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No. 159

House of Representatives

The House met at noon and was called to order by the Speaker.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER. 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 1:50 p.m.

FISCAL CLIFF UPDATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LATOURETTE). The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BOEHNER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BOEHNER. Mr. Speaker, last week, Republicans made a serious offer to avert the fiscal cliff, and most of it was based on testimony given last year by President Clinton's former Chief of Staff, Erskine Bowles. As Mr. Bowles himself said on Sunday: "We have to cut spending." Well, he's right. Washington has a spending problem. Let's be honest: we're broke. The plan that we have offered is consistent with the President's call for a "balanced approach."

A lot of people know that the President and I met on Sunday. It was a nice meeting, it was cordial; but we're still waiting for the White House to identify what spending cuts the President is willing to make as part of the "balanced approach" that he promised the American people. Where are the President's spending cuts? The longer the White House slow-walks this process, the closer our economy gets to the fiscal cliff.

But here's what we do know: we know that the President wants more

stimulus spending and an increase in the debt limit without any cuts or reforms. That's not fixing our problem. Frankly, it's making it worse. On top of that, the President wants to raise tax rates on many small business owners. Now, even if we did exactly what the President wants, we would see red ink for as far as the eye can see. That's not fixing our problem either; it's making it worse and it's hurting our economy.

I think the Members know that I'm an optimist. I'm hopeful that we can reach an agreement. This is a serious issue, and there's a lot at stake. The American people sent us here to work together towards the best possible solution, and that means cutting spending.

Now, if the President doesn't agree with our approach, he's got an obligation to put forward a plan that can pass both Chambers of Congress. Because right now the American people have to be scratching their heads and wondering: When is the President going to get serious?

RECOGNIZING VICTOR DICARLO

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

Mr. ALTMIRE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Victor DiCarlo for receiving the National Order of the French Legion of Honor, the highest decoration that France bestows for meritorious service. I also want to commend Mr. DiCarlo for his unwavering service to his country during World War II. It's truly a privilege to be able to honor a constituent who so exemplifies patriotism and the American spirit.

Established by Napoleon Bonaparte in 1802, the National Order of the French Legion of Honor is a merit-based distinction awarded for excep-

tional civilian or military service. The Order's motto, "Honor and Fatherland," reaffirms a celebration of patriotism and service for its recipients.

Victor DiCarlo was drafted into the Army 2 months after he graduated from Pittsburgh's Schenley High School in 1944. He arrived in France in 1945 and was assigned the responsibility of aiding the Allied Forces in reversing gains made by the German Army. He first saw combat in the Moselle region, helping the Allied Forces by breaking through the heavily fortified infamous Siegfried Line, a 390-mile defense system set up by the German Army along the country's western border that contained a series of tank traps and manned bunkers.

After successfully breaking through the Siegfried Line, Victor headed north in order to provide assistance to the undermanned and underequipped Allied Forces during the famous Battle of the Bulge. He also saw combat in the Rhineland region and all around central Europe throughout the duration of World War II. His division also helped to liberate two concentration camps, one in Austria and one in Germany.

Upon receiving an honorable discharge from the service, Victor was awarded the Bronze Star by the United States for his committed, meritorious service to his country during World War II, a fitting honor for a patriot of Victor's caliber. This year, on September 27, 2012, Victor added another decoration when he was awarded the French Legion of Honor during a ceremony here in Washington, D.C. at the French Embassy. He was given the honor for his military service in helping to secure the liberation of France.

The determination, bravery, and selflessness of Victor DiCarlo and so many like him is why we consider his generation the greatest. After the war, Victor returned home, earned an engineering degree from Tri-State College in Indiana, and worked as an engineer until

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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his retirement from Westinghouse in 1989. He and his wife have five children, 13 grandchildren, and one great-grandchild.

I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating an individual who is emblematic of the greatest armed forces in the world. World War II is filled with stories of heroism, triumph, and patriotism; and it is truly an honor to share Victor's story with my colleagues today.

I again want to commend Victor DiCarlo for his commitment to his country and join with his family in congratulating him for being awarded the prestigious National Order of the French Legion of Honor.

BIDDING FAREWELL TO OUTGOING OHIO MEMBERS

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

Mr. TURNER of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I am here today to extend my sincere and best wishes as five of my fellow Ohioans will be leaving the House at the adjournment of this Congress.

Ohioans have benefited greatly from the dedication and service of Representative STEVE LATOURETTE, who occupies the Speaker's chair today; Representatives DENNIS KUCINICH; JEAN SCHMIDT; BETTY SUTTON; and STEVE AUSTRIA. On a personal note, I want to thank Representative STEVE LATOURETTE for both his mentorship and his guidance and leadership in Congress.

I've had the privilege of working across the aisle with each of these lawmakers in support of our fellow Buckeyes and Americans. Their service to our home State of Ohio and to our Nation will not end with this Congress. Their innovative ideas and selfless service will be felt long after they leave the people's House.

I look forward to their future roles as Ohioans, committed to advancing the interests of our communities, our State, and our great country.

AT LAST, FISCAL CLIFF DEBATE

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

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor very pleased that our Speaker of the House, Mr. BOEHNER, has brought the discussion of our fiscal challenges to this floor. Indeed, it is long overdue. We have been calling upon the Speaker to bring forth a middle-income tax cut now for a very long time—in fact, since last summer when it passed the United States Senate. The President stands ready and poised with his pen to sign it.

Democrats in the House have a discharge petition to bring that bill to the floor. What stands in the way is an act on the part of the Republican majority to bring a middle-income tax cut to the floor of the House, which across the country has almost universal support

and which I think in this body, given the right to vote for it, would have overwhelming support.

Up until now, everybody in the country—in fact, in the world—has been talking about what's going to happen—those who pay attention to such matters—what's going to happen in the budget debate in the Congress and with the President. At last, that subject comes to the floor.

□ 1210

What I would do to respond to what the Speaker has said, though, is to set the record straight. The fact is that the President has, and Democrats agree with him, agreed to around \$1.6 trillion in cuts in the Budget Control Act and other acts of Congress in this particular Congress, \$1.6 trillion in cuts. Where are the cuts? They're in bills that you, Mr. Speaker, have voted for.

Secondly, on the issue of the entitlements with the Affordable Care Act and with legislation, suggestions and provisions in the President's budget, it amounts to over \$1 trillion in savings in Medicare, over \$1 trillion in savings which have been redirected to prolonging the life of Medicare, making it stronger for nearly a decade while increasing benefits for our seniors and those who depend on Medicare—not reducing but increasing benefits. There's been a massive misrepresentation about what that is, so I want to set the record straight. So in terms of spending cuts, we are on the record having voted for about \$1.6 trillion.

In terms of entitlement reform, there is over \$1 trillion already and more savings to be gained in further discussions on the subject by a strong down payment.

What is missing are two elements that the President has put forth in his budget: growth, investments in infrastructure—yes, the President has called for investments in infrastructure to build the infrastructure of America and to create jobs to grow our economy; and, where are the revenues? Where are the revenues? Regardless of the cuts or the changes in entitlements, more is demanded in terms of what seniors would have to pay into Medicare and at what age that would happen, while the Republicans refuse to touch one hair on the head of the wealthiest people in our country.

The public overwhelmingly, 2-1, supports the President's initiative for extending the middle-income tax cuts whereby 100 percent—100 percent—of U.S. taxpayers get a tax cut. Above 250—the people making more than \$250,000 a year would be asked to pay a little more to contribute to the fiscal soundness of our country, to pay our bills, the defense of our country, the support of our troops, the pillars of security for our seniors, the education of our children and the safety of our neighborhoods.

This is just asking them to pay a little bit more while they continue to get

the same tax cut that everyone does. So it is 100 percent of the American people get a tax cut, the upper 2 percent are asked to pay a little bit more.

So I thank the Speaker for finally at least uttering the words on the floor of the House about what the decisions are that need to be made. Again, we have committed to the cuts, we have acted upon the entitlements, the President has more in his budget, all of this would be a down payment for as we go forward into the next session of Congress to talk about tax simplification and fairness, how we can perhaps lower rates while plugging up loopholes and having a Tax Code that encourages growth in our economy.

But that is a longer discussion as we address the issue of how we strengthen our entitlements not by diminishing benefits but by getting more for what we are spending. So if it's Social Security, any changes in Social Security should be left to strengthen Social Security. If it's Medicare, any changes should be there to strengthen Medicare, not to underwrite and subsidize tax cuts for the wealthiest people in our country.

So, again, I welcome the Speaker's statement that he wants to solve the problem. The President has put forth his budget, which has his initiative in it. He has said that he's willing to make some changes. But it's really important that any changes not hurt the middle class. It comes right down to this. Again, I've said, it's not about the price of the high-end tax cut, it's about the money that it generates. You can find the money another way at the high end. Let's see what that discussion is. But it is not to burden the middle income in order to have bigger tax cuts at the high end.

Those high-end tax cuts only increase the deficit. They have not created jobs. It's simply unfair, and it doesn't work. So hopefully the clock is ticking, we're getting closer to the holidays, and that means closer to the end of the year, which is fraught with meaning in terms of time and the rest of this. I don't think there's any reason for us not to come to the table to make an agreement to give confidence to consumers in this holiday season and to the markets at their end of year decisions so that we will have the growth—the growth, the jobs that produce revenue. That approach is the way to create jobs to reduce the deficit.

We want to fix the deficit, grow the economy, and do so in a way that makes responsible cuts and strong investments for our seniors and the pillars of economic security for them and for their family. It is not a time to inject even more uncertainty into the lives of the American people and the economy of our country—and what that means globally. It simply isn't the time. Many of these ideas are bad at any time, but they're particularly harmful at this time.

So, again, I thank the Speaker for bringing the issue finally to the floor

of the House of Representatives. I look forward to how we can move quickly because time is of the essence, and every day that we can remove all doubt about the full faith and credit of the United States of America, our investments in the future, our creation of jobs and our respect and support for the economic and health security of our seniors, every day we can do that, but more quickly, is a good day.

THE FISCAL CLIFF

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

Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, ladies and gentlemen of America, every day that I'm on the floor, I can't help but be reminded that facts are a stubborn thing, and I simply want to talk to you about the facts today. You see, the President and the Democratic leadership spent the last 4 years blaming George Bush for driving our economy into the ditch. Now, as President Obama drives our economy towards the fiscal cliff, I'd like to share with you some remarks, remind you, remarks that he made during his Fiscal Responsibility Summit held on February 23, 2009, at the White House.

The President said:

We cannot and will not sustain deficits like these without end. Contrary to the prevailing wisdom in Washington these past few years, we cannot simply spend as we please and defer the consequences to the next budget, the next administration, or the next generation. We're paying the price for this budget right now.

He continued:

In 2008 alone, we paid \$250 billion in interest on our debt—1 in every 10 taxpayer dollars. That is more than three times what we spent on education that year, more than seven times what we spent on VA health care. So if we confront this crisis without also confronting the deficits that helped cause it, we risk sinking into another crisis down the road as our interest payments rise and our obligations come due. Confidence in our economy erodes, and our children and grandchildren are unable to pursue their dreams because they're saddled with our debts.

That's why today, I'm pledging to cut the deficit we inherited by half by the end of my first term in office. Now, this will not be easy. It will require us to make difficult decisions and face challenges we've long neglected. But I refuse to leave our children with a debt they cannot repay. That means taking responsibility for it right now, in this administration, for getting our spending under control.

Now, let's do the math, Mr. Speaker. The deficit that the President is talking about is this 1.4, the \$1.4 trillion deficit that he's talking about. Now, according to his own proposal, if he gets all of the tax increases that he has asked for, and I want to make this clear, his revenue estimate right here assumes that he gets the tax increases that they're asking for.

□ 1220

You still have a \$900 billion deficit, ladies and gentlemen. He promised it

wouldn't be any bigger than \$700 billion. That means that the President owes the American taxpayer \$200 billion in cuts, not over the course of 10 years, but over this year right now, the fiscal year 2013 that we're in.

Mr. Speaker, the President made a pledge to cut spending not to the Republican Members of Congress. He doesn't even speak to us, if you want to know the truth of the matter. He made a pledge to cut spending to the citizens of the United States of America so that our children and grandchildren would be able to pursue their dreams instead of being saddled with our debts.

Mr. Speaker, a pledge from the President of the United States to the citizens of this country should mean something. Instead, his plan in his budget, assuming his tax increases, leaves our children and grandchildren with a debt of more than \$21 trillion. That, ladies and gentlemen, is something that we simply cannot allow him to do to our country and to our children.

THE HIGHEST BUDGET DEFICITS IN AMERICAN HISTORY

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

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the words of my colleague from Georgia. He was the president of this freshman class that the American people elected in 2010, about 99 new Members, mostly Republicans, but Democrats as well. It was one of the largest freshman classes we've had in history.

I remember when the President spoke those words that my colleague from Georgia just quoted, when he said by the end of his first term he was going to cut the deficit in half. I remember chuckling just a little bit and thinking what a low bar to set, having run such a huge campaign as he ran in 2007 and 2008, just to cut the deficit in half. I thought we could do better. I didn't realize at the time, of course, that we were going to begin, during the Obama administration, running the highest budget deficits in American history. Formerly, the Bush deficits had been the highest deficits in American history. Of course, President Obama took those deficits not just to that level, not to just twice that level, not to just three times that level, but almost four times the level of what were formerly the highest deficits in American history.

This campaign, Mr. Speaker, he spent the entire campaign campaigning on raising taxes on the 1 percent. He said he had a mandate to do that because he talked about that for 2 years and folks elected him President, and they did. Candidly, Mr. Speaker, that's not a new idea.

I show you here this red line, which represents the tax burden, the bills that the top 1 percent of America pays; this blue line represents the bills that the 80 percent of the rest of us pay. It goes back to 1979 and Jimmy Carter.

You will see that every single President in my lifetime has gone with that tried-and-true formula of asking the top 1 percent to pay more. Every President in my lifetime has gone with the tried-and-true formula of telling the American voter that they can have all the government they want, and they won't have to pay for it.

In fact, as we sit here today, Mr. Speaker, the last year for which the Congressional Budget Office has numbers, the bottom 80 percent of America, most of us, pays only 6 percent of the income tax burden in America. Eighty percent of us pay 6 percent of the burden. The top 1 percent today are paying 39 percent of the burden.

Mr. Speaker, raising taxes on people is easy. In fact, if we give the President every nickel that he wants in tax increases, it doesn't even solve 1 month of deficits in this Congress, not 1 month. In fact, it solves about two-thirds of 1 month, and that's if we don't spend any of it. And as the Minority Leader just so eloquently said, he wants to spend a lot of it on investment in this country. So this whole discussion, this whole business of tax increases that the President spent 2 years building a mandate for, solves less than 1 month of the problem.

Mr. Speaker, my challenge today to the White House, to my friends on the left: Make it hard on me as a freshman conservative. Make it hard. Lay out those tax increases right beside solutions to the real problem, which is spending, and make those spending reductions so large and so powerful and so helpful to the American economy that I'll have no choice but to agree to your tax increases so that we can save the country by solving the real problem, which is spending.

There is no leadership, Mr. Speaker, in raising taxes on the 1 percent. We've been doing it for a long time. The problem in this town is spending, and we have yet to see the leadership from the White House on that problem. If we give them everything they want, it solves less than 1 month of the deficit. We, Republicans and Democrats, Congress and the White House, owe the American people so much better.

Let's not kick the can down the road. Let's do it right now in these discussions.

TIME FOR LEADERSHIP

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

Mr. LATOURETTE. Mr. Speaker, I hadn't planned on talking, but as I conclude my service here in the United States Congress, every time somebody comes down to the well and says that they want to set the record straight, the record winds up looking like the hind legs of my dog: very crooked.

