactly the opposite and

would only strengthen the central message of the memorial.

To his credit, Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar testified during a hearing last year that he personally disagreed with his own Department's testimony on the legislation. However, since his testimony, neither the Department of the Interior nor the administration has changed their official position on this legislation. I am hopeful after a bipartisan vote today on this legislation that the administration may have a change of heart.

Fortunately, you don't have to just take my word for it because today we are honored to be joined by George ''Poppy'' Fowler of Coolville, Ohio. Poppy is 88 years young and served 3 years, 10 days, 1 hour and 10 minutes in the United States Navy during World War II. He flew 35 missions in Air Group 15 on a SB2C Helldiver as both a rear gunner and photographer.

I had the pleasure of escorting Poppy last fall on an honor flight trip to visit the World War II Memorial, and he and I became friends.

□ 1240

When the Natural Resources Committee scheduled a hearing on this legislation, I invited Poppy to come testify before the committee, and he graciously accepted the offer and came out to testify at his own personal expense.

Here is a brief excerpt of Poppy's testimony at the hearing: ''I feel, with no doubt, that it would be appropriate that this prayer be inscribed in some manner at the World War II Memorial. Those reading this prayer will be able to recall the sacrifices made by our military, also those on the homefront. This prayer came at a perilous time, yet it was answered in victory at a dear cost of lives. Today, this prayer can pertain to any military action. Under present circumstances, it is also appropriate.''

Now, I don't think anybody or anyone in this body could be more succinct and articulate than Mr. Fowler, and I thank him again for coming to Washington to testify on behalf of this legislation and for being here for today's debate and final vote in the House.

Before I close, I also want to thank my fellow Ohioan, Chris Long, for his tireless efforts to gain support and momentum for this legislation. This legislation wouldn't be on the House floor today without Chris' efforts.

Like Poppy, I have no doubt that the prayer should be included among the tributes to the Greatest Generation memorialized on the National Mall, and I strongly urge all of my colleagues to support this legislation.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

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

Mr. SABLAN. Mr. Speaker, H.R. 2070 would direct the Secretary of the Interior to install at the World War II Memorial a plaque or inscription with the text of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's prayer on June 6, 1944—D-day. The committee considered this legislation in November. We have no objections.

I yield to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KUCINICH) as much time as he may consume.

Mr. KUCINICH. I want to thank my friend, Mr. SABLAN, and the Members for pursuing this important legislation. I rise on behalf of not just myself but of a now departed World War II combat veteran by the name of Frank J. Kucinich, Sr. He was proud to serve this country. He served in the Pacific theater. But all veterans come together to pay respect not only to those who served but to a President who on June 6, 1944, as the Nation was preparing for that D-day invasion, said the following, ''With Thy blessing, we shall prevail over the unholy forces of our enemy. Help us to conquer the apostles of greed and racial arrogances. Lead us to the saving of our country, and with our sister nations, into a world unity that will spell a sure peace—a peace invulnerable to the schemings of unworthy men. And a peace that will let all of men live in freedom, reaping the just rewards of their honest toil. Thy will be done, Almighty God. Amen.''

Those words by President Franklin Roosevelt, upon the occasion of D-day, June 6, 1944, should not only be inscribed—as my friend in his work will make sure of it, with the consent of this Congress—on a plaque for a suitable presence in the memorial, but should also be reflected upon on a daily basis to remind us of the sacrifices that people have made for this country and to remind us that the ultimate objective of those sacrifices is peace, peace within our Nation and peace among people around the world.

And so it is in that spirit of human unity and in recognition of the importance of this legislation that I ask all of our colleagues to join with us in approving it.

Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleagues for their support. May I ask if the minority bill manager has any additional speakers? We do not.

Mr. SABLAN. No, I don't, Mr. Speaker. I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. JOHNSON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2070, as amended.

The question was taken.

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

Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio. Mr. 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.

WAR MEMORIAL PROTECTION ACT

Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 290) to amend title 36, United States Code, to ensure that memorials commemorating the service of the United States Armed Forces may contain religious symbols, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 290

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''War Memorial Protection Act''.

SEC. 2. INCLUSION OF RELIGIOUS SYMBOLS AS PART OF MILITARY MEMORIALS.

(a) AUTHORITY.—Chapter 21 of title 36, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''§ 2115. Inclusion of religious symbols as part of military memorials

''(a) INCLUSION OF RELIGIOUS SYMBOLS AUTHORIZED.—To recognize the religious background of members of the United States Armed Forces, religious symbols may be included as part of—

''(1) a military memorial that is established or acquired by the United States Government; or

''(2) a military memorial that is not established by the United States Government, but for which the American Battle Monuments Commission cooperated in the establishment of the memorial.

''(b) MILITARY MEMORIAL DEFINED.—In this section, the term 'military memorial' means a memorial or monument commemorating the service of the United States Armed Forces. The term includes works of architecture and art described in section 2105(b) of this title.''.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of such chapter is amended by adding at the end the following:

''2115. Inclusion of religious symbols as part of military memorials.''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. JOHNSON) and the gentleman from the Northern Mariana Islands (Mr. SABLAN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Ohio.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio. I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

H.R. 290, introduced by the gentleman from California (Mr. HUNTER), will allow the inclusion of religious symbols as part of military monuments.

In 1913, a memorial that included a 43-foot tall cross was placed on Mt. Soledad in San Diego, California, as a tribute to the members of the Armed Forces who sacrificed their lives to defend the United States. In 1989, the city of San Diego was sued over the cross, with critics claiming it violated the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution and to the California Constitution.

Several remedies were attempted over the years to avoid the cross being removed by the courts. These included transferring the property to a nonprofit organization, but this, too, led to a lawsuit. The property was also declared a national memorial by Congress in 2004. In 2006, Congress enacted Public Law 109–272 to transfer the memorial to the Department of Defense. The Federal Government was sued, and the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that the cross was unconstitutional.

While the legislation does not specifically resolve the constitutionality of the Mt. Soledad cross, this legislation will, for the first time, statutorily protect religious symbols in all war memorials and make clear Congress' intent in the U.S. Code.

I urge adoption of H.R. 290, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SABLAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I my consume.

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

Mr. SABLAN. Mr. Speaker, H.R. 290 is a bill that would allow religious symbols to be included as part of memorials commemorating the service of the United States armed services. The legislation, sponsored by my good friend Congressman HUNTER of California, was considered by the Committee on Natural Resources in July. I commend my colleague, Mr. HUNTER, for moving this legislation forward.

We have no objections to the bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. HUNTER), the author of the bill.

Mr. HUNTER. I thank the gentleman from Ohio for yielding and for his service as a veteran and for what he has done for this country. I also thank the gentleman from the Northern Mariana Islands.

□ 1250

One of the most common ways that this Nation honors its military and war dead is with monuments and memorials. Across the Nation, from Fort Rosecrans National Cemetery in San Diego to Arlington National Cemetery, there are countless markers paying tribute to America's war heroes and the brave men and women who never came home. In many cases, these markers display symbols of religion and personal faith—representing not just individuals, but the shared commitment and sacrifice of those who serve and those who made the ultimate sacrifice to protect others and us here at home.

I'm reminded of headstones at Arlington National Cemetery or images of Normandy where symbols of personal faith and religion are prominently displayed. And even then, these symbols never overshadow the purpose and message of honoring our military and veterans.

Now this time-honored tradition is under attack. Civil liberty groups have taken offense to the presence of religious symbols on war memorials. They are going after a cross sitting atop a hill at Camp Pendleton in San Diego. It's not an official site sanctioned by the Marine Corps or the Federal Government, and the cross can't even be seen by the public. But groups are pushing the Marine Corps to remove the cross from Camp Pendleton even when the base is contributing much of the manpower to the fight in Afghanistan and more recently Iraq.

The Mt. Soledad Veterans Memorial in San Diego is also a cause for their outrage. The memorial, first erected to honor veterans of the Korean war, displaying a 29-foot concrete cross, is now under the full ownership of the Department of Defense. At the base of the cross are more than 3,000 plaques with images and statements paying tribute to the veterans of all wars and religions. Last year, the runaway Ninth Circuit Court ruled that the memorial is unconstitutional, overturning a lower-court ruling.

The future of the Mt. Soledad Veterans Memorial is uncertain, even though the memorial, for all its years as a fixture of the San Diego community, had one stated purpose: to remember those who have fought and died for this Nation. H.R. 290 ensures Mt. Soledad and any other war memorial will withstand these attacks by allowing the inclusion of all symbols of religion and personal faith on war memorials established and under control of the Federal Government.

For the 131 national cemeteries under the purview of the Department of Veterans Affairs, there are currently 48 emblems, I believe, authorized. There is no preference for one symbol over another—the way that things should be. In the face of persistent legal challenges and the threat of more to come, it's important that we install the right protection for war memorials in Federal law, allowing the spirit and tradition of honoring our Nation's military to continue.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

Mr. SABLAN. Mr. Speaker, some Members may be aware of specific situations regarding religious symbols located on public land in California. In fact, the committee report for H.R. 290 mentions one of these ongoing controversies.

It is important to note that the committee report also makes clear "this legislation does not specifically address the Mt. Soledad situation." Further, the report includes analysis of the legislation by the Congressional Budget Office, which found, "under current law, religious symbols are not barred from being used in any military memorials; thus, H.R. 290 would codify current practice. According to the Department of Defense, the National Park Service, and the American Battle Monuments Commission, implementing H.R. 290 would not require any new memorials to be built or current memorials to be changed."

H.R. 290 is not necessary and does not appear to change current law. As a result, we do not oppose it.

At this time, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. BILBRAY).

Mr. BILBRAY. Mr. Speaker, I am truly honored and proud to be here today as a cosponsor of this bill. This is a bill that will protect and defend religious symbols on war memorials from Washington to San Diego.

I think we need to remember that one thing that was a foundation of this country was religious tolerance. And this bill is addressing the fact that there are those who refuse to express religious tolerance and are actually after any symbol, no matter how traditionally accepted and how universally accepted by the community as a general recognition of service and devotion and memorial, that they would attack it if they could find a religious connotation in any form.

Mind you, our Constitution protects the freedom of religion, not from it. But I think that this issue is one that has gone so far that we're actually talking about tearing crosses down over war memorials, and I don't think any American across the board who really believes in tolerance would support that.

I'm very honored to have four plaques at this memorial in San Diego. Frankly, I have a father, a stepfather, a brother, and a stepbrother whose plaques are at the memorial at Mt. Soledad. This is a family effort. I remember as a child, my father pointing up at the cross at Mt. Soledad and that memorial that it symbolizes and said it's one of the few in the country to the men and women who died in Korea. Now, I also was very privileged in 2006 to be the cosponsor of a bill with another Duncan Hunter, DUNCAN's father, that specifically had Congress and the Federal Government come in to save this war memorial.

Mr. Speaker, if you're not going to support this bill, if your attitude is that any religious connotation anywhere in the world that is on Federal-controlled property needs to be torn down and destroyed, then you can take that position, but don't stand in these Chambers and point at religious symbols all over in Europe or in San Diego and say they must come down or you will not defend them.

If you're going to sit in these Chambers with Moses at one side, Pope Innocent and Pope Gregory on the other, and Calvin, in these Chambers, if you're not going to stand up and demand that this Congress tear those plaques off these walls, then for God sakes, leave our war memorials alone, and don't tear down religious symbols just because you're intolerant and can't stand the fact that there are some of us that respect our war service and respect their faith, but most importantly, respect the heritage that has made America what it is today.

Mr. SABLAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. JOHNSON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 290.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

BUFFALO SOLDIERS IN THE NATIONAL PARKS STUDY ACT

Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1022) to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study of alternatives for commemorating and interpreting the role of the Buffalo Soldiers in the early years of the National Parks, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1022

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Buffalo Soldiers in the National Parks Study Act''.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS AND PURPOSE.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Congress finds the following:

(1) In the late 19th century and early 20th century, African-American troops who came to be known as the Buffalo Soldiers served in many critical roles in the western United States, including protecting some of the first National Parks.

(2) Based at the Presidio in San Francisco, Buffalo Soldiers were assigned to Sequoia and Yosemite National Parks where they patrolled the backcountry, built trails, stopped poaching, and otherwise served in the roles later assumed by National Park rangers.

(3) The public would benefit from having opportunities to learn more about the Buffalo Soldiers in the National Parks and their contributions to the management of National Parks and the legacy of African-Americans in the post-Civil War era.

(4) As the centennial of the National Park Service in 2016 approaches, it is an especially appropriate time to conduct research and increase public awareness of the stewardship role the Buffalo Soldiers played in the early years of the National Parks.

(b) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this Act is to authorize a study to determine the most effective ways to increase understanding and public awareness of the critical role that the Buffalo Soldiers played in the early years of the National Parks.

SEC. 3. STUDY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of the Interior shall conduct a study of alternatives for commemorating and interpreting the role of the Buffalo Soldiers in the early years of the National Parks.

(b) CONTENTS OF STUDY.—The study shall include—

(1) a historical assessment, based on extensive research, of the Buffalo Soldiers who served in National Parks in the years prior to the establishment of the National Park Service;

(2) an evaluation of the suitability and feasibility of establishing a national historic trail commemorating the route traveled by the Buffalo Soldiers from their post in the Presidio of San Francisco to Sequoia and Yosemite National Parks and to any other National Parks where they may have served;

(3) the identification of properties that could meet criteria for listing in the National Register of Historic Places or criteria for designation as National Historic Landmarks;

(4) an evaluation of appropriate ways to enhance historical research, education, interpretation, and public awareness of the story of the Buffalo Soldiers' stewardship role in the National Parks, including ways to link the story to the development of National Parks and the story of African-American military service following the Civil War; and

(5) any other matters that the Secretary of the Interior deems appropriate for this study.

(c) REPORT.—Not later than 3 years after funds are made available for the study, the Secretary of the Interior shall submit to the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate a report containing the study's findings and recommendations.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. JOHNSON) and the gentleman from the Northern Mariana Islands (Mr. SABLAN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Ohio.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

H.R. 1022 authorizes the National Park Service to study alternatives for commemorating and interpreting the role of the Buffalo Soldiers in the early years of the national parks.

The Buffalo Soldiers were a segregated Army unit composed of African American cavalrymen. For nearly 25 years before the creation of the National Park Service, Yosemite National Park was administered by the U.S. Army. The Buffalo Soldiers played a key role protecting those park resources that have since been enjoyed by millions of Americans. Their success will be examined by this study that will focus on existing resources inside current national parks.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

H.R. 1022 would direct the Secretary of the Interior to study ways the National Park Service could commemorate the role of Buffalo Soldiers.

Buffalo Soldiers were African American troops who served in the first national parks, including Yosemite and Sequoia National Park, prior to the establishment of the National Park Service.

□ 1300

The legislation, sponsored by Congresswoman SPEIER of California, was considered by the Committee on Natural Resources in May. I commend my colleague, Congresswoman SPEIER, for introducing this legislation and for her leadership on this issue. We strongly support this legislation.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SABLAN. Mr. Speaker, at this time, I yield such time that she may consume to the Congresswoman from California (Ms. SPEIER), the sponsor of this legislation.

Ms. SPEIER. I thank my friend from the Northern Mariana Islands for yielding.

I rise today in support of this legislation, the Buffalo Soldiers in the National Parks Study Act, which will allow the Department of the Interior to study the role of Buffalo Soldiers and how they defended our first national parks. This is a key step in preserving the legacy of the Army's first African American infantry and cavalry units and the contributions they made to our Nation.

This bill will evaluate the feasibility of a National Historic Trail along the Buffalo Soldiers' route from their historic military post at the San Francisco Presidio to Yosemite and Sequoia National Parks. The study would also identify properties that could be listed in the National Register of Historic Places or designations as National Historic Landmarks.

For several years, Buffalo Soldier regiments traveled 320 miles along this route to patrol the parklands for loggers and poachers, build new trails, and escort visitors. The Buffalo Soldiers were among our very first park rangers, a challenging task these troops took on with pride after serving bravely in the Civil War.

Because of the color of their skin, the Buffalo Soldiers were all too often marginalized instead of respected for their service to our Nation, both on and off the battlefield. However, during their time protecting the parks, they not only confronted racism and discrimination, they overcame it. They

became respected neighbors and friends to people living in the park regions, and they made real inroads toward racial progress that were extraordinary for their day.

Although they were assigned to watch over government property for only a relatively short time, the Buffalo Soldiers helped lay the groundwork for some of our greatest wilderness to be preserved forever.

I'm proud that the Buffalo Soldiers traveled through my district on their way to the parks, and I believe this bill will help shine a light on the history they made in the great State of California and in many places across the country.

All Americans from all walks of life would benefit from learning about this often overlooked chapter in our history. The Buffalo Soldiers' story is ultimately about the triumph not just of African American troops over prejudice and injustice, but about the movement of our Nation toward a more tolerant and courageous society.

I thank my colleagues for supporting this bill.

Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, may I ask if the minority bill manager has any additional speakers? We do not.

Mr. SABLAN. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, with that, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FORTENBERRY). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. JOHNSON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1022.

The question was taken.

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

Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio. Mr. 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.

AIRPORT AND AIRWAY EXTENSION ACT OF 2012

Mr. PETRI. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3800) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend the funding and expenditure authority of the Airport and Airway Trust Fund, to amend title 49, United States Code, to extend authorizations for the airport improvement program, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3800

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Airport and Airway Extension Act of 2012''.

SEC. 2. EXTENSION OF TAXES FUNDING AIRPORT AND AIRWAY TRUST FUND.

(a) FUEL TAXES.—Subparagraph (B) of section 4081(d)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking ''January 31, 2012'' and inserting ''February 17, 2012''.

(b) TICKET TAXES.—

(1) PERSONS.—Clause (ii) of section 4261(j)(1)(A) of such Code is amended by striking ''January 31, 2012'' and inserting ''February 17, 2012''.

(2) PROPERTY.—Clause (ii) of section 4271(d)(1)(A) of such Code is amended by striking ''January 31, 2012'' and inserting ''February 17, 2012''.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect on February 1, 2012.

SEC. 3. EXTENSION OF AIRPORT AND AIRWAY TRUST FUND EXPENDITURE AUTHORITY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Paragraph (1) of section 9502(d) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended—

(1) by striking ''February 1, 2012'' and inserting ''February 18, 2012''; and

(2) by inserting ''or the Airport and Airway Extension Act of 2012'' before the semicolon at the end of subparagraph (A).

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Paragraph (2) of section 9502(e) of such Code is amended by striking ''February 1, 2012'' and inserting ''February 18, 2012''.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect on February 1, 2012.

SEC. 4. EXTENSION OF AIRPORT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM.

(a) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 48103(9) of title 49, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

''(9) $1,344,535,519 for the period beginning on October 1, 2011, and ending on February 17, 2012.''.

(2) OBLIGATION OF AMOUNTS.—Subject to limitations specified in advance in appropriation Acts, sums made available for a portion of fiscal year 2012 pursuant to the amendment made by paragraph (1) may be obligated at any time through September 30, 2012, and shall remain available until expended.

(b) PROJECT GRANT AUTHORITY.—Section 47104(c) of such title is amended by striking ''January 31, 2012,'' and inserting ''February 17, 2012,''.

SEC. 5. EXTENSION OF EXPIRING AUTHORITIES.

(a) Section 40117(l)(7) of title 49, United States Code, is amended by striking ''February 1, 2012.'' and inserting ''February 18, 2012.''.

(b) Section 41743(e)(2) of such title is amended by striking ''and $2,016,393 for the portion of fiscal year 2012 ending before February 1, 2012,'' and inserting ''and $2,295,082 for the portion of fiscal year 2012 ending before February 18, 2012,''.

(c) Section 44302(f)(1) of such title is amended—

(1) by striking ''January 31, 2012,'' and inserting ''February 17, 2012,''; and

(2) by striking ''April 30, 2012,'' and inserting ''May 17, 2012,''.

(d) Section 44303(b) of such title is amended by striking ''April 30, 2012,'' and inserting ''May 17, 2012,''.

(e) Section 47107(s)(3) of such title is amended by striking ''February 1, 2012.'' and inserting ''February 18, 2012.''.

(f) Section 47115(j) of such title is amended by striking ''February 1, 2012,'' and inserting ''February 18, 2012,''.

