

we can, that invests where we must, that grows jobs, and ends the painful consequences of sequestration.

The absolute misery here is that all of this dysfunction could have been avoided. We could have avoided the reach to yet another kicking of the can down the road if we would come together at the conference table and do a real budget. We could reach through a budget process; we could reach to regular order.

With many of my colleagues, I have urged them that the leadership in the House resort to naming the panelists who will sit at that conference table to realize regular order through a budget process, a real budget process. That request has been turned down time and time again. The statements made in the past were, Well, the Senate hasn't moved on a budget, or We haven't heard from this entity about what their plans are.

Well, the truth be told, this year, the United States Senate passed its version of a budget. This House passed its version of a budget. The President and his administration have advanced their fiscal blueprint for the coming fiscal year.

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The entities have spoken. The process needs to be addressed and respected. We need to bring those panelists to the conference table—those who will represent Republicans and Democrats in the House of Representatives and in the United States Senate—to come to terms, to develop the compromise in the spirit by which our Founding Parents developed this wonderful blueprint of a Republic, guided by the democracy.

Why are we rejecting that opportunity?

A sound budget could allow us to escape the terrible consequences of sequestration.

I have witnessed what that sequestration has meant in my own district. During our 5½-week district work period, I visited with many of those Head Start programs, with Early Intervention, with nutrition programs, with food banks that address the nutrition needs of the people of this great Nation. I have worked with the small business community to understand more fully what the impact of sequestration might mean to them—cuts to research, to programs that have furloughed my Federal employees if given the opportunity to serve this Nation through their workforce.

All of that consequential damage could be avoided if we would resort to the soundness of the tool called the “budget.” The sequestration issue is painful. It's a hidden attack. It's mindless, thoughtless, and it has pervaded itself into the fabric of our communities—into the quality of life of the people who place within us the trust to be their voice in Washington.

So we need to do better than this paralysis that has stalled the process

that finds us at the midnight hour, searching for answers in the most unusual format that will resort to yet another kicking of the can down the road, that would use the smoke and mirrors to balance a budget for some uncertain period of time, that doesn't provide the predictability to the business community or to the working families of this Nation. The partnership with their government should be real. It should be stated in terms that allow for the respect of businesses to invest and hire and be productive.

We have had a plan in this House coming from the Democrats. Representative VAN HOLLEN has introduced a plan that will reduce the deficit in greater fashion and will avoid the painful consequences of sequestration.

PROTECTING THE FINANCIAL SOLVENCY OF THE UNITED STATES

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

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, I want to begin my remarks with a couple of comments about the budget process. I think my colleagues could be a little bit confused on this.

I will remind my colleagues that it is this body that every single year meets our statutory duty and our constitutional duty to bring forward a budget that funds the operations of the United States of America. We do not miss our deadlines, and this year, we did it. I know that the White House did their Sweet 16 bracket before they did their budget, but we were still pleased to see that they were willing to participate in that process, and we were pleased that our friends in the Senate, for the first time in 5 years, decided they would enter into the budget process.

We were very disappointed, quite frankly, when they said they would not move to the conference table with us until we agreed to a tax increase. That is what they want—an agreement to a tax increase in this kind of economy and with about 8 percent unemployment and with 20 million Americans either un- or underemployed? They want more taxes—more control over people's lives? We were not willing to do that.

We are continuing to stand and fight for the American people—for responsible government, for getting this budget balanced within the next decade, and for getting this country back on the road to fiscal health.

I will also remind my colleagues that one of the things we continue to hear from this White House and this administration is that they want a government shutdown. Now, they try to blame us—we realize that—but I've got to tell you that I've got a titanium backbone. Let them blame. Let them talk. It's fine. They want a government shutdown. For my colleagues, I would direct their attention to the Congressional Research Service for the summary of what happens in a government shutdown.

For the interest of my colleagues, Mr. Speaker, I will just walk through some of these points.

One of the reasons they want it is that the President wants control of the checkbook. Right now, the U.S. House of Representatives has that control, and we want to keep it. We don't want a government shutdown. We want to keep the government open and keep cutting it. We want to keep the government open so we can delay, defund, repeal, and replace ObamaCare. This budget process of going into a shutdown gives control to the administrative branch.

There is another little tidbit when you read this circular, and it directs you to the 2011 revision of Circular No. A-11. OMB's current instructions would have agency heads use the Department of Justice opinions. I can tell you the American people and a Republican-led House do not want Eric Holder and Barack Obama making the determination of who and what will be open in this Federal Government, what will be funded and what agencies are going to be working. We don't want to give them that responsibility. I know they want that. I know they're trying to get a government shutdown, but I have to tell you that that is not what we want.

What we are for, as I said, is of making certain that we protect the future and the financial solvency of this great Nation. One of the reasons we have worked so diligently on a budget for this body is that we know the cost and the impact that ObamaCare is going to have on the Nation's fiscal health, and we are very concerned about it. We see what is happening in our communities.

I just want to reference some of the correspondence and conversations I am having with my constituents in Tennessee.

Yesterday, I spoke with a gentleman who went to a check cashing store, borrowed \$400, started a retail business, now has 45 employees in five locations—a great business. What he is looking at is he can't expand. He can't hire anybody else. He is having to deal with all of the hoops that really weigh this business down, and it is because of ObamaCare.

COMPROMISE

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

Mr. HIMES. Mr. Speaker, I am happy to be able to follow the rank, partisan remarks of Mrs. BLACKBURN's, because I wanted to speak this morning on the subject of compromise.

Compromise is not an easy subject to speak on because, of course, we all have it in our minds here that the right thing to do is to lead great ideological battles—to stand unbending by your principles, to stand up for what you think is right—and it is the right thing to do to stand up for what you think is right.

Compromise is a hard thing to discuss because, of course, those on the