Knowing a little bit about this and caring about this issue, as everybody that serves in this Congress does, I

really feel compelled to talk about where we are. And I'm heartened by the fact that both the Speaker and the minority leader spoke today about the need to come up with a solution.

Last spring, a guy named JIM COOPER, a Member from Tennessee, and I offered in response to the budget resolutions that were going on, something called "Simpson-Bowles." Simpson-Bowles is also known as the fiscal commission appointed by President Obama to look at the Nation's fiscal problems and come up with a set of recommendations.

The fact is that, even though it was President Obama's commission, he has not sought to implement one of the recommendations. Why? Because the recommendations are tough. There's a lot of tough love. You don't get into a situation as a country where you owe \$16 trillion and not have a solution that involves some difficulty and some sacrifice.

Included in there—and sadly, as you listen to the news accounts and you listen to some of the comments on the floor—the rhetoric is that those mean, nasty, nasty, mean Republicans are so interested in protecting the rich people in this country that they're not willing to increase and ask them to give just a little bit more. As one Republican who, in fact, says give the President the 2 percent of the rate increases that he's looking for—that still doesn't solve the problem, as Mr. WOODALL so eloquently indicated—I would come at it a different way.

If you let the Bush tax cuts expire on the top 2 percent of wage earners in this country, by the President's numbers—not my numbers, not some number that was pulled out of the campaign—it raises about \$900 billion over 10 years. Not being the sharpest knife in the drawer when it came to math when I was growing up, even I can do that. If you divide \$900 billion by 10 years, you wind up with \$90 billion a year. That \$90 billion a year is enough to run the Federal Government for 11 days.

The fiscal year around here ends on September 30. The President's proposal, in terms of sticking it to the rich people, making them pay a little bit more, gets you from the end of the fiscal year on September 30 to Columbus Day. Then what? It completely ignores the fact that two-thirds of the Federal budget—the Federal budget is \$3.6 trillion.

Two-thirds of the Federal budget is what is called the "middle class entitlements." It's Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security, and the interest on the debt. Those checks go out automatically. There is nothing that any Member of Congress has to vote on, unless you have a proposal, which Simpson-Bowles was and is.

You may hear the ads playing on the radio from the Nation's CEOs and others saying, We can't play small ball. We've got to come up with a package that actually heals the country.

If there is a sadness that I have and one of the reasons I'm leaving is, if you listen to the people talking, the President's advisers are saying, Well, you know, going over the fiscal cliff, we're putting the Republicans in this box and the 2 percent, that's good for the President. And you hear the Democrats saying, Listen, if we can have this discharge petition, make people not like Republicans, that's good for the Democratic Party as we go forward.

□ 1230

Some people, quite frankly, in my party—the Republican Party—are saying, Hey, listen. If we can paint the President and the Democrats as tax and spenders, then that's good for our party.

Mr. Speaker, when are people going to stop thinking about what's good for themselves or good for their parties and start thinking about what's good for America?

What's good for America is that we've got to come together and solve this problem, not just with taking that \$90 billion, which really is not much, but with reforming our Tax Code. We have to look at the programs of Social Security and Medicare, not to eviscerate them, not to throw Granny out on the street, not to not have health care for people in this country, but to make those programs not only viable today—but what about the people in their forties and thirties and twenties?

They did a survey a little while ago of high school seniors, and asked: What are you more likely to see, a Social Security check or a UFO, an unidentified flying object? More seniors picked the UFO, and with some of the leadership around here, I'm not surprised that they picked the UFO.

The fact of the matter is that we can't play small ball. When COOPER and I put this thing on the floor last spring, it got 38 votes; 26 Democrats and 12 Republicans were willing to stand up and do this. It's time for the big deal, and it's time for leadership.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 31 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. LATOURETTE) at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer: Gracious God, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

Throughout history, You have been ever present to all believers. In times of darkness, we readily turn on lights. Millions of Americans in this season have variously turned to the celebration of the Christmas season, with its trees and lights, and Hanukkah, the Festival of Lights.

Even so, in our political world, there remains the reality of considerable disagreement and contention. Where there is darkness here, send forth a spark of inspiration and grace to enlighten minds and warm hearts to respond to Your love for Your people.

Eternal Father of us all, fill Your children with the delight that comes from light. May we walk no longer in the darkness of distrust, but join together in mutual understanding and peace toward the common well-being of our Nation.

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

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. 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.

Mr. DOLD. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 1, rule I, I demand a vote on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. DOLD. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

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

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. WILSON) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina 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.

TACKLING OUR OUT-OF-CONTROL SPENDING

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, on Sunday, the President and House Speaker BOEHNER met to discuss the impending fiscal cliff. The next

day, the President jetted off to Michigan to campaign for tax increases, instead of staying in Washington to work on a possible plan.

With a national debt of over \$16 trillion, Washington's out-of-control spending is placing our national security at risk. Clearly, spending is the threat, with an increase of 93.5 percent over 10 years and revenues increased only 15.7 percent. Raising taxes on the American economy will destroy jobs.

Reports have indicated that raising taxes on the top 2 percent will generate up to \$80 billion a year. This amount of money covers less than 10 percent of our Nation's annual deficits. It's my hope that the President will address the fiscal cliff to work with House Republicans to promote small business job growth.

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

WORKING TOWARD BIPARTISAN SOLUTIONS

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

Mr. DOLD. Mr. Speaker, today I rise because the fiscal cliff is upon us. And one thing that I know is clear in talking to my constituents, time and time again, they're looking for solutions to the problems that we face. I believe that the solutions that are out there aren't going to come from one party or the other party; they're going to come from us working together, forging a bipartisan solution to the problems that we face. And I hope that we can go bigger than what is simply asked of us.

Mr. Speaker, one of the great pleasures of being here is to be able to work with good friends, and I want to thank my good friend STEVE LATOURETTE for his leadership and JIM COOPER as well for the thought of putting together the Cooper-LaTourette budget based on Simpson-Bowles, that talks about a solution that really helps us get our entitlements under control, helps raise revenues, and puts a solution on the table.

So today, I'm asking my colleagues to join with me to try to make sure that together we put a bipartisan solution on the table. And I want to thank my good friend, STEVE LATOURETTE, for his leadership, and JIM COOPER as well.

LET'S WORK TOGETHER

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

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. I thank the Speaker this afternoon, and I am grateful for the words, the prayer that was offered about light, both of inspiration and collaboration.

I think there are bipartisan voices crying out for an acceptance of a tax cut on 98 percent of the American peo-

ple. That is why the President went to Michigan, to speak to working men and women, to be able to reaffirm their voices that were spoken so loudly on November 6. Let us have a tax cut that will impact 98 percent of the American people and businesses. And let us collaboratively work together for the steps going forward.

But let me be very clear. Having spoken to physicians yesterday in meetings in hospitals, you cannot raise the eligibility rate of Medicare recipients. It just will not work. You cannot judge a person's physical condition between 65 and 67. That is not the way to balance the budget and reduce the deficit. We know that entitlements, Social Security, is not the issue. Pass the tax cuts on 98 percent, Mr. Speaker, and work collaboratively in 2013 to find a pathway forward to make this economy the growing economy that it has begun to be. I ask my colleagues, let's work together.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, December 11, 2012.

Hon. JOHN A. BOEHNER,
*The Speaker, U.S. Capitol,
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.*

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in clause 2(h) of rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on December 11, 2012 at 11:08 a.m.:

That the Senate passed without amendment H.R. 3187.

That the Senate agreed to S. Res. 612.

With best wishes, I am
Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 4 of rule I, the following enrolled bill was signed by the Speaker on Friday, December 7, 2012:

H.R. 6156, to authorize the extension of nondiscriminatory treatment (normal trade relations treatment) to products of the Russian Federation and Moldova and to require reports on the compliance of the Russian Federation with its obligations as a member of the World Trade Organization, and for other purposes.

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 2 o'clock and 8 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1830

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. YODER) at 6 o'clock and 30 minutes p.m.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF MOTIONS TO SUSPEND THE RULES

Mr. SESSIONS, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 112-700) on the resolution (H. Res. 827) providing for consideration of motions to suspend the rules, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the unfinished business is the question on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal, which the Chair will put de novo.

The question is on the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 272, nays 102, answered "present" 3, not voting 54, as follows:

[Roll No. 620]
YEAS—272

Ackerman	Carney	Farr
Aderholt	Carson (IN)	Fattah
Alexander	Carter	Fincher
Amodi	Cassidy	Flake
Austria	Castor (FL)	Fleischmann
Bachus	Chabot	Fleming
Barber	Chaffetz	Forbes
Barletta	Chu	Portenberry
Barrow	Cicilline	Franks (AZ)
Barton (TX)	Clarke (MI)	Frelinghuysen
Bass (NH)	Clarke (NY)	Fudge
Berg	Clay	Garamendi
Berkley	Cleaver	Gerlach
Berman	Clyburn	Goodlatte
Biggert	Coble	Gowdy
Bilirakis	Cohen	Granger
Bishop (GA)	Cole	Green, Al
Bishop (UT)	Conaway	Grimm
Blackburn	Connolly (VA)	Guthrie
Blumenauer	Cooper	Hahn
Bonamici	Courtney	Hall
Bonner	Crenshaw	Hanabusa
Bono Mack	Crowley	Harper
Boswell	Cuellar	Harris
Boustany	Davis (CA)	Hartzler
Brady (TX)	Davis (IL)	Hayworth
Braley (IA)	DeGette	Heinrich
Brooks	DeLauro	Hensarling
Broun (GA)	DelBene	Heger
Brown (FL)	Dent	Higgins
Buchanan	DesJarlais	Himes
Bucshon	Diaz-Balart	Hinche
Buerkle	Dingell	Hinojosa
Butterfield	Doggett	Hirono
Calvert	Dreier	Hochul
Camp	Duncan (SC)	Holt
Campbell	Duncan (TN)	Huelskamp
Canseco	Edwards	Huizenga (MI)
Cantor	Ellmers	Hultgren
Capito	Emerson	Hunter
Capps	Engel	Hurt
Carnahan	Eshoo	Israel

Issa	Meeks	Scalise
Jackson Lee	Mica	Schiff
(TX)	Michaud	Schmidt
Jenkins	Miller (MI)	Schwartz
Johnson (GA)	Miller, Gary	Schweikert
Johnson, E. B.	Murphy (CT)	Scott (SC)
Johnson, Sam	Murphy (PA)	Scott (VA)
Jordan	Myrick	Scott, Austin
Kaptur	Nadler	Scott, David
Keating	Napolitano	Sensenbrenner
Kelly	Neugebauer	Serrano
Kildee	Noem	Sessions
King (IA)	Nunes	Sherman
King (NY)	Olson	Shimkus
Kingston	Palazzo	Shuster
Kissell	Payne	Smith (NE)
Kline	Pearce	Smith (NJ)
Labrador	Pelosi	Smith (TX)
Lamborn	Pence	Smith (WA)
Lankford	Perlmutter	Southerland
Larsen (WA)	Petri	Speier
Larson (CT)	Pingree (ME)	Stearns
LaTourette	Platts	Stutzman
Latta	Polis	Sullivan
Levin	Pompeo	Thompson (PA)
Lewis (CA)	Posey	Thornberry
Lofgren, Zoe	Price (NC)	Tiberti
Long	Quigley	Tonko
Lowey	Rehberg	Tsongas
Lucas	Richardson	Turner (NY)
Luetkemeyer	Richmond	Turner (OH)
Lujan	Rivera	Upton
Lummis	Roby	Van Hollen
Lungren, Daniel	Roe (TN)	Walden
E.	Rogers (AL)	Walz (MN)
Mack	Rogers (KY)	Wasserman
Maloney	Rogers (MI)	Schultz
Marino	Rohrabacher	Waters
McCarthy (CA)	Rokita	Watt
McCaul	Rooney	Waxman
McClintock	Ros-Lehtinen	Webster
McCollum	Roskam	Welch
McHenry	Ross (FL)	West
McIntyre	Rothman (NJ)	Westmoreland
McKeon	Roybal-Allard	Whitfield
McKinley	Runyan	Wilson (SC)
McMorris	Ruppersberger	Womack
Rodgers	Rush	Yarmuth
McNerney	Ryan (WI)	Young (FL)
Meehan	Sanchez, Loretta	Young (IN)

NAYS—102

Adams	Hastings (FL)	Peterson
Altmire	Heck	Poe (TX)
Andrews	Herrera Beutler	Price (GA)
Baldwin	Holden	Quayle
Bass (CA)	Hoyer	Rahall
Becerra	Johnson (OH)	Rangel
Benishkek	Jones	Reed
Bilbray	Kind	Reichert
Bishop (NY)	Kinzinger (IL)	Renacci
Brady (PA)	Kucinich	Ribble
Burgess	Lance	Rigell
Capuano	Landry	Ryan (OH)
Coffman (CO)	Langevin	Sánchez, Linda
Costa	Latham	T.
Crawford	Lee (CA)	Sarbanes
Critz	LoBiondo	Schakowsky
Cummings	Loeb sack	Schrader
Curson (MI)	Lynch	Sewell
DeFazio	Manzullo	Shuler
Denham	Markey	Slaughter
Dold	Masse	Stivers
Donnelly (IN)	Matheson	Sutton
Doyle	Matsui	Terry
Duffy	McDermott	Thompson (CA)
Farenthold	McGovern	Thompson (MS)
Fitzpatrick	Miller (FL)	Tipton
Foxx	Miller, George	Velázquez
Gardner	Moore	Visclosky
Garrett	Mulvaney	Walberg
Gibbs	Neal	Wittman
Gibson	Nugent	Woodall
Graves (GA)	Pallone	Yoder
Green, Gene	Pascrell	Young (AK)
Guinta	Paulsen	
Hanna	Peters	

ANSWERED "PRESENT"—3

Amash	Gohmert	Owens
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NOT VOTING—54

Akin	Chandler	Ellison
Baca	Conyers	Flores
Bachmann	Costello	Frank (MA)
Bartlett	Cravaack	Gallely
Black	Culberson	Gingrey (GA)
Boren	Deutch	Gonzalez
Burton (IN)	Dicks	Gosar

Graves (MO)	McCarthy (NY)	Schilling
Griffin (AR)	Miller (NC)	Schock
Griffith (VA)	Moran	Simpson
Grijalva	Nunnelee	Sires
Gutierrez	Olver	Stark
Hastings (WA)	Pastor (AZ)	Tierney
Honda	Paul	Towns
Johnson (IL)	Pitts	Walsh (IL)
Lewis (GA)	Reyes	Wilson (FL)
Lipinski	Ross (AR)	Wolf
Marchant	Royce	Woolsey

□ 1848

Mr. MARKEY changed his vote from "yea" to "nay."

Mr. HURT changed his vote from "nay" to "yea."

Mr. GOHMERT changed his vote from "nay" to "present."

So the Journal was approved.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

IMMEDIATE RELEASE OF U.S. MARINE JON HAMMAR

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise here to ask for the immediate release of U.S. Marine Jon Hammar, who has been unreasonably imprisoned by Mexican authorities since August, where, for a time, he was actually being shackled to his bed.

Lance Corporal Hammar is an outstanding young American combat veteran who clearly took every reasonable step to ensure that he was safely and legally transporting the antique firearm that he inherited from his great-grandfather. He spoke with our own Customs and Border Patrol agents, who assured him that he would be fine as long as he registered it with Mexican authorities.

Once in Mexico, Jon attempted to register his old-fashioned Sears and Roebuck shotgun and was immediately arrested as if he were a gunrunner.

I am calling on our State Department to act swiftly to get Jon released, and I am calling on our Department of Homeland Security to explain how their agents could have given Jon this wrong instruction.

Jon has suffered enough. Let's bring him home to his family, where he rightly belongs, in time for Christmas.

CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF DAVE BRUBECK

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

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I come to the House floor to celebrate the life of one of California's greatest native sons, the Ambassador of Jazz, Dave Brubeck. The man behind the immortal classics like "Take Five" and "Blue Rondo a la Turk" was born in Concord, California, a city I'm proud to represent.

Drafted to serve in General Patton's Army during World War II, he formed

the Army's first integrated band. He would later tour with black musicians in the Jim Crow South during the height of the civil rights movement, insisting on a mixed-race quartet and integrated crowds. Because of this courageous stand, 23 out of 25 of his shows were canceled one summer.

"Jazz is the voice of freedom," he said.

With suave sophistication, Brubeck would become a leader in the West Coast cool jazz scene, putting California jazz on the map. Dave Brubeck performed before Presidents, Prime Ministers, Premiers, and pontiffs. He was named a Jazz Master by the National Endowment for the Arts, and he was awarded the National Medal of the Arts.

On a personal note, during the 16 years I represented Stockton, Brubeck often came there to help the University of the Pacific and many charities.

Today, I hope everyone can Take Five to remember a remarkable American: Dave Brubeck.

□ 1900

DENOUNCE CASTRO REGIME

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

Mr. RIVERA. Yesterday, December 10, marked the 60th anniversary of International Human Rights Day. As usual, the Castro dictatorship demonstrated its brutal nature. Cuban state police violently arrested more than 100 dissidents and put another 100 to 150 under house arrest. Among those detained were about 80 members of the Ladies in White organization, a human rights organization that peacefully seeks change in Cuba. Many of them were arrested on their way to mass to celebrate at our Lady of Charity Basilica in the eastern town of El Cobre. About 45 Ladies in White were arrested in Havana, following their traditional march outside the Santa Rita Church after Sunday mass. Thirty-four Ladies in White were detained with violence as they tried to make their way to church.

Mr. Speaker, once again, I call on President Obama, the Obama administration, and the international community to denounce and condemn the terrorist Castro dictatorship's human rights abuses and continue to push for democratic change on that imprisoned island nation.

RIGHT-TO-WORK IS WRONG FOR WORKERS

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

Mr. CLARKE of Michigan. Many decades ago, my father came to this country, like many other immigrants, to seek the American Dream. He got a job

in the auto factory—a job that exposed him to toxins that ultimately killed him. My father died when I was 8 years old.

Today, the Michigan legislature approved right-to-work legislation, intending to roll back the clock on our labor laws. We cannot allow this to happen. Right-to-work is wrong for workers, and it must be stopped.

WE GOT HERE BY SPENDING TOO MUCH, NOT TAXING TOO LITTLE

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, “The last thing you want to do is to raise taxes in the middle of a recession because that would put businesses in a further hole.” That was President Obama in 2009. But that was then and this is now. President Obama now says he wants to save us all by raising taxes on a few Americans. But the idea is flawed. One, the plan only funds the government for a few days. Then what’s the plan, Mr. President? Two, according to the Senate Budget Committee, 75 percent of the new taxes will go towards spending, not deficit reduction.

This plan won’t work to solve our economic woes. The problem is the government just spends too much. Where’s the plan to cut spending? There isn’t one. We got here by spending too much, not taxing too little. After all, “the last thing you do in a recession is raise taxes”—quoting the President.

And that’s just the way it is.

RECOGNIZING DEPARTING MEMBERS OF THE OHIO DELEGATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KINZINGER). Under the Speaker’s announced policy of January 5, 2011, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. TIBERI) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. TIBERI. I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous materials for the RECORD on the topic of the Special Order.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. TIBERI. Mr. Speaker, tonight, we from Ohio would like to recognize and thank for their service five departing Members from the Ohio delegation. Congressmen STEVE AUSTRIA, DENNIS KUCINICH, STEVE LATOURETTE, JEAN SCHMIDT, and BETTY SUTTON will end their service with us at the end of this year. Over the next hour we would like to, as Republicans and Democrats, thank them for their service.

I would first like to recognize my colleague from central Ohio, Congressman STEVE STIVERS, for his remarks.

Mr. STIVERS. I would like to thank the gentleman for yielding.

I would like to say a few things about our five departing colleagues, who have given great service to our country. I want to thank them on behalf of the people of the 15th District for their incredible service and talk a little bit about each one.

I’ll start with Congressman STEVE LATOURETTE, whose service in Congress has really been incredible, and he’s been a role model for many of us who are younger. He’s been a great mentor. He’s not afraid to stand up for what he believes in. He knows that we’ve got to work together as Republicans and Democrats to solve our Nation’s problems. He’s an illustration of what a good Member of Congress should be—someone who’s always thinking about their constituents.

STEVE LATOURETTE had been a mainstay of Congress, and it won’t be the same here without him, especially on transportation issues. I’d like to just thank him for his support, as I had a transportation bill earlier in this Congress. He was very helpful. I had a plan to try to fund transportation projects differently, and he sat down with me and worked me through the process and helped me sit down with the folks at the Congressional Budget Office and folks in leadership to sell my idea. That bill passed the House with bipartisan support, with 20 Democrats voting for it and a lot of Republicans voting for it. I know I couldn’t have gotten that done without Congressman LATOURETTE. I’m sorry to see him retire. But he’s leaving behind a legacy of outstanding service, and he’s been an incredible Member of Congress, and I know there are great things in his future.

The gentlelady to my left, Congresswoman SCHMIDT, I grew up in her district. My family lives in her district, and they really appreciate her hard work and constituent service. She’s a runner. She runs marathons in her spare time, but she runs her office like a marathon. She’s always working for the people of her district, the Second District. It’s been incredible just to watch her advocacy for important things in all of her district. We share some territory down in southern Ohio now. She’s been a leader on the uranium enrichment plant in Piketon and what it can do for our country, for safety in our nuclear arsenal, and for what it can do as an economic driver in southern Ohio. On behalf of the people of southern and central Ohio, I want to thank the gentlelady for her work on that. She’s left a legacy that’s really going to make a difference in the future.

The Congressman from the Seventh District, Congressman AUSTRIA, and I served as State senators together. He got up here a couple of years before I did in 2008, back when my race was still in a recount. We came up to orientation together, and he showed a willingness and an interest to run for leader-

ship of the class, to be the president of the class. I worked hard as his campaign manager. He got elected class president that year, and he went on to give great service to this class in Congress. He’s also been a leader on the Appropriations Committee for these 2 years.

I’ve seen him work on some tough issues in the State senate, and I know he’s got great things in his future. I’m certainly sorry to see him retire. I’m proud of his service, and I’m happy to call him a friend. I’m looking forward to what is next in his life. And I know he’s going to do great things.

Also, our Members from the other side of the aisle, Congresswoman SUTTON and Congressman KUCINICH have really worked hard, and I appreciate all their work and efforts. DENNIS KUCINICH is really a man who sticks up for his principles. I certainly respect him for that. He’s willing to stand up for what he believes is right when nobody in this institution will. I really respect him for that. He’s also become a good friend. He’s a really nice fellow. I want to thank him for his service and wish him great luck in his future.

Congresswoman BETTY SUTTON, I really appreciate her service back to her time on the city council and the Summit County Council and the State legislature. She’s advocated for her constituents. I just want to thank her for her service.

I think it’s important that we as Republicans and Democrats work together on the issues that are facing our country, and I want to thank these Members for their service to our country and thank them for everything that they’ve done for the people of Ohio. And as a grateful coworker, I want to say: job well done.

□ 1910

Mr. TIBERI. Mr. Speaker, it is indeed a privilege to recognize one of the more famous members of our delegation because he is the Speaker of the House. Our leader, Mr. BOEHNER, is recognized.

Mr. BOEHNER. Let me thank my colleague for yielding.

I have proudly represented the people of the Eighth Congressional District of Ohio now for 22 years. During that time, our State delegation has had a long line of great leaders and great legislators here in the Congress.

Tonight, I want to recognize the careers and the service of five departing members from the Ohio delegation, each of whom in their own way exemplify the type of leadership for which our great State has long been known.

Congressman KUCINICH has been a passionate advocate for his community. While we haven’t always agreed, I respect his courage, his passion, and his commitment to his constituents.

Congressman STEVE AUSTRIA has worked tirelessly on military and veterans issues that are so important to the people we both serve. Steve, for your efforts on behalf of Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, the community, and the people of southwest Ohio,

you deserve a great deal of thanks and applause for your work.

Congresswoman JEAN SCHMIDT blazed the trail as the first woman elected to represent her southern Ohio district. She has served in this Chamber with a deep commitment to her principles and her faith, and I wish her the very best of luck.

Congresswoman BETTY SUTTON sits on the other side of the aisle, but we've always been able to disagree without being disagreeable. Like me, she served in the Ohio House before serving our State here in the Congress. I respect her for her straightforward nature and willingness to fight for her priorities and those of her constituents.

Finally, my friend and close colleague, STEVE LATOURETTE. Now, Steve and I have known each other for a long time. Steve, you've always done things your way; you're truly one of a kind. It really is not going to be the same around here without my good friend, STEVE LATOURETTE, but our friendship will continue; and I'm grateful for the relationship that we've had.

Each of these Representatives focused on different issues and led in their own way, but what they all have in common is a love for Ohio and an unwavering dedication to their constituents. So I'm honored to have worked with each of you, and on behalf of the people of our beloved State, I want to thank you for your service.

Mr. TIBERI. I would now like to recognize the gentleman from Urbana, Ohio (Mr. JORDAN).

Mr. JORDAN. I thank the gentleman for yielding. I thank him for putting this hour together where we can recognize five outstanding Buckeyes for their service to their districts and to our great State.

I want to start first with the two gentleladies—truly gentleladies, poise and grace and passion that they bring to this process. I have appreciated that. I have appreciated BETTY's tireless advocacy for the families that she represents in her district. For JEANNIE and her unbelievable commitment to the sanctity of human life, I respect that tremendously and appreciate that. That's going to be missed around these Halls.

Then to the two Steves. STEVE AUSTRIA, I had the privilege of serving with him in the State senate, outstanding American. He's done a great job representing his district. And then of course STEVE LATOURETTE as well. As I like to call them "Stevie Wonder Austria," "Stevie Wonder LaTourette," both great guys who have served their districts with the kind of commitment that you want in a Representative.

Then, finally, my good friend—we use that term a lot around here, but in this situation it's actually true. DENNIS KUCINICH is a good friend. We have had the privilege of working on a subcommittee together. I've said this back home in our district—it's no secret that I'm a pretty conservative guy and DENNIS is not a very conservative guy,

and yet I tell people that we're good friends.

Here is a guy who truly comes to this process with this idea: get your best hole, take your best shot, fight for the things you believe in. That's the way this process should work; that's how Representatives should behave; and DENNIS has done that just as good as anybody, and I respect that tremendously.

So we're losing five wonderful people, but they're going to continue to do great things for our State and continue in some form of public service, I'm sure. So I just want to say thank you and best of luck.

Mr. TIBERI. The next gentleman is not a member of the Ohio delegation, but an honorary member of the Ohio delegation. I certainly enjoy working with him on the Ways and Means Committee; he's a delightful man to work with. The former chairman of the Ways and Means Committee, Mr. RANGEL, is recognized.

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

Mr. RANGEL. Well, I thank you for this opportunity. It's always difficult when Members' political careers are interrupted. We're going to miss BETTY SUTTON on our side, and of course we're going to miss Mr. KUCINICH for all the great work he's done.

I remember, Congressman LATOURETTE, when your former Member, Lou Stokes, was on the floor and he demonstrated his friendship in a way that certainly most Members on both sides will never forget. And Mr. AUSTRIA is leaving.

One of the main reasons why I did come to the floor is because of JEAN SCHMIDT. When I first heard that she was defeated, they told me that her opponent had said that I endorsed her and that's the reason she lost the race. So I wanted to make it abundantly clear that while I did not endorse her politically, I certainly would have said what a nice lady she has been in being kind and gentle and Republican at the same time, and I thought that was quite an achievement.

Ms. SCHMIDT has managed to disagree with so many of the differences we have in policy; and yet the first thing that you would ever see on her face is a smile, asking you how you are feeling and having a genuine concern about that. I personally will miss you and miss the greetings that we had for each other and sharing each other's family experiences. It's really a classic example in showing what this great body used to be and what it can become when people can just take a few minutes and realize that we may all come from different political philosophies, but we are still the brothers and sisters and children of God.

I also want to thank Judge FUDGE for giving me this great opportunity in speaking with her great Buckeye delegation. Thank you so much.

Mr. TIBERI. I would now like to recognize one of our new Members who is

returning for his second term from northeast Ohio, Mr. JIM RENACCI.

Mr. RENACCI. I want to thank my colleague for yielding time.

As a Representative of the 16th District of Ohio, I really want to thank each one of the departing Members for their service to not only the State of Ohio, but our country.

First, STEVE AUSTRIA, he has become a friend. As a new Member getting to know the House of Representatives, STEVE has become a good friend, a tireless advocate for Ohio and his district, but even more important, an advocate for Wright-Patterson Air Force Base during the BRAC process. He also fought to keep KC-135s at Rickenbacker Air and National Guard Base and the C-27Js at the ANG base in Mansfield. That's not just important for Ohio, but also for national security. I want to thank him for his service, and best of luck.

The next individual, DENNIS KUCINICH. DENNIS has been a true steward for northeast Ohio. While we don't agree on some of the issues, I have always considered DENNIS a very close friend. He has often offered to help me over the past 2 years when it comes to northeast Ohio. I have genuinely enjoyed our discussions, many times traveling back and forth from Washington, D.C., to Cleveland. I will miss serving with DENNIS and wish him the best of luck going forward.

Congresswoman SCHMIDT also, when I got here 2 years ago, was someone who I knew that I could turn to. She's been a great leader for her district and someone who has really stepped up when it comes to energy issues in the Ohio delegation, specifically on re-enriching uranium. Our Navy relies on uranium, and JEAN made it a point to fight for a domestic source of materials that power our aircraft carriers and submarines. Without a faithful and reliable source of fuel, the Navy would not be able to fully protect the American homeland or protect power abroad. But not only that, JEAN has been a voice of fiscal responsibility during her time in Congress, and I wish her the best going forward.

My colleague, BETTY SUTTON. I want to thank BETTY SUTTON for her service to Ohio and our Nation.

□ 1920

Over the last year, we had a hard-fought and extremely competitive campaign. Throughout it, she maintained a level of professionalism and integrity not often seen in American politics. I want to thank her for her service, and I wish her the best of luck with her future endeavors.

Last, but not least, my friend, STEVE LATOURETTE, has been a friend, a guide, a trusted confidante and someone whom I have looked to as a mentor. He and I both strongly supported a couple of issues: development of fuel cell technology through the Solid State Energy Conversion Alliance program. This technology will increase

the efficient use of our Nation's natural resources, reduce dependence on foreign oil, and enhance energy security. I will miss working alongside him on this issue.

He has always been available if needed for advice or even as a sounding board. His answers have always represented what he believes to be best for me, regardless of his own position on an issue. For that, I was really appreciative. And the rest of Congress are really, we are losing an intelligent, thoughtful, and highly motivated public servant, one who always puts his constituents first.

While it will be sad to see him go, I wish him luck in his future endeavors. I truly thank him sincerely for his 18 years of service to Ohio and America.

Mr. TIBERI. It's a real pleasure to recognize the dean of our delegation, the pride of Toledo, Ms. MARCY KAPTUR.

Ms. KAPTUR. I thank you very much, Congressman TIBERI, for spearheading this Special Order to honor those in our delegation who have served with us so honorably these many years.