(g) Section 47141(f) of such title is amended by striking ''January 31, 2012.'' and inserting ''February 17, 2012.''.

(h) Section 49108 of such title is amended by striking ''January 31, 2012,'' and inserting ''February 17, 2012,''.

(i) Section 161 of the Vision 100—Century of Aviation Reauthorization Act (49 U.S.C. 47109 note) is amended by striking ''February 1, 2012,'' and inserting ''February 18, 2012,''.

(j) Section 186(d) of such Act (117 Stat. 2518) is amended by striking ''February 1, 2012,'' and inserting ''February 18, 2012,''.

(k) Section 409(d) of such Act (49 U.S.C. 41731 note) is amended by striking ''January 31, 2012.'' and inserting ''February 17, 2012.''.

SEC. 6. FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION OPERATIONS.

Section 106(k)(1)(H) of title 49, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

''(H) $3,692,555,464 for the period beginning on October 1, 2011, and ending on February 17, 2012.''.

SEC. 7. AIR NAVIGATION FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT.

Section 48101(a)(8) of title 49, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

''(8) $1,044,541,913 for the period beginning on October 1, 2011, and ending on February 17, 2012.''.

SEC. 8. RESEARCH, ENGINEERING, AND DEVELOPMENT.

Section 48102(a)(16) of title 49, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

''(16) $64,092,459 for the period beginning on October 1, 2011, and ending on February 17, 2012.''.

SEC. 9. ESSENTIAL AIR SERVICE.

Section 41742(a)(2) of title 49, United States Code, is amended by striking ''and $50,309,016 for the period beginning on October 1, 2011, and ending on January 31, 2012,'' and inserting ''and $54,699,454 for the period beginning on October 1, 2011, and ending on February 17, 2012,''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. PETRI) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. COSTELLO) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. PETRI. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill, H.R. 3800.

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

There was no objection.

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

I would like to include in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD an exchange of letters between the Committee on Ways and Means and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure concerning H.R. 3800.

I am pleased to report that we are currently in the final negotiations of completing an FAA reauthorization bill with the Senate, with only a few open issues left to be resolved. I am confident that we will be able to complete negotiations and produce a conference report in the very near future.

However, given the congressional schedule and the limited legislative days before FAA's current authority expires, we will not be able to consider the final agreement on the conference report until February. Since current funding expires at the end of this month, it is necessary for us to pass a

clean, short-term extension of the FAA's funding and programs through February 17 at current funding levels.

This extension is a prudent precaution to ensure that the FAA is able to continue its funding and programs while negotiations are completed and the House and Senate consider the FAA conference report.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS,
Washington, DC, January 24, 2012.

Hon. JOHN MICA,
Chairman, Committee on Transortation and Infrastructure, Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN MICA: I am writing concerning H.R. 3800, the ''Airport and Airway Extension Act of 2012'' which is expected to be scheduled for floor consideration this week.

As you know, the Committee on Ways and Means has jurisdiction over the Internal Revenue Code. Sections 2 and 3 of this bill amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 by extending the current Airport and Airway Trust Fund (AATF) expenditure authority and the associated Federal excise taxes to February 17, 2012. In order to expedite H.R. 3800 for Floor consideration, the Committee will forgo action on the bill. This is being done with the understanding that it does not in any way prejudice the Committee with respect to the appointment of conferees or its jurisdictional prerogatives on this or similar legislation.

I would appreciate your response to this letter, confirming this understanding with respect to H.R. 3800, and would ask that a copy of our exchange of letters on this matter be included in the Congressional Record during Floor consideration.

Sincerely,

DAVE CAMP,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE,
Washington, DC, January 24, 2012.

Hon. DAVE CAMP,
Chairman, Committee on Ways and Means, Longworth House Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you for your letter regarding H.R. 3800, the ''Airport and Airway Extension Act of 2012.'' The Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure recognizes the Committee on Ways and Means has a jurisdictional interest in H.R. 3800, and I appreciate your effort to facilitate consideration of this bill.

I concur with you that forgoing action on H.R. 3800 does not in any way prejudice the Committee on Ways and Means with respect to its jurisdictional prerogatives on this bill or similar legislation in the future, and I would support your effort to seek appointment of an appropriate number of conferees to any House-Senate conference involving this legislation.

I will include our letters on H.R. 3800 in the Congressional Record during House Floor consideration of the bill. Again, I appreciate your cooperation regarding this legislation and I look forward to working with the Committee on Ways and Means as the bill moves through the legislative process.

Sincerely,

JOHN L. MICA,
Chairman.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

I rise in support of H.R. 3800, the Airport and Airway Extension Act of 2012. This bill contains a clean extension of the Federal Aviation Administration's authority to spend from the Airport and Airway Trust Fund to carry out airport improvement projects at current funding levels through February 17, 2012.

Mr. Speaker, this short-term extension will hopefully provide us enough time for the House Republican leadership to finally appoint conferees to the FAA reauthorization bill, which we passed almost a year ago, work through the remaining policy issues with the other body, and send a comprehensive bill to the President.

Although this has been an unnecessarily difficult and controversial process during the first session of the 112th Congress to move the multiyear FAA reauthorization measure, I'm pleased that the House and Senate leadership recognized the importance of getting a bill completed and stepped in to help in the process.

While I will reserve judgment on a final conference report, it appears as though we are making progress, and we certainly need to avoid a repeat of the disastrous outcome that occurred this summer when the FAA was partially shut down for 2 weeks, costing taxpayers almost $400 million in lost revenue for infrastructure investment. As we move to conference, we need to enact a fair and comprehensive bill that creates jobs, furthers aviation safety, and advances our transition to the Next Generation Air Transportation System.

Mr. Speaker, I support this short-term FAA extension in the interest of preventing another FAA shutdown in order to give us a few more weeks to produce a bipartisan reauthorization conference report that the President can sign into law.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 3800, the Airport and Airway Extension Act of 2012, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PETRI. Does the gentleman have any further requests for time?

Mr. COSTELLO. Mr. Speaker, we have one speaker.

Mr. PETRI. I will continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. COSTELLO. At this time, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlelady from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON), a valued member of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee.

Ms. NORTON. I thank the gentleman from Illinois. This compromise only reminds me of how much I regret that he has decided to retire. He was such a valuable chair of our subcommittee and member of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee. I can only wish him all the good fortune his extraordinarily productive years in the Congress have earned him.

□ 1310

But I thank both sides of the aisle for this short-term extension, short-term, I am assured, to wrap up some details. This is a bill that is really a great deal more bipartisan than it would appear. Yes, there were some tough items, as in any piece of major legislation.

I do regret the major reason for the standoff. This bill, it seems to me, could have been before us long ago but for at least one provision which could have been settled, and that was the provision in the bill that would have insisted that no-shows be counted in labor elections, the no-shows be counted as for one side or the other. And in this case, they would have been counted as a ''no'' vote against joining the union.

You know, you could argue just the opposite, that if you really were against the union, you're the ones who show up. So it seems to me that was a thumb on the scale, but you don't know how it would come out. And some kind of compromise has been reached on that. I will have to wait on that compromise. But I'm very pleased that we've moved ahead on a compromise because the President had said over and over again he was going to veto the bill if it had that provision in it. So since we knew it was going to be vetoed, it was up to us to get to a compromise much earlier and to get on to other tough issues in the bill. And I recognize that more time is needed on those issues.

One of those issues, by the way, has to do with just how much traffic we are going to tolerate at Reagan Airport, with the idea that if an individual Member from the west coast would prefer the convenience of landing at Reagan, then the whole bill should bend in that way. I ask that we consider——

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

Mr. COSTELLO. I yield another 1 minute to the gentlewoman.

Ms. NORTON. So, in winding up the bill, I ask that we keep in mind the fact that a very fragile compromise has been reached to allow the three other airports in this region and the economic assumptions involved to divide up the air traffic as has been allowed.

I also want to say that when we get to these union provisions, do remember that in every society, one of the cardinal tests of whether or not you have a free society is whether there is a right to organize a union.

Mr. PETRI. I yield such time as he may consume to our colleague from Texas, Representative FARENTHOLD.

Mr. FARENTHOLD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to do something that I don't particularly like to do, supporting in kicking the can down the road another time. But I'm excited about kicking the can down the road this time. We've had 23 extensions of the FAA bill, but this time, as we kick the can down the road, we actually see the end of the road.

The Transportation and Infrastructure Committee has worked in a bipartisan manner to come up with a bill

that I think is going to be phenomenal once we get it out of the House and Senate conferees. It's taken some time to get us to the point where we can find the efficiencies and savings that we need and continue to provide the level of service we expect in our air transportation system in this country. My fear is we're going to come up with this bipartisan bill and it's going to get stalled again though.

As we stand here on the eve of the State of the Union address, we have the politics of a do-nothing Congress. I hope that that narrative doesn't stop this bill from moving forward as it comes up and we don't have to extend this again.

This is something we've been able to do in a bipartisan nature. Historically, transportation bills have been bipartisan. Let's not let this get stopped and have to kick the can down the road. Let's get our conferees done. Let's get this passed.

I urge everybody, my colleagues, to support this extension. Let's make it the last and get the long-term bill passed for the betterment of this country and everyone in it.

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

Mr. PETRI. I yield such time as he may consume to the chairman of the full Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, our colleague from the State of Florida, JOHN MICA.

Mr. MICA. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Chairman PETRI, our chair of the Aviation Subcommittee. I see Mr. COSTELLO, the ranking member, former chair of the subcommittee. Thank you for your work.

We're here to extend FAA for the 23rd time. The consequences of that can, I hope, be positive, that we can conclude this long overdue and very important authorization.

Members of Congress, we must authorize every program. That's part of our constitutional responsibility.

I had the privilege, when I chaired the Aviation Subcommittee, to write a lot of what was in the last bill which we authored in 2003. It expired in 2007. The other side of the aisle had 4 years in which they controlled the body, 2 of which they controlled every branch of government, and were unable to pass that. They passed 17 extensions. We've had to pass—it will now be five—but we can get this done. This should be a bipartisan and must be a bicameral jobs bill.

The aviation industry in our country accounts for between 7 and 8 percent of our gross domestic national economic activity, and for us not to have passed an authorization that updates the safety, all of the programs, the next generation of air traffic control, things that are so important to have a dynamic industry, and then an area of our economy that we have led in in the world. The biggest area of exports is aviation. That's huge for jobs in this country.

So this is going to be the last extension. It's done in, again, a bipartisan effort to conclude the negotiation.

Let me say in conclusion, there are some tough issues on labor that have held us up—4 years with the Democrats, the last year with us—and I want to commend Speaker BOEHNER for his leadership working with the leadership of the Senate. The Speaker and his staff and others have worked day and night through the holidays and right up to now to conclude what I think is a very fair compromise. And it must be a compromise.

This is part of our business is to do the best business we can for the American people and getting this economy working and getting in place the framework for one of the most important aspects of our industry. If we want to see Americans back to work, we'll pass this legislation by the 17th of February, and then we'll come back in the next week or two, and we will pass a long-term infrastructure transportation measure, and we will and we can get Americans working.

So I ask for continued cooperation to complete this important process.

Mr. PETRI. I have no further requests for time, and reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. COSTELLO. Mr. Speaker, let me commend Chairman MICA and Chairman PETRI for working in a bipartisan way. We've attempted to work with the other body in working on an agreement. We are very close to agreement. As I said in my statement, I reserve judgment on the final conference agreement, but I certainly want to commend our friends on the other side of the aisle for working to move this legislation forward.

With that, I urge the passage of this legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

□ 1320

Mr. PETRI. I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. PETRI) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3800.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

MOTION TO INSTRUCT CONFEREES ON H.R. 3630, TEMPORARY PAYROLL TAX CUT CONTINUATION ACT OF 2011

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, I have a motion to instruct conferees at the desk.

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

The Clerk read as follows:

Mrs. Capps moves that the managers on the part of the House at the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the Senate amendment to the bill H.R. 3630 be instructed to file a conference report not later than February 17, 2012.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XXII, the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. CAPPS) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. REED) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California.

Mrs. CAPPS. I yield myself 5 minutes.

I rise today to offer a straightforward motion to provide certainty to American families and businesses.

As we all know, late last month, after a lot of drawn-out drama, we enacted a short-term extension of the payroll tax cut, of unemployment insurance, and the so-called doc fix. All of these provisions were set to expire at the end of last year. Payroll taxes would have gone up on 160 million American workers. Millions of unemployed people would have had their benefits cut off even though they still can't find work, and doctors would have faced huge cuts in their reimbursement from Medicare, making it harder for seniors to see a doctor. The 2-month extension was not ideal, but differences could not be resolved before the clock ran out.

Now, with this short-term extension set to expire in just a few weeks, we must find a way to bridge our differences and enact a full-year extension of these provisions, and we need to do it as soon as possible, and that's what this motion is about.

It simply directs the conferees to finish their work by February 17 so both the House and Senate will have time to vote on the final package before the clock runs out on the 29th; just a date certain to ensure that we get our work done without yet another last-minute scramble. We have a habit in this Congress of leaving our work to the last minute, something we should have learned when we were kids when our parents warned us about this long ago.

Last year, for example, was filled with manufactured crises and last-minute deals. It led to a great deal of uncertainty about everything from tax policy to whether or not America will pay its debts. This uncertainty has affected our economy and our efforts to create jobs. I know we can do better. I know we must do better

Our economy is still in a fragile state, and we must not add to its precarious nature with yet another unnecessary dustup here in Washington and especially not about provisions we generally agree upon. For example, extending the payroll tax cut for 160 million Americans will put a thousand dollars more in their paychecks for a worker in this coming year. In my home State alone, that would put $21 billion into the pockets of 17 million Californians. That's real money for consumers to spend quickly at small businesses across the country, stimulating demand and growing our economy.

Now, economists from both sides from every perspective agree that this

payroll extension is critical to maintaining our recovery and critical to extending new jobs.

In addition, there is a general agreement about the need to extend unemployment benefits. This affects about 4½ million Americans who would lose their unemployment benefits if we don't get our work done in time. Never before have we allowed emergency unemployment benefits to expire while unemployment remains so high. Millions of middle class workers and their families depend upon emergency unemployment benefits to feed their families, to put gas in their cars, to keep their houses warm.

Once again, extending these benefits helps create jobs, helps to grow our economy. According to Mark Zandi, every dollar of unemployment benefits creates $1.65 in economic demand. It's not rhetoric. It's a fact.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, we all agree on the need to ensure our doctors don't see a draconian cut in their Medicare reimbursements. Such a cut would affect the health care of nearly 50 million seniors who could lose access to their doctors if we don't complete our work on time. Without an extension, Medicare physicians will see nearly a 30-percent reimbursement cut at the end of this month, and of course this is something we face every year, which is why I have always supported a permanent fix to the SGR. But at a minimum, we must include a full-year fix for this program. Failure to do so will harm not only our doctors and their employees but our seniors as well.

Mr. Speaker, the American people are rightfully tired of the political games and needless brinksmanship that has become all too common in this body. I say it's time to change course.

Let's begin this new year on a better note. Let's begin the year by putting aside our differences and working together. Let's begin the new year by completing the work that we all were sent here to do, and let's do it on time and without unnecessary drama.

Let's begin the new year by helping middle class families and small businesses stay afloat in these tough times. It's way too important to wait until the last minute. Millions of American workers, business owners, and families are depending on us. The time to act is now.

I urge my colleagues to support this motion to ensure that we get our work done on time.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

I rise today in great agreement with my colleague from California on the other side of the aisle. What she has articulated before us in this Chamber, Mr. Speaker, is an instruction to the conferees, of which I am one, to get our job done. I wholeheartedly agree with that sentiment.

Also, there is a tremendous amount of agreement when it comes to the payroll tax extension to get an extension for at least a year, to extend unemployment benefits, and also to do what we have to do in Washington, D.C., in regards to our providers under Medicare with our doc fix.

We have proposed and passed in this Chamber before the end of the year a 1-year proposal on the payroll tax extension fully paid for, a 2-year proposal on our doc fix fully paid for. Those are long-term solutions that have been offered by our side of the aisle, adopted in a bipartisan fashion before the end of the year, and sent to the Senate to act upon.

The reality of the situation finds us in a position where the Senate has not done its job. And my colleague from California is correct. A lot of it had to do with the fact that the Senate ran out of time, and they reverted to classic, old political ways of doing business: passing legislation at 3 o'clock, 2 o'clock in the morning, waiting until the last minute, and putting forth a product that only allowed us to kick the can 2 months down the road.

We can do better. We need to do better. The proposal that came out of this Chamber was a start in that right direction. It is time that we join together and we hit this long-term solution put forth for the American people because they deserve no less.

I would be remiss if we did not identify the fact that we as conferees were here over the Christmas break. We were here trying to champion the cause for making sure we put policy into law, not achieve political gamesmanship or wins. It is time for us to focus on policy and put politics aside. Hardworking taxpayers deserve that today in America.

I, for one, will join my colleague on the other side of the aisle in the tremendous amount of agreement that I think we have going into this conference and the sentiment of getting the job done in time, not waiting until the last minute, coming up with a long-term solution of at least a year on our payroll tax extension, at least 2 years for our doctors who are getting reimbursed under Medicare, and take care of the unemployment situation.

□ 1330

But I would have to disagree with my colleague on the other side of the aisle when she says that unemployment benefits are some sort of economic stimulus that should be expanded. I understand, and I have read what the economists have said on the economic impact of unemployment benefits.

My point would be, if that logic were true, then why don't we just extend unemployment benefits to every American and sit back and watch the economy blossom. The fundamental truth is—and it's time to be open and honest with the American people about it—that the economy is not going to strengthen based on government expansion, government spending. It's going to strengthen on a commitment to small-business America laying the foundation upon which the private sector knows that there is certainty, there is confidence in the market, and they have the ability to know what the rules are going to be for years to come, not on a month-by-month basis.

I urge my colleagues in the other Chamber, in the U.S. Senate, to heed that fundamental message. We can no longer, in Washington, D.C., believe that short-term policy is the best we can do for America. Hardworking taxpayers deserve better than that, and small business owners across America need to know what the rules are with certainty and for years so that they can make the investments to put our hardworking taxpayer Americans back to work.

That's what we stand for on this side of the aisle; and that is what I am hopeful, going into this conference, we will be able to produce out of this payroll bill, unemployment extension, and our doc fix.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Ms. LEE of California. I want to thank the gentlelady for yielding and also for her tremendous leadership.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to encourage all the conferees on H.R. 3630 to fully consider the chilling effect on the economy of any failure to fully extend unemployment benefits.

While we are all pleased to see the economy slowly improving, unemployment rates continue to be unacceptably high; and, yes, there are four individuals looking for every one job. This job recovery still has not created enough jobs in our country.

I have participated in many job fairs in my district, along with the Congressional Black Caucus; and we have witnessed thousands and thousands and thousands of people lining up for the jobs that existed. People want to work. It's not that people are sitting around waiting for their unemployment benefits. If there were jobs, people would work. So we need this bridge over troubled waters until we find out a way to create the jobs that people deserve.

We must immediately extend all expiring unemployment benefits. The conferees should also strongly consider adding an additional 14 weeks of tier 1 unemployment benefits for the millions of 99ers who have completely exhausted their benefits. We don't remember that even with the extension of unemployment, there are between 2 and 3 million people who will not be eligible because 99 weeks is the limit.

So we can't abandon those individuals. We have to pass, and we're asking for Congressman SCOTT's bill and my bill, H.R. 589, to be included in any final legislative agreement.

So, Mr. Speaker, I am pleading for this body to really understand that until we figure out a way to create jobs, people want to work. It is our

moral responsibility to create this extension of unemployment benefits to include an additional 14 weeks for people who have hit the 99-week mark. That's our duty and our responsibility, and I hope that you'll put this in our package.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, January 23, 2012.

Hon. DAVE CAMP,
Chairman, Committee on Ways and Means, House of Representatives, Longworth HOB, Washington, DC.

