

REPUBLICAN SHUTDOWN HAS
BEEN A DISASTER

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, the Republican government shutdown has been a disaster. A lot of people all across this country have been hurt. Hopefully, the press reports that I am reading this morning are true and that, by the end of the day, this House of Representatives will support a Senate compromise that will reopen our government and will avoid our defaulting on our debt. So, I hope that in a bipartisan way, before this day is out, we can come together and do that.

This shutdown and this threat of default has made this Chamber look ridiculous. People of every political persuasion are disappointed in the behavior, especially of some elements of this House that have driven us to this shutdown and threatened a default of our Nation for the first time in history.

END HUNGER NOW

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I just want to take a few minutes here to speak about another aspect of this shutdown and, indeed, some of the policies that we have approved of here in this House of Representatives, policies that have adversely impacted most, especially the poor and the hungry and the vulnerable.

We have 50 million people in the United States of America who are hungry; 17 million are children. This shutdown and this sequester and the farm bill that this House of Representatives approved goes after the very programs that provide so many of our needy people in this country food. That is it, nothing else but food.

We have a hunger problem in the United States of America, and we all should be ashamed of that. This shutdown, coupled with the sequester, has threatened programs like WIC—the Women, Infants, and Children program. It has gone after the SNAP program, which used to be known as food stamps, threatening the amount that people get to be able to put food on their tables. It has threatened funding for food banks. We have had food banks all across this country that have shut down because of the sequester and also because of what this shutdown has done.

We are a much better country than that. I know that the majority of people in this Chamber, deep down, care about the most vulnerable, but we haven't acted that way. There is a pattern in this House of Representatives and this Republican-led Congress that has diminished the plight of poor people, that has trivialized the need for people to be able to put food on their tables for their families and for their children.

We passed a farm bill in the Congress here that cuts food stamps by \$40 billion. That would mean 3.8 million peo-

ple who currently rely on this benefit would be thrown off the program. We would literally be taking food away from families who need it. It would throw hundreds of thousands of children off the free breakfast and lunch program at school. That cut would result in over 170,000 veterans being thrown off that program. Veterans—men and women who have served our country overseas in battle, who are having trouble finding a job, getting stability in their lives, who need this program to be able to put food on their tables for themselves and their families—we are going to throw them off the program. That is just not right. That is just not right.

The farm bill is going to go to conference, and my hope is that we can come to some sort of a bipartisan agreement to reverse kind of the negative aspects of what the House has done. We can do much better. We can do much better. We need to do much better.

Mr. Speaker, it is not fashionable in this House of Representatives to worry about the poor, I guess maybe because they don't have super PACs; they don't donate to our campaigns; they don't have big lobbies here in Washington. But if government stands for anything, we need to stand for those people. Donald Trump doesn't need us, doesn't need government; but some returning veteran who cannot find a job, or some single mother who is trying to raise her kids and doesn't have enough to put food on the table, or some unemployed man who has worked all of his life and all of a sudden because of this lousy economy has found himself without a job and is trying to support his family, they need us, and we need to be there for them. That should not be a controversial or radical idea; yet, in this House of Representatives, it has been. So, from the shutdown to the sequester to the farm bill, over and over and over again, we have targeted the most vulnerable.

Mr. Speaker, we need to reverse this trend. When this is all over with, I hope we can come together in a bipartisan way and actually talk about hunger; and I hope that the White House will come forward and embrace a White House conference on food and nutrition so we can have some leadership at the national level to come up with a plan to end hunger and to end poverty in this country.

TIME TO END SHUTDOWN AND GO
TO WORK ON LONG-TERM PROBLEMS

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

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, it is a rather important day today. Sometime today or in the next 24 hours, the United States Treasury will run out of its ability to borrow money, that is, to roll over its debt, to pay all of the obli-

gations that the United States Government has.

I guess, even this morning, we remain the world's biggest economy. We certainly remain the oldest democracy; although, that seems to be somewhat in doubt here on the floor of the House of Representatives where we don't operate as a democracy. We really operate more as a dictatorship, or at least as an oligarchy, in which one or two or a handful of people makes the decision for the majority of the House.

It is a very, very, very important moment that this Nation moves towards, the moment in which it, for the first time in its history, would default on its payments, default on its debt. We have already seen the effects of this. Banks all around the world are selling, that is, getting out of America's short-term obligations or those obligations, bonds, that are due now or in the next week or so. So they are shedding American debt. They are running away from the world's reserve currency.

Why?

Because this House, the House of Representatives, the people's House, is being jerked around, led around by a small contingent of folks who is not thinking clearly, who is not willing to understand the import, the importance, of the soundness of the American dollar, the importance of the full faith and credit of this Nation, of the 200-plus years of history where this House, where this government, where the people of America have always stood behind its obligations. But that group of individuals who is unwilling to be rational, who is the Tea Party faction of the Republican Party, seems to want to take this Nation into a new era, an era in which the world cannot count on the United States of America.

We are also in the 16th day of the shutdown of the United States Government in which the United States Government is only partially operating; in which the national parks, with the exception of just three, are not open; where the Fish and Wildlife Service's refuges are not available to the public, where much of the government is not operating. We are in the 16th day. Why? Why are we in this situation?

When it started 16 days ago, it was to end the Affordable Health Care Act, and then it was to modify it, and then it was to change it, and then it was to delay it, and now it is not even on the agenda.

So why are we still shut down?

There is no reason that is being presented other than what you might see in a preschool class with some kid who is too tired and is down on the floor, throwing a tantrum, screaming and yelling and trying to stop everything. Kid, get your blanket. Get your bottle and take a nap.

We don't need tantrums around here, but apparently that is the only reason the government continues to be shut down, because some 40 or 50 Members of the Tea Party caucus of the Republican Party are throwing a tantrum, led by Senator CRUZ.