I was reflecting and listening to our colleagues that, with the departure of these wonderful, wonderful Americans who call Ohio their home, Ohio will lose over a half a century of seniority as they move on to other pursuits. On top of the seniority that was lost when Ralph Regula retired and Dave Hobson and Lou Stokes, we really have a rebuilding job to do in Ohio to gain footing here and to make sure that the needs of Ohio are met. So as these very able Ohioans leave, they take with them great knowledge and great dexterity in this institution, but we have to be conscious of our added responsibilities as they leave.

I want to say to my two sisters, to BETTY SUTTON, who has been a true champion on the middle class during her 6 years of service here, without question her voice has been heard and will be heard again. She has dedicated her life to public service and the betterment of the lives of Ohioans and all Americans. And what makes her service particularly poignant, I think, she is a very highly educated woman, but she is very, very proud of her working-class roots, her blue-collar roots, and it is not surprising that she was a tireless advocate for working men and women in her service here.

The Cash for Clunkers legislation that gave our economy a much-needed shot in the arm was championed by her. And at every turn, she fought for her convictions that everyone should have access to work, to health care, that we had to grow our economy and create jobs so the middle class could be strengthened and those who want to get into it would have that ladder of opportunity up. She always kept our Nation's servicemen and -women eminent in her mind. I can tell you, I will miss her so very, very much.

Congresswoman JEAN SCHMIDT, who I'm glad is on the floor with us tonight,

was first elected in 2005 and has been an absolutely totally dedicated Representative to her district, to our State, and to the country. I have admired her dedication and her ability to reach across the aisle. I have admired very much her work on new energy systems in all sectors, not picking any favorites necessarily, but trying to help America meet its chief strategic vulnerability, and that is our continued reliance on imported sources of energy. I know how hard she has fought for our troops, both here as a Member and back home, always recognizing their contributions to our country.

And I will miss her. I will miss seeing her, I will miss working with her, and I obviously wish her, on behalf of our side of the delegation, the very best that life can offer and a very beautiful holiday season. I know we have not heard the last of JEAN SCHMIDT. I know that she has much more to give.

To my colleague, DENNIS KUCINICH from Cleveland, we certainly admire his passion and conviction on issues. One doesn't doubt where he stands when DENNIS takes a position. He believes in it, and he believes in the people he represents, and they surely need voice. He has never lost focus on that during his tenure, and I know that all of us will be watching as he makes his way forward. I know that he will be active in the political realm as he so chooses. And we thank him for his great service to the State of Ohio as a Member of Congress, but before that, as well, in service to the State legislature and as mayor of Cleveland. He has had a very illustrious career and many, many accomplishments to show for that service.

I want to say to STEVE LATOURETTE a personal thank-you for the years that we've served together, but also for our work on the Appropriations Committee, the full committee, as well as the subcommittee that we share, Transportation, Housing and Urban Development. Our part of Ohio, in fact all of Ohio, which has more urban areas than any other State in the Union, needs the attention of this committee, and STEVE completely dedicated himself to that so honorably. He's been a commonsense Congressman and an able partner on the many issues that we're able to work on together. We fought against bank bonuses after Wall Street collapsed. We worked together to save the auto industry to ensure that auto dealers got a fair deal, saving thousands of jobs, and to make sure, in the end, Ohio got her fair share.

I will hope that his work in the future will allow him to be a champion for the greater Cleveland area and northeastern Ohio, but for our whole State because of his great acumen and his abilities to work with people of all persuasions. I know how Lake Erie and the entire Great Lakes system has benefited from his years of service, and we have to pick up that mantle and carry it forward for him.

Finally, for STEVE AUSTRIA, what a joy to work with STEVE AUSTRIA,

whether it was on Wright Pat, whether it was on the concerns of central Ohio, such a gentleman, so strong and steady, such a voice for his constituents over the last 4 years that he has served. I wish that he could have served longer. I have enjoyed the opportunities I've had to work with him, though not always on shared committees.

I just want to thank Congressman TIBERI for bringing us together tonight to pay tribute to all of these great Ohioans—BETTY SUTTON, JEAN SCHMIDT, DENNIS KUCINICH, STEVE AUSTRIA, and STEVE LATOURETTE—all of whom have made enormous contributions to our State, and I thank you for allowing me to add my words of appreciation to all of you.

Mr. TIBERI. I would like to recognize the gentleman who represents the district that borders Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and Kentucky from northwestern Ohio to southern Ohio, the gentleman from Marietta, BILL JOHNSON, a new Member of our Congress who just got reelected to a second term.

Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio. I thank you for yielding.

As a fledgling new Member of Congress in January of 2011, I realized right away that I had an awful lot to learn. And so many of our Ohio delegation reached out to me and gave me an arm around the shoulder, a nudge on the arm saying, Hey, we can work these things out; just hang in there. I've gotten to know each of our five departing Members from the Ohio delegation in their own unique way.

I remember very early on leading up to the 2010 election coming to Washington to meet with some folks, and it was the first time that I met with JEAN SCHMIDT. JEAN graciously invited me into her office. We sat down. We talked about issues that are important to the people of her district. Her district borders my district, and we have a lot of common interests about that. We sat for an hour or more, and she gave me great insight into the kind of work that I would be doing, and I'm so appreciative of that.

□ 1930

After coming to Washington and beginning to sit on the Foreign Affairs Committee, I sat right next to JEAN. I saw her passion for fiscal issues, spending, issues around the sanctity of human life, around human rights. I saw how she went about the business of not only representing the people of her district, but representing the values that Americans stand for. To Congresswoman SCHMIDT, I just want to say: JEAN, it has been a pleasure working with you. I agree that we haven't seen the last of you. I've enjoyed spending our days at the Bible study on Thursday mornings, and I wish you the very best in your future endeavors. I look forward to seeing you often.

To STEVE AUSTRIA, STEVE is another one that reached out. As a 26½-year

veteran of the Air Force, Wright-Paterson Air Force Base—it is important to the State of Ohio, that is true—but it's important to the Air Force and it's important to our Nation. And I've appreciated the work that STEVE has done there. STEVE might not realize this, but he trained many of the staff that I have today. I'm very pleased with the staff that I have here in Washington. Many of those that serve with me today serving the Sixth District of Ohio came through STEVE AUSTRIA's office where they learned and where they saw the value of hard work in STEVE AUSTRIA. I appreciate so much what STEVE has done for our delegation.

To DENNIS KUCINICH, I had seen DENNIS many times on television prior to being elected myself. I have seen the interviews. DENNIS was a known leader and political figure in the State of Ohio. People told me early on that you don't have to agree with everything that DENNIS says, but one thing you will find out about DENNIS is that he loves the people that he represents and he represents them well. You can learn a lot from DENNIS KUCINICH about constituent services.

In the days since I've been here, one thing I've learned about DENNIS as well is that he is always a gentleman. No matter what the issue, no matter what the crisis of the moment might be, DENNIS would remain calm and would remain poised in the conversations that we've had, even though not necessarily agreeing on the issues, but certainly raising very valid points and doing so in a manner that befits the office. I want to thank DENNIS for that.

To Congresswoman BETTY SUTTON, I did not get a chance to work with BETTY that often. We traveled back and forth on the same flights every now and then to Ohio. We served on the Natural Resources Committee together, but not on the same subcommittee. So I did not get a chance to spend an awful lot of time with BETTY. But like so many of the other comments that you've heard, she represented her district well. She did it in a very professional manner. I want to thank her for her many years of service.

STEVE LATOURETTE, what can you really say about STEVE LATOURETTE? I never once went to STEVE and asked him a question and he said, Hey, can you come back and see me later? I don't have time. He was always willing to stop what he was doing and say, What can I do to help? What do you need to talk about? No matter what the issue, you could always count on STEVE LATOURETTE being a voice of reason. I had, from time to time throughout my Air Force career, those rare leaders who could see beneath the fog and the friction of the battle to see clearly what the issues were. STEVE LATOURETTE possesses that ability. He took me under his wing. He shared with me his wealth of knowledge about the legislative process, helped guide me through some really difficult issues

here on the floor. He's so very well respected. One thing I admire most about STEVE is it's so obvious that he is so respected by both sides of the aisle. That's a lesson that I think many of us could learn and take home. I can assure you that STEVE LATOURETTE is going to be missed.

I wish all of our departing Members from Ohio Godspeed, many blessings, and I've enjoyed serving with each and every one of you.

Mr. TIBERI. Thank you.

It's a real pleasure to recognize the gentle lady who represents the bulk of Cleveland and Cuyahoga County, soon Akron and some of Summit County, as well, Congresswoman MARCIA FUDGE, a neighbor to Mr. LATOURETTE and Mr. KUCINICH.

Ms. FUDGE. Thank you very much.

I rise to pay tribute today to my faithful Ohio colleagues who will be leaving our ranks at the end of this Congress. Three of them represent districts that border mine, and all will be missed by our delegation.

At the beginning of 2011, I pulled together a long list, with my friend Mr. RENACCI, of our delegation for dinner. This experience showed everyone who attended that we can work and play together, despite our party affiliations. This isn't true of all delegations. Simply put, it is because of the people who make up the Ohio delegation. Those departing will be deeply missed. I will miss their collective experience, their outstanding wit, and unrivaled passion in serving the people of Ohio. Their departure will truly be a loss to the region, our State, and the Nation.

DENNIS KUCINICH is one of the most enduring public servants in Cleveland history. From city council to what we used to call "boy mayor," to a Member of Congress, DENNIS has represented the city of Cleveland and its citizens with undeniable zeal and passion. First elected to Congress in 1996, DENNIS KUCINICH is the kind of fighter you want on your team, be it fighting for labor rights or against the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. He left his mark for being fiery, outspoken, and incorruptible, and the city of Cleveland loves him for it. DENNIS was proud to champion liberal causes even when being liberal wasn't popular. He is bright and unflappable in his convictions, traits that earned him admiration from citizens throughout the Nation. Congress will not be the same without him.

BETTY SUTTON is a leader who has and will undoubtedly continue to make a difference in northeast Ohio. She ran for city council during her first year of law school and won. She is the youngest woman to ever serve in the Ohio State House. She fought hard for the middle class by representing unions and their members as a labor attorney. BETTY played a critical role in the passage of the Nation's health care reform bill. She championed the Cash for Clunkers program, helping thousands of Americans afford new cars and helping to revive the economy with this

successful program. BETTY has been unwavering in her support of America's veterans of all generations. Notably, she always found time in her schedule to greet World War II veterans from Ohio visiting our Nation's Capital. BETTY's congressional service to Ohio and the Nation will be missed.

STEVE LATOURETTE. July 30, 2012, was not only a sad day for the State of Ohio and the Ohio delegation, but it was a sad day for all reasonable, level-headed Americans. July 30 marked the day that STEVE LATOURETTE, my good friend, announced his retirement from Congress. STEVE is and always will be a champion for all of northeast Ohio. The impact he made on his district and the State cannot be disputed. He is hard-working and easy to work with. STEVE is a master of bipartisanship. He wrote the book on working across the aisle. He and I recently introduced the Restore Our Neighborhoods Act, and we are working together to ensure this bill is included in an end-of-the-year bill. We need more Members of Congress like STEVE. He is one of the few Members I could always rely on to be objective. He was one of only seven House Republicans to vote against defunding NPR. He was only one of two House Republicans who voted against holding Attorney General Eric Holder in contempt of Congress. Words cannot begin to describe the void STEVE's departure will create. We're going to miss him.

JEAN SCHMIDT. I know Congresswoman SCHMIDT is exceptional. To be the first woman elected to represent southern Ohio in Congress is quite a feat; and to be a grandmother and still run marathons is something that I don't know that anyone else could do.

□ 1940

Although we have not always agreed on policy, we can agree on the importance of promoting female athletes and women in general, and we agree on family values. JEAN understands the importance of representing all of the people and all of the parts of her district. We will miss her kindness and her sincerity.

Good luck, my friend.

And STEVE AUSTRIA, he is one of the five that I did not get an opportunity to know very well, but I have watched him. He has an impressive track record. He served both in the State house and the senate, serving as the majority whip in the senate. He was the first first-generation Filipino to become a Congressman. STEVE quickly shot up the ranks to serve on the Appropriations Committee and helped bring much-needed funding to the State of Ohio and to our military installments. He is a principled man, deciding not to run for a third term because he did not want to leave his Beaver Creek home of 20 years as a result of redistricting.

As I have watched him, I know him to be a gentleman. I can tell by a person's demeanor what kind of person he is, and he always carries himself with dignity and respect.

I am sorry that I did not get an opportunity to know you better.

I will close by saying that this House is better and stronger because all of you served here.

Mr. TIBERI. It is a real pleasure to introduce the gentleman of whom you were just speaking, Congresswoman FUDGE, one of the five Members who will not be back with us next year, Mr. STEVE AUSTRIA, who I had the pleasure of having a district next to.

Mr. AUSTRIA. I thank the gentleman.

I want to first thank the Ohio delegation for taking time this evening to recognize the departing members of the Ohio delegation; and to those Members on both sides of the aisle who have supported me and helped me throughout my 4 years of Congress, I thank you.

To those departing Members, for your service and your commitment to the Buckeye State, you will be missed. You've done a great job. I've had the distinct opportunity to work with many of you in the State legislature as well as in Congress, and I thank you for your service, and I especially thank those Members who have given me advice and helped me and supported me through this last year.

As the Members who are here on the floor today know, as well as many of the folks back in Ohio, the Seventh Congressional District that I represent was eliminated with redistricting. This has been a tough year. To those Members who have given me advice, encouragement, and sometimes just that pat on the back to keep going through these challenging times, I thank you for that, and your friendship will always be remembered.

It is truly an honor and a privilege to serve in Congress and to represent the eight counties and the residents of those eight counties that I represent in the Seventh Congressional District; to be blessed with a family and friends and a great staff who have supported and stayed with me during this past year; and to serve in this fine institution with so many good people—and there are good people here in Congress. I will miss serving in Congress, but the friendships that I have made here in Washington and throughout my district will be forever.

It was my father who first introduced me to politics and government. My father came to this country from the Philippines, and he came here to live the American Dream. He became a legal citizen, and he was so proud of that. He met my mother. They got married. They raised a family—nine kids and now 28 grandkids. God bless my mother who is still alive. He started his own business. He always gave back to his community, and he always believed in making this place he called “home” a better place for his children

and grandchildren to live. I think if he were alive today—and I'm sure he's looking down from heaven somewhere—he'd be very proud of his oldest son, who, to my knowledge, is the first first-generation Filipino American to serve in the United States Congress.

I am proud to be part of the Asian American community. This has been a job for the past 14 years, in having served in the State legislature for 10 years and now in Congress for 4 years, that I have taken very seriously. I've tried to give it my all—100 percent—and have dedicated my life to it. I want to thank my family for all of the sacrifices that they have made to allow me to be the best Congressman that I could be.

Many Members of Congress have family members back home who are making tremendous sacrifices, and I thank you for those sacrifices to allow the Members of Congress to serve our government.

I also must recognize and thank my staff. You see, when I started my service in Congress, I was very blessed with a great staff that I inherited from my predecessor, Congressman Dave Hobson. Most have gone on to bigger and better things, but I am also blessed to end my service here with a very dedicated and committed staff who are dedicated to helping our constituents back in our district—whether they be veterans, whether they be seniors, whether they be hardworking Americans—and having a positive impact on their lives. There is a loyalty that this staff has given to our district. It is a very committed staff both in D.C. and back in the district; and most of the staff, actually, have stayed with me until the very end.

To our staff, to our team, you are the best.

To the freshman class of the 111th Congress that I came in with—in particular, our Republican members of the freshman class—I want to thank you for your service and the friendships and the support that we've had throughout the years.