Hon. MAX BAUCUS,
Chairman, Committee on Finance, U.S. Senate, Dirksen SOB, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN CAMP AND CHAIRMAN BAUCUS: As you and your colleagues on the conference committee address the extension of payroll tax relief and unemployment compensation benefits, restoration of Medicare payments to physicians, and other matter, I urge you to fully consider the ongoing impacts of the crisis in unemployment and long term unemployment, not only on the millions of affected individuals and families who are living life on the edge, but to also consider the impact on our nation's struggling economy.

While we see some slow improvements in the jobs numbers, unemployment rates continue to be unacceptably high and the rates of long term unemployment as well the length of time that the unemployed are out of work are both at record highs.

We must immediately extend the expiring emergency unemployment benefits to the maximum authorized levels and we should also immediately add an additional 14 weeks of tier I unemployment benefits for the millions of Americans who have completely exhausted their benefits while struggling to find work.

Far too many Americans have exhausted all of their unemployment benefits and are still unable to find work. Abandoning these job seekers will only further depress the economy and will fail to reduce our deficits as these so called 99er's will begin to fall into poverty and begin to be eligible for other needs based federal benefits.

With nearly 50 million Americans in poverty and half of all Americans in low income households, we must take bold action now. It is only by providing these millions of struggling American families with adequate and immediate relief and a genuine long term pathway out of poverty that we can put America back on track to prosperity and economic growth for all.

I strongly urge the members of the conference committee to consider my legislation, H.R. 589 for inclusion in any final legislative agreement.

Sincerely,

BARBARA LEE,
Member of Congress.

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

I would like to respond to my colleague on the other side of the aisle who just spoke in regard to when it comes to unemployment benefit extensions.

What we have to do, in my opinion, is set the framework upon which jobs in America could be created. We just had an example of this last week. I so hope our President tonight in this very Chamber comes and explains his decision to reject American jobs being created through the Keystone pipeline, because there is a project that has been identified; and it will be implemented in a way that would create an immediate 20,000 new jobs for men and women in America.

That will go a long way to solving our unemployment problems in the United States, not just extending unemployment benefits. But as we take up the issue of extending unemployment benefits, we need to do better. We owe it to hardworking taxpayers of America to come up with solutions and reforms in our unemployment benefits programs that give them the tools, the resources to be reemployed.

I agree wholeheartedly with my colleague on the other side of the aisle that I don't believe the majority of Americans wants to be unemployed. They want to get back to work.

So in our reforms that were passed in this Chamber before the end of the year, we talk about such things as requiring GEDs, high school education equivalency diplomas, high school degrees so that people could have that basic educational benefit that will give them the tools to get back to work. We should be focusing together in a bipartisan manner, Democrat and Republican, on reforms that are going to give those tools to our unemployed Americans rather than just giving a check.

There is an old adage that I grew up with, being the youngest of 12 children, that was passed on for generations in our family, which was: You give a man a fish, you feed him for a day. You teach a man or woman to fish, you feed him and her and their entire family for a lifetime.

That is the mantra. That is the foundation upon which we should take up unemployment extension in this conference and join hands to implement going forward.

Again, I have to highlight the fact that what we see out of the other Chamber in the United States Senate is a willingness to just achieve what is politically possible, to only achieve what could be called a political win. It is time to stop focusing on politics. Hardworking taxpayers in America deserve us to focus on good policy.

Mr. Speaker, with that, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY).

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support the Capps motion to instruct conferees.

This issue is just too important to get tied up in election-year politics. Failing to extend the payroll tax cut, unemployment insurance, and the Medicare doc fix will have real and lasting effects on our Nation's middle class. It will mean that fewer doctors will be available to care for seniors and the aging baby boomer generation. It will mean that people who have lost their job through no fault of their own will have the safety net pulled out from under them, and it will mean that working families will see their paychecks shrink.

Americans don't want partisan gridlock. They want jobs, they want economic security, and they want access to health care. I urge my colleagues, support the Capps motion and put our families first.

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

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. CASTOR).

Ms. CASTOR of Florida. I thank our colleague, Representative CAPPS, for yielding time and for her great leadership on behalf of middle class families across America.

I rise to encourage all of our colleagues to get to work on middle class tax relief and also take this opportunity to strengthen Medicare. We're going to have a lot of debates over Medicare here in the coming year.

□ 1340

This will be an opportunity to address a real shortcoming in Medicare, and that is protecting our parents and grandparents and the ability that they have to see the doctor of their choice. See, what will happen if the Congress does not act is there will be instituted very harsh cuts to the reimbursement rate for doctors who take care of our parents and take care of our grandparents under Medicare. We simply can't let this happen.

Democrats are interested in a permanent fix to these Medicare cuts to doctors. This is vitally important for tens of millions of our parents and grandparents all across America. And you better believe in the State of Florida, where we have 3.4 million seniors who rely on Medicare, we want to ensure that the ability of the doctor that they trust, that they see time and time again, will be there when they make that appointment in the doctor's office. We're interested in a permanent fix. We think working together we can get this done.

Medicare is that promise that has been made to generation after generation of Americans; that it will be there no matter what happens, how hard they work, what happens in their lifetime, Medicare will be there to serve them, and we need to ensure that the doctors are there on the front lines to take care of our parents and grandparents as well.

Mr. REED. Mr. Speaker, again I'm heartened because, as the gentlelady spoke, I came to the conclusion we're in full agreement. House Republicans are in full agreement, so that gives us hope, ladies and gentlemen. That gives us hope going into this conference that what we're going to be able to put together with the doc fix and how our providers are paid under Medicare is a solution that will be a long-term solution to this situation that politically is required to go through all the time because of this doc fix situation we find ourselves in.

But I would remind this Chamber and I would remind all of my colleagues that we are in the midst of a fiscal crisis in this Nation that needs to be respected. And as we talk about making

sure that our providers under Medicare are taken care of on a long-term basis, we need to go into this discussion with our eyes wide open, and that is that fiscal crisis forces us to cover these costs, for us to be responsible in Washington, DC, for one time and pay for what we are doing and live within our means.

That's what our proposal for 2 years out of the House Chamber before the end of year passed by a bipartisan fashion did—took care of 2 years of the doc fix, fully paid for and offset. What we need to do is bring that attitude into the conference to get it taken care of.

I so heartily agree with my colleague, the esteemed lady, and her position in coming up with a long-term solution for our doctors under Medicare. But we do need to be responsible and we have to offset and make sure that it is paid for. That is the reality of the situation we find ourselves in in America in the fiscal crisis we now face, and it will be the reality of our Nation's fiscal prosperity going forward if we so choose to honor it.

With that, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. ANDREWS).

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

Mr. ANDREWS. Mr. Speaker, we hear that there is agreement over some basic principles here. Just about everyone thinks we should extend the middle class tax cut for the rest of this year. Just about everyone thinks we should make sure that doctors don't see a nearly 30 percent cut in the payments that they receive to take care of our seniors and disabled persons under Medicare. Most of us think that unemployment benefits should be extended at a time when there are four people unemployed for every one job opening in the country.

Most people believe that most if not all of this should be paid for; that is to say that we shouldn't borrow the money to do these things. The amount of money that's needed to do that is about $3 out of every $1,000 that we're going to spend here. It's significant money, but it's about $3 out of every $1,000 that we spend.

So here's the idea behind this motion. Since there is such broad agreement that this middle class tax cut and the other provisions need to happen, since there is such broad agreement that it ought to be offset in part, if not fully, and since it's such a relatively small amount of money, $3 for every $1,000 we're going to spend, let's not wait until the very last minute to do it.

The history of 2011 is littered with the majority waiting until the eleventh hour. And it was more than just an inconvenience for the legislative process. In August when the markets melted down, it turned out to be a crisis for the country and the global economy. Let's not take that chance again.

So if everybody is so much in agreement, vote for this motion. What it says is let's not wait until February 29. They gave us a leap year this year, so let's not stretch it. Let's not wait until February 29 at midnight. Let's get this done no later than February 17 to get this done in an orderly fashion.

The American people are tired of a Congress that has the study habits of a student who parties all semester and crams for the finals. Let's get serious, let's grow up, and let's vote for this motion.

Mr. REED. Mr. Speaker, I do have to remind my good friend on the other side of the aisle that, on December 22, House Republicans were here. We were sitting in the conference ready to get to work, and conferees on their side of the aisle had not even been named by that point in time.

I was here over the New Year's break, Thursday, Friday, working on this issue in preparation for the conference. Where was the Senate? Nowhere to be found. So let us be straight with the American people. Let's be open and honest with the American people that who's ready to do the work is us in the House Chamber on the House Republican side. We demonstrated it at the end of 2011 by staying here. We may have been hurt politically or lost that political battle. But you know what? The American people want us to do not what is politically the winning strategy, but what is the best policy for the American people. And that's what we stood up for.

Maybe that message didn't get home to the men and women back in our districts immediately. But I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, when I went back in my district and I had the question presented to me at my local church, local grocery store, why were you still down there? What was the problem? What were you fighting for? And we went through the details of the policy that we're talking about here with the payroll tax rate, the unemployment extension, and the Medicare reimbursement for our providers under Medicare, and they said: Well, obviously, you needed to stay there to get it done. And that's what we have to do. We have to adopt the attitude of, we have been sent here to do the people's work. It's time not for us to wait until the last minute, I wholeheartedly agree. But it's also time that we just do not leave town because we've accomplished what was politically possible or what was in our political interest. I wholeheartedly am committed to finding the real solutions, the real policy initiatives, and that's what we are standing for on this side of the aisle.

With that, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire how much time remains on each side?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Each side has 18 minutes remaining.

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. COURTNEY).

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the Capps motion, which again says that we should move as swiftly as possible to resolve all of these issues.

In support of that, I just want to share with the body a survey that was released by the Connecticut Medical Society a few days ago. It's the largest physician group in the State of Connecticut. It asked what the impact would be if the SGR 27 percent rate cut went into effect. It would be catastrophic: 40 percent of doctors would stop accepting Medicare patients; 10 percent would close their practices; 32 percent would lay off staff. But what was interesting was that 19 percent said they are already refusing to take new appointments of Medicare beneficiaries and are curtailing access for both Medicare and Tricare patients all across the State of Connecticut.

So clearly, this is not an issue which can wait until the last minute. People are already voting with their feet, and it's affecting access to health care literally as we sit here today in the House Chamber.

I also would just like to remind the gentleman from New York that the measure that the Republicans passed in December, which supposedly addressed this issue, paid for the SGR fix by taking $40 billion out of the hospital accounts in Medicare.

□ 1350

So in the name of protecting physician fees, they butchered the other part of the system and the central part of the system in terms of hospital access which provides emergency care all across this country. The American Hospital Association and others clearly warned this Chamber and the Senate that this cut would be extremely damaging and catastrophic to the American health care system. And the fact that the Senate did not just rubber-stamp what the House did, in my opinion, shows that they acted appropriately.

It is extremely urgent for the American health care system that we pass and follow the Capps motion's timeline to fix this issue, frankly an issue which has festered since the 1990s when the Republicans passed the SGR formula. This is not part of the Affordable Care Act. In fact, at the time we passed the Affordable Care Act, it abolished the SGR with H.R. 3662. We should follow that path at the end of the day, and we should certainly follow the timeline of the Capps motion.

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

I so appreciate my colleague reminding me of the offsets on the doc fix bill. And I would just like to remind my colleagues on the other side of the aisle and this entire Chamber that in the House-passed bill that was sent to the Senate, 90 percent—90 percent—of those offsets were recommended and

supported by the President of the United States, President Obama.

Now, I'm not saying that that's the final thing that we can agree to. By no means am I saying that. But what I will say is that we did our work. We found common ground with the President's own recommendations and policies that he supported and sent it to the Senate. At this point in time, I still remind the American people who is at the table: the House. Where is the United States Senate? And may I remind the Speaker and the American people, I say the entire Senate but, in particular, those on the other side of the aisle.

With that, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. CAPPS. I am pleased to yield, Mr. Speaker, 2 minutes to our colleague from New Jersey (Mr. PASCRELL).

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, in just a few hours, the President of the United States will be on the floor to present his ideas as to how we can grow our economy and put the American people back to work. I hope the majority keeps an open mind and rejects the extreme ideology and political timidness that has driven the 112th Congress of the United States.

Need I remind my friend from New York State, need I remind him that the tax cuts of 2001 and 2003, as we move into this next decade, are the biggest cause and the biggest proportion of the deficit facing this Congress. And you are not going to—you are not going to nickel and dime us to solve the problem of the deficit on the backs of the middle class and the working poor. It doesn't work. You can't figure it out.

While the economic indicators are showing pretty good improvements, the unemployment rate in my home State of New Jersey is still 9.1 percent, above the national average of 8.5. Because of games played by the extreme wing of the Republican Party, the payroll tax cut that President Obama and the Democratic Congress support is at risk of expiring again.

Now, I can't say any clearer than this: $1,000 may not be a lot for millionaires like Mitt Romney paying a 13.9 percent tax rate, but it is a significant amount of money directly in the pockets of middle class families in north Jersey.

You don't have to look far to see where we are still hurting. Just last month, Mr. Speaker, the construction industry unemployment rate jumped another 3 percent to 16 percent. Passing the payroll tax cut will help grow the economy and get the American people back to work.

Isn't that what we want?

Mr. REED. Mr. Speaker, I would like to yield 1 minute to my good friend from Missouri (Mr. LONG).

Mr. LONG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address the issue of the payroll tax extension—holiday—whatever you want to call it, and the doc fix that we address every single year here in this Congress. At the end of last year, we went home. We did our work. We extended the payroll tax holiday for 1 full year. We did the doc fix for 2 years. When I got to the airport in Dallas, Texas, we got a call that the Senate had sent back over a bill here that was going to pay the doctors taking care of our seniors on Medicare for 2 months. I think, if I remember right, they had three different plans. It would either take care for 2 months, 8 weeks, or 60 days. That's the only three programs they looked at in the Senate. Then they sent it back over here, and then they try and blame us, saying we're not for the payroll tax extension. We were for it for a year; we were for the doc fix for 2 years.

I think it is ridiculous that the Senate cannot do their work, just like we haven't had a budget out of the Senate in 1,000 days.

Mrs. CAPPS. I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to our colleague from North Carolina, DAVID PRICE.

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the motion to instruct and want to thank our colleague from Santa Barbara for offering it.

Last year, as we lurched from one congressionally created crisis to another, uncertainty plagued families and businesses, and the American people's confidence in our ability to do their work plummeted.

In the first few months of the new year, we can right these wrongs. We can proceed in a deliberative, mature manner to address our Nation's problems.

As the President will reiterate tonight in his State of the Union Address, this is a make-or-break moment for our economic recovery, for our middle class and those trying to reach the middle class. Extending the payroll tax cut will put an average of $1,000 in the pockets of working people this year. Let's not play games by threatening to raise taxes on 160 million workers if you don't get your way on one bargaining chip or another.

We should pass a full-year extension of the payroll tax cut right away and then move on to the President's broader jobs bill that would create jobs and put us on a faster road to recovery.

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

Mrs. CAPPS. I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to our colleague from New York (Mr. CROWLEY).

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend and colleague, Mrs. CAPPS, for yielding this time and for spearheading this resolution which will simply end the ''dog ate my homework'' excuse my Republican colleagues have repeatedly used when refusing to do more than the bare minimum that our job requires.

I'm a father of three children all under the age of 13. My kids are the best. I love them dearly. But they are like most: they don't like doing their homework, and they often wait until the last minute to get it done, despite my wife's and my best efforts to see otherwise. While this behavior is common in households across America, it is not acceptable in the workforce, and it ought not be acceptable here in the Halls of Congress. Yet, this is how the Republican leadership has gone about our business here in Congress.

This Congress almost let the United States of America default on its bills. This Congress almost prevented Social Security checks from going out to every American senior because they wanted their way or the highway. This Congress almost refused to pass a middle class tax cut for Americans before the holidays because they didn't believe middle class Americans deserve one.

And here we are today. The majority has refused for weeks to even begin discussions on the payroll tax even though Democrats named their conferees several weeks ago and have been ready to talk ever since.

President Obama has been waiting for any word from my Republican colleagues. He's made clear he wants to talk, negotiate, and get this done. But the Republicans have clearly been in no rush to get a tax cut passed for the middle class.

Today, with the passage of Mrs. CAPPS' resolution, that will all come to an end. The middle class will go to the front and center of this Congress, and it's about time. We cannot wait until the last second once again. We have the chance to pass a bill that will provide the typical American family earning $50,000 a year over $1,000 in tax cuts—tax cuts they will see in every paycheck.

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

Mrs. CAPPS. I yield 30 seconds to our colleague.

Mr. CROWLEY. We have the chance to ensure the doctors treating seniors on Medicare can continue to do so without having to charge them higher fees for medical care. We have the chance to continue unemployment benefits for those who lost their jobs by no fault of their own and are actively looking for work.

The majority has a simple choice today: pass this resolution and make it clear it's our shared goal—Republicans and Democrats alike—to help hard-working Americans who are struggling in this economy; or reject this bill and continue playing the same games that have become the hallmark of this do-nothing Congress.

□ 1400

The fact is the American people don't have time for these games anymore. Stop the games. Pass this motion to instruct conferees.

Mr. REED. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to my colleague from Wisconsin (Mr. RYAN).

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I enjoy listening to revisionist history as is practiced here on the floor of the House of Representatives.

Our friends on the other side are saying that we haven't done our job, that we're not doing our work. Well, let's think about this for a second. It was the House Republicans that passed the full-year extension last year of the payroll tax and the unemployment extension. It was the House Republicans that named the conferees to get this work done. Let's think about who is and who is not getting their job done.

This year marks the second year in a row where the President has literally flouted the law and is delaying his budget. It's 2 years that the President hasn't brought the budget on time as according to law. Today is 1,000 days since the other body in the United States Senate bothered to even try to pass, let alone propose, a budget.

We acted responsibly. We acted in time. And, more to the point, Mr. Speaker, if we're going to have a temporary tax holiday for payroll taxes, let's never forget the fact that payroll taxes finance Social Security. This is why we insist on spending cuts—to make sure that Social Security is intact, remains whole. The failure to cut spending to pay for this temporary tax holiday means complicity with raiding the Social Security trust fund, and we are not in favor of that.

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, may I ask, please, how much time I have remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WOMACK). The gentlewoman from California has 10 minutes remaining.

Mrs. CAPPS. With that, may I just remind our colleagues that we went lurching from one crisis to another during the past year, first about our debt ceiling default crisis, then whether or not we could even continue the government. Then we spent some time shutting down the FAA. So that's the reason behind this motion to instruct conferees in terms of getting on time.

Now I would like to yield 2 minutes to our colleague from New York (Mr. ENGEL).

Mr. ENGEL. I thank the gentlewoman for yielding to me. I rise in strong support of her motion, and I urge my colleagues to do so as well.

Today is a day of bipartisanship. The President is speaking to us. We should really show it. We should really put our money where our mouths are. It may be true, as the gentleman just said on the other side of the aisle, that the Republicans passed a year of a payroll tax break, yeah, but they put poison pills in it. They put Keystone in it. They put Medicare restrictions in it.

We want a clean bill. We want a year's bill, but let it be a clean bill. Let it be a bill that is not mixed in with anything else, no poison pills. I challenge my friends on the other side of the aisle to do that. This is what we should be doing. The American people want it.

There are still significant differences between the two parties on the specifics. Let's resolve them. Let's resolve them sooner rather than later. The American people are saying Congress is dysfunctional. Congress can't even agree on a bill, which everyone agrees. And this is more reason why we should pass this and show that we should not be playing politics on something that's so vital to people's lives. We should not wait until the very last minute to reach an agreement.

This motion simply instructs conferees to finish negotiations by February 17; and by doing so, we'd avoid the confusion and uncertainty that happened last time when the Congress waited until the last minute for the last extension. We need these tax breaks for the middle class. We need the doc fix. We need unemployment benefits for those who have been hurt most by the prolonged economic downturn.

Let's not play politics with people on these issues. I urge the conferees to quickly reach an agreement that will not hurt the unemployed and will help continue our economic recovery.

So again, Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this motion so that we don't take this debate to the last minute again, make us look like fools and play games with people's lives. Let's pass this. Let's do it now. Let's not wait. Let's stop the political games.

