

pocket so they can do what they do best.

The government was also not responsible for the success of STS Coatings, a construction company based in the San Antonio area. The founder of STS Coatings, Cayce Kovacs, reports that she and her husband cashed in their savings to launch their business, which now has annual sales totaling more than \$3 million. As Ms. Kovacs recently said:

We were the ones sweating bullets over processing orders and paying our bills, making payroll—not the government. The government did nothing to help my business.

You know who else can say that? Another extraordinary Texan named Frank Scantlin, who founded Sunbelt Machine Works in Stafford, TX, near Houston, some 34 years ago. Frank tells a story that as a child he was so poor he sometimes couldn't even afford to buy shoes, and he had to quit school in the ninth grade in order to support his family. This is a quintessential American success story. Frank persevered and went on to create a business that now has almost 60,000 square feet of workspace and employs 90 people.

All these stories epitomize the American dream that has enticed immigrants from around the world to take a risk, leave everything they had behind, and come and make America their home. We were the one place in the world where they knew if they were willing to work hard and save, that hard work could be rewarded by success.

In the meantime, those of us who depend on those small businesses to create those jobs and prosperity could benefit as well. The owners of Sunbelt, STS Coatings, Pink Pockets, and Mayo Furniture understand their success was not inevitable, and it sure was not guaranteed by the Federal Government. They had to take the hard risks, they had to work overtime, and they had to overcome challenges that many times the government put in their way. In the end, as in so many great American success stories, their hard work and ingenuity paid off. They can, not government, declare with confidence that "I built this."

My office has received more than 250 of these stories since President Obama gave his speech in Roanoke. They are the type of stories that have made our country the beacon of prosperity and entrepreneurial energy for so many years. As one Texas business owner put it: "Rugged individualism is alive and well in the United States." I hope we remember that, and I hope the President of the United States remembers that as well.

I yield the floor and note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. FRANKEN). The clerk will call the roll. The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. KOHL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

(The remarks of Mr. KOHL pertaining to the introduction of S. 3427 are printed in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

Mr. KOHL. Mr. President, I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. KOHL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### MOMENT OF SILENCE IN MEMORY OF OFFICER JACOB J. CHESTNUT AND DETECTIVE JOHN M. GIBSON

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will observe a moment of silence in memory of Officer Jacob J. Chestnut and Detective John M. Gibson of the U.S. Capitol Police.

(Moment of silence.)

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MANCHIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### MIDDLE CLASS TAX CUT ACT—MOTION TO PROCEED—Continued

Mr. MANCHIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 10 minutes, and that following my remarks the Senator from Rhode Island be recognized to speak.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MANCHIN. Mr. President, I rise today to express my indescribable frustration and genuine disbelief that we are looking at two proposals that do not do enough to fix this Nation's financial problems—and both have been predicted by both respective sides to fail. I speak of the Bush tax cuts and how those of us in the responsible middle find ourselves caught between a rock and a hard place, with a vote that offers, truly, no real solutions.

It is no secret that I prefer fixing the problems this country faces, like most of my colleagues, and we all have different approaches. We are hurling toward \$16 trillions in debt, and for the first time since the World War II era our debt exceeds the output of our economy. Even our generals say the greatest threat this Nation faces is not a foreign power or a terrorist organization but the debt we have created ourselves.

We are staring down the barrel of insurmountable obligations for decades to come, and we are passing up a key opportunity to put this country in better shape for the next generation.

As you can see, and as West Virginians know, we urgently need to put our country's financial house back in order, and the people of West Virginia are tired of temporary solutions to our long-term problems.

As I have said so many times, I will work with both sides of the aisle, Democrats and Republicans, on a comprehensive solution that lowers tax rates, broadens our revenue base, closes loopholes, cuts spending, and reduces our debt, like the framework proposed by the Bowles-Simpson plan.

Unfortunately, neither of the proposals on the Bush tax cuts will solve our long-term debt and fiscal problems. At the same time, with our debt problems getting worse every year, we must come together to take responsible action and fair steps toward reducing our debt, even if they are only temporary.

Let's look at the two proposals that have been offered, one from my Republican colleagues in the House that, unfortunately, kicks the can down the road entirely and extends these tax cuts at a cost of \$400 billion. What people do not know is that even though it would extend tax cuts for the wealthiest—and this is what they do not know—it would actually get rid of some tax reductions for middle- and low-income Americans, such as the expanded child tax credit. That is tremendously unfair.

Another proposal from the Democrats here in the Senate, our side, would cost about \$250 billion, which is at least starting to move in the right direction to reduce our deficit, and it keeps the tax cut for more than 99 percent of all West Virginians and a high percentage in every State such as the Presiding Officer's.

When considering these two proposals, I kept two priorities in mind—putting our fiscal house back in order and restoring fairness to the Tax Code. So while I would prefer a bipartisan comprehensive solution, I will support the plan to keep taxes low on families that make less than \$250,000. According to the latest available figures from the West Virginia Department of Revenue, more than 99 percent of all West Virginians will get a break on their taxes under this proposal. And the wealthiest among us will pay the rates they did during Bill Clinton's Presidency, which was the greatest era of prosperity I can remember in my lifetime.

On the other hand, the proposal that includes extending the tax cuts for the wealthiest Americans carries a heavy price for this Nation. It is about \$150 billion more than the Democrats' proposal. Given our dire budget situation, this country cannot afford that. We simply have to prioritize and close the gap. The fact is we cannot keep trying temporary solutions to our serious budget problems. And the truth is,