I came in in 2008. It was a tough year for Republicans, and I was the only Republican in Ohio to win an open seat. Then, in 2010, my colleagues on the other side of the aisle experienced, I think, the same thing. We had a small Republican class that came in—22 members. It was a very talented class, a class that showed great leadership and was very vibrant, and I believe that they will be part of the future of this Congress as far as leadership. It was a great honor to be elected by my Republican peers and my freshman class as our class President. The freshman class of the 111th Congress was a special group of friends on both sides of the aisle that will be remembered forever.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I want to pay tribute to Ohio's Seventh Congressional District, which I've had the honor to represent for the last 4 years. As I mentioned, this district was elimi-

nated because of redistricting in Ohio; but it's a district with great history and one with great integrity, and it has had great leaders. It has been represented by leaders such as Congressman Dave Hobson, known as “Uncle Dave” here on the Hill and back home for the great work he has done in Washington and throughout the State of Ohio; by former Senator and now Attorney General Mike DeWine, a personal friend who continues to lead our great State of Ohio; Congressman Bud Brown and Joyce Brown and his father, Clarence Brown, who also served in the United States Congress. The list goes on and on. To follow these great leaders and to have the opportunity to serve behind my mentors has been a great honor.

When I'm here in Washington, I often walk through the Halls of the Capitol at night when there are very few people around. I can tell you the history, the tradition, the integrity of this Capitol is still there, and it speaks to you at night. Often as I walk through the Halls of the Capitol or am traveling throughout the district, folks will come up to me and remind me that, when one door closes, another opens and that God has a plan for all of us.

So as I begin the next chapter of my life with my wife of 26 years, Eileen, and our three boys—Brian, Kevin, and Eric—I will take this great experience, the knowledge, and the memories here in Congress with me into the future. I always will remember the advice my father gave to me when I ran for my first office nearly 25 years ago—a local precinct, a county central committee—which is: always do the right thing.

To the new Members who are here, I would encourage you to continue to do the right thing.

And to our members of the Ohio delegation, never forget our men and women who are serving in our military and our veterans and the sacrifices that they are making and continue to make for our country and for our freedoms.

May God bless this great country. It has been a privilege to serve you in Congress. Thank you.

Mr. TIBERI. Thank you, STEVE AUSTRIA. It has been a real pleasure working with you.

I got to know STEVE when he came to the Ohio legislature, actually. I was in the Ohio House, and he soon left and went to the Ohio Senate, and then rejoined us here in 2008. We always used to joke around that STEVE AUSTRIA was going to be a heck of a lot less maintenance than Dave Hobson, his predecessor; and he certainly was.

We've enjoyed working with you. You've been a great member of the Appropriations Committee. You have continued to serve the people of Ohio well. You had a great career in the Ohio Senate, and you helped pass some pretty critical legislation, including the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act. So we wish you well. We wish you and Eileen and your three boys much success in the future.

It is a real pleasure to introduce another departing Member who also was in the legislature before she came here. Unfortunately, I didn't have an opportunity to serve with her; she came just as I was leaving.

□ 1950

When I think of JEAN SCHMIDT, and it has been said before, I think of her faith and I think of marathons because she is an amazing marathon runner. She just completed her 97th marathon in October. And she's obviously a really proud grandma to two young grandsons, and it is a pleasure to recognize the gentlelady from southwestern Ohio.

Mrs. SCHMIDT. Thank you, Congressman TIBERI, my great friend from central Ohio.

I just want to say a few things today. First, I want to say good-bye, not just to this Chamber, but to the good friends who are leaving with me.

BETTY SUTTON from northern Ohio. You know, politically we disagree just about on everything, but we also have something very common together: softball. She, like I, joined an all-female softball team. She's a good player. She can actually throw the ball from third to first without having it hop in between. And her tenacity helped us not lose as readily as we usually do when we play the women of the press. BETTY has fought tirelessly for her district. She has represented it well, and she will be missed.

DENNIS KUCINICH. You know, a lot has been said about DENNIS. He is a man of conviction, and he's a man who's not afraid to be a voice in the wilderness. And all too often we don't agree with DENNIS, but we always understand where his passion comes from, and it comes from his deep faith and the fact that he really believes in America, just as the rest of us do. But on a personal note, DENNIS has become a good friend of mine. We share a deep conviction about obesity in our Nation and ways to conquer it. Who knows, maybe on the outside we will work together to try to find solutions to that.

To STEVE AUSTRIA, who just stood at this podium, I got to know STEVE in the State legislature. While we didn't really work together on bills, we actually went to Arizona to watch Ohio State win its national championship. It was there that I really got to know STEVE and his wife on a personal level. It was there that he shared with me his dream to one day serve in this Congress, and I'm so glad he was able to let that dream come true.

To my good friend, STEVE LATOURETTE, you know, when you come as a special election, you don't get this orientation that people get when they come as a class. You get elected and you're thrown on the floor and you're there to vote. I was put on his committee called Transportation, and I didn't know a whole lot about it, but STEVE LATOURETTE shepherded me through it; and not just on that, on

other issues critical to Ohio and critical to our Nation. He gave me great advice. He was a wonderful mentor, and he will be missed in this body.

I don't know whether this is going to be my good-bye speech or not, but I just want to say what an honor it has been to serve in Congress. I came from a background where I truly represent the American Dream. My father grew up in poverty. He didn't have an education, but he believed in himself and he believed in hard work. And he married a woman with a college education—unheard of for a man of that background—and together they instilled in me a couple of really wonderful values. The first is to love God. The second is to love your country. The third is to believe in yourself because we are Americans, and as Americans, we cannot just dream something but work hard to make that a reality.

I never thought that I would serve in this wonderful body, but through a special election, I was able to come here, and it has been a privilege to represent the Second District of Ohio. I truly believe it is the best district in the Nation because of its diversity. One of the communities I represent is one of the wealthiest in the country. Several others are the poorest in the country. But the fabric that weaves through the Ohio River Valley is one that shows me that these people, whether they are rich or poor, are deep, loving people of not just America but of our God.

We are a community that believes in the sanctity of life. We are a community that believes in the right to carry. We are a community that believes in fiscal responsibility. And it was easy for me to carry that message here because, like so many people in the Second Congressional District, I believe in those things, too.

Parting is sweet sorrow. Nobody knows what tomorrow will bring, but I can tell you this: Tomorrow there will be people here championing the cause of America and the American spirit, and I only hope that we are blessed as a Nation to continue to be the beacon of hope and freedom in the world.

Toward that end, I wish all of my departing Members and all of those coming in and all of those that are remaining, Godspeed. God bless you, and God bless the United States of America.

Mr. TIBERI. Thank you, JEAN. We wish you and Peter well in the next door, in the next chapter.

Five—five departing Ohioans, and I get to go last. It's been an honor to serve with all five of them. They leave a big void, Mr. Speaker. STEVE AUSTRIA, JEAN SCHMIDT, BETTY SUTTON—much has been said about all of these five.

I actually knew BETTY before I knew the other four. She and I were part of the freshman class of the Ohio class of Representatives in 1992, and we served 8 years together in the Ohio House. Obviously different political parties, but you knew right away that BETTY was bright, tenacious, and she was a fighter

for her beliefs. We rarely agreed on issues. We got to see each other again when she got elected in 2006 to replace SHERROD BROWN, who got elected to the U.S. Senate.

I know her career's not over. It began in the Barberton City Council, Summit County Council, and the 8 years she served in the House. I know she is going to continue to serve in some capacity, and I wish her and her husband, Doug, the best as they move on to the next chapter of their life.

DENNIS KUCINICH, I first knew DENNIS, he didn't know me, when he was the boy mayor of Cleveland and I was growing up in Columbus. He obviously made a lot of headlines around the State as mayor. I still call him "Mayor" today. I first got to know DENNIS when he was in the legislature of the Ohio Senate and I was in the Ohio House in the early 1990s. He then got elected to Congress in 1996. I got to know DENNIS better when I was elected here.

And obviously, a lot has been said about DENNIS. A lot has been said about DENNIS, about his passion. The wilderness comment was perfect, JEAN. He obviously is a man who will continue his mission in other ways. He ran for President. He wasn't shy about it. He has strong beliefs, beliefs that are different than mine, but again, someone you could call a friend.

And finally, last but not least, the man who has a different quality than the rest of the four, and what I mean by that, he was the only one of the five who wasn't a legislator before he came to Congress, he was a prosecutor, STEVE LATOURETTE. And ironically, if you talk to Members of the House, they would say he was a legislator's legislator even though he was never a legislator before he got here, which is amazing.

STEVE LATOURETTE is a contrast in so many different ways, and you heard so much about him here tonight in terms of the work he did in such a bipartisan way. But he could be as partisan as they came. In fact, as I think of memories from down on the floor, back in—I don't know what year it was—2007 or 2008, maybe it was 2009 or 2010, STEVE came up with this game show idea about the lack of substantive work that we were doing on the House floor when we were in the minority and the Democrats were in the majority.

□ 2000

And it was funny, but, boy, was it pointed, and it could be absolutely true.

But then again, you just never know where STEVE was going to be. You could be on the House floor and here he is defending Jim Traficant on the House floor, a Republican defending a Democrat. And if you ever need a lawyer, you want STEVE LATOURETTE to be your lawyer because he gave an incredible performance that one time.

But he was a guy that was our dean. He was our dean of our delegation because everybody could go to STEVE

with an issue. Whether it was an appropriations issue, whether it was an internal issue, whether it was an issue for Ohio, he's a guy who would give great advice, and he would work to get an answer for the problem.

So whether it was the Appropriations Committee or—the Transportation Committee, where he served much of his career, was an area where he knew more about transportation, and transportation issues, then anybody in this town. He was just a walking encyclopedia on transportation issues.

It's pretty hard for a Buckeye to talk about a University of Michigan graduate this way, Mr. Speaker, but it's going to be a big void for this House for all five, but especially for STEVE LATOURETTE, who has really given his heart and his soul for 18 years to trying to make this body and our Nation a better place for our kids and for our grandkids.

It really didn't matter who you were or what you were about or if you had an "R" or a "D" by your name with respect to STEVE. If he believed in your cause, he was your partner, and he was going to do everything within his power to make sure that cause, that issue was going to be solved. He didn't always win, but he surely went down swinging every time he took that cause up.

This place will not be as good as it has been without STEVE LATOURETTE, JEAN SCHMIDT, STEVE AUSTRIA, DENNIS KUCINICH, and BETTY SUTTON.

Mr. Speaker, it has been great knowing these folks. I am pretty sure that all of them we will see again in one capacity or another. I know, STEVE, that we will see you and Jen and Henry and Emma soon.

Mr. Speaker, with that, I think our hour is up. We have no more speakers. It's been a pleasure. It's been a privilege, an honor to serve with all five of these men and women.

I yield back the balance of my time.

THE IMPENDING FISCAL CLIFF

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 5, 2011, the gentleman from California (Mr. GARAMENDI) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, thank you for the opportunity. We're going to spend a good portion of this hour talking about something that is on everybody's mind, the fiscal cliff. Oh my goodness, the fiscal cliff is now just, well, 20 days away. So what are we going to do?

Some have suggested that we really have to deal with entitlements, and I'm here to agree that we can and we should deal with entitlements. Certainly, two of those issues, which I really don't think we ought to call entitlements, but they happen to be fundamental programs here in America for Americans, should be dealt with. One that some people want to put on the

table really doesn't deal with the deficit at all, and that's Social Security.

So before we even get into this discussion tonight, let's just understand, for anybody that cares to take on this issue, that in dealing with the fiscal cliff, Social Security is not the problem. The deficit is not caused by Social Security. Social Security has never been and in its present form will not be part of the deficit issue. It's separate and apart. It is a special program, has its own source of revenue, has its own trust fund, and frankly, is not even running a deficit at all and has not run a deficit.

So let's put Social Security to the side and say, yes, in the years ahead, maybe even next year, but probably 3 to 4 years out, Social Security will be dealt with, as it must, because we will have to make adjustments. But that is really not the debate about the deficit, sequestration, or the fiscal cliff.

Coming back to the fiscal cliff, let's take up one of the very big programs, and I'm not talking here about the Department of Defense, which is one of the major expenditure items, but that's not the subject for tonight. Tonight the subject is Medicare and Medicaid.

The Medicare program is a big one, and it certainly is a program that is expensive. It's a program that, over the years, has grown on the average faster than inflation. But, in the last 2 years, that's not the case, and we'll discuss that in more detail later. In fact, Medicare has fallen below the general rate of health care inflation.

Let's talk about what we can do about Medicare. Instead of saying what we ought not do, we're going to start this discussion, at least my portion of it, talking about what we can do. And the President has put out several ideas that deserve the attention of the 435 Members of this House and the 100 Senators, because there are things that really can be done immediately to significantly reduce the cost of Medicare.

Just in listening to my colleagues here on the floor discuss the departure of some extraordinary Members from the Ohio delegation, I came across an article in one of the local Hill newspapers, and this article says, "GAO hits Medicare and Medicaid wasteful spending." Turns out that the GAO just issued a report, came out just this week, that Medicare had, in their estimation, \$28 billion in fraud and wasteful spending in the year 2011—\$28 billion. And in Medicaid, some \$21 billion.

Now, the President has suggested that one of the things we ought to do to reform the Medicare system and the Medicaid system is go after waste, fraud, and abuse. Well, there you have, what, 50-plus billion dollars of annual fraud, waste, and expenditure in the Medicare system. That goes a long way to solving the Medicare problem. And we ought to do that. And, in fact, a lot of that was done in the Affordable Health Care Act, and systems were put in place and they're working today.

But there's even more that can be done, according to the GAO. And if

we're going to start dealing with Medicare, why don't we start right there with that issue and perhaps some \$50 billion, or if you want to be a little conservative, let's just say 40 or \$30 billion that we can reduce immediately.

By the way, this is going to take a few Federal employees to do that. Interestingly, in the Affordable Health Care Act there was a provision that added several thousand, a couple of thousand employees to the IRS for the specific purpose of going after Medicare and Medicaid fraud. Well, they were added, and then our Republican colleagues, in a fit of—well, just in a fit, decided that they would somehow save a lot of money by eliminating the men and women that were supposed to be hired to go after fraud.

□ 2010

They tried to do it. Fortunately, they were not successful.

I'm going to just name a couple of other ways in which we can reduce the cost of Medicare, and then I want to turn to my colleague from Illinois to expand on some of these issues.

Very quickly, how about drugs? Would you believe that the Federal Government has no power to negotiate the price of drugs for seniors in the Medicare program? It's true. Congress passed a law back in the 2003-2004 period that denied the Federal Government the ability to negotiate prices. We could save a pile of money right there.

There's some other things we can do—and some of this is already underway. We could penalize hospitals that have high infection rates; readmission to hospitals. Well, the Affordable Health Care Act is already doing that. And it's having an effect. We could also deal with the issues that occur with unnecessary payments. We can reform the system in the way in which payments are made so that they are more efficient and more effective. And those have been proposed by the President.

In fact, there are many, many things that can be done to significantly reduce the cost of Medicare without doing the onerous, damaging proposals that have been made by many of our colleagues on the Republican side, such as increasing the age to 67 when you could apply for Medicare—and we'll discuss that in much more detail in a few moments—and such as going after the privatization of Medicare.

Some really bad ideas are out there. And we don't need those bad ideas. What we need are some really good, solid ideas.

Let me turn to my colleague from Illinois, JAN SCHAKOWSKY. This is a woman who's been deeply involved in this issue. She was on the Simpson-Bowles Committee. That's not the formal name but that's how we know it—the Simpson-Bowles Committee. And she's focused specifically on Social Security and Medicare. She's joining us tonight with extraordinary background and information on this.

JAN, let's talk for a few minutes about your experiences and what you think we can do.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Thank you so much, Congressman GARAMENDI, for leading this hour where, hopefully, we can get just some of the facts out about Medicare and Social Security. I, too, want to concentrate on Medicare.

