

develop a family plan, encourage others to prepare. Taking those steps now will make a huge difference should disaster strike.

STUDENT LOAN INTEREST RATES

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

Mr. TIERNEY. Mr. Speaker, during the last 2 months, students from my district have spoken out about their struggles to afford college, to pay their loans, to keep up their grades, and to maintain their jobs. Many of them are working multiple jobs and still graduated with \$20,000 to \$30,000 in debt, and it's way too much for them.

So now they're just watching as the days tick by, and we're getting closer to July 1, when student loan interest rates will actually double if Congress doesn't act. They are understandably scared and frustrated.

At Middlesex Community College recently, the students that I met with added their voices to the debate and signed their names on the "Wall of Debt." In the days following, hundreds of students, parents, and even grandparents added their names to what has now become the virtual "Wall of Debt." They're letting Congress know that we can't let those interest rates double on July 1.

So, again, I'm standing here today on behalf of 177,000 students from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and 7 million students across the country whose student loans rates are set to double if Congress doesn't act, and I call upon my Republican colleagues to put the partisanship and the political games aside and take real action on this important issue.

While I believe the bill that I put forward a month ago to prevent the interest rate from doubling to 6.8 percent and was fully paid for by just one tax subsidy to Big Oil was fair and reasonable, I continue to be open to find other ways to compensate for that bill. I urge my colleagues to join me in doing that and make sure that this interest rate does not double.

REPUBLICAN PLAN FOR AMERICA'S JOB CREATORS

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

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, in 2009, the Obama administration said unemployment would never reach 8 percent if the stimulus was approved. Three years and \$1.2 trillion in spending later, unemployment has remained above 8 percent for 39 consecutive months, the longest span since the Great Depression. Even more alarming is that 8 percent doesn't illustrate how grim the situation really is.

More than half a million more Americans are out of work since President Obama took office, and currently the percentage of working Americans is at

a 30-year low. Unemployment would be 40 percent higher if more Americans hadn't given up looking for jobs.

With these numbers, it is clear that President Obama's policies have failed and are making the economy worse.

House Republicans have a plan for America's job creators to help turn this economy around. It's time for the President and Senate Democrats to stop blocking our jobs bill and help us put Americans back to work.

PRENATAL NONDISCRIMINATION ACT

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

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the Prenatal Nondiscrimination Act, which is yet another misleading bill that purports to help women, when in reality it takes away their freedom to control their own reproductive health. Mr. Speaker, we should be talking about jobs, but instead we're spending time on this divisive issue.

We can all agree that women should not choose to terminate a pregnancy based solely on gender, but this bill criminalizes a legal procedure and puts doctors in the role of legal and moral arbiter, and could give almost anyone who asserts an interest an effective veto over a woman's intimate personal health care decision.

This bill is another attempt to limit a woman's ability to make her own decisions about her life and her health. It will restrict the rights of women to obtain a completely legal and constitutionally protected medical procedure. If we want to truly and effectively address the issue of gender-selective abortion—a problem much more pervasive in other parts of the world—there are much better ways to do it than making suspects out of women and criminals out of doctors.

WAR ON WOMEN LEGISLATION

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

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, this week, Republicans are bringing to the floor a bill that purports to stop abortions based on sex selection, but it is so broadly written and so clearly unconstitutional that it is obvious that they are really after rolling back the clock and undermining comprehensive health care for women.

The bill includes a provision that would allow a woman's husband or parents—by merely alleging that an abortion is because of gender—to seek injunctive relief to prevent the doctor from performing abortion procedures, sending an incredibly private and personal decision into the courts and potentially forcing women against their will or health to go through with a pregnancy.

Republicans oppose protections for immigrant women under the Violence

Against Women Act, they oppose pay equity and access to contraceptives, but with this bill they claim to be defenders of women?

Today marks the third anniversary of the death—and the murder—of Dr. George Tiller of Wichita, Kansas, who performed legal abortions. His motto was "Trust women." He believed that women—not the government—should make the decisions about their health and their lives. I'm not fooled, and American women aren't fooled. This bill is just the latest strike by Republicans in the war on women.

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ACCESS TO EDUCATION

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

Ms. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, from an early age, my parents instilled the importance of obtaining a quality education. They cultivated a love of learning and made it clear how important an education is to success in life. They could not have been more right. Higher education is the single biggest determining factor for lifetime earning potential, with those holding a bachelor's degree earning double the yearly salary of someone with a high school diploma.

And yet, while the benefits of education are clear for America's families, my Republican colleagues seem deaf to the message. Even as college tuition has increased 28 percent in the last decade, Republicans continue to play partisan and ideological politics that will only ensure that 7 million students across the country will see their interest rates double in July. They're more concerned with gutting health care reform and protecting the wealthiest 2 percent and Big Oil and corporations than making college more affordable for America's students. And the one time House Republicans put the student loan issue to a vote, they insisted on slashing critical funding for women and children's preventative health care in exchange.

If you're thinking, "Oh, no, not again," you're right. It's time for my Republican colleagues to recognize that students deserve better, and it's time to take action to ensure that student loan rates don't increase, don't double by July. Actually, time is running out.

PASS THE PAYCHECK FAIRNESS ACT

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

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, it's absolutely appalling that in the year 2012 women still make 77 cents for every dollar earned by their male peers.

This isn't just an issue of fundamental fairness. With so many women