Mr. REED. Mr. Speaker, I'd just remind my good colleague on the other side of the aisle that we were here. The House Republicans were here December 22. December 26, conferees weren't even named yet. I was here Thursday and Friday of New Year's working on the issue.

We're ready to do the work. But there is one thing that we will not yield on, that we have demonstrated years in Washington, DC, of fiscal irresponsibility. And until we came in, this freshman class in November 2010, there was an attitude of, Don't worry about how we're going to cover it; don't worry about how we're going to pay for it.

That attitude has changed, and that's why I'm proud to yield 2 minutes to a fellow freshman Member from North Carolina (Mrs. ELLMERS).

Mrs. ELLMERS. I thank my freshman colleague from New York for yielding.

I've been watching this discussion, this debate going on, and I am once again amazed by the issue.

I am in favor of this motion to instruct. In fact, I am so much in favor of it that I wish we weren't here talking about it right now. I wish we had finished the people's work in 2011. As my colleague has pointed out, we were here. This idea that somehow we don't work up until the minute, Mr. Speaker, this is ridiculous. This is absolutely ridiculous. This is nothing more than a dog and pony show.

As a conferee, I am anxious to begin the House and Senate-level meetings and to learn about what policy pathway will get us to the yearlong extension we are all seeking, what we voted for, what we passed in the House of Representatives—bipartisan effort, mind you. I am waiting to see what the Senate has to say about this on this 1,000th day of their not even passing a budget. The Senate's willingness to produce a plan is critical to giving employers, workers, and those seeking to reenter the workforce certainty they need.

Again, I am ready to work on this issue. My colleagues are ready to work on this issue. We were ready to fix this problem in 2011, where it should have been left, so that into 2012 we could provide certainty for the American people.

I support this effort, and let's get to work.

Mrs. CAPPS. Before I yield time, I just want to congratulate the conferees for finally meeting today for the very first time, at least 5 weeks after they were appointed. So that's the point.

I am pleased now to yield 2 minutes to our colleague from Texas, SHEILA JACKSON LEE.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. I thank the gentlelady from California for the recognition and also for the leadership.

I might say to my colleagues that whenever we come to the floor of the House to do the people's business it is an important effort, and this motion to instruct is truly the people's business. I want to applaud you for framing the urgency of answering the call of doing what we need to do with respect to 160 million Americans who need payroll tax relief—again, tax cuts for middle class and working Americans, not a discriminatory treatment of only the top 1 percent being able to sing the song ''Oh Happy Day,'' but to allow those who get up every day, some working with their hands, some working with the genius of their minds, and being able to get tax relief from this Congress.

I also know that the American people are looking for immediate relief as it relates to jobs. And I join with my colleague, Chairman LARSON of the Democratic Caucus, about the American Jobs Act and the President's initiative on putting teachers and firefighters, police and construction workers to work, creating jobs and cutting taxes to put in the American people's pockets, and, as well, to provide job training and extended unemployment incentives.

But I do raise this question as we look to protect Medicare and, yes, to provide the doctor fix, which is so important to Houston, with the large Texas Medical Center and the large population of seniors. I join with my colleagues to urgently move toward that. But may I make it very clear that unemployment benefits are not a handout. It is not given to people who have not worked. It is given to blue collar workers. It's given to white collar workers. It's given to people who have worked and contributed to this economy. For my friends on the other side of the aisle to suggest in the most

insulting way to give drug tests and to suggest that people need a GED, I can assure you people want to get a GED. But when you talk of the body politic of unemployed workers, 14 million people can't find jobs because there are no jobs to be found, and we are working to create jobs.

So the issue is: Help us pass the American Jobs Act, and help recognize that those who get unemployment benefits, Mr. Speaker, are Americans who have worked, who deserve this kind of insurance.

I join in passing the payroll tax motion to instruct and the unemployment benefits. Let's do it now.

□ 1410

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

Mrs. CAPPS. I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to our colleague from Ohio (Mr. KUCINICH).

Mr. KUCINICH. I agree with Representative CAPPS in that we shouldn't wait. We have to move quickly to eliminate any uncertainty that American families have in planning their budget or any uncertainty that they may have as to whether or not they're going to get unemployment benefits.

We in this Congress have certainty in much of our lives, especially with the fact that we get paid every month. But if you are out there and you have a really tight budget or you are unemployed or you are a senior trying to make sure you can go to your doctor of choice, this motion that the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. CAPPS) has is very important because we need to recognize that the middle class has been under enormous financial stress. With the wealth of the country accelerating upward, middle class people have been looking for a break.

If I'm right, this legislation will provide up to $1,000 for the year for a middle class family, which would be a great break for many families. This middle class tax break is imperative. Unemployment benefits for those who have not been able, despite their best efforts, to find a place in the job market are absolutely essential. There are 13 million people who are unemployed. There are a tremendous number of unemployed people in my own State of Ohio. They are looking to see, are we going to help them eliminate the uncertainty? That is why the Capps amendment is important, because we move forward quickly to show them, we are there for you. And the senior citizens, they want to make sure they can get their doctors of choice, and doctors want to make sure they are going to paid what is appropriate.

So I rise to support this amendment. Let's remember the middle class taxpayers. Let's remember those who are unemployed. Let's remember seniors who want to see the doctor of their choice. Let's remember doctors who want to get paid a fair amount. And let's pass this Capps amendment.

Mr. REED. Mr. Speaker, in closing, I would just like to say simply this, that we wholeheartedly agree with the general sentiment that has been brought to the House Chamber today, with the motion that is before this body, that we need to do our work in the conference. We cannot wait until the last minute. We wholeheartedly join in that sentiment, and we have demonstrated that commitment by what we have already done. Our actions should speak louder than our words.

The House Republicans were here on December 22, asking the Senate to come back to the table and do the people's work. And we are ready to do that work now. We need the Senate to come to the table in good faith, finalize this package on a long-term basis, bring certainty to our payroll tax rates, bring certainty to our providers, how they get paid under Medicare, and take care of the unemployment extension situation. But we must go into this conference with our eyes wide open.

We were sent to Washington in November 2010 because the American people recognized the fiscal crisis that is coming to our shores in America if we don't get our debt under control, and the habit that creates it; the spending problem of Washington, D.C., corrected once and for all, or we will not have a future in America. And that is unacceptable to me, as a father of two, and as the father of three, the gentleman from New York (Mr. CROWLEY) on the other side of the aisle, also indicated. We are fighting for our children and our grandchildren who have yet to see the face of this Earth.

So I join with my colleagues in sending a message that we will do the work. The hardworking taxpayers in America deserve no less. The U.S. Senate should come to the table, find a solution to these issues, and we will wholeheartedly join hands on our side of the aisle when we do it in a responsible way that will take care of this situation in a long-term fashion, not the short-term Band-Aid that Washington, D.C., for so long has thought is good policy at the expense of the hardworking taxpayers of America.

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

Mrs. CAPPS. I yield myself the remainder of my time.

Mr. Speaker, I will say to my colleague from New York, being here in December, as you mentioned a few times, it was December 22 that Senator MCCONNELL—actually several Senators said to us, Don't just be here, but get to work. Again, I acknowledge that, today, the conferees are meeting for the first time.

In closing, I just want to make a few quick points: first, to remind our colleagues what is in this motion. It simply says that the conference should finish its work and report it back to the House by February 17. It doesn't speak to specific outcomes, just that we get our work done and do it in a timely fashion. It is very clear that we need to come together and work on the problems that the American people have sent us here to address. They are rightfully tired of the endless drama and the political posturing in Washington, D.C. They know we can do better, and we know it too.

Second of all, we pretty much agree on the need for the basic provisions of this bill—the extension of the payroll tax cut, a tax cut for middle class, hardworking families, an extension of unemployment benefits, and a doc fix for Medicare providers for the rest of the year.

Third, it sounds like we all want to get these issues resolved as quickly as possible. There was a lot of agreement here on the floor during the past hour. So I hope we can all agree now to pass this simple and commonsense motion to instruct the conferees to get their work done over the next 3 weeks so that we can get our work done here on the floor and get moving to the agenda that we know lies before us.

I urge my colleagues to support this motion, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. CAPPS).

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

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. 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.

□ 1420

EXPRESSING SENSE OF HOUSE REGARDING FEDERAL BUDGET

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 516) expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the passage of a fiscal year 2013 Federal budget is of national importance.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 516

Whereas the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 established the modern budgeting process;

Whereas the President is required to submit a budget to Congress each year;

Whereas the last time the House of Representatives passed a budget was on April 15, 2011;

Whereas the last time the Senate passed a budget was on April 29, 2009; and

Whereas people in the United States must routinely set budgets for themselves, their businesses, and their families: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That it is the sense of the House of Representatives that the passage of a fiscal year 2013 Federal budget is of national importance.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. RYAN) and the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H. Res. 516 currently under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 3 minutes at this time.

We welcome the President to the House Chamber tonight, where he will address the American people to assess the state of the Union. This presents another opportunity for the President to chart a new course. I hope the President takes this opportunity to stop offering empty rhetoric and broken promises, to stop pushing policies that have proven to make matters worse, and to stop dividing Americans for political gain. I hope the President takes this opportunity to start working with us to get America back on track.

Yet the administration has, time and again, turned hope into disappointment. The President and his party's leaders continue to duck from the most pressing fiscal and economic challenges facing our Nation. Exhibit A of this failure is the fact that today marks 1,000 days without Senate Democrats passing a budget.

Having failed to put forward a credible plan in 1,000 days, the President's party is committing America to a future of debt, doubt, and decline. Instead of dealing honestly with our biggest fiscal challenges and providing certainty to job creators, Senate Democrats have refused to meet their legal and moral obligations to propose and pass a budget.

The President and his party's leaders refuse to account for their reckless spending spree. The lack of credible budget plans from the President and his party leaders raises the question: What are they hiding? Is it threats to economic security, health security, and national security that would result from their policy agenda? the job-destroying tax hikes that they continue to insist upon? the bureaucratic rationing and denial of vital care for seniors that would result from their health care law? or the deep cuts to the military that would hollow out our national defense?

Mr. Speaker, their policy preferences call for ever higher levels of government spending, higher taxes, a board of bureaucrats to cut Medicare, and a smaller military. It's understandable why they'd be afraid to try and fit that agenda on a spreadsheet, but that is no excuse for giving up on budgeting.

This failure to budget stands in stark contrast to our efforts here in the House. As the law requires, we proposed and passed a budget resolution last spring. We honestly confronted our Nation's most difficult challenges, putting the budget on a path to balance and the country back on to a path to prosperity.

We will keep working together to advance solutions this year, and we call upon our friends in the Senate to get serious about their duty to those they serve: Propose a budget; engage in debates; advance solutions.

I thank Congressman NUGENT for his leadership on this resolution, which expresses the sense of House that passage of a budget is of national importance.

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

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. I yield myself 15 seconds to say we must recommit ourselves to the American idea. We must apply our Nation's timely principles to the challenges of the day, and we will continue to advance bipartisan solutions and the principled reforms necessary to get our country back on track.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

I appreciate, as always, the opportunity to exchange views with my good friend from Wisconsin, the chair of the Budget Committee, with whom I've been pleased to work with on some items. Occasionally, rarely, we're opposed, but this is one of those areas where I do have some concerns.

When I hear my friend talk about empty rhetoric and broken promises, I am reminded of what the Republican agenda has been to this point in this Congress—debt, doubt, and decline. Debt, doubt, and decline. Well, I think that that's a pretty good assessment of what had been offered up by my good friends when they had an opportunity this last year to present their vision.

Now they attempt to lay this off somehow on the Senate. And we all have had our frustrations with the other body. But the fact is, the problem that we face in terms of being able to work regular order, is that there has been a decision by the minority leader in the other body.

The senior Senator from Kentucky, the Republican leader, has been very clear. His number one priority is not putting Americans back to work. It's not dealing with the challenges we face at home and abroad. It is to make sure that President Obama is not reelected. And when you start from that premise and radiate out, we have seen the Senate, which has never been, shall we say, nimble, has slowed to a crawl. We have seen an unprecedented effort to make even the most modest and mundane efforts over there require a supermajority.

It's unprecedented. It is sad. The American people deserve better. But it is Republican obstruction that has twisted the rules of the Senate to make it nonfunctional.

Debt, doubt, and decline. The Republican budget, notwithstanding all the pyrotechnics and the effort to spread doubt about whether or not the United States would honor its commitment, paying the national debt for debt that is already incurred, which occupied too much time this summer, an absolutely manufactured crisis, the Republican budget authored by my good friend from Wisconsin, itself, would have required increasing the debt ceiling.

And when you talk about decline, my Republican friends have failed to move forward with meaningful job creation. We've had, languishing, a reauthorization for the Surface Transportation Act, which we've had to extend eight times. And, in fact, the Republican budget actions to this date are cutting back on investment in water, in transportation, things that would put Americans to work all across America.

And as for bureaucratic rationing of health care, I'm surprised my good friend can say that with a straight face because, remember, his budget takes the half trillion dollars and accepts it. He doesn't unwind it. He doesn't change it. He accepts it. They count on it because they know that, in fact, there are opportunities for us to strengthen Medicare without ending the guarantee that two generations of senior citizens have relied upon to be able to have the Medicare payments when they need them.

We have the opportunity to refine and reform Medicare, to provide better service for our seniors and eliminate unnecessary expenditures. There was a time when those agenda items, not the rhetoric, not vouchering this and slashing that, but what was required to move forward to actually reform Medicare, that has been bipartisan. It's been agreed to. It's being practiced by health care systems in Wisconsin, in Oregon. We know what to do. We have the opportunity to do it. Unfortunately, the Republican approach to this point has been to assume that it's too expensive, that we can't do it. It's too expensive for the Federal Government, so we're going to transfer the risk to the next generation of senior citizens but taking advantage of the savings under the Affordable Care Act.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we're going through an exercise today that is largely beside the point. What we should be doing is dealing with pieces of legislation that would have bipartisan support, moving forward, accelerating health care reform, rebuilding and renewing America, taking things like the work that I've done with my good friend from Wisconsin in terms of reforming the agricultural system that wastes too much money on the wrong people, doing the wrong things. We could be moving forward on a constructive agenda that the Occupy Wall Street people and the Tea Party folks could actually get behind.

□ 1430

Unfortunately, today, this H. Res. 516 is another sidetrack that gets us away from doing what we should do.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, as I yield time to the gentleman from Texas, I will simply say I'm sure my colleague, my friend from Oregon, knows that you cannot filibuster a budget resolution in the Senate. I would just state that for the RECORD.

At this time, I would like to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas, a member of the Budget Committee, Mr. FLORES.

Mr. FLORES. Mr. Speaker, just like America's families and businesses, Congress must base its spending on a budget so that the Federal Government lives within its means. While Americans struggling in the Obama economy must sit down every day and produce a budget for their families, Senate Democrats have decided it would be a better political move to not produce a budget for the Nation, even though the law requires passage of an annual budget.

To repeat, the Senate leadership is ignoring the law and has been for 1,000 days.

A budget plan is Congress' most basic responsibility of governing, but without a budget, the State of the Union is uncertain, just like the economy is today.

Coincidentally, today is not only the President's State of the Union address; it is also the 1,000th day since the Senate last passed a budget. And without surprise, yesterday, just like it did last year, we also learned that the White House will again miss its deadline to submit a budget to Congress.

For 1,000 days, the Democrat-led, do-nothing Senate has refused to fulfill this duty to the American people. During this time, our national debt has surpassed our gross domestic product. And we've seen 35 straight months of unemployment higher than 8 percent. That means trillions of dollars of debt are being added to the bill our children and grandchildren will be forced to pay.

House Republicans put together a plan to put America back on a sound fiscal trajectory and to avoid a future of doubt, debt, and despair. Our ''Path to Prosperity'' budget will cut excess spending while strengthening vital programs like Medicare so they will be around for current and future generations.

Unfortunately, Senate Democrats rejected this bill; and, in fact, they have not bothered to do their job and pass a budget for the Federal Government since April 29, 2009, exactly 1,000 days ago.

Today, I call on President Obama and Senate Democrats to do their jobs, providing real leadership for the American people and to join House Republicans in passing a responsible budget so that we may restore America's promise, prosperity, and security for future generations.

I urge my colleagues to support this important resolution, H. Res. 516.

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

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. At this time, Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. SCOTT).

Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, as I heard the gentleman from Oregon speaking of debt, doubt, despair, decline, I couldn't help but think that all of those words start with ''D,'' just as ''Democrat'' does, and ''recovery'' starts with ''R,'' just as ''Republican'' does.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the President presented a budget, and that's a fact, and the House passed a fiscally responsible budget. The Senate defeated both of those budgets and then failed to produce an alternate.

Republicans in the House stand willing to work and want to move to regular process. Senator REID has closed that door at every opportunity.

Today, we call on the President to appeal to the Senate in his State of the Union address tonight to ask the Senate simply to pass a budget. Without a budget, there is no plan. With no plan, that means no recovery, and no recovery means no new jobs.

Mr. Speaker, Americans did not send us here to play the same tired old games that Senator REID continues to play. They sent us here to get something done for this generation.

This is my son, Wells. He's 12 years old. Our class represents over 300 children and grandchildren. Now, times are tough, but Americans are tougher, so the future of America is bright. But today is 1,000 days that this country has operated without a Federal budget.

I understand the majority leader likes to say that we don't have a budget because of House freshmen, but that's simply not true. When we arrived in Washington, we were sworn in just over a year ago, and America had operated at that time without a budget for 678 days. Our freshman class knew we could do better than that, and we did better than that, Mr. Speaker. We passed a budget in the House, and we call on the President tonight to ask the Senate to fulfill their job for the American people and simply pass a budget.

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

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I would like to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. LONG).

Mr. LONG. I rise today to address a thousand days. Now, I can try to impress you with my knowledge of a thousand days and tell you things like Mark Zuckerberg could have invented Facebook in his dorm room at Harvard 71.3 times in a thousand days, but I don't think that's going to get us anywhere. I could tell you that you could build 2.4 Empire State buildings in a thousand days, but that really doesn't mean anything. Those are the things you could do in a thousand days. What I'd like to address is what you cannot do in a thousand days.

What can we not do in a thousand days? The Senate cannot pass a budget. I was with one of the 87 freshmen that got here last year. I've been here 365-plus days. So what happened to that first 600-and-some days, if we could address that, when the Democrats controlled all three bodies, the House, the Senate, and the White House? They didn't produce a budget in that time.

This is an election year. I don't think we're really going to see a budget this year. We can talk about it all we want and ask them to produce one, but it's not politically correct to budget in this country anymore. And to me, Mr. Speaker, that's appalling.

When you do come forth with a budget, as we did last year, a couple days later you're going to get an ad of somebody throwing a lady off a cliff in a wheelchair, because that's what happens in this country when you put your plan down in writing, and that's appalling.

Eighty-seven freshmen came here last year—doctors, nurses. I was one of two auctioneers. Pizza parlor owner, roofing contractor. Just like the Founding Fathers envisioned. Car dealers, people off the street, people that have run businesses, small business people.

We got here and we were told the first vote we needed to take was for what? Speaker of the House. We voted for JOHN BOEHNER, Speaker of the House, because the public sent us up here with a 25-seat majority.

What was our second vote? A CR, a continuing resolution. We looked at each other. Continuing resolution? Oh, yeah. We've got to keep the government open for 2 more full weeks, 14 days, because that's how we operate here in Washington, D.C. And if that's not appalling, too—we were sent here to change the way Washington does business.

Now, you can have your three Ds—doubt, despair, decline—and I think on ''Hee Haw'' they used to say ''in agony''—but we can also be optimistic in this country.

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

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. LONG. You can deal from a position of defeat and doubt and decline like our colleagues across the aisle like to, but I wish I would have stepped 14 steps down the hall to my good friend from Oregon's office—that's how far our offices are apart—and I could have studied on how the first term of George W. Bush they worked night and day how to figure out how to get him reelected, because apparently Mr. MCCONNELL is doing something wrong in the Senate.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KUCINICH).

Mr. KUCINICH. I thank the gentleman from Oregon for yielding.

On its surface, the resolution seems to make sense about making sure we pass a budget, and that's of national importance. I think that all of us who

are here understand the underlying politics that have made it very difficult to bring a budget forward.