First of all, I want to ask this fundamental question: do we really think that the United States of America is poorer today than we were 70 years ago, when Social Security came into being; that the United States is really poorer as a country today than 50 years ago, when Medicare and Medicaid came into being? The answer is simply, no. The economy has grown 15 times over since Social Security was enacted. And it was enacted because this country decided that it was really important for us to not have poorhouses for our elderly in this country, and that when Medicare and Medicaid came in, that insurance companies really didn't want to ensure old people, and that they weren't able to get the health care that they needed, and that the right thing to do for the richest country in the world, which we still are, is to set a priority that we're going to address the needs of the elderly—not for free, by any means.

People pay every paycheck that they're working into Social Security, and we created an insurance company for Americans, an insurance policy for Americans, that if you pay in, when you retire, that money will be there for you. And as you pointed out, we have \$2.7 trillion in the Social Security Trust Fund right now. If we didn't have that, that means that our deficit would look \$2.7 trillion worse than it does. Thank goodness for Social Security and its Trust Fund.

So you're right, Social Security should be off the table. Medicare, too. Every single paycheck people pay in. But the difference is when you get Medicare, you continue to pay. And I want to talk a little bit about the truth of what's going on in Medicare today, and the myths.

Talk about means-testing Social Security. Guess what? We do. We already means-test Social Security. I want everybody to understand that. We means-test Social Security. Medicare part D premiums—that's for doctor out-patient—and part D—that's for prescription drug premiums—are already higher for individuals with incomes over \$85,000 a year. Now let's remember we're calling middle class for everyone else up to the \$250,000. But we're saying, for Medicare purposes, people who make \$85,000 or more, they're going to pay extra costs ranging from \$504 a year to \$2,270 a year for part B and \$139 to \$797 more a year for part D. We means-test Medicare. By 2020, with no changes in current law, annual means-tested part B premiums are projected to range from almost \$2,700 to \$6,000 more. We means-test Medicare.

Higher income households pay more for future Medicare benefits during

their working lives as well. There's no cap on the tax that you pay into Medicare. A person with \$2 million in wages pays \$58,000 into Medicare. So during their working lives, and when they retire and take Medicare benefits, we means-test Medicare.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Let me just interrupt for a second. You started to discuss Social Security. I think what you meant was Medicare, which is where you have been taking the discussion. Medicare part B is means-tested—and has been since its inception.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. We means-test Medicare, exactly. We do.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Exactly. The amount that you pay into Medicare is higher as your income goes up.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Yes. So during your working life and when you start on Medicare, you are paying more if you make \$85,000 or more.

Mr. GARAMENDI. So the argument that you've got to means-test this program is, Yes. And we do.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Now we means-test Medicare for 5 percent of beneficiaries. Under proposals to cover 25 percent of beneficiaries, call them higher income, means-testing would start at \$47,000 in income. Really? These are rich seniors? Covering 10 percent of Medicare beneficiaries would hit individuals with \$63,000 in income. Are those wealthy seniors? No. We means-test Medicare right now for people who earn income over \$85,000.

Here's the other thing. A couple more points I want to make. There is no cap right now on out-of-pocket costs in Medicare, which today average \$4,500 for people over 65 years old. So the out-of-pocket costs for Medicare beneficiaries are very high. The average amounts to about 20 percent of their income, out-of-pocket, already. So Medicare costs are already high. The idea now of going further down in income levels to means-test Medicare beneficiaries makes no sense whatsoever.

The other thing I wanted to point out is half of all seniors live in households with less than \$22,000 in income. So here's the part I don't get about the fiscal cliff proposals. It seems as if the trophy that the Republicans want in exchange for asking people whose income is above \$250,000, even though they'll get a tax break on that first \$250,000, to ask them to pay a little more, the trophy in return is to ask senior citizens, whose median income is \$22,000, to pay more?

□ 2020

Why is this a quid pro quo? Why is this fair? Why is that the trophy? Why is that the exchange that makes sense? The American people say no.

Medicare, Social Security, Medicaid, these are programs that keep people healthy. Raising the age of Medicare; really? That's why we have Medicare in the first place; insurance companies don't want to insure people. The Center for American Progress says that if we

did that, in a single year, almost 435,000 seniors would be at risk of becoming uninsured. Is this the goal?

I am really confused about these proposals that somehow equate really the wealthiest top 2 percent in our country with extracting something from the poorest adults in our country: seniors and persons with disabilities.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Your points are so very, very well taken. It seems as though—you call it a trophy. The argument made by some is that we ought not raise this top tax rate, but you ought to hit the Medicare program, the beneficiaries, and make them pay more. As you've said, they're mostly middle class and poor. So what's that all about? And raising the age to 67 is really stupid. There is no other way to describe that.

I was the insurance commissioner in California for 8 years, and let me tell you, you raise that age to 67, a lot of very, very bad things are going to happen. First of all, people between 65 and 67 are not likely to get insurance at all, let alone affordable, for the reason you said. That's the population that is almost uninsurable under the present system. Even with the Affordable Health Care Act, they're going to wind up paying a huge amount of money, and you're shifting the cost to them, to their employers, and to their State and local governments. You've saved no money. In fact, you've probably increased the cost because the benefits that go to seniors in the Affordable Care Act are not available to them, such benefits as annual checkups, medical services keeping people healthy.

I'd like to come back to that in a little while, but I noticed our colleague from the great State of Texas is with us. Thank you for joining us once again to talk about something that I know you've spent your career here in Congress working on: Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. I thank the gentleman from California, and I thank the gentlelady from Illinois for her persistence on this issue of seniors and Medicare.

Congresswoman SCHAKOWSKY, along with Congresswoman MATSUI, co-chaired a task force that was very effective on making sure that the Democratic Caucus—and, really, Members of Congress—had an understanding of the safety net, but also the issue around the word "earned."

For some reason or another, when you put the benefits of individuals on the altar of sacrifice, it's because they didn't earn anything. You can sacrifice them. One thing that the Congresswoman emphasized is the idea that Social Security is earned, Medicare is earned, and, to a certain extent, Medicaid, though it's on a different structure.

To the gentleman from California, I want to speak directly to what you've said as insurance commissioner. We value your experience, because here's my point that I want to make. I want to stay narrowly focused.

First of all, let me say that there are enough bipartisan voices right now to pass the Senate bill. I want to thank Congressman WALZ, whom we have a petition with 178 Democratic names. We welcome our colleagues, Republicans, to get on. But the point I want to make is that—and I want to change my vernacular, I want to change my language—100 percent of the American people will get a tax cut. If we pass the Senate bill, 100 percent—

Mr. GARAMENDI. Let's describe the Senate bill.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. The Senate bill is \$250,000 and below. The income up to \$250,000—whatever you make—receives the continuation or a tax cut, and the remaining obviously expire. Simple premise. That means 97 percent of our businesses today, that means all the businesses on Main Streets in everybody's cities and towns will be protected going into the 2013 tax year or the 2012 tax year. But what it means is that middle class Americans will not have a \$2,200 per family of four going into January 2013. I just want to lay that on the table, because now I want to move to this question of entitlements, but specifically the eligibility as it relates to age. That's been batted around.

I really wanted to come here today. I was home over the weekend, and I said, I have to get to Washington to convey the thoughts in the minds of my constituents, not only the average citizen, but doctors whom I sat down with yesterday to ask about this question. But here's my point. Now, you can look at it globally, and then I'm going to narrow it down.

Globally, one would say that we're living longer. Of course women are. This is the actuarial genius here, you know, the actuarial tables that you deal with. So women are living longer. It's always been a tradition, et cetera, but the body politic is living longer, maybe because they're healthier. That is not the case in the span of what we're speaking of, because what we're talking about globally, or nationally, are people whose beginnings are different, whose lifestyles are different.

Now, I don't know, but the family farmers—and I'm not picking on that group of people—have worked with their hands. Of course they work with their minds—they have to have a budget and make things work—but they're in the outdoors, foresters. Some would say, well, that's a healthy lifestyle. I don't know until you walk a mile in their shoes. Those who work in the coal mines in West Virginia; those who are in the sanitation department of our municipal cities; those who work in concrete and the building trades; those individuals who work in the energy industry in all shapes, forms, and sizes; those who may be in the vocational trades, maybe even nurses and nurses aids who are lifting patients all day long, thank God for them. We see them all the time when we're visiting the sick and our relatives or even we're in

the hospital. So what I'm saying is you cannot have a cookie that fits all. You cannot immediately jump to entitlement reform between now and December 31.

Here's a solution: The bipartisan voices have said pass the Senate bill or pass the elimination of the tax cuts on the top 2 percent—but I, frankly, believe that 100 percent of Americans will get it. We cannot then jump to entitlement reform now. It would not be wise. It is not prudent. It does not work.

When you talk about 65 to 67, that is a lifetime. Because what you do, as the gentleman has said, you throw seniors into the marketplace. You save a buck, and they have to spend two bucks, three bucks, four bucks. And then on top of the four bucks, they will have doors slammed in their face.

The Affordable Care Act was premised on a 65-year-old Medicare admission, if you will—except for those who are disabled—and therefore, now, you want to skew it. You've already claimed that ObamaCare is going to raise prices. Look at the projection of cost to the seniors, trillions of dollars that they will pay in the open marketplace. But more importantly, how many of the poor seniors not having the money to go into the open marketplace will drop dead? I'm being colorful because, in terms of your lifestyle, some people struggle to get to 65. It makes no sense that they should be on the altar of sacrifice.

I'm passionate about this because I just don't understand why we jump so far. I say, Members, let's be deliberative. You cannot throw it out and say, oh, that's what we're going to do, when you don't know the numbers, you don't know the ultimate results, you have not done an analysis on what seniors of this age, what are their particular work histories. Maybe we will have, 40 years from now—let me go 20 years from now, we'll have all white collar seniors. I don't know what we have now, and therefore I can't judge that 65 for one person is 65 for everybody.

Let me say this to my good friends that are here: Let's take raising the Medicare age off the table. I'm delighted to see people here who are 65, 72, 80, 42, fine, but sometimes we do not represent a microcosm of America.

Let me finish on this note. I sat down with doctors and I posed a question. Doctors have a sense of pride. They like their work and they think they can keep us healthy. They could have said a number of things to me: Well, if we stay on a nutritious diet and if we do our exercise, I can see that in the future. They did not say that.

□ 2030

They shook their heads, and they said it is unbelievable. It won't work. It doesn't work. It's not a good answer. They were against raising it on the basis of medical grounds.

So let me just say this: I hope that we stand firm, our caucus. I hope we will work with the White House. I

know they are speculating over a number of opportunities and options, but my perspective is you go for this tax relief, and you put on the table for deliberative consideration what is the best approach to have Medicare savings and to provide for the American people. But I can't fathom burdening seniors with raising the eligibility age for Medicare.

Mr. GARAMENDI. I thank you for bringing this issue back. And I don't want to leave it right yet. Our colleague from Illinois started her discussion with the values, the values that we Americans possessed back in the 1960s when Medicare began. That was the value of caring for each other, particularly caring for those seniors who at that time had 50 percent in poverty, I think 70 percent without insurance, and a very bad situation.

I remember when I was a youngster, not even a teenager yet, my father took me to the county hospital. You mentioned the word poorhouse. That's what it was. And that is etched in my mind to this day, what was happening in that county hospital. It was just row after row of beds down a long ward. The cries, the sounds, and the odors were unbelievable. That was the only care available. And then Medicare came in. And we have moved to a different place, fortunately. Our values as Americans expressed in the most meaningful way, taking care of seniors, the issues of poverty, largely eliminated—no, that's not true. The issue of poverty among seniors substantially changed. We still have too much poverty. But medical services available, quality medical services that have extended the life of many.

The point you were making about not everybody is so very, very true. As you were talking, I was just thinking, I read something about this, though increasing overall life expectancy at 65 has not increased equally across the social economic status, from 1977 to 2007, life expectancy for the top half of earners increased by 5 years, but only 1 year for the bottom half of earners. So, once again, you have this disparity class, if you would. White men without a high school diploma have a life expectancy of 67.5 years as compared to 80.4 years for those with a college degree. Once again, two different societies in America.

Since 1990, life expectancy for the least educated whites has decreased—decreased—by 4 years. And now the argument is that we can increase the Medicare eligibility age to 67 because people are living longer. Hello? Who is living longer? Those who have higher incomes. Those who don't—and you said it so very well—those who work with their hands, whether they are a maid cleaning a hotel room or a farmer or a coal miner or any other task which is labor intensive, and that's physical labor intensive—by the time they get to 65, they're broken. Their body is broken. And to deny them the opportunity, I can tell you everybody I

meet who is not 65 wants to live long enough to get to 65 and Medicare.

So for our Republican friends, their principal negotiator has put on the table, the Speaker of the House has put on the table let's raise the eligibility age.

JAN, you were talking about this earlier—let's go back at this—this is a fundamental dichotomy in how we value our seniors, how we value each other and how we are compassionate.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Could I say one thing before the gentlelady, and then I will finish on that and then step away.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Sure.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. I'm so glad you used the statistic of a white male because I want this to be holistic. You did it on income. There are other disparities between African Americans, Asians, and Hispanic based upon a number of factors, a number of factors. So, there is a population that you've just mentioned, I assume there are numbers for white women, and then there are what we call health disparities because of various ethnic differences and distinctions, nothing that would make them different as Americans, but it would make you want to think more closely about a cookie-cutter approach to how Medicare can be. And to raise it to 67 is dangerous for the diversity of this country. And remember what we said. We want to be for the 100 percent.

I thank you for allowing me just to say that point. Thank you, Congresswoman, because I think our fight is a noble fight, and it is not against anybody, it is for something, and I would like our friends to join us and recognize that this is not a good idea. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. GARAMENDI. SHEILA JACKSON LEE, thank you very much. I hope you are able to stick around.

Jan.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Thank you. I wanted to also make the point that there are many people who throughout their life have not been able to afford health care, and so they really are in need of health care when they turn 65. I have people coming into my office every day, or at least once a week—I bet this happens to you and to most Members—who say, I just hope I make it until I'm 65. Then I can have this fixed or that fixed or all these things that are really debilitating me and causing such a loss in lifestyle.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Pain, serious pain.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Yes. I finally am going to be able to take care of it. So a couple of things I want to reiterate that I think are just myths. One, I already said that we already means-test Medicare. Number two, that raising the age of eligibility—and our Democratic leader wrote on December 11 the "Truth About Medicare Age." She wrote an excellent USA Today article. And in it she says:

As one expert, Paul N. Van de Water of the Center for Budget and Policy Priorities, has

noted, raising the age 'would not only fail to constrain health care costs across the economy, it would increase them.'

And our leader points out that the Kaiser Family Foundation estimates that higher State and private sector costs that result from raising the age would be twice as large as the total Federal savings. So we aren't even doing ourselves a favor when it comes to expenditures, the cost of health care, if we raise the age. It's, as you said, a really bad idea.

Another thing, I do think that a lot of people, especially younger people, do think that once you get to 65 you just get this health care benefit without realizing that it is an insurance policy that seniors are paying dearly for. It is a good insurance policy, Medicare. In fact, it is far more efficient, with an overhead of about 3 percent, compared to private insurance, which can have as much as, well, you would know better, it is reaching up into 20 percent overhead costs. So Medicare works very well. And it's popular for very good, good reasons.

As you pointed out, we can control the cost of Medicare. I'm not up here saying don't do anything about Medicare. We aren't going to touch Medicare. Yes, we can, as we did through ObamaCare. And you remember the numbers, \$716 billion, Democrats were hit over the head with that number, saying that we funneled that kind of money, we stole that money from Medicare, implying that we took it from beneficiaries. The opposite happened.

