

honor of chairing several conference committees. Conference committees are set up when there's a disagreement between a House-passed bill and a Senate-passed bill. You sit down with your list of differences and you start sawing away at them, if you will.

That's, in fact, what the House has been doing the past 2 weeks in the midst of this shutdown. We've been finding some things, such as military pay, science, civilian furlough issues, and health-related issues—things that are less controversial and on which we can agree—so we can get some momentum to come up with a big agreement.

Indeed, the gap is large. We have disagreement on ObamaCare because it's one-sixth of the American economy. It's very big.

Secondly, we have a disagreement on the debt ceiling. Do we continue along the path of spending that we are on or do we make corrections?

Thirdly, we have a \$90 billion gap between our spending level between the House and the Senate.

These are big issues. Sometimes, a long journey starts with small steps. That's why I urge our friends in the Senate to pass the legislation which the House has sent over to them, and then we can start focusing on the larger issues.

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OPEN THE GOVERNMENT

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

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, we in Texas know that when the cattle starts stampeding, you're really in trouble; so my friends on the other side of the aisle haven't realized that the cattle in the United States is stampeding: 57,000 seats of Head Start are going; veterans centers will be closed in a couple of days; Federal courts are looking at whether or not they can stay open past October 15; U.S. attorneys are laying off various U.S. attorneys across America, up to 4,000.

We actually have rules in this House, the rules that brought about the agreement in the beginning of the year where we actually agreed to the 986 number that the Republicans had. We agreed to the tax reform that the Republicans had and Democrats agreed. But now they want to throw on us another supercommittee—fool's folly—talking about discretionary spending, the debt ceiling, and entitlement reform—all decent ideas, but open the government first.

Get the bill on the floor that is clean. Open the government. Raise the debt ceiling to pay our bills. Let the American people get back to work. Let our veterans get services. Stop throwing down another committee. We don't catch cattle. We don't go after cattle in Texas by throwing down a committee. We get it done.

Let's get the job done. Let's stop the stampede.

SPEAKER BOEHNER, LET YOUR PEOPLE GO

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MASSIE). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentleman from California (Mr. GARAMENDI) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, October 8. October 8. We are now 8 days into the shutdown of the government of the United States of America, presumed to be the strongest Nation on this Earth, presumed to be the greatest economic power, presumed to be the world's oldest democracy—perhaps oldest, but not functioning.

Why? Why are we in this situation? Eight days without a functioning government. What in the world is the Republican Party doing to this Nation? And why? Why? It's hard to say why because every day the goalpost changes. Every day a different demand. And today yet a new demand.

But what's the result of all of this? What does all of this mean? It means that this Nation is humiliated by this shutdown.

Speaker BOEHNER, let your people go. Speaker BOEHNER, let your people go and vote. Why not? We think there's a majority. Let's see here. There's 198 Democrats that will vote for the re-opening of this government tonight. Call us back into session, Mr. BOEHNER, 198 Democrats. And by the public record, there are 23 or more Republicans that have said they would vote for a clean CR. Mr. Speaker, let your people go and vote.

What does it mean that the government shut down? What does it mean to Americans? I'll tell you what it means in my district. It means that the day care centers, the early childhood education programs, the levee improvements, indeed, even today we've learned that the burials of those brave men and women—men, in this case—that have recently been killed in the war in Afghanistan, their families will not receive \$100,000 that's been set aside for them.

Oh, I know we have a vote here. This is the eighth day of the shutdown, and we have, in this House, passed eight bills to appropriate pieces of this government.

These are the 12 appropriation bills. These are the 12 appropriation bills that fund every function of government, whether it's the military, whether it's the farm programs, the day care programs, the health care programs, the Centers for Disease Control. Here they are, more than 1,000 specific items. And in 8 days, our Republican colleagues have put before us eight bills to fund eight of the more than 1,000. At this rate, it will be 2020 before this government fully is functional. How foolish. How stupid. How humiliating for this Nation.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, let your people vote. Let us vote. Let us vote on reopening this government. The votes

are there. A simple blackboard will tell you the votes are there. Tonight, call us back to session, and tomorrow morning the people of America, the people across this world will see the strongest Nation in the world, the government of that Nation functioning once again.

How do I go back to my district and tell the people at the Dixon National Cemetery that those burials aren't going to take place? How do I go back to my district and tell them—yeah, maybe we ought to see this.

In California, northern California, it's hunting season, opened on Saturday, but the refuges across this great Nation are closed to hunters, the duck hunters, the men and women that want to recreate in those areas. And if you're not a hunter, maybe you're a fisherman, but don't go to a refuge. Don't go to the Bureau of Land Management fishing areas. Don't try to put your boat in the water at the national parks. You can't do it because this government is shut down.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, let your people vote. Let us all vote. Let us reopen this government.

We have several of my colleagues with me tonight. We're going to cover this issue. How much I would prefer to be here with my colleagues from New York and other States to talk about putting Americans back to work. And I guess we are, in a way, putting the Federal employees back to work.

Mr. PAUL TONKO from the great State of New York, thanks for joining us once again.

Mr. TONKO. My pleasure. I appreciate the gentleman from California bringing us together tonight in thoughtful discussion about what is chaos here in the Nation's Capitol. So, Representative GARAMENDI, thank you for bringing us together with Representatives from New Jersey and from Connecticut and from Pennsylvania, and others who will probably join us that will speak to the unnecessary pain that has trickled into the lives of far too many working families across this country and impacting so many small businesses from coast to coast with the ill effects of a government shutdown—a Republican government shutdown simply because, as you just heard the gentleman from California indicate, we need to vote on a CR, a continuing resolution, a bill that allows for the budget to continue into a date certain as mentioned in that bill, most likely 2 months—8 weeks—as an extender into perhaps mid-December.

Why do we need to do that? So that we can bring stability into the process, allow government to be funded, allow for the doors to be opened, allow for the lights to go on and reopen government. That's the first step in the sequence.

Secondly, another cornerstone bit of legislation coming quickly upon us, giving the green light to America to pay her bills. America's working families understand what that's about.