Of course, budgets are all about priorities, what are our Nation's priorities. When we get to the point of passing a budget, here's what we ought to be telling the American people: that the middle class will be protected; that the social safety net will be protected; that Social Security will be protected; that benefits will not be cut; that the cap will be lifted; that there will be no privatization; that Medicare will be protected; that there will be a fix so that doctors can get a fair shake; that we'll do something about Medicare Part D, which blew a hole in the Medicare budget; that we'll begin to cut back our military presence around the world, and that we start to take down this military industrial complex that General Eisenhower warned about so many years ago; that we'll begin investing in new technologies so that we can grow the economy of the future.

Budgets are about priorities. And while we still debate whether or not we're going to pass a budget, we need to set those priorities that will enable America, when it finally has a budget, to move forward into the future with a country that's going to be serving everyone, not just a few at the expense of the many.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire as to how much time remains between the two sides?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman has 10½ minutes remaining, and the side in opposition has 12½ minutes remaining.

□ 1440

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DOGGETT).

Mr. DOGGETT. I thank the gentleman.

As a long-time member of the Budget Committee, I certainly think that having a budget resolution is a good idea. I think it is a matter of national importance. I don't see how anyone can really disagree with the resolution, although it seems to have been offered primarily to establish a setting for the Republican response to the State of the Union Address that we all look forward to hearing tonight.

It is important to understand what the budget resolution is and what it is not, and what difference it really makes if one hasn't been passed for 1,000 days, 3 or 4 years, or 3 or 4 weeks. The budget resolution is not the appropriations act. It is a statement of our values and of our priorities, and I think that it is important to try to get one passed every year.

But the most important practical consequence of passing a budget resolution is to establish the level of discretionary spending, that is, to establish the level of expenditures that can be made by the various Appropriations committees and by this Congress. It provides us a good opportunity to look at what the consequences of that spending are, to try to match it up to revenues, and not to engage in endless deficit spending.

But the practical effect of the resolution itself is to say to the Appropriations Committee here in the House and in the Senate how much discretionary spending will the Congress approve this year. So what happens when there is not a budget resolution? The Congress finds other ways to do the very same thing.

So, in fact, the Congress did not pass a budget resolution for fiscal year 2003, for fiscal year 2005, for fiscal year 2007; but that did not stop President Bush from signing appropriation bills that added billions of dollars to our national debt—along with his tax cuts for those at the top that also added immensely to our national debt. He signed those appropriation bills.

I don't know whether we went a thousand days or a year or two then without a budget resolution. It would have been better if we could have adopted one, but the budget resolution tends to be confused by some people with the appropriations that keep the Federal Government going. This is not the act that Republicans from time to time have threatened to shut down the government.

You can't threaten to shut down the government over the passage of a budget resolution. That has happened with some of our appropriation bills. It almost happened with the ceiling on debt for the Federal Government. It is also inaccurate, not only confusing, to mix the two; and it is inaccurate to say that this Congress has not acted to establish some discretionary spending limits, even though a budget resolution, as good as it would be to have one, has not been formally adopted.

We did, in fact, adopt last year the Budget Control Act. The Budget Control Act proposes to set discretionary expenditure limits, what this Congress will spend, not just for this year but for a 10-year period in an effort to try to get spending under control and bring us closer to getting our fiscal house in order, which is something we very much need to do.

I see today's resolution as restating the obvious, that a budget resolution is a good idea, but not adding really much to our attempt to achieve some balance in our budget. Indeed, the last debate here on the floor about instructing conferees and trying to move forward on the issues of unemployment, the job creation, and the payroll tax extension are much more on target than a resolution of this nature.

We do have some serious challenges and deadlines. We still have almost 5 million Americans that would lose their unemployment benefits this year if we don't have an extension. I'd focus on those and working with the President, rather than a resolution that accomplishes little.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. NUNNELEE).

Mr. NUNNELEE. I would like to thank the gentleman from Wisconsin for yielding and also for his leadership on budget issues.

Mr. Speaker, 1,000 days without a budget and then 2 days ago we received news that the President is going to miss his deadline for submitting a budget to Congress. Rather than urging Senate Democrats to pass a budget and work with us to solve our Nation's fiscal problems, President Obama has joined them in failing to do their job.

America deserves better than this. Families and businesses set budgets every day. How much money do we have? What can we afford? What do we have to go without? In Washington, we have an obligation to ask and to answer those same questions. As I learned operating a small business, failing to plan is planning to fail.

Now, 17 years ago when I lost my job in a corporate merger, my wife and I sat down around the kitchen table, made a pot of coffee and got out a sheet of notebook paper, drew a line down the middle and on the left side we wrote this is how much we have, on the right side how we were going to spend it. That's a budget. Americans are sitting around their kitchen tables every night, and they have every reason to expect their government in Washington to do the same thing.

In the House, we passed a serious budget last year, and we're committed to do so again this year. It's time for the President and the Democrats in the Senate to do the same.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. I yield myself 2 minutes.

It's interesting to watch my friend's attempt to reframe the issue away from proposals that they have offered and the inartful budgetary fiscal activities of this last year. It was, after all, a Republican choice to halt the operation of the other body, essentially shutting down the Senate, by requiring supermajorities on everything.

We started the year with the threat of government shutdown. You recall we went to just minutes away from having to shut down the Federal Government over a basically theological argument on the part of my friends on the other side of the aisle over things like Planned Parenthood and Big Bird.

Then this summer we had cast doubt for the first time in history about whether we were actually going to honor the requirement to pay the debt for obligations we'd already incurred. This summer the Republicans were willing to leave town, and we actually shot the hostage when it came to the FAA: 70,000 people were idled on construction projects for aviation; 4,000 employees laid off.

Then this fall and into the winter, we had the spectacle of what should be a relatively routine effort, and has been a routine effort for Republicans and Democrats alike, dealing with things

like the extension of unemployment insurance and avoiding a draconian impact with the sustainable growth rate, the SGR, the doc fix. We watched our Republican friends in the House and Senate unable to communicate, and we ended up having a situation where they just basically turned their backs on the American people and were going to insist it was their way or the highway again.

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. I yield myself 1 additional minute.

It took days for, finally, reason to settle in when even the Republicans in the Senate had to say, no, well, this is the deal that we had. There appears to be a lack of accord on behalf of the new majority in the House, we're still spinning around.

And all the time we're dealing with things like this that are a sideshow when the majority of what really makes the difference, how we spend the money, these appropriation bills, the majority of which haven't even come out of the Republican-controlled committee to the Republican-controlled House to be passed, when we actually should be working on the next fiscal year.

□ 1450

So we'll endure the sideshow. This will pass. It will not really do anything other than sort of trying to be the pivot point in trying to spin the issue. But it would be nice at some point to stop the spin and the things that are beside the point, and maybe encourage the Republicans to agree amongst themselves, come into accord between the House and the Senate, and maybe get some of these appropriations bills to the floor so we can see where we're going.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. HUELSKAMP).

Mr. HUELSKAMP. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in support of the resolution offered by my colleague, the gentleman from Florida. The jaws of the people I represent drop when I inform them that 1,000 days have passed since the Senate actually passed a budget; 1,000 days since Democrat HARRY REID allowed a budget to actually be debated. They can't believe that such a failure of duty has occurred, yet alone that it can occur.

Two weeks ago I hosted a town hall in Clay Center, Kansas, and a constituent asked: How is it possible for the Senate to not pass a budget? As the constituent correctly pointed out, you can't run a city, a State, or a business this way. Washington seems to be the only place in the world where reality doesn't apply. Perhaps it's fitting that the President traveled to the most magical place on earth—Disney World—last week. He is complicit with allowing the Senate Democrats to live out a fairy tale in which fiscal policy is carried out on a whim.

Not only do cities, States, and businesses not function without budgets, but American families cannot get ahead without them. Families who face mountains of debt, like Washington does, never erased the red ink without a plan to pay it down or a plan to stop adding to it. Families who want to save and invest for the future cannot do so without a budget. Families who want to leave a legacy for their children and grandchildren come up with a blueprint to do so. And in the same regard, we should be focused on the legacy Washington is leaving for our children and grandchildren, Mr. President and Mr. REID. We cannot wait.

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

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. I yield myself 1½ minutes.

Here's the deal, Mr. Speaker. We're going to have a debt crisis in this country if we don't watch it. What is going to happen if that happens is everybody's going to get hurt in this country. Europe is in the middle of austerity. What that means is they're cranking up taxes on all of their countrymen, slowing down their economy. And they're pulling the rug out from under their seniors who have already retired and organized their lives around these programs. We want to prevent that from happening. We want to preempt a debt crisis. We want to get America on a path to prosperity and deal with this debt issue, and we can't grow the economy and create jobs unless we do that. The only way to fix this problem, to prevent seniors from getting harmed, to grow this economy, is to have a budget.

And it's been 1,000 days since the Senate bothered even trying to pass a budget. It's the epitome of irresponsibility that the other body has neglected this most basic function of governing. We've got to save this country. And in order to do that, we have to budget and prioritize because that's what our constituents elected us to do.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I agree with the goal of my good friend from Wisconsin about making sure that we deal with our long-term problems of budget deficits and national debt, and certainly look forward to working together moving down a path to prosperity. But we have slightly different ways of going about this, and it is unfortunate because I think if we really had full and open debate on the floor of the House, if we hadn't accepted draconian rules that make it very hard to be able to discuss on the floor the opportunity to have a balanced approach that would include, for example, eliminating unnecessary tax breaks for industries that no longer need them, or adjusting the Tax Code so we wouldn't have the anomaly of where people worth hundreds of millions of dollars—the most recent example of Mr. Romney releasing his tax returns, where he is paying less than 15 percent due to the use of carried interest long after he left his former employer. These are things that we could do that the American public agrees with and that would help have a balanced approach that ultimately would make a difference.

I am, as I mentioned, a little bit perplexed that we are going to continue to beat up on the Senate, although that's always fun, to whack around the other body, but the point is that the dysfunction of the Senate is a Republican choice to shut it down, require extraordinary majorities for the most routine of items. We see it with judicial appointments that have been cleared out of committee, that have bipartisan support, that the minority in the other body, the Republican Party, won't even allow to move forward when we have a serious crisis in a number of the areas of our judiciary.

We have watched where there's long on rhetoric, but when it comes time to just getting the budgets done for this year, there are six major appropriations bills for this year, and we're now 5 months into the fiscal year, that are languishing, that have not passed out of the Republican committee to the Republican-controlled House to at least start the process going.

Now, today in the Budget Committee we had a fascinating intellectual exercise. There were four bills that were considered. We're moving these items to the House floor, each and every one of which was an interesting intellectual exercise, but in the name of transparency and simplicity and giving the American public a fuller picture, every one of them clouds the budget picture, whether it's so-called dynamic scoring that won't deal with important investments like infrastructure and give the people a great picture, but it will muddy the waters in terms of the impact on legislation coming forward.

Biennial budgets, when we can't move forward now with appropriations on an annual basis, will institutionalize the sideshow. We'll do it twice; we'll require the bureaucracy to generate more information over a longer timeframe that will be more inaccurate. It flies in the face of what is happening in the States—which have been referred to as the laboratories of democracy—which used to have biennial budgets, and the majority are moving away because it doesn't work, it is inaccurate, and it requires extra work. This is part of the Republican approach, to move in this direction.

Freezing baseline budgets will make long-term budgeting less accurate and make it harder to really assess what the budgetary costs and consequences are going to be.

And then there's a little thing that deals with risk adjustment that would require the current process, where there is an absolute accurate appraisal of what will happen with Federal loans and their performance, but because it doesn't deal with their academic

model, will require a risk adjustment premium and further budget balancing. And I defy any Member of the House to explain to any of their constituency, even pretty sophisticated people, why this is an improvement for greater transparency and accuracy.

The point is it's continuing a side show instead of working together on what the American public wants. They want a balanced solution. And if we didn't have the vast majority of the people in the House and the Senate pledging their fealty to an unelected lobbyist, pledging never to increase taxes, we could have moved with the supercommittee and moved forward and done something.

□ 1500

It is time for us to stop the gimmicks, maybe work together doing what the American public wants so that we can deal with avoiding a debt crisis and get us launched on a path to prosperity that the American public would agree with.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, for the purposes of closing, I yield the remainder of my time to the gentleman from Florida, the author of this House resolution, Mr. NUGENT.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Florida is recognized for 5½ minutes.

Mr. NUGENT. I would like to thank the chairman, Mr. RYAN, for allowing me to speak and allowing me to close. And I heard this is a sideshow. I don't think the American people see it as that.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to offer a resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the passage of a fiscal year 2013 Federal budget is of national importance. You've heard it over and over again that this is the 1,000th day, 1,000 days, Mr. Speaker, since the Senate has not fulfilled its obligation. Think about all the things Americans have done and been able to accomplish in the last 1,000 days, and yet the Senate has failed to achieve this basic responsibility under the Budget Act of 1974.

It's astonishing. I've had two sons graduate from college, two sons go to war and come home again. Another son got married in that time period. And in that time, the citizens of Florida's Fifth Congressional District sent me to Washington to do this job to work for the American people.

That work undoubtedly includes passing a budget, as this House did on April 15 based on the leadership of Chairman RYAN. The Senate, on the other hand, hasn't produced a budget since 2009—I believe it's April of 2009—and didn't even bother to propose a budget this last year. The last time the Senate passed the budget, the CBO predicted that the deficit for 2011 would be $693 billion. In reality, it was twice, almost twice that, $1.3 trillion.

When I'm at home talking with people in my district, they're astounded that the Senate has not passed a budget in almost 3 years. They can't fathom how we can operate without a budget. In truth, Mr. Speaker, you've heard the other side even say that we haven't been operating smoothly. When I first got here, we had to do a CR. That's because we haven't done what we're supposed to do in the Senate and the House. The American people know that, and that's reflected in our approval ratings.

You see, in the real world, Americans routinely set budgets for themselves, their families, and their businesses. I had to set one when I was a sheriff. Unfortunately, the Senate doesn't operate in the real world. Rather, it has become a legislative graveyard, even for bills passed with bipartisan support.

The House, however, has acted. We've passed 27 bipartisan jobs bills that have been lost to the black hole that is the Senate. Some of those bills received an overwhelming majority of support. For instance, H.R. 1070, the Small Company Capital Formation Act, would allow small businesses to capture more capital in the early stages of their formation, and that passed in this House with 421 votes for and one opposed. That's a perfect example of legislation that should be public law, and it isn't because it's died in the Senate.

Now, I understand the Senate may not agree with everything in our bills that we pass, and that's fine. That's how the Founding Fathers envisioned it. But if you have objections, then put forth your own proposals and allow the normal process to work. Do not simply sit on the sidelines and decry every idea that comes out of the House of Representatives—ideas that we put forward.

In my opinion, there couldn't be a better example of putting politics before country than the Senate's refusal to pass a budget. Even those on the other side have said, it's a plan, we have to have a direction. That's what we ask. We don't have to agree on that direction; but at the end of the day, we have to have something to set our appropriators free to work with within the confines.

Rather than show Americans what priorities are, rather than show what they're willing to spend, where they want to cut and how much they want to increase taxes, and whether they believe our colossal debt is even an issue, the Senate has instead insisted on punting this issue entirely. This is not only a disservice to the American people; but, frankly, it's irresponsible. And when you hear them say the Republicans in the Senate are blocking a budget, you can't filibuster a budget in the Senate. The rules do not allow for it. So they could, if they wanted to, do their job and assist the American people in figuring out where they stand on issues of great national importance. Once again, we talked about spending, taxes, and how we move forward.

The Senate Democrats had the supermajority in the Senate, control of the House and the White House and still didn't pass a budget. I don't think it's too much to ask the Senate to produce a budget. I know Americans don't think so either.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. RYAN) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 516.

The question was taken.

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

Mr. RYAN. Mr. 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.

RECESS

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

Accordingly (at 3 o'clock and 6 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

□ 1615

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. WOMACK) at 4 o'clock and 15 minutes p.m.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1173, FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY AND RETIREMENT SECURITY ACT OF 2011

Mr. SESSIONS, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 112–375) on the resolution (H. Res. 522) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1173) to repeal the CLASS program, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, proceedings will resume on questions previously postponed. Votes will be taken in the following order:

The motion to suspend the rules and adopt House Resolution 516, by the yeas and nays;

The motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 2070, by the yeas and nays; and

The motion to instruct on H.R. 3630, by the yeas and nays.

The first electronic vote will be conducted as a 15-minute vote. Remaining electronic votes will be conducted as 5-minute votes.

EXPRESSING SENSE OF HOUSE REGARDING FEDERAL BUDGET

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 516) expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the passage of a fiscal year 2013 Federal budget is of national importance, 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 motion offered by the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. RYAN) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 410, nays 1, answered ''present'' 1, not voting 21, as follows:

[Roll No. 7]

YEAS—410

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

NAYS—1

Honda

ANSWERED ''PRESENT''—1

Welch

NOT VOTING—21

Berman
Bishop (GA)
Brady (TX)
Burton (IN)
Culberson
DeFazio
Farr
Frank (MA)
Giffords
Gosar
Hinchey
LaTourette
Mack
Miller, George
Paul
Rush
Sánchez, Linda T.
Schrader
Slaughter
Speier
Watt

□ 1630

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

WORLD WAR II MEMORIAL PRAYER ACT OF 2011

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2070) to direct the Secretary of the Interior to install in the area of the World War II Memorial in the District of Columbia a suitable plaque or an inscription with the words that President Franklin D. Roosevelt prayed with the nation on June 6, 1944, the morning of D-day, as amended, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

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

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 386, nays 26, not voting 21, as follows:

[Roll No. 8]

YEAS—386

Ackerman
Adams
Aderholt
Alexander
Altmire
Amash
Amodei
Andrews
Austria
Baca
Bachmann
Bachus
Baldwin
Barletta
Barrow
Bartlett
Barton (TX)
Bass (CA)
Bass (NH)
Benishek
Berg
Berkley
Biggert
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bishop (NY)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Bonner
Bono Mack
Boren
Boswell
Boustany
Brady (PA)
Braley (IA)
Brooks
Broun (GA)
Brown (FL)
Buchanan
Bucshon
Buerkle
Burgess
Butterfield
Calvert
Camp
Campbell
Canseco
Cantor
Capito
Capps
Capuano
Cardoza
Carnahan
Carney
Carson (IN)
Carter
Cassidy
Castor (FL)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Chandler
Cicilline
Clarke (MI)
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coble
Coffman (CO)
Cole
Conaway
Connolly (VA)
Cooper
Costa
Costello
Courtney
Cravaack
Crawford
Crenshaw
Critz
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
Davis (KY)
DeGette
DeLauro
Denham
Dent
DesJarlais
Deutch
Diaz-Balart
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Dold
Donnelly (IN)
Doyle
Dreier
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers
Emerson
Engel
Eshoo
Farenthold
Fattah
Filner
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Flake
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxx
Frank (MA)
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
Garamendi
Gardner
Garrett
Gerlach
Gibbs
Gibson
Gingrey (GA)
Gohmert
Gonzalez
Goodlatte
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (MO)
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Griffin (AR)
Griffith (VA)
Grimm
Guinta
Guthrie
Hahn
Hall
Hanabusa
Hanna
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings (FL)
Hastings (WA)
Hayworth
Heck
Heinrich
Hensarling
Herger
Herrera Beutler
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Hirono
Hochul
Holden
Holt
Hoyer
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurt
Inslee
Israel
Issa
Jackson Lee (TX)
Jenkins
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (IL)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jones
Jordan
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly
Kildee
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kinzinger (IL)
Kissell
Kline

Kucinich
Labrador
Lamborn
Lance
Landry
Langevin
Lankford
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latham
Latta
Levin
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (GA)
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren, Zoe
Long
Lowey
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Luján
Lummis
Lungren, Daniel E.
Lynch
Manzullo
Marchant
Marino
Markey
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (CA)
McCarthy (NY)
McCaul
McClintock
McCollum
McCotter
McGovern
McHenry
McIntyre
McKeon
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McNerney
Meehan
Meeks
Mica
Michaud
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller (NC)
Miller, Gary
Moore
Mulvaney
Murphy (CT)
Murphy (PA)
Myrick
Napolitano
Neal
Neugebauer
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Nunnelee
Olson
Olver
Owens
Palazzo
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor (AZ)
Paulsen
Pearce
Pelosi
Pence
Perlmutter
Peters
Peterson
Petri
Pingree (ME)
Pitts
Platts
Poe (TX)
Pompeo
Posey
Price (GA)
Price (NC)
Quayle
Quigley
Rahall
Reed
Rehberg
Reichert
Renacci
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)
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Runyan
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Ryan (WI)
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Scalise
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schilling
Schmidt
Schock
Schwartz
Schweikert
Scott (SC)
Scott, Austin
Scott, David
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Sewell
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuler
Shuster
Simpson
Sires
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Southerland
Speier
Stearns
Stivers
Stutzman
Sullivan
Sutton
Terry
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tierney
Tipton
Tonko
Towns
Tsongas
Turner (NY)
Turner (OH)
Upton
Van Hollen
Visclosky
Walberg
Walden
Walsh (IL)
Walz (MN)
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Waxman
Webster
Welch
West
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Wilson (FL)
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Wolf
Womack
Woodall
Yarmuth
Yoder
Young (AK)
Young (FL)
Young (IN)

NAYS—26

Blumenauer
Chu
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cohen
Conyers
Edwards
Ellison
Fudge
Grijalva
Gutierrez
Honda
Jackson (IL)
Lee (CA)
Maloney
McDermott
Moran
Nadler
Payne
Polis
Rangel
Scott (VA)
Serrano
Stark
Velázquez
Woolsey

NOT VOTING—21

Akin
Becerra
Berman
Bishop (GA)
Brady (TX)
Burton (IN)
Culberson
DeFazio
Farr
Giffords
Gosar
Hinchey
LaTourette
Mack
Miller, George
Paul
Reyes
Sánchez, Linda T.
Schrader
Slaughter
Watt

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1649

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

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

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

MOTION TO INSTRUCT CONFEREES ON H.R. 3630, TEMPORARY PAYROLL TAX CUT CONTINUATION ACT OF 2011

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to instruct on the bill (H.R. 3630) offered by the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. CAPPS) on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk will redesignate the motion.

The Clerk redesignated the motion.

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

This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 397, nays 16, not voting 20, as follows:

[Roll No. 9]

YEAS—397

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

NAYS—16

Aderholt
Amash
Bachmann
Blackburn
Campbell
Flake
Long
Lummis
McClintock
McKinley
Neugebauer
Quayle
Rogers (AL)
Stutzman
Wolf
Yoder

NOT VOTING—20

Berman
Brady (TX)
Burton (IN)
Conyers
Culberson
DeFazio
Farr
Giffords
Gosar
Hinchey
Hirono
LaTourette
Mack
McDermott
Miller, George
Paul
Sánchez, Linda T.
Schrader
Slaughter
Watt

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1656

Mrs. LUMMIS changed her vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

So the motion to instruct was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 3261

Mr. CARTER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that my name be removed as a cosponsor of H.R. 3261.

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

There was no objection.

HOUR OF MEETING ON TOMORROW

Mr. CARTER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 9 a.m. tomorrow.

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

There was no objection.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. After consultation among the Speaker and the majority and minority leaders, and with their consent, the Chair announces that, when the two Houses meet tonight in joint session to hear an address by the President of the United States, only the doors immediately opposite the Speaker and those immediately to his left and right will be open.

No one will be allowed on the floor of the House who does not have the privilege of the floor of the House. Due to the large attendance that is anticipated, the rule regarding the privilege of the floor must be strictly enforced. Children of Members will not be permitted on the floor. The cooperation of all Members is requested.

The practice of purporting to reserve seats prior to the joint session by placement of placards or personal items will not be allowed. Chamber Security may remove these items from the seats. Members may reserve their seats only by physical presence following the security sweep of the Chamber.

Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 8:35 p.m. for the purpose of receiving in joint session the President of the United States.

Accordingly (at 4 o'clock and 58 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until approximately 8:35 p.m.

□ 2040

JOINT SESSION OF CONGRESS PURSUANT TO HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 96 TO RECEIVE A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at 8 o'clock and 40 minutes p.m.

The Deputy Sergeant at Arms, Mrs. Kerri Hanley, announced the Vice President and Members of the U.S. Senate, who entered the Hall of the House of Representatives, the Vice President taking the chair at the right of the Speaker, and the Members of the Senate the seats reserved for them.

The SPEAKER. The joint session will come to order.

The Chair appoints as members of the committee on the part of the House to escort the President of the United States into the Chamber:

The gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CANTOR);

The gentleman from California (Mr. MCCARTHY);

The gentleman from Texas (Mr. HENSARLING);

The gentleman from Texas (Mr. SESSIONS);

The gentleman from Georgia (Mr. PRICE);

The gentlewoman from Washington (Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS);

The gentleman from Texas (Mr. CARTER);

The gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI);

The gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER);

The gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. LARSON);

The gentleman from California (Mr. BECERRA);

The gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. CLYBURN);

The gentleman from New York (Mr. ISRAEL); and

The gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. SUTTON).

The VICE PRESIDENT. The President of the Senate, at the direction of that body, appoints the following Senators as members of the committee on the part of the Senate to escort the President of the United States into the House Chamber:

The Senator from Nevada (Mr. REID);

The Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN);

The Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER);

The Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY);

The Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW);

The Senator from Alaska (Mr. BEGICH);

The Senator from Kentucky (Mr. MCCONNELL);

The Senator from Arizona (Mr. KYL);

The Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER);

The Senator from Wyoming (Mr. BARRASSO);

The Senator from South Dakota (Mr. THUNE);

The Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN); and

The Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT).

The Deputy Sergeant at Arms announced the Dean of the Diplomatic Corps, His Excellency Roble Olhaye, Ambassador from the Republic of Djibouti.

The Dean of the Diplomatic Corps entered the Hall of the House of Representatives and took the seat reserved for him.

The Deputy Sergeant at Arms announced the Chief Justice of the United States and the Associate Justices of the Supreme Court.

The Chief Justice of the United States and the Associate Justices of the Supreme Court entered the Hall of the House of Representatives and took the seats reserved for them in front of the Speaker's rostrum.

The Deputy Sergeant at Arms announced the Cabinet of the President of the United States.

The members of the Cabinet of the President of the United States entered the Hall of the House of Representatives and took the seats reserved for them in front of the Speaker's rostrum.

At 9 o'clock and 5 minutes p.m., the Sergeant at Arms, the Honorable Paul D. Irving, announced the President of the United States.

The President of the United States, escorted by the committee of Senators and Representatives, entered the Hall of the House of Representatives and stood at the Clerk's desk.

(Applause, the Members rising.)

The SPEAKER. Members of the Congress, I have the high privilege and the distinct honor of presenting to you the President of the United States.

(Applause, the Members rising.)

The PRESIDENT. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Vice President, Members of Congress, distinguished guests, and fellow Americans:

Last month, I went to Andrews Air Force Base and welcomed home some of our last troops to serve in Iraq. Together, we offered a final, proud salute to the colors under which more than a million of our fellow citizens fought—and several thousand gave their lives.

We gather tonight knowing that this generation of heroes has made the United States safer and more respected around the world. For the first time in 9 years, there are no Americans fighting in Iraq. For the first time in two decades, Osama bin Laden is not a threat to this country. Most of al Qaeda's top lieutenants have been defeated. The Taliban's momentum has been broken, and some troops in Afghanistan have begun to come home.

These achievements are a testament to the courage, selflessness, and teamwork of America's Armed Forces. At a time when too many of our institutions have let us down, they exceed all expectations. They're not consumed with personal ambition. They don't obsess over their differences. They focus on the mission at hand. They work together.

Imagine what we could accomplish if we followed their example. Think about the America within our reach: a country that leads the world in educating its people; an America that attracts a new generation of high-tech manufacturing and high-paying jobs; a future where we're in control of our own energy, and our security and prosperity aren't so tied to unstable parts of the world; an economy built to last, where hard work pays off, and responsibility is rewarded.

We can do this. I know we can because we've done it before. At the end of World War II, when another generation of heroes returned home from combat, they built the strongest economy and middle class the world has ever known. My grandfather, a veteran of Patton's Army, got the chance to go to college on the GI Bill. My grandmother, who worked on a bomber assembly line, was part of a workforce that turned out the best products on Earth.

The two of them shared the optimism of a Nation that had triumphed over a depression and fascism. They understood they were part of something larger; they were contributing to a story of success that every American had a chance to share—the basic American promise that if you worked hard, you could do well enough to raise a family, own a home, send your kids to college, and put a little away for retirement.

The defining issue of our time is how to keep that promise alive. No challenge is more urgent. No debate is more important. We can either settle for a country where a shrinking number of people do really well, while a growing number of Americans barely get by. Or we can restore an economy where everyone gets a fair shot, everyone does their fair share, and everyone plays by the same set of rules. What's at stake are not Democratic values or Republican values, but American values. We have to reclaim them.

Let's remember how we got here. Long before the recession, jobs and manufacturing began leaving our shores. Technology made businesses more efficient but also made some jobs obsolete. Folks at the top saw their incomes rise like never before, but most hardworking Americans struggled with costs that were growing, paychecks that weren't, and personal debt that kept piling up.

In 2008, the house of cards collapsed. We learned that mortgages had been sold to people who couldn't afford or understand them. Banks had made huge bets and bonuses with other people's money. Regulators had looked the other way, or didn't have the authority to stop the bad behavior.

It was wrong. It was irresponsible. And it plunged our economy into a crisis that put millions out of work, saddled us with more debt, and left innocent, hardworking Americans holding the bag. In the 6 months before I took office, we lost nearly 4 million jobs. And we lost another 4 million before our policies were in full effect.

Those are the facts. But so are these. In the last 22 months, businesses have created more than 3 million jobs. Last year, they created the most jobs since 2005. American manufacturers are hiring again, creating jobs for the first time since the late 1990s. Together, we've agreed to cut the deficit by more than $2 trillion. And we've put in place new rules to hold Wall Street accountable so a crisis like this never happens again.

The state of our Union is getting stronger. And we've come too far to turn back now. As long as I'm President, I will work with anyone in this Chamber to build on this momentum. But I intend to fight obstruction with action, and I will oppose any effort to return to the very same policies that brought on this economic crisis in the first place.

No, we will not go back to an economy weakened by outsourcing, bad debt, and phony financial profits. Tonight, I want to speak about how we move forward, and lay out a blueprint for an economy that's built to last—an economy built on American manufacturing, American energy, skills for American workers, and a renewal of American values.

This blueprint begins with American manufacturing.

On the day I took office, our auto industry was on the verge of collapse. Some even said we should let it die. With a million jobs at stake, I refused to let that happen. In exchange for help, we demanded responsibility. We got workers and automakers to settle their differences. We got the industry to retool and restructure. Today, General Motors is back on top as the world's number one automaker. Chrysler has grown faster in the U.S. than any major car company. Ford is investing billions in U.S. plants and factories. And together, the entire industry added nearly 160,000 jobs.

We bet on American workers. We bet on American ingenuity. And tonight, the American auto industry is back.

What's happening in Detroit can happen in other industries. It can happen in Cleveland, Pittsburgh and Raleigh. We can't bring every job back that's left our shores. But right now, it's getting more expensive to do business in places like China. Meanwhile, America is more productive. A few weeks ago, the CEO of Master Lock told me that it now makes business sense for him to bring jobs back home. Today, for the first time in 15 years, Master Lock's unionized plant in Milwaukee is running at full capacity.

So we have a huge opportunity, at this moment, to bring manufacturing back. But we have to seize it. Tonight, my message to business leaders is simple: Ask yourselves what you can do to bring jobs back to your country, and your country will do everything we can to help you succeed.

We should start with our tax code. Right now, companies get tax breaks for moving jobs and profits overseas. Meanwhile, companies that choose to stay in America get hit with one of the highest tax rates in the world. It makes no sense, and everyone knows it.

So let's change it. First, if you're a business that wants to outsource jobs, you shouldn't get a tax deduction for doing it. That money should be used to cover moving expenses for companies like Master Lock that decide to bring jobs home.

Second, no American company should be able to avoid paying its fair share of taxes by moving jobs and profits overseas. From now on, every multinational company should have to pay a basic minimum tax, and every penny should go towards lowering taxes for companies that choose to stay here and hire here in America.

Third, if you're an American manufacturer, you should get a bigger tax cut. If you're a high-tech manufacturer, we should double the tax deduction you get for making your products here. And if you want to relocate in a community that was hit hard when a factory left town, you should get help financing a new plant, equipment, or training for new workers.

So my message is simple. It is time to stop rewarding businesses that ship jobs overseas and start rewarding companies that create jobs right here in America. Send me these tax reforms, and I will sign them right away.

We're also making it easier for American businesses to sell products all over the world. Two years ago, I set a goal of doubling U.S. exports over 5 years. With the bipartisan trade agreements we signed into law, we're on track to meet that goal—ahead of schedule. Soon, there will be millions of new customers for American goods in Panama, Colombia and South Korea. Soon, there will be new cars on the streets of Seoul imported from Detroit, Toledo and Chicago.

I will go anywhere in the world to open new markets for American products. And I will not stand by when our competitors don't play by the rules. We've brought trade cases against China at nearly twice the rate as the last administration—and it's made a difference. Over a thousand Americans are working today because we've stopped a surge in Chinese tires. But we need to do more. It's not right when another country lets our movies, music and software be pirated. It's not fair when foreign manufacturers have a leg up on ours only because they're heavily subsidized.

Tonight, I'm announcing the creation of a Trade Enforcement Unit that will be charged with investigating unfair trading practices in countries like China. There will be more inspections to prevent counterfeit or unsafe goods from crossing our borders. And this Congress should make sure that no foreign company has an advantage over American manufacturing when it comes to accessing financing or new markets like Russia. Our workers are

the most productive on Earth, and if the playing field is level, I promise you—America will always win.

I also hear from many business leaders who want to hire in the United States but can't find workers with the right skills. Growing industries in science and technology have twice as many openings as we have workers who can do the job. Think about that—openings at a time when millions of Americans are looking for work.

It's inexcusable. And we know how to fix it.

Jackie Bray is a single mom from North Carolina who was laid off from her job as a mechanic. Then Siemens opened a gas turbine factory in Charlotte and formed a partnership with Central Piedmont Community College. The company helped the college design courses in laser and robotics training. It paid Jackie's tuition, then hired her to help operate their plant.

I want every American looking for work to have the same opportunity as Jackie did. Join me in a national commitment to train 2 million Americans with skills that will lead directly to a job. My administration has already lined up more companies that want to help. Model partnerships between businesses like Siemens and community colleges in places like Charlotte, Orlando and Louisville are up and running. Now you need to give more community colleges the resources they need to become community career centers—places that teach people skills that businesses are looking for right now, from data management to high-tech manufacturing.

And I want to cut through the maze of confusing training programs so that from now on people like Jackie have one program, one Web site, and one place to go for all the information and help that they need. It is time to turn our unemployment system into a reemployment system that puts people to work.

These reforms will help people get jobs that are open today. But to prepare for the jobs of tomorrow, our commitment to skills and education has to start earlier. For less than 1 percent of what our Nation spends on education each year, we've convinced nearly every State in the country to raise their standards for teaching and learning—the first time that's happened in a generation.

But challenges remain, and we know how to solve them. At a time when other countries are doubling down on education, tight budgets have forced States to lay off thousands of teachers. We know a good teacher can increase the lifetime income of a classroom by over $250,000. A great teacher can offer an escape from poverty to the child who dreams beyond his circumstance. Every person in this Chamber can point to a teacher who changed the trajectory of their lives. Most teachers work tirelessly with modest pay, sometimes digging into their own pocket for school supplies just to make a difference.

Teachers matter. So instead of bashing them or defending the status quo, let's offer schools a deal. Give them the resources to keep good teachers on the job and reward the best ones. And in return, grant schools flexibility to teach with creativity and passion, to stop teaching to the test, and to replace teachers who just aren't helping kids learn. That's a bargain worth making.

We also know that when students don't walk away from their education, more of them walk the stage to get their diploma. When students are not allowed to drop out, they do better. So tonight, I am proposing that every State—every State—require that all students stay in high school until they graduate or turn 18.

When kids do graduate, the most daunting challenge can be the cost of college. At a time when Americans owe more in tuition debt than credit card debt, this Congress needs to stop the interest rates on student loans from doubling in July. Extend the tuition tax credit we started that saves millions of middle class families thousands of dollars, and give more young people the chance to earn their way through college by doubling the number of work-study jobs in the next 5 years.

Of course, it's not enough for us to increase student aid. We can't just keep subsidizing skyrocketing tuition; we'll run out of money. States also need to do their part by making higher education a higher priority in their budgets, and colleges and universities have to do their part by working to keep costs down. Recently, I spoke with a group of college presidents who've done just that. Some schools redesign courses to help students finish more quickly. Some use better technology. The point is, it's possible. So let me put colleges and universities on notice: If you can't stop tuition from going up, the funding you get from taxpayers will go down. Higher education can't be a luxury. It is an economic imperative that every family in America should be able to afford.

Let's also remember that hundreds of thousands of talented, hardworking students in this country face another challenge—the fact that they aren't yet American citizens. Many were brought here as small children, are American through and through; yet they live every day with the threat of deportation. Others came more recently to study business and science and engineering; but as soon as they get their degree, we send them home to invent new products and create new jobs somewhere else. That doesn't make sense.

I believe as strongly as ever that we should take on illegal immigration. That's why my administration has put more boots on the border than ever before. That's why there are fewer illegal crossings than when I took office. The opponents of action are out of excuses. We should be working on comprehensive immigration reform right now. But if election-year politics keeps Congress from acting on a comprehensive plan, let's at least agree to stop expelling responsible young people who want to staff our labs, start new businesses, and defend this country. Send me a law that gives them a chance to earn their citizenship; I will sign it right away.

You see, an economy built to last is one where we encourage the talent and ingenuity of every person in this country. That means women should earn equal pay for equal work. It means we should support everyone who's willing to work and every risk-taker and entrepreneur who aspires to become the next Steve Jobs. After all, innovation is what America has always been about.

Most new jobs are created in startups and small businesses. So let's pass an agenda that helps them succeed. Tear down regulations that prevent aspiring entrepreneurs from getting the financing to grow. Expand tax relief to small businesses that are raising wages and creating good jobs. Both parties agree on these ideas. So put them in a bill and get it on my desk this year.

Innovation also demands basic research. Today, the discoveries taking place in our federally financed labs and universities could lead to new treatments that kill cancer cells but leave healthy ones untouched, new lightweight vests for cops and soldiers that can stop any bullet. Don't gut these investments in our budget. Don't let other countries win the race for the future. Support the same kind of research and innovation that led to the computer chip and the Internet, to new American jobs and new American industries.

And nowhere is the promise of innovation greater than in American-made energy. Over the last 3 years, we've opened millions of new acres for oil and gas exploration. And tonight, I'm directing my administration to open more than 75 percent of our potential offshore oil and gas resources. Right now, American oil production is the highest that it's been in 8 years—that's right, 8 years. Not only that, last year we relied less on foreign oil than in any of the past 16 years. But with only 2 percent of the world's oil reserves, oil isn't enough. This country needs an all-out, all-of-the-above strategy that develops every available source of American energy, a strategy that's cleaner, cheaper, and full of new jobs.

We have a supply of natural gas that can last America nearly 100 years, and my administration will take every possible action to safely develop this energy. The experts believe this will support more than 600,000 jobs by the end of the decade. And I'm requiring all companies that drill for gas on public lands to disclose the chemicals they use because America will develop this resource without putting the health and safety of our citizens at risk.

The development of natural gas will create jobs and power trucks and factories that are cleaner and cheaper,

proving that we don't have to choose between our environment and our economy. And by the way, it was public research dollars, over the course of 30 years, that helped develop the technologies to extract all this natural gas out of shale rock, reminding us that government support is critical in helping businesses get new energy ideas off the ground.

Now, what's true for natural gas is just as true for clean energy. In 3 years, our partnership with the private sector has already positioned America to be the world's leading manufacturer of high-tech batteries. Because of Federal investments, renewable energy use has nearly doubled, and thousands of Americans have jobs because of it.

When Bryan Ritterby was laid off from his job making furniture, he said he worried that at 55 no one would give him a second chance; but he found work at Energetx, a wind turbine manufacturer in Michigan. Before the recession, the factory only made luxury yachts. Today it's hiring workers like Bryan who said, I'm proud to be working in the industry of the future.

Our experience with shale gas, our experience with natural gas shows us that the payoffs on these public investments don't always come right away. Some technologies don't pan out. Some companies fail. But I will not walk away from the promise of clean energy. I will not walk away from workers like Bryan. I will not cede the wind or solar or battery industry to China or Germany because we refuse to make the same commitment here. We have subsidized oil companies for a century. That's long enough. It's time to end the taxpayer giveaways to an industry that rarely has been more profitable and double down on a clean-energy industry that never has been more promising. Pass clean-energy tax credits, and create these jobs.

We can also spur energy innovation with new incentives. The differences in this Chamber may be too deep right now to pass a comprehensive plan to fight climate change, but there's no reason why Congress shouldn't at least set a clean-energy standard that creates a market for innovation. So far, you haven't acted. Well, tonight I will. I'm directing my administration to allow the development of clean energy on enough public land to power 3 million homes. And I'm proud to announce that the Department of Defense, working with us—the world's largest consumer of energy—will make one of the largest commitments to clean energy in history, with the Navy purchasing enough capacity to power 250,000 homes a year.

Of course, the easiest way to save money is to waste less energy. So here's a proposal: help manufacturers eliminate energy waste in their factories, and give businesses incentives to upgrade their buildings. Their energy bills will be $100 billion lower over the next decade, and America will have less pollution, more manufacturing, and more jobs for construction workers who need them. Send me a bill that creates these jobs.

Building this new energy future should be just one part of a broader agenda to repair America's infrastructure. So much of America needs to be rebuilt. We've got crumbling roads and bridges, a power grid that wastes too much energy, an incomplete high-speed broadband network that prevents a small business owner in rural America from selling her products all over the world.

During the Great Depression, America built the Hoover Dam and the Golden Gate Bridge. After World War II, we connected our States with a system of highways. Democratic and Republican administrations invested in great projects that benefited everybody, from the workers who built them to the businesses that still use them today.

In the next few weeks, I will sign an executive order clearing away the red tape that slows down too many construction projects, but you need to fund these projects. Take the money we're no longer spending at war, use half of it to pay down our debt, and use the rest of it to do some nation-building right here at home.

There's never been a better time to build, especially since the construction industry was one of the hardest-hit when the housing bubble burst. Of course, construction workers weren't the only ones who were hurt. So were millions of innocent Americans who have seen their home values decline. And while government can't fix the problem on its own, responsible homeowners shouldn't have to sit and wait for the housing market to hit bottom to get some relief.

And that's why I'm sending this Congress a plan that gives every responsible homeowner the chance to save about $3,000 a year on their mortgage by refinancing at historically low rates. No more red tape. No more runaround from the banks. A small fee on the largest financial institutions will ensure that it won't add to the deficit and will give those banks that were rescued by taxpayers a chance to repay a deficit of trust.

Let's never forget: Millions of Americans who work hard and play by the rules every day deserve a government and a financial system that do the same. It's time to apply the same rules from top to bottom. No bailouts, no handouts, and no cop-outs. An America built to last insists on responsibility from everybody.

We've all paid the price for lenders who sold mortgages to people who couldn't afford them and buyers who knew they couldn't afford them. That's why we need smart regulations to prevent irresponsible behavior. Rules to prevent financial fraud or toxic dumping or faulty medical devices, these don't destroy the free market. They make the free market work better.

There is no question that some regulations are outdated, unnecessary, or too costly. In fact, I've approved fewer regulations in the first 3 years of my Presidency than my Republican predecessor did in his. I've ordered every Federal agency to eliminate rules that don't make sense. We've already announced over 500 reforms, and just a fraction of them will save business and citizens more than $10 billion over the next 5 years. We got rid of one rule from 40 years ago that could have forced some dairy farmers to spend $10,000 a year proving that they could contain a spill—because milk was somehow classified as an oil. With a rule like that, I guess it was worth crying over spilt milk.

Now, I'm confident a farmer can contain a milk spill without a Federal agency looking over his shoulder. Absolutely. But I will not back down from making sure an oil company can contain the kind of oil spill we saw in the gulf 2 years ago. I will not back down from protecting our kids from mercury poisoning or making sure that our food is safe and our water is clean. I will not go back to the days when health insurance companies had unchecked power to cancel your policy, deny your coverage, or charge women differently than men.

And I will not go back to the days when Wall Street was allowed to play by its own set of rules. The new rules we passed restore what should be any financial system's core purpose: Getting funding to entrepreneurs with the best ideas, and getting loans to responsible families who want to buy a home or start a business or send their kids to college.

So, if you are a big bank or financial institution, you're no longer allowed to make risky bets with your customers' deposits. You're required to write out a living will that details exactly how you'll pay the bills if you fail, because the rest of us are not bailing you out ever again. And if you're a mortgage lender, or a payday lender, or a credit card company, the days of signing people up for products they can't afford with confusing forms and deceptive practices, those days are over. Today American consumers finally have a watchdog in Richard Cordray, with one job: to look out for them.

We'll also establish a financial crimes unit of highly trained investigators to crack down on large-scale fraud and protect people's investments. Some financial firms violate major anti-fraud laws because there's no real penalty for being a repeat offender. That's bad for consumers, and it's bad for the vast majority of bankers and financial service professionals who do the right thing. So pass legislation that makes the penalties for fraud count.

And tonight, I'm asking my Attorney General to create a special unit of Federal prosecutors and leading State attorney generals to expand our investigations into the abusive lending and packaging of risky mortgages that led to the housing crisis. This new unit will hold accountable those who broke

the law, speed assistance to homeowners, and help turn the page on an era of recklessness that hurt so many Americans.

Now, a return to the American values of fair play and shared responsibility will help protect our people and our economy. But it should also guide us as we look to pay down our debt and invest in our future.

Right now, our most immediate priority is stopping a tax hike on 160 million working Americans while the recovery is still fragile. People cannot afford losing $40 out of each paycheck this year. There are plenty of ways to get this done. So let's agree right here, right now: no side issues, no drama. Pass the payroll tax cut without delay. Let's get it done.

When it comes to the deficit, we've already agreed to more than $2 trillion in cuts and savings. But we need to do more, and that means making choices. Right now, we're poised to spend nearly $1 trillion more on what was supposed to be a temporary tax break for the wealthiest 2 percent of Americans. Right now, because of loopholes and shelters in the Tax Code, a quarter of all millionaires pay lower tax rates than millions of middle class households. Right now, Warren Buffett pays a lower tax rate than his secretary.

Do we want to keep these tax cuts for the wealthiest Americans? Or do we want to keep our investments in everything else, like education and medical research, a strong military, and care for our veterans? Because if we're serious about paying down our debt, we can't do both.

The American people know what the right choice is. So do I. As I told the Speaker this summer, I'm prepared to make more reforms to rein in the long-term costs of Medicare and Medicaid and strengthen Social Security so long as those programs remain a guarantee of security for seniors.

But, in return, we need to change our Tax Code so that people like me, and an awful lot of Members of Congress, pay our fair share of taxes. Tax reform should follow the Buffett rule. If you make more than $1 million a year, you should not pay less than 30 percent in taxes. And my Republican friend TOM COBURN is right: Washington should stop subsidizing millionaires. In fact, if you're earning a million dollars a year, you shouldn't get special tax subsidies or deductions. On the other hand, if you make under $250,000 a year, like 98 percent of American families, your taxes shouldn't go up. You're the ones struggling with rising costs and stagnant wages. You're the ones who need relief.

Now, you can call this class warfare all you want. But asking a billionaire to pay at least as much as his secretary in taxes? Most Americans would call that common sense.

We don't begrudge financial success in this country. We admire it. When Americans talk about folks like me paying my fair share of taxes, it's not because they envy the rich. It's because they understand that when I get a tax break I don't need and the country can't afford, it either adds to the deficit or somebody else has to make up the difference, like a senior on a fixed income, or a student trying to get through school, or a family trying to make ends meet. That's not right. Americans know that's not right. They know that this generation's success is only possible because past generations felt a responsibility to each other and to the future of their country, and they know our way of life will only endure if we feel that same sense of shared responsibility. That's how we'll reduce our deficit. That's an America built to last.

Now, I recognize that people watching tonight have differing views about taxes and debt, energy and health care. But no matter what party they belong to, I bet most Americans are thinking the same thing right about now: Nothing will get done in Washington this year, or next year, or maybe even the year after that, because Washington is broken.

Can you blame them for feeling a little cynical?

The greatest blow to our confidence in our economy last year didn't come from events beyond our control. It came from a debate in Washington over whether the United States would pay its bills or not. Who benefited from that fiasco?

I've talked tonight about the deficit of trust between Main Street and Wall Street, but the divide between this city and the rest of the country is at least as bad, and it seems to get worse every year. And some of this has to do with the corrosive influence of money and politics. So together, let's take some steps to fix that. Send me a bill that bans insider trading by Members of Congress. I will sign it tomorrow.

Let's limit any elected official from owning stocks in industries they impact. Let's make sure people who bundle campaign contributions for Congress can't lobby Congress and vice versa, an idea that has bipartisan support, at least outside of Washington.

Some of what's broken has to do with the way Congress does its business these days. A simple majority is no longer enough to get anything, even routine business, passed through the Senate. Neither party has been blameless in these tactics. Now both parties should put an end to it.

For starters, I ask the Senate to pass a simple rule that all judicial and public service nominations receive a simple up-or-down vote within 90 days. The executive branch also needs to change. Too often it's inefficient, outdated, and remote. That's why I've asked this Congress to grant me the authority to consolidate the Federal bureaucracy so that our government is leaner, quicker, and more responsive to the needs of the American people.

Finally, none of this can happen unless we also lower the temperature in this town. We need to end the notion that the two parties must be locked in a perpetual campaign of mutual destruction, that politics is about clinging to rigid ideologies instead of building consensus around commonsense ideas.

I'm a Democrat, but I believe what Republican, Abraham Lincoln, believed—the government should do for people only what they cannot do better by themselves and no more. That's why my education reform offers more competition and more control for schools and States. That's why we're getting rid of regulations that don't work. That's why our health care law relies on a reformed private market, not a government program.

On the other hand, even my Republican friends who complain the most about government spending have supported federally financed roads and clean energy projects and Federal offices for the folks back home.

The point is we should all want a smarter, more effective government. And while we may not be able to bridge our biggest philosophical differences this year, we can make real progress.

With or without this Congress, I will keep taking actions that help the economy grow. But I can do a whole lot more with your help because when we act together, there's nothing the United States of America can't achieve.

That's the lesson we've learned from our actions abroad over the last few years. Ending the Iraq war has allowed us to strike decisive blows against our enemies. From Pakistan to Yemen, the al Qaeda operatives who remain are scrambling, knowing that they can't escape the reach of the United States of America.

From this position of strength we've begun to wind down the war in Afghanistan. Ten thousand of our troops have come home; 23,000 more will leave by the end of this summer. This transition to Afghan lead will continue, and we will build an enduring partnership with Afghanistan so that it is never again a source of attacks against America.

As the tide of war recedes, a wave of change has washed across the Middle East and North Africa, from Tunis to Cairo, from Sana'a to Tripoli. A year ago, Qadhafi was one of the world's longest serving dictators, a murderer with American blood on his hands. Today, he is gone. And in Syria, I have no doubt that the Assad regime will soon discover that the forces of change cannot be reversed and that human dignity cannot be denied.

How this incredible transformation will end remains uncertain. But we have a huge stake in the outcome. And while it's ultimately up to the people of the region to decide their fate, we will advocate for those values that have served our own country so well.

We will stand against violence and intimidation. We will stand for the rights and dignity of all human beings, men and women, Christians, Muslims,

and Jews. We will support policies that lead to strong and stable democracies and open markets because tyranny is no match for liberty. And we will safeguard America's own security against those who threaten our citizens, our friends, and our interests.

Look at Iran. Through the power of our diplomacy, a world that was once divided about how to deal with Iran's nuclear program now stands as one. The regime is more isolated than ever before. Its leaders are faced with crippling sanctions. And as long as they shirk their responsibilities, this pressure will not relent.

Let there be no doubt: America is determined to prevent Iran from getting a nuclear weapon, and I will take no options off the table to achieve that goal. But a peaceful resolution of this issue is still possible and far better. And if Iran changes course and meets its obligations, it can rejoin the Community of Nations.

The renewal of American leadership can be felt across the globe. Our oldest alliances in Europe and Asia are stronger than ever. Our ties to the Americas are deeper. Our ironclad commitment, and I mean ironclad to Israel security has meant the closest military cooperation between our two countries in history.

We've made it clear that America is a Pacific power. And a new beginning in Burma has lit a new hope.

From the coalitions we've built to secure nuclear materials to the missions we've led against hunger and disease, to the blows we've dealt our enemies, to the enduring power of our moral example, America is back.

Anyone who tells you otherwise, anyone who tells you that America is in decline or that our influence has waned doesn't know what they're talking about. That's not the message we get from leaders around the world who are eager to work with us. That's not how people feel from Tokyo to Berlin, from Cape Town to Rio, where opinions of America are higher than they've been in years. Yes, the world is changing. No, we can't control every event. But America remains the one indispensable Nation in world affairs; and as long as I'm President, I intend to keep it that way.

That's why, working with our military leaders, I have proposed a new defense strategy that ensures we maintain the finest military in the world while saving nearly half a trillion dollars in our budget. To stay one step ahead of our adversaries, I have already sent this Congress legislation that will secure our country from the growing dangers of cyberthreats.

Above all, our freedom endures because of the men and women in uniform who defend it. As they come home, we must serve them as well as they've served us. That includes giving them the care and the benefits they have earned, which is why we've increased annual VA spending every year I've been President. And it means enlisting our veterans in the work of rebuilding our Nation.

With the bipartisan support of this Congress, we are providing new tax credits to companies that hire vets. Michelle and Jill Biden have worked with American businesses to secure a pledge of 135,000 jobs for veterans and their families. And tonight, I'm proposing a Veterans Job Corps that will help our communities hire veterans as cops and firefighters so that America is as strong as those who defend her.

Which brings me back to where I began. Those of us who've been sent here to serve can learn a thing or two from the service of our troops. When you put on that uniform, it doesn't matter if you're black or white, Asian, Latino, Native American, conservative or liberal, rich, poor, gay, straight. When you're marching into battle, you look out for the person next to you, or the mission fails. When you're in the thick of the fight, you rise or fall as one unit, serving one Nation, leaving no one behind.

And one of my proudest possessions is the flag that the SEAL team took with them on the mission to get bin Laden. On it are each of their names. Some may be Democrats, some may be Republicans; but that doesn't matter. Just like it didn't matter that day in the Situation Room when I sat next to Bob Gates, a man who was George Bush's Defense Secretary, and Hillary Clinton, a woman who ran against me for President.

All that mattered that day was the mission. No one thought about politics. No one thought about themselves. One of the young men involved in the raid later told me that he didn't deserve credit for the mission. It only succeeded, he said, because every single member of that unit did their job—the pilot who landed the helicopter that spun out of control, the translator who kept others from entering the compound, the troops who separated the women and children from the fight, the SEALs who charged up the stairs.

More than that, the mission only succeeded because every member of that unit trusted each other, because you can't charge up those stairs into darkness and danger unless you know that there's somebody behind you watching your back.

So it is with America. Each time I look at that flag, I'm reminded that our destiny is stitched together like those 50 stars and those 13 stripes. No one built this country on their own. This Nation is great because we built it together. This Nation is great because we worked as a team. This Nation is great because we get each other's backs. And if we hold fast to that truth in this moment of trial, there is no challenge too great, no mission too hard. As long as we are joined in common purpose, as long as we maintain our common resolve, our journey moves forward, and our future is hopeful and the state of our Union will always be strong.

Thank you, God bless you and God bless the United States of America.

(Applause, the Members rising.)

At 10 o'clock and 16 minutes p.m., the President of the United States, accompanied by the committee of escort, retired from the Hall of the House of Representatives.

The Deputy Sergeant at Arms escorted the invited guests from the Chamber in the following order:

The members of the President's Cabinet; the Chief Justice of the United States and the Associate Justices of the Supreme Court; the Dean of the Diplomatic Corps.

The SPEAKER. The Chair declares the joint session of the two Houses now dissolved.

Accordingly, at 10 o'clock and 23 minutes p.m., the joint session of the two Houses was dissolved.

The Members of the Senate retired to their Chamber.

MESSAGE OF THE PRESIDENT REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE HOUSE ON THE STATE OF THE UNION

Mr. CANTOR. Mr. Speaker, I move that the message of the President be referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union and ordered printed.

The motion was agreed to.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. BRADY of Texas (at the request of Mr. CANTOR) for January 23 and for the balance of the week on account of a family emergency.

Mr. CULBERSON (at the request of Mr. CANTOR) for today on account of illness.

SENATE BILL REFERRED

A bill of the Senate of the following title was taken from the Speaker's table and, under the rule, referred as follows:

S. 1134. An act to authorize the St. Croix River Crossing Project with appropriate mitigation measures to promote river values; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure; in addition to the Committee on Natural Resources; in addition to the Committee on the Budget 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.

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. 3237. An act to amend the SOAR Act by clarifying the scope of coverage of the Act.

ADJOURNMENT

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

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 24 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Wednesday, January 25, 2012, at 9 a.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

4661. A letter from the Congressional Review Coordinator, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule — Importation of Live Swine, Swine Semen, Pork and Pork Products from Liechtenstein and Switzerland [Docket No.: APHIS-2009-0093] received December 21, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

4662. A letter from the Chief Counsel, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Suspension of Community Eligibility [Docket ID: FEMA-2011-0002] [Internal Agency Docket No.: FEMA-8209] received January 4, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

4663. A letter from the Chief Counsel, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Changes in Flood Elevation Determinations [Docket ID: FEMA-2011-0002] received December 4, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

4664. A letter from the Deputy Secretary, Securities and Exchange Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Mine Safety Disclosure [Release Nos.: 33-9286; 34-66019; File No. S7-41-10] (RIN: 3235-AK83) received December 29, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

4665. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Delaware; Adhesives and Selants Rule [EPA-R03-OAR-2011-0721;FRL-9609-2] received December 20, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4666. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; West Virginia; Revised Motor Vehicle Emission Budgets for the Charleston, Huntington, Parkersburg, Weirton, and Wheeling 8-Hour Ozone Maintenance Areas; Correction [FDMS Docket No.: EPA-03-OAR-2011-0511; FRL-9609-1] received December 20, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4667. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans and Designation of areas for Air Quality Planning Purposes; Ohio and Indiana; Redesignation of the Ohio and Indiana Portions of the Cincinnati-Hamilton 1997 Annual Fine Particulate Matter Nonattainment Area to Attainment [EPA-R05-OAR-2011-0017; EPA-R05-OAR-2011-0106; FRL-9610-3] received December 20, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4668. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; Oklahoma; Federal Implementation Plan for Interstate Transport of Pollution Affecting Visibility and Best Available Retrofit Technology Determinations [EPA-R06-OAR-2010-0190; FRL-9608-4] received December 20, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4669. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; Oregon: New Source Review/Prevention of Significant Deterioration Rule Revisions and Air Quality Permit Streamlining Rule Revisions [EPA-R10-OAR-2011-0767; FRL-9494-9] received December 20, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4670. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; State of Kansas: Regional Haze [EPA-R07-OAR-2011-0675; FRL-9611-3] received December 20, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4671. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Federal Implementation Plans for Iowa, Michigan, Missouri, Oklahoma, and Wisconsin and Determination for Kansas Regarding Interstate Transport of Ozone [EPA-HQ-OAR-2009-0491; FRL-9609-9] (RIN: 2060-AR01) received December 20, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4672. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants: Area Source Standards for Prepared Feeds Manufacturing; Amendments [EPA-HQ-OAR-2008-0080; FRL-9610-2] (RIN: 2060-AR16) received December 20, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4673. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — National Emissions Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants From Secondary Lead Smelting [EPA-HQ-OAR-2011-0344; FRL-9610-9] (RIN: 2060-AQ68) received December 20, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4674. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Revisions to Final Response to Petition From New Jersey Regarding SO2 Emissions From the Portland Generating Station [EPA-HQ-OAR-2011-0081; FRL-9609-4] (RIN: 2060-AQ69) received December 20, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4675. A letter from the Program Analyst, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of Class E Airpsace; Winters, TX [Docket No.: FAA-2011-0608; Airspace Docket No. 11-ASW-7] received December 21, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4676. A letter from the Program Analyst, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Establishment of Class E Airspace; Nashville, AR [Docket No.: FAA-2011-0497; Airspace Docket No. 11-ASW-4] received December 21, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4677. A letter from the Program Analyst, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Establishment of Class E Airspace; Danville Airport, PA [Docket No.: FAA-2011-0766; Airspace Docket No. 11-AEA-19] received December 21, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4678. A letter from the Program Analyst, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of Class E Airspace; Alice, TX [Docket No.: FAA-2011-0498; Airspace Docket No. 11-ASW-5] received December 21, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4679. A letter from the Program Analyst, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of Class E Airspace; Emmonak, AK [Docket No.: FAA-2011-0880; Airspace Docket No. 11-AAL-17] received December 21, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4680. A letter from the Program Analyst, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of Class E Airspace; Ardmore, OK [Docket No.: FAA-2011-0851; Airspace Docket No. 11-ASW-10] received December 21, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4681. A letter from the Program Analyst, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment and Establishment of Air Traffic Routes; Northeast United States [Docket No.: FAA-2011-0376; Airspace Docket No. 10-AEA-11] (RIN: 2120-AA66) received December 21, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4682. A letter from the Senior Regulations Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Procedures for Transportation Workplace Drug and Alcohol Testing Programs: Federal Drug Testing Custody and Control Form; Technical Amendment [Docket: DOT-OST-2010-0161] (RIN: 2105-AE13) received December 21, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4683. A letter from the Program Manager, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's final rule — Tribal Child Welfare (RIN: 0970-AC41) received January 6, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4684. A letter from the TTB Federal Register Liaison Officer, Department of the Treasury, transmitting the Department's final rule — Establishment of the Naches Heights Viticultural Area [Docket No.: TTB-2011-0005; T.D. TTB-99; Ref: Notice No. 118] (RIN: 1513-AB80) received December 29, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4685. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Current Refundings of Tax-exempt Bonds in Certain Disaster Relief Bond Programs [Notice 2012-03] received December 29, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4686. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — HARP Safe Harbor Guidance for REITs (Rev. Proc. 2012-14) received December 29, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4687. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Safe

Harbor Reporting Method for Eligible REMICs Required to Report on Schedule Q Information with Respect to REMIC Assets [Notice 2012-5] received December 29, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4688. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Deadline to Submit Opinion and Advisory Letter Applications for Pre-approved Defined Contribution Plans is Extended to April 2, 2012 (Announcement 2012-3) received December 29, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4689. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Guidance Regarding Deduction and Capitalization of Expenditures Related to Tangible Property [TD 9564] (RIN: 1545-BJ93) received December 20, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4690. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Rulings and determination letters (Rev. Proc. 2012-7) received January 6, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. SESSIONS: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 522. Resolution providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1173) to repeal the CLASS program (Rept. 112–375). 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, Mr. BOREN, Mr. BARTON of Texas, Mr. CULBERSON, Mr. FARENTHOLD, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. OLSON, Mr. BOUSTANY, Mr. MARCHANT, Mr. SCALISE, Mr. MCCAUL, and Mr. ROHRABACHER):

H.R. 3811. A bill to approve the Keystone XL pipeline project permit; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, and in addition to the Committees on Energy and Commerce, and Natural Resources, 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. PIERLUISI (for himself, Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA, Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. SABLAN, Mr. SERRANO, and Ms. VELÁZQUEZ):

H.R. 3812. A bill to extend the supplemental security income program to Puerto Rico, the United States Virgin Islands, Guam, and American Samoa, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. ROSS of Florida:

H.R. 3813. A bill to amend title 5, United States Code, to secure the annuities of Federal civilian employees, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, and in addition to the Committee on House Administration, 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. AMASH (for himself, Mr. BURTON of Indiana, Mr. AKIN, Mr. PAUL, Mr. AUSTRIA, Mr. COLE, Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee, Mr. BENISHEK, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mr. CHAFFETZ, Mr. QUAYLE, and Mr. GOHMERT):

H.R. 3814. A bill to prohibit the Department of Justice from tracking and cataloguing the purchases of multiple rifles and shotguns; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. AMODEI:

H.R. 3815. A bill to require the Secretary of the Interior to convey certain Federal land to Elko County, Nevada, and to take land into trust for the Te-moak Tribe of Western Shoshone Indians of Nevada, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. GRAVES of Missouri (for himself and Mr. LIPINSKI):

H.R. 3816. A bill to amend title 49, United States Code, to provide rights for pilots, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. HIMES:

H.R. 3817. A bill to amend the Energy Policy and Conservation Act to improve the energy efficiency of electric instantaneous water heaters, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. HOLT:

H.R. 3818. A bill to direct the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of the battlefields of the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan:

H.R. 3819. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow the transfer of required minimum distributions from a retirement plan to a health savings account; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. ISRAEL (for himself, Mr. SERRANO, Mr. LOEBSACK, and Mr. TOWNS):

H.R. 3820. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to modify the dependent care credit to take into account expenses for care of parents and grandparents who do not live with the taxpayer; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. KILDEE (for himself, Mrs. LOWEY, and Ms. DELAURO):

H.R. 3821. A bill to reauthorize 21st century community learning centers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mrs. LOWEY:

H.R. 3822. A bill to require the Nuclear Regulatory Commission to retain and redistribute certain amounts collected as fines; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. RIVERA:

H.R. 3823. A bill to authorize the cancellation of removal and adjustment of status of certain aliens who are long-term United States residents and who entered the United States as children, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committees on Ways and Means, Armed Services, and Homeland Security, 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. LIPINSKI (for himself, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. REED, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. JONES, Mr. MANZULLO, Mr. BACA, Mr. TOWNS, Mr. HOLT, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. HOLDEN, Mr. GINGREY of Georgia, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. TIBERI, Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. HIGGINS, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. DONNELLY of Indiana, Mr. BARLETTA, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mr. QUIGLEY, Mr. KILDEE, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, Mr. YARMUTH, Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. CALVERT, Ms. DELAURO, Mr. FORBES, Mr. KELLY, Mr. COSTELLO, Mr. MCCAUL, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. NEAL, Mr. WOLF, Mr. AKIN, Mr. MCCOTTER, Mr. AUSTRIA, Mr. MICHAUD, Mr. SABLAN, Mr. GONZALEZ, Mr. GRIMM, and Ms. ESHOO):

H. Res. 523. A resolution supporting the contributions of Catholic schools; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York:

H. Res. 524. A resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the Palestine Liberation Organization should not be allowed to maintain an official office in Washington, D.C; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California:

H. Res. 525. A resolution expressing support for designation of the week of February 6 through February 10, 2012, as ''National School Counseling Week''; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. SHUSTER (for himself and Ms. SCHWARTZ):

H. Res. 526. A resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives with respect toward the establishment of a democratic and prosperous Republic of Georgia and the establishment of a peaceful and just resolution to the conflict with Georgia's internationally recognized borders; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

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. 3811.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1 Section 8 Clause 3

By Mr. PIERLUISI:

H.R. 3812.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the power of the Congress to provide for the general welfare of the United States, as enumerated in Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the United States Constitution; to make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution such power, as enumerated in Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the Constitution; and to make rules and regulations respecting the U.S. territories, as enumerated in Article IV, Section 3, Clause 2 of the Constitution.

By Mr. ROSS of Florida:

H.R. 3813.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause I

By Mr. AMASH:

H.R. 3814.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The Second Amendment to the Constitution guarantees individuals' right ''to keep and bear Arms.'' The federal government's policies barred by this bill are an undue burden on that right.

By Mr. AMODEI:

H.R. 3815.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority of Congress to enact this legislation is provided by Article I, Section of the United States Constitution, specifically clause 1 (relating to providing for the general welfare of the United States) and clause 18 (relating to the power to make all laws necessary and proper for carrying out the powers vested in Congress), and Article IV, Section 3, Clause 2 (relating to the power of Congress to dispose of and make all needful rules and regulations respecting the territory or other property belonging to the United States).

By Mr. GRAVES of Missouri:

H.R. 3816.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Pursuant to Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3 of the United States Constitution, Congress shall have the power to Regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among several States, and with the Indian Tribes.

By Mr. HIMES:

H.R. 3817.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, §8, clause 3 of the U.S. Constitution.

By Mr. HOLT:

H.R. 3818.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1 of the U.S. Constitution

By Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan:

H.R. 3819.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution

By Mr. ISRAEL:

H.R. 3820.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the powers granted to Congress under Article I of the United States Constitution and its subsequent amendments, and as further clarified and interpreted by the Supreme Court of the United States.

By Mr. KILDEE:

H.R. 3821.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 1 of section 8 of article 1 of the Constitution.

By Mrs. LOWEY:

H.R. 3822.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. RIVERA:

H.R. 3823.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 4, Immigration Regulation

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions as follows:

H.R. 12: Mr. CARSON of Indiana.
H.R. 57: Mr. BARLETTA.
H.R. 104: Mr. SCHILLING, Mr. HONDA, Ms. BROWN of Florida, and Mr. SOUTHERLAND.
H.R. 114: Mr. MANZULLO.
H.R. 153: Mrs. CAPITO.
H.R. 187: Mr. MILLER of Florida.
H.R. 196: Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD and Mr. HASTINGS of Florida.
H.R. 308: Ms. HAHN.
H.R. 361: Mrs. ADAMS.
H.R. 365: Mr. HANNA.
H.R. 419: Mr. BLUMENAUER.
H.R. 493: Mr. MCCOTTER.
H.R. 547: Mr. COFFMAN of Colorado.
H.R. 631: Ms. PINGREE of Maine.
H.R. 676: Ms. HAHN and Mr. TOWNS.
H.R. 680: Mr. PITTS.
H.R. 735: Mrs. ADAMS.
H.R. 750: Mr. FLEISCHMANN.
H.R. 819: Mr. AL GREEN of Texas.
H.R. 860: Mrs. BLACK, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. AMODEI, and Mr. ROSKAM.
H.R. 890: Mr. FITZPATRICK.
H.R. 920: Mr. MANZULLO.
H.R. 938: Mr. FATTAH and Ms. JENKINS.
H.R. 1048: Mr. HASTINGS of Florida.
H.R. 1084: Mr. ROTHMAN of New Jersey.
H.R. 1092: Mr. COHEN and Mr. HONDA.
H.R. 1167: Mr. FLEISCHMANN.
H.R. 1175: Mr. RUNYAN, Mr. COFFMAN of Colorado, and Mr. PETRI.
H.R. 1218: Mr. ALTMIRE.
H.R. 1350: Ms. PINGREE of Maine.
H.R. 1370: Mr. STIVERS.
H.R. 1426: Ms. SUTTON.
H.R. 1449: Ms. BROWN of Florida.
H.R. 1479: Mr. MCDERMOTT.
H.R. 1515: Mr. CLAY.
H.R. 1533: Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. LIPINSKI, and Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan.
H.R. 1537: Mr. ANDREWS.
H.R. 1549: Mr. KISSELL.
H.R. 1564: Mr. VAN HOLLEN.
H.R. 1568: Mr. GRIJALVA.
H.R. 1576: Mr. LATHAM.
H.R. 1621: Ms. HIRONO.
H.R. 1639: Mr. SCALISE, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, and Mr. ISSA.
H.R. 1738: Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia.
H.R. 1744: Mr. LATHAM, Mr. JONES, and Mr. BISHOP of Utah.
H.R. 1746: Mr. GARAMENDI.
H.R. 1747: Mr. OWENS.
H.R. 1783: Mr. BLUMENAUER.
H.R. 1802: Ms. SEWELL and Mr. ROGERS of Alabama.
H.R. 1830: Mrs. MYRICK.
H.R. 1856: Mr. RIGELL.
H.R. 1936: Mr. MEEHAN.
H.R. 1956: Ms. JENKINS.
H.R. 1957: Mr. BILIRAKIS.
H.R. 1960: Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia.
H.R. 1966: Mr. TIERNEY.
H.R. 2014: Mr. HECK.
H.R. 2020: Mr. MCCOTTER.
H.R. 2140: Ms. SCHWARTZ.
H.R. 2179: Mr. COLE and Mr. LOEBSACK.
H.R. 2187: Mr. CLARKE of Michigan.
H.R. 2190: Mr. NADLER.
H.R. 2268: Mr. HURT.
H.R. 2284: Mr. STIVERS and Mr. ROKITA.
H.R. 2299: Mr. RAHALL.
H.R. 2334: Mr. BERMAN and Mr. MCHENRY.
H.R. 2335: Mr. NUNES.
H.R. 2341: Mr. BACA.
H.R. 2353: Mr. BLUMENAUER.
H.R. 2435: Mr. THORNBERRY.
H.R. 2443: Mr. SMITH of Texas.
H.R. 2464: Mr. TOWNS.
H.R. 2528: Mr. CANSECO.
H.R. 2595: Mr. YOUNG of Florida, Mr. NADLER, and Mr. COLE.
H.R. 2597: Mr. ANDREWS.
H.R. 2689: Mr. LEWIS of Georgia.
H.R. 2810: Mr. CANSECO.
H.R. 2888: Ms. HIRONO.
H.R. 2951: Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio.
H.R. 2955: Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia and Mr. JACKSON of Illinois.
H.R. 2969: Ms. LEE of California and Mr. LIPINSKI.
H.R. 3028: Mr. WITTMAN.
H.R. 3039: Mr. FITZPATRICK.
H.R. 3059: Mr. MEEHAN, Ms. RICHARDSON, Mr. BERG, and Mr. MEEKS.
H.R. 3061: Mr. SOUTHERLAND and Mrs. CHRISTENSEN.
H.R. 3067: Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. SENSENBRENNER, Mr. MEEKS, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Ms. BALDWIN, Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. TONKO, Mr. HINCHEY, and Ms. HAHN.
H.R. 3074: Mr. JONES and Ms. BUERKLE.
H.R. 3096: Mr. POE of Texas.
H.R. 3130: Mr. FARENTHOLD.
H.R. 3159: Mr. WITTMAN.
H.R. 3192: Mr. ROSS of Arkansas and Mr. HINCHEY.
H.R. 3200: Mr. COSTA.
H.R. 3206: Mr. ROKITA.
H.R. 3211: Mr. MEEHAN.
H.R. 3216: Mr. HECK.
H.R. 3258: Mr. LOEBSACK.
H.R. 3286: Mr. CUMMINGS and Mr. PRICE of North Carolina.
H.R. 3324: Ms. SPEIER and Mr. BACA.
H.R. 3337: Mr. NUNNELEE, Ms. SCHWARTZ, and Ms. BERKLEY.
H.R. 3349: Mr. KING of New York.
H.R. 3351: Mr. KING of New York.
H.R. 3357: Mr. DEFAZIO.
H.R. 3359: Mr. OWENS and Ms. SPEIER.
H.R. 3400: Mrs. MILLER of Michigan.
H.R. 3405: Mr. FILNER and Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York.
H.R. 3423: Mr. JOHNSON of Illinois, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, and Mr. MEEHAN.
H.R. 3437: Mr. HONDA.
H.R. 3462: Ms. WATERS, Mr. MCGOVERN, and Ms. LEE of California.
H.R. 3480: Mr. COBLE.
H.R. 3510: Mr. WITTMAN and Mr. TERRY.
H.R. 3521: Mr. GERLACH.
H.R. 3533: Ms. SUTTON.
H.R. 3545: Mr. WILSON of South Carolina.
H.R. 3575: Mr. KLINE and Mr. MANZULLO.
H.R. 3577: Mr. SCHRADER and Mr. MANZULLO.
H.R. 3578: Mr. AMASH, Mr. PAULSEN, Mr. RIBBLE, Mr. MANZULLO, Mr. KLINE, and Mr. HUELSKAMP.
H.R. 3581: Mr. KLINE.
H.R. 3582: Mr. KLINE and Mr. MANZULLO.
H.R. 3596: Ms. SLAUGHTER.
H.R. 3606: Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas.
H.R. 3610: Mr. BUCSHON.
H.R. 3611: Mr. BUCSHON.
H.R. 3627: Mr. PAYNE.
H.R. 3643: Mr. DESJARLAIS and Mr. MATHESON.
H.R. 3658: Mr. COLE.
H.R. 3661: Mr. REYES.
H.R. 3662: Mr. JONES, Mr. HALL, Mr. CARTER, Mr. WESTMORELAND, Ms. JENKINS, and Mr. CALVERT.
H.R. 3676: Mr. GUTHRIE.
H.R. 3677: Mr. MCDERMOTT, Ms. SCHWARTZ, Mr. CLARKE of Michigan, Mr. ELLISON, and Mr. PETERS.
H.R. 3695: Mr. MICHAUD, Mr. SABLAN, Mr. COHEN, and Ms. WOOLSEY.
H.R. 3698: Mr. HULTGREN.
H.R. 3704: Ms. SLAUGHTER.
H.R. 3713: Mr. MEEHAN, Mr. MICA, Ms. PINGREE of Maine, Ms. RICHARDSON, Mr. AMODEI, Mr. WITTMAN, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mr. MEEKS, and Mr. RUNYAN.
H.R. 3714: Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia, and Ms. TSONGAS.
H.R. 3723: Mr. LANDRY and Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois.
H.R. 3747: Mr. LANCE.
H.R. 3760: Mr. BACA, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. PASTOR of Arizona, Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. COHEN, Mr. LUJÁN, Mr. MEEKS, Mr. HINOJOSA, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. CUELLAR, Mr. ANDREWS, Mr. SERRANO, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. GONZALEZ, Ms. BALDWIN, Ms. MOORE, Mr. YARMUTH, Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, Ms. BASS of California, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. DONNELLY of Indiana, Mr. ALTMIRE, Mr. ROTHMAN of New Jersey, Mr. PERLMUTTER, Mr. SARBANES, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. HOLDEN, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. CRITZ, Mr. CAPUANO, and Mr. HOLT.
H.R. 3771: Mr. FILNER and Ms. WATERS.

H.R. 3772: Mr. NUNNELEE, Mr. HARPER, and Mr. PALAZZO.

H.R. 3778: Mr. CANSECO and Mr. MANZULLO.

H.R. 3781: Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas.

H.R. 3785: Mr. JONES.

H.R. 3795: Ms. WATERS.

H.R. 3796: Mr. AMODEI, Mr. POE of Texas, Mr. GOWDY, and Mr. AUSTRIA.

H.R. 3799: Mr. NUGENT and Mr. DUFFY.

H. J. Res. 8: Mr. PRICE of North Carolina.

H. J. Res. 13: Mr. WOLF.

H. J. Res. 90: Mr. MCNERNEY, Mr. FILNER, Mr. HINCHEY, Mr. JACKSON of Illinois, Mr. MORAN, Ms. NORTON, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Ms. CHU, Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, Mr. OLVER, and Mr. SHERMAN.

H. Con. Res. 72: Mr. ROTHMAN of New Jersey.

H. Res. 25: Mr. LANGEVIN.

H. Res. 111: Mr. MCCAUL.

H. Res. 247: Mr. PITTS.

H. Res. 333: Mr. PEARCE and Mr. MCDERMOTT.

H. Res. 460: Mr. BERMAN, Ms. WOOLSEY, Mr. OWENS, Mr. REYES, Mr. RAHALL, and Ms. WATERS.

H. Res. 474: Mr. LEVIN.

H. Res. 489: Mr. COLE.

H. Res. 507: Mr. POE of Texas, Mr. MARCHANT, and Mr. MCCAUL.

H. Res. 509: Mr. STUTZMAN, Mr. SENSENBRENNER, Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin, Mr. WITTMAN, Mr. HURT, and Mr. SOUTHERLAND.

DELETIONS OF SPONSORS FROM PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were deleted from public bills and resolutions as follows:

H.R. 3261: Mr. CARTER.