□ 2040

We were able to create more efficiencies in Medicare, stopping our subsidies of private insurance companies, beefing up our fraud division, even though, as you pointed out, we can do better. We saved \$716 billion from Medicare and improved benefits. That was just the beginning.

I was here when we passed Medicare part D. The truth is, the pharmaceutical companies, the drug companies got language written into the bill that said Medicare, unlike the Veterans Administration, shall be prohibited from negotiating for better prices with the drug companies. That cost us about \$250 billion over 10 years, the fact that we cannot negotiate for lower prices with the drug companies, who are making money hand over fist from Medicare part D.

If we were to make a change like that, as the Veterans Administration does, drug prices would be lower for the government and for Medicare beneficiaries, as well. It would be a win-win in terms of lowering prices. Yes, the pharmaceutical companies aren't going to like it, but most countries already negotiate for lower drug prices. Why shouldn't we do the same, especially for Medicare?

Mr. GARAMENDI. Only in a free-market system would Congress pass a law to prohibit negotiating prices,

which, I think, is kind of the essence of a market system.

You raised a couple of points, and I just want to use a chart to expand on those points. The Affordable Health Care Act—ObamaCare—really significantly enhanced benefits to Medicare recipients 65 and older. They got some really important benefits. You mentioned the drug benefit, benefit part D, the doughnut hole that is being closed. That's worth, I think, some \$55 billion a year to seniors. There's other things that are in the Affordable Health Care Act that have already saved vast amounts of money to the Medicare program. For example, annual wellness visits for seniors. Why is it important? Well, you find out certain things, like you've got high blood pressure. And you take a pill—we ought to be negotiating that price—but you take a pill, and suddenly you're able to reduce your blood pressure and avoid a stroke, avoid some other kind of medical incident. You may find that you're on the path towards diabetes or other kinds of long-term, very expensive illnesses. So that wellness visit becomes exceedingly important, and also some treatments are available.

Here's what's happened. Because of ObamaCare, the inflation rate in Medicare has been dramatically reduced. If you take a look at this particular chart, over the years it shows that beginning in 2005 and now in 2012, the annual increase in cost, the inflation rate in Medicare—it peaked in 2005, and then it began to come down. Here is the Affordable Health Care Act, or ObamaCare, and we have seen a decline to about 2½ percent inflation, which is actually less than the general health care inflation rate in the economy. This has occurred because of multiple factors, perhaps—and it's arguable, but we think one of the major factors is the advent of ObamaCare, or the Affordable Health Care Act, and the kinds of programs that are in the Affordable Health Care Act for Medicare recipients that reduce the cost of medical services.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. I think it's important to point out too that the full provisions of ObamaCare haven't even rolled out yet, although these preventive services are in place. And look at what's already happened.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Exactly.

As those other services roll out, they will affect not only the Medicare portion of the health care system, but they will also affect the general population and should, because of the availability of insurance and the availability of the ability therefore get to a doctor, to get the continuation of care, should bring down the overall inflation rate for health care, which will dramatically affect Medicare, as well.

What we are on is a track that is reducing what they call "bending the inflation curve." It's happening. Here's the most dramatic chart that I've seen on this issue, that we are, in fact, bending the cost curve. And perhaps even

more important, senior citizens are healthier. They're healthier. They're getting better care. They're getting more care.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Let me just say on that point, though, on the cost savings, that's why when the Affordable Health Care Act passed, the Congressional Budget Office estimated that it saves—people said, How are we going to afford that? How are we going to pay for that? But it actually saved a \$1 trillion over 20 years in costs to the government.

Mr. GARAMENDI. That's a very good point, but let me interrupt.

They were calculating an inflation rate that continued at this level. They did not calculate a reduction in the inflation rate. And in the more recent estimates of cost savings, they're now looking at this difference here. They're looking at a lower inflation rate. This saves billions upon billions of dollars in the Medicare system. So we are seeing that.

I don't want to let a point go by that you raised, and that is, yes, all of us Democrats were whacked over the head in the elections about the \$720 billion. I was, you were, and I suspect the rest of us were also. The \$720 billion of savings reductions in Medicare did not come from benefits. In fact, the benefits were increased just as you said. I don't know how many times I said that over the last several months, but I'm going to say it again: it didn't come from there. It came from three areas. You said this earlier, and it bears repetition.

First of all, it came out of the pockets of the insurance companies that were providing the additional Medicare insurance coverage; secondly, it came out of fraud and abuse; and, thirdly, it came out of payments to medical providers that were not performing good services. Specifically, one of the biggest were hospitals that had high infection rates. The Affordable Health Care Act said, we are not paying for the second admission when there is an infection acquired in the hospital. This is really good news to every Medicare beneficiary because suddenly the hospital goes, Oh, you mean we are going to have to pay for the cost of a readmission because of an infection? The government's not going to pay for it any more? Maybe we ought to clean up our act. Maybe we ought to have a little bit of hygiene in this hospital.

We are now seeing a significant decline in the hospital infection rates. It's not expensive for hospitals to do, but extremely important for every individual that goes into a hospital, whether you're on Medicare or otherwise. Hospitals are now paying attention to hygiene, cleaning up, washing hands, other kinds of very simple, inexpensive things that keep people healthy and reduce the cost of Medicare and general health care.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Exactly.

The real benefit of the Affordable Care Act and its effect on Medicare

and everything else is that we are making this system more efficient. The health care system in the United States of America is very inefficient. We are going to be rewarding outcomes, we are going to be rewarding value and good performance, rather than just getting—you know, a doctor sends a bill or the hospital sends a bill, Medicare sends off a check. We are going to be rewarding efficiency and good practices now in the health care system. I think that that is what everybody wants. You want better results for a lower cost. That's what we are getting.

Mr. GARAMENDI. There are some very simple things in the Affordable Health Care Act that do reduce the cost, and this is the continuity of care. This is the kind of thing you're talking about. It is the management of a debilitating illness, for example, diabetes. If diabetes is properly managed, the kinds of extraordinarily damaging and expensive things that occur to individuals are either delayed or not happening at all. So management systems are put in place that dramatically reduce the overall costs. They cost a little bit up front because people are keeping in touch with the patient. It's not necessarily a doctor. It may be a case worker keeping in touch with the patient and making sure they're taking their medications, making sure they're doing the checkups that they need on a regular basis, getting that kind of thing. How about right now?

□ 2050

I don't know. There are a whole bunch of people in this room—435. They're not here today, but how many have gotten their flu shots? If you want to reduce the costs of health care, get your flu shot. I think I'll go do that tomorrow.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. I did that. You should do it, too.

Mr. GARAMENDI. I know. I've got to do it tomorrow. I'll get my flu shot.

So these are the kinds of things that reduce costs, and the Affordable Care Act does that, not just for seniors but all the way down the board.

Go ahead. You were about to make a comment. Then I want to turn to some of the pernicious things that are being proposed to Medicare and to seniors.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. I just want to say that this is not about party. This is about people who know the realities of life—Democrats, Republicans, Independents and, I'm sure, some people who are identified with the Tea Party. They don't want to see this Congress cut Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security benefits, and this is overwhelming in every single poll. It's not because people are greedy; it is because they need these bedrock programs—these treasures of our American system—in order to live a decent quality of life. Americans are willing to work hard, to pay into these programs, to follow the rules—to do everything they're supposed to do. Then when they're either

disabled or when they're past 65 years old or, in the case of Social Security, 67 years old, they want the fruits of their labor to be there for them. Again, continuing when they get Medicare, they pay dearly for those services. I think it's really important to remember that.

Mr. GARAMENDI. I guess, as politicians—all 435 of us—what happens when we get elected is we often read the polls. Hmm, let's see here: 67 percent of Americans are opposed to increasing the age from 65 to 67—71 percent of Democrats, 68 percent of Republicans, and 62 percent of Independents. That's pretty overwhelming.

So, just to back up to what you were saying a few moments ago about the American public, they viscerally, internally, understand how important Medicare is. It's not just for themselves. They have parents, many of whom are now 65. My mother is 92. She's a Medicare recipient, and she depends upon Medicare for her hospitalization. Fortunately, she hasn't had an incident for more than 2 years now, but when she did, Medicare was there to provide the necessary services for her, and so it is for all of us who have parents who are in the Medicare system.

We understand this, and we really want to make it quite clear that, as Democrats, we are in synchronization with the President on this issue. He has put forward specific proposals that over time will reduce the cost of Medicare without taking away the benefits, without changing the eligibility age.

However, there are proposals—and I spoke earlier about one that has been put forth by the Speaker of the House—to increase the age to 67. No, that's a nonstarter. I'm not going to go into all the actuarial issues—which I could easily do—about why that makes no sense at all for employers, who would wind up paying more. It makes no sense at all for an individual, who is going to wind up paying more. It makes no sense to the Medicaid program, which you've already talked about, and it makes no sense in saving money. The total cost to the system would actually increase. The costs would be shifted, to be sure. No, not so. I guess I will do a little actuarial work here.

Those people who are 65 to 67 years of age are more healthy than people who are 67 and above. You eliminate the healthy people from the risk pool, and guess what happens to those who are left—it's more expensive per person in that smaller risk pool. So what you want to do in all insurance programs is to increase the size of the risk pool so that the cost is shared among a larger population of people. What this proposal does is exactly the opposite. It shrinks the risk pool. It keeps in that risk pool less healthy people; it's more expensive; and those who are now healthy are outside. Yet they are now shifted on to the new exchanges that are going to be created, so the cost in the exchange is increased, and the cost

for the per-person in Medicare is increased. So what's going on here? You've got to think this through. Bad idea. Bad concept.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Your 92-year-old mother, when she goes into the hospital, if she didn't have—she probably does have—a supplemental insurance policy, the copayment on the first day in the hospital, which some seniors have to pay out-of-pocket, is well over \$1,000. Medicare, let's remember, does not cover most vision, hearing, or dental, so seniors are still left with not only their premiums and their copayments and their deductibles but lots of things that still aren't covered by Medicare.

With the cost of health care to seniors today, this is no entitlement, which makes it sound like they're getting a freebie here. It's very, very expensive. We want to make Medicare better. We want to make it efficient and actually enhance some of those benefits.

Mr. GARAMENDI. The word "entitlement" is really misused for both Social Security and Medicare. Basically, the word means that, when you reach a certain age, the program is available to you. It's not a freebie. Men and women in America who work, even those who are 65 and over, continue to pay what amounts to a health care premium. It's the payroll tax. They're paying that from the first paycheck they get until the last one that they receive. Then when they're no longer working, as you so correctly stated, Medicare does not cover the total cost, so they're going to continue to pay. They're probably going to be paying for a supplemental insurance program, and they're certainly going to be paying out-of-pocket and the like.

There are a couple of other things that have been proposed, and I want to just cover those because they're very important. It has been proposed that the cost of the Medicare system can be reduced by giving every senior a voucher or—a different word but exactly the same thing—premium support, which basically says that the Medicare system, as we have known it for nearly 50 years, is terminated—gone—and that seniors who are 65—or 67 if they get their way—would be thrown into the private health insurance market. I cannot imagine a worse situation for a senior. The private health insurance market is not interested in caring for seniors.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. That's why we have Medicare.

Mr. GARAMENDI. They don't want those people because they get sick and they're expensive. They want Medicare, but the voucher program is the privatization of Medicare. It is nothing other than that. It's the termination of this guarantee, and seniors have to go out and negotiate on their own for a health insurance policy.

Good luck, Mom. You're 92 years old. Good luck in getting a health insurance policy from any private health in-

surance company. It won't happen. It won't happen.

So, with those proposals, they are wrongheaded; they are cruel; they are expensive to the individual; and they ultimately will lead to a system in which health insurance will not be available to seniors. That's a proposal that has been given life and that has actually passed the House of Representatives.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. It's part of the Ryan budget.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Indeed, it is. It has passed the House of Representatives twice—not once but twice.

So this is not just some idea floating in the ether. This is a real proposal that is sitting in the Senate. Fortunately, it's going nowhere there, but these kinds of programs are there.

The other program—and we've talked around this issue—is just a flat-out assault on the benefits. We're going to cut out drugs. We're going to cut out one or another of the benefits that are in Medicare. The package of benefits in Medicare is designed to provide a continuity of care so that something that is common is going to get covered—hospitalization, a doctor's care, and now, with the Affordable Care Act, annual visits to the doctor. It's very, very important.

Let me be clear that, as Democrats, we understand the necessity of reducing the cost of Medicare. We understand that. In fact, we have done it. The Democrats have done it. We have taken action to reduce the cost of Medicare and to simultaneously maintain the benefits and improve the benefits to seniors.

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That is what we have done, and we'll continue to do it. Things I talked about at the very outset are very real. We can take additional steps. We can do more. The President has proposed it, and the Democrats stand ready today to take up those issues and pass them out of the House, give them to the Senate and say we can do more to reduce the cost of Medicare and simultaneously maintain quality care for seniors and the benefits that they have spent their lifetime paying for, paying for those benefits. We can do it. We've done it.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. We can do it. And I hope that everyone will stand with our President who has said that we're not going to raise the age of Medicare and that the Republicans now first have to agree that we're going to ask the wealthiest people in our country to pay a bit more, and not to begin with the least able to pay more, the poorest adults, seniors, and persons with disabilities.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Our colleague, SHEILA JACKSON LEE, before she left, she brought this issue up. In the House today is the tax program that would continue the tax reductions for the middle class.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. And for the first \$250,000 for everyone.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Exactly so. All we need to do is pass that.

The other alternative, which has been proposed, is to keep the taxes low for the superwealthy and to pay for that out of the pockets of seniors. We're not going there, and we shouldn't.

JAN, thank you for sharing this evening with us. This is an important issue.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Thank you.

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

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. CULBERSON (at the request of Mr. CANTOR) for today on account of illness.

Mr. REYES (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of medical reasons.

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. 6156. An act to authorize the extension of nondiscriminatory treatment (normal trade relations treatment) to products of the Russian Federation and Moldova and to require reports on the compliance of the Russian Federation with its obligations as a member of the World Trade Organization, and for other purposes.

BILLS PRESENTED TO THE PRESIDENT

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported that on December 6, 2012, she presented to the President of the United States, for his approval, the following bill:

H.R. 6634. To change the effective date for the Internet publication of certain financial disclosure forms.

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, further reported that on December 7, 2012, she presented to the President of the United States, for his approval, the following bill:

H.R. 6156. To authorize the extension of nondiscriminatory treatment (normal trade relations treatment) to products of the Russian Federation and Moldova and to require reports on the compliance of the Russian Federation with its obligations as a member of the World Trade Organization, and for other purposes.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 9 o'clock and 2 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Wednesday, December 12, 2012, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

EXPENDITURE REPORTS CONCERNING OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL

Reports concerning the foreign currencies and U.S. dollars utilized for Official Foreign Travel during the third and fourth quarters of 2012 pursuant to Public Law 95-384 are as follows:

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, ROBERT KAREM, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN OCT. 14 AND OCT. 21, 2012

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem ¹		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²
Robert Karem	10/15	10/16	France		155.00						155.00
	10/16	10/18	Senegal		204.00						204.00
	10/18	10/19	Mali		109.00						109.00
	10/19	10/20	Burkina Faso		184.00						184.00
Committee total					652.00						652.00

¹ Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.
² If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.

MR. ROBERT STORY KAREM, Nov. 19, 2012.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, DELEGATION TO BELGIUM AND THE UNITED KINGDOM, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN OCT. 14 AND OCT. 19, 2012

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem ¹		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²
Anne Thorsen	10/14	10/16	Belgium		546.00		3,076.90				2,622.90
Tom Wickham	10/14	10/16	Belgium		546.00		3,076.90				2,622.90
Kyle Nevins	10/14	10/16	Belgium		546.00		3,076.90				2,622.90
Anne Thorsen	10/16	10/19	United Kingdom		1,497.00						1,497.00
Tom Wickham	10/16	10/19	United Kingdom		1,497.00						1,497.00
Kyle Nevins	10/16	10/19	United Kingdom		1,497.00						1,497.00
Jo-Marie St. Martin Green	10/15	10/19	United Kingdom		1,497.00		1,164.40				2,661.40
Committee total											15,021.10

¹ Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.
² If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.
³ Airfare all inclusive.

HON. JOHN A. BOEHNER, Speaker of the House, Nov. 16, 2012.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, DELEGATION TO CANADA, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN OCT. 21 AND OCT. 26, 2012

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem ¹		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²
Ethan Lauer	10/21	10/26		2,729.86	2,765.80	1,627.81	1,649.25			4,357.65	4,415.05
Kirk Boyle	10/21	10/26		2,729.86	2,765.80	1,331.56	1,349.10			4,061.41	4,114.90
Committee total											8,529.95

¹ Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.
² If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.

MR. ETHAN LAUER, Nov. 14, 2012.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN JULY 1 AND SEPT. 30, 2012

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem ¹		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²
Hon. Tim Holden	6/30	7/01	Latvia		382.14		(3)				382.14
	7/01	7/03	Kazakhstan		720.00		(3)				720.00
	7/03	7/05	Kyrgyz Republic		402.00		(3)				402.00
	7/05	7/06	Tajikistan		198.00		(3)				198.00
	7/06	7/07	Uzbekistan		289.16		(3)				289.16
	7/07	7/08	Spain		323.55		(3)				323.55
Hon. Rick Crawford	8/02	8/04	Panama		354.97		(3)				354.97
	8/04	8/06	Columbia		824.33		(3)				824.33
Hon. Tim Holden	8/10	8/12	Morocco		496.05		(3)				496.05
	8/12	8/15	Kenya		1,050.00		(3)				1,050.00
	8/15	8/15	South Sudan				(3)				
	8/15	8/18	Tanzania		563.10		(3)				563.10
	8/18	8/19	Spain		220.69		(3)				220.69
Hon. Terri Sewell	8/10	8/12	Morocco		496.05		(3)				496.05
	8/12	8/15	Kenya		1,050.00		(3)				1,050.00
	8/15	8/15	South Sudan				(3)				
	8/15	8/18	Tanzania		563.10		(3)				563.10
	8/18	8/19	Spain		220.69		(3)				220.69
Committee total					8,154.49						8,154.49

¹ Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.
² If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.
³ Military air transportation.

HON. FRANK D. LUCAS, Chairman, Nov. 15, 2012.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS,
ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

8667. A letter from the Acting Administrator, General Services Administration, transmitting a report of a violation of the Antideficiency Act by the Working Capital Fund, Treasury Symbol 47X 4540, pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 1517(b); to the Committee on Appropriations.

8668. A letter from the Acting Administrator, General Services Administration, transmitting a report of a violation of the Antideficiency Act by the Working Capital Fund, Treasury Symbol 47X 4542, pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 1517(b); to the Committee on Appropriations.

8669. A letter from the Attorney, Legal Division, Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection, transmitting the Bureau's final rule — Delayed Implementation of Certain New Mortgage Disclosures [Docket No.: CFPB-2012-0045] (RIN: 3170-AA32) received November 27, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

8670. A letter from the Chief Counsel, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Suspension of Community Eligibility [Docket ID: FEMA-2012-0003] [Internal Agency Docket No.: FEMA-8255] received November 28, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

8671. A letter from the Chief Counsel, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Suspension of Community Eligibility [Docket ID: FEMA-2012-0003] [Internal Agency Docket No.: FEMA-8257] received November 28, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

8672. A letter from the Assistant Secretary For Export Administration, Department of Commerce, transmitting the Department's final rule — Addition of Certain persons to the Entity List [Docket No.: 12100957-2527-01] (RIN: 0694-AF80) received November 28, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

8673. A letter from the Acting Director, International Cooperation, Department of Defense, transmitting Pursuant to Section 27(f) of the Arms Export Control Act and Section 1(f) of Executive Order 11958, Transmittal No. 10-12 informing of an intent to sign the Capability Management Updates Project Arrangement pursuant to the memorandum of the Understanding between Australia, Canada, Denmark, Republic of Italy, Kingdom of Norway, United Kingdom, and the United States; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

8674. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting Transmittal No. DDTC 12-145, pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(d) of the Arms Export Control Act; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

8675. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting pursuant to section 3(d) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended, certification regarding the proposed transfer of major defense equipment (Transmittal No. RSAT-12-2912); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

8676. A letter from the Assistant Legal Adviser for Treaty Affairs, Department of State, transmitting report prepared by the Department of State concerning international agreements other than treaties entered into by the United States to be transmitted to the Congress within the sixty-day period specified in the Case-Zablocki Act; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

8677. A letter from the Associate Director, Department of the Treasury, transmitting the Department's final rule — Cuban Assets Control Regulations received November 29, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

8678. A letter from the Honorary Secretary, Foundation of Japanese Honorary Debts, transmitting the 216th petition to the Prime Minister of Japan; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

8679. A letter from the Special Assistant to the President and Director, Office of Administration, transmitting the personnel report for personnel employed in the White House Office, the Executive Residence at the White House, the Office of the Vice President, the Office of Policy Development, and the Office of Administration for FY 2012, pursuant to 3 U.S.C. 113; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

8680. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the semiannual report from the Department of Health and Human Services Office of Inspector General for the period ending September 30, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. app. (Insp. Gen. Act) section 5(b); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

8681. A letter from the Deputy Secretary, Department of the Interior, transmitting the Department's semiannual report from the office of the Inspector General for the period April 1, 2012 through September 30, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. app. (Insp. Gen. Act), section 5(b); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

8682. A letter from the Presiding Governor, Broadcasting Board of Governors, transmitting the semiannual report on the activities of the Office of Inspector General for the period from April 1, 2012 to September 30, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. app. (Insp. Gen. Act), section 5(b); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

8683. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Labor, transmitting the Semiannual Report of the Inspector General for the period April 1, 2012 through September 30, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. app. (Insp. Gen. Act), section 5(b); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

8684. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting the Inspector General's semiannual report to Congress for the reporting period April 1, 2012 through September 30, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. app. (Insp. Gen. Act), section 5(b); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

8685. A letter from the Senior Counsel for Regulatory Affairs, Department of the Treasury, transmitting the Department's final rule — Federal Benefit Payments Under Certain District of Columbia Retirement Plans (RIN: 1505-AC02) received November 28, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

8686. A letter from the Special Assistant to the President and Director, Executive Office of the President, Office of Administration, transmitting accounting expenditures from the Unanticipated Needs Account for fiscal year 2012, pursuant to 3 U.S.C. 108; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

8687. A letter from the Chairman, Federal Labor Relations Authority, transmitting the semiannual report of the Inspector General of the Federal Labor Relations Board for the period April 1, 2012 through September 30, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. app. (Insp. Gen. Act), section 5(b); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

8688. A letter from the Chairman, Federal Maritime Commission, transmitting the

Commission's Performance and Accountability Report for FY 2012; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

8689. A letter from the Senior Procurement Executive, Deputy Chief Acquisition Officer, General Services Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Federal Acquisition Regulation; Interagency Acquisitions: Compliance by Nondefense Agencies with Defense Procurement Requirements [FAC 2005-62; FAR Case 2012-010; Item II; Docket 2012-0000, Sequence 01] (RIN: 90000-AM36) received December 7, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

8690. A letter from the Senior Procurement Executive, Deputy Chief Acquisition Officer, General Services Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Federal Acquisition Regulation; Updates to Contract Reporting and Central Contractor Registration [FAC 2005-62; FAR Case 2010-014; Item I; Docket 2010-0014, Sequence 01] (RIN: 9000-AL99) received December 7, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

8691. A letter from the Senior Procurement Executive, Deputy Chief Acquisition Officer, General Services Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Federal Acquisition Regulation; Federal Acquisition Circular 2005-62; Small Entity Compliance Guide [Docket: FAR 2012-0081, Sequence 7] received December 7, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

8692. A letter from the Chief Information Officer, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Update of Existing Privacy Act — NASA Regulations [Document Number NASA-NASA-2012-0005] (RIN: 2700-AD86) received November 28, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

8693. A letter from the Chairman, National Labor Relations Board, transmitting the Board's semiannual report from the office of the Inspector General for the period April 1, 2012 through September 30, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. app. (Insp. Gen. Act), section 5(b); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

8694. A letter from the Director, Office of Personnel Management, transmitting the Office's final rule — Federal Employees Health Benefits Program Coverage for Certain Intermittent Employees (RIN: 3206-AM74) received November 28, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

8695. A letter from the Director, Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, transmitting the Corporation's Performance and Accountability Report for fiscal year 2012, as required under OMB Circular No. A-11 and A136; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

8696. A letter from the Vice Chairman, Postal Service, transmitting the Semiannual Report of the Inspector General for the period of April 1, 2012 through September 30, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. app. (Insp. Gen. Act), section 5(b); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

8697. A letter from the Branch Chief, Endangered Species Listings, Department of the Interior, transmitting the Department's final rule — Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Designation of Revised Critical Habitat for the Northern Spotted Owl [FWS-R1-ES-2011-0112] (RIN: 1018-AX69) received November 29, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

8698. A letter from the Acting Deputy Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFIS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric

Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pollock in Statistical Area 620 in the Gulf of Alaska [Docket No.: 111207737-2141-02] (RIN: 0648-XC319) received December 7, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

8699. A letter from the Acting Deputy Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pacific Cod by Catcher/Processors Using Trawl Gear in the Western Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Alaska [Docket No.: 111207737-2141-02] (RIN: 0648-XC211) received December 7, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

8700. A letter from the Acting Deputy Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Magnuson-Stevens Act Provisions; Fisheries Off the West Coast States; Pacific Coast Groundfish Fishery; Pacific Whiting and Non-Whiting Allocations; Pacific Whiting Seasons [Docket No.: 100804324-1265-02] (RIN: 0648-XC302) received December 7, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

8701. A letter from the Chief Counsel, FEMA, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Debris Removal: Eligibility of Force Account Labor Straight-Time Costs under the Public Assistance Program for Hurricane Sandy [Docket ID: FEMA-2012-0004] (RIN: 1660-AA75) received November 26, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

8702. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Branded Prescription Drug Fee; Guidance for the 2013 Fee Year [Notice 2012-74] received November 29, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

8703. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Update of Weighted Average Interest Rates, Yield Curves, and Segement Rates [Notice 2012-66] received December 7, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

8704. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Salvage Discount Factors and Payment Patterns for 2012 (Rev. Proc. 2012-45) received December 7, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

8705. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — 2012 Base Period T-Bill Rate (Rev. Rul. 2012-22) received December 7, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

8706. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — 2012-2013 Special Per Diem Rates [Notice 2012-63] received December 7, 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. H. Res. 827. A resolution providing for consideration of motions to suspend the rules (Rept. 112-700). 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. BERMAN (for himself and Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia):

H.R. 6644. A bill to establish a framework for effective, transparent, and accountable United States foreign assistance, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committees on Ways and Means, Oversight and Government Reform, Armed Services, and Rules, 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. HERGER:

H.R. 6645. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to save and strengthen the Medicare program; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committees on Energy and Commerce, and Rules, 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. BUCHANAN (for himself and Mr. JONES):

H.R. 6646. A bill to prohibit United States assistance to the country of Egypt; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas (for himself, Mr. BRADY of Texas, and Mr. MARCHANT):

H.R. 6647. A bill to rename section 219(c) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 as the Kay Bailey Hutchison Spousal IRA; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. KUCINICH:

H.R. 6648. A bill to provide for the establishment of the Post Office Consumer Action Group, Incorporated; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN (for herself and Mr. BERMAN):

H.R. 6649. A bill to provide for the transfer of naval vessels to certain foreign recipients; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. KUCINICH (for himself, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. MICHAUD, and Mr. MORAN):

H. Res. 828. A resolution calling for the unconditional release of Nasrin Sotoudeh and all prisoners of conscience in Iran, and the utilization by the United States of direct multilateral and bilateral diplomacy with Iran to address Iran's human rights situation; 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. BERMAN:

H.R. 6644.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is introduced pursuant to the authority delineated in Article I section I,

which includes an implied power for the Congress to regulate the conduct of the United States with respect to foreign affairs.

By Mr. HERGER:

H.R. 6645.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1.

By Mr. BUCHANAN:

H.R. 6646.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 9 of the U.S. Constitution.

By Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas:

H.R. 6647.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1.

By Mr. KUCINICH:

H.R. 6648.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 7 which provides Congress with the power to establish and regulate the United States postal system.

By Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN:

H.R. 6649.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8 of the constitution.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions as follows:

H.R. 181: Mr. TIERNEY.

H.R. 1448: Mr. DEFAZIO.

H.R. 1897: Mr. FRANKS of Arizona and Mr. DOGGETT.

H.R. 2104: Mr. LATHAM.

H.R. 2595: Ms. ESHOO.

H.R. 2701: Mr. CICILLINE.

H.R. 2770: Mr. CRAVAACK.

H.R. 3014: Mr. DAVIS of Illinois.

H.R. 3506: Mr. YODER.

H.R. 3627: Mr. BLUMENAUER.

H.R. 3652: Mr. GOODLATTE.

H.R. 3713: Mr. BURTON of Indiana and Mr. CARNAHAN.

H.R. 4209: Mr. WELCH.

H.R. 4216: Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California.

H.R. 4336: Mr. BILIRAKIS.

H.R. 4390: Mr. CUMMINGS.

H.R. 5741: Mr. WELCH.

H.R. 5943: Mr. LOESACK.

H.R. 6154: Mr. SCHWEIKERT and Mr. PASTOR of Arizona.

H.R. 6322: Mr. HARPER.

H.R. 6364: Mr. GRAVES of Missouri and Mrs. HARTZLER.

H.R. 6388: Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California.

H.R. 6437: Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia and Ms. MCCOLLUM.

H.R. 6446: Mr. GUTHRIE.

H.R. 6490: Mr. SHUSTER, Mr. GRAVES of Georgia, Mr. TURNER of New York, Ms. PINGREE of Maine, Ms. TSONGAS, Mr. PLATTS, Mr. LUETKEMEYER, Mr. BILIRAKIS, Mr. ROGERS of Michigan, Mrs. CAPITO, and Mr. ACKERMAN.

H.R. 6504: Mr. KEATING.

H.R. 6575: Mr. BOSWELL, Mr. KING of Iowa, and Mr. LOESACK.

H.R. 6590: Mr. CARNEY, Ms. NORTON, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, and Mr. RUSH.

H.R. 6613: Mr. LYNCH.

H.R. 6628: Mr. MICHAUD and Mr. COSTA.

H. Con. Res. 116: Mr. MCDERMOTT.

H. Con. Res. 142: Mr. TERRY, Mr. GUTHRIE, Mr. NUNNELEE, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. OLSON, and Mr. PEARCE.

H. Res. 193: Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mr. BERMAN, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. JONES, Mr. OLVER, Mr. TOWNS, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. KEATING, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. KILDEE, Mr. ACKERMAN, Ms. BROWN of Flor-

ida, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. SIRES, Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. MCGOVERN, Ms. SCHWARTZ, Mr. LYNCH, Mr. MILLER of North Carolina, Mr. WELCH, Mr. PETERS, Mrs. MALONEY, and Mr. MEEKS.

H. Res. 824: Mr. WALBERG, Mrs. MYRICK, Mr. MULVANEY, Mr. SCHOCK, Mrs. LUMMIS, Mr. MANZULLO, Mr. FLORES, Mr. NEUGEBAUER, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. BRADY of Texas, and Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas.