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CLEAN ENERGY FUTURE

(Mrs. CAPPS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, it is no secret that power generation produces the vast majority of carbon pollution that is causing climate change. In order to mitigate the impacts of climate change, we have no choice but to find cleaner, more sustainable energy sources. The good news is we have been making progress. For example, thanks to both Federal and private investments, my district on California's central coast is now home to two of the largest operating solar farms in the world, and more are on the way.

I had the pleasure of visiting these facilities last week, and they are truly a sight to behold. Together, the California Valley Solar Ranch and the Topaz Solar Farms are already generating 550 megawatts of electricity and powering hundreds of thousands of California homes. The clean energy generated from these two projects alone is equivalent to removing 135,000 cars from our roads. Not to mention that these projects have also created hundreds of local construction jobs.

There is no silver bullet to stopping climate change, but renewable energy is certainly a big step in the right direction. I urge my colleagues to join in in helping to stop climate change. Let's invest in a clean energy future.

RIGHT TO LIFE

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

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. Speaker, this week the congressional conversation is on spending, the national debt, and rightfully so. The budget work in the past 3 years has only made a dent in the looming debt crisis in our future, but America's story is about more than budget and spending. America is about its people, their opportunity and hope and dream for a better future for all of our children.

A few months ago, the March of Dimes released its scorecard for premature birth rates in Oklahoma. We lowered our preterm birth rate for the third year in a row in Oklahoma. That is good. Every child is a gift of God, and they should have a chance to live to his or her fullest potential. We all know that a baby in the womb is not tissue; that is a child. A child that should have the same opportunity, the same chance for hope, the same dreams for a better future. That dream begins with the opportunity for life.

How can we as a Nation work so hard to prevent premature births so each child can reach their full potential and then be callous to the reality that some children will never have the chance to even be born? That is why

Americans will stand on the National Mall for the March for Life January 22. We are Americans. We believe in the inherent right to life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness. That right extends to all people, regardless of their size.

EXTEND EMERGENCY UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS

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

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, here we go again, another week, another bill, another missed opportunity to extend emergency unemployment benefits for 1.4 million Americans.

Today, the House will be voting on the 2014 omnibus spending bill, but one key part is missing: an extension of emergency unemployment benefits. To add insult to injury, on Friday, this body will adjourn for another week of recess without addressing this issue, leaving 1.4 million Americans without this critical lifeline, a number that grows every day. It is terrible for these families and for our economy.

Just yesterday, I spoke with a constituent, Margaret, a mother of four who is suffering with Parkinson's disease whose benefits were cut. She has worked her whole life. This is the first time she has ever had to ask for help. She is among more than 4,900 Rhode Island families and 1.4 million Americans who are struggling to find work and need this insurance to help them survive.

We should not adjourn before resolving this issue, and I urge my colleagues to press the Speaker to bring a bill to the floor to extend emergency unemployment insurance today.

CONGRATULATING DRESS FOR SUCCESS MIAMI

(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, Dress for Success is celebrating 20 years of service to Miami-Dade County residents who have benefited through its training and clothing programs. This noble organization promotes self-sufficiency to low-income women by providing professional attire, while equipping them with the tools and resources to help them thrive in work and in life.

Over 35,000 women in Miami have already succeeded and transitioned from unemployment to economic independence. We have seen that when women have the possibility to earn an income, find stability, and invest back into their communities, they successfully break the dreadful cycle of poverty.

The Dress for Success celebration will also honor the first woman to serve as president of any State senate in the United States, Florida Senator Gwen Margolis. I have had the pleasure of knowing Gwen for over 30 years and

can testify on her commitment to public service, to our community, and to her many capacities as a member of the Miami-Dade County Commission, the Florida House of Representatives, and the Florida Senate.

I thank Florida Senator Gwen Margolis and Dress for Success Miami for what they do on behalf of low-income women of south Florida.

ECONOMY PRIORITY NUMBER ONE

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

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to advocate for the 1.3 million Americans and their families who have been hit hardest by this recession. Affording the most basic necessities—food, transportation, rent, and health care—just got even harder. Their needs are not extravagant. The benefits of unemployment insurance are not a blank check. They are a modest lifeline for families who are in need of desperate help over the holidays and in a cold winter.

Since Congress has failed to act, over 60,000 residents of Massachusetts have lost access to these benefits. If we fail to do so, 140,000 more residents of our State are in jeopardy. At a time when the State's overall jobless rate is around 7 percent, and rises to 12 or 13 percent in some of our most challenged communities, to not extend these benefits today is wrong.

My colleagues that are blocking this bill will tell you they are concerned with the number of people accessing these benefits. Well, you know what? So am I, and cutting those benefits off today is wrong.

The funding that we seek today is an essential lifeline for these individuals at a time when we need to be expanding workforce development programs, workforce training programs, community colleges, vocational schools, and STEM education. We have to support our small businesses, an economic engine for so many American communities. I am in support of transportation upgrades, investments in infrastructure, and affordable housing.

While there is a whole lot we should be working on right now, getting our economy going again and getting people back up should be priority number one.

FLEXIBILITY TO PROMOTE REEMPLOYMENT ACT

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

Mr. RENACCI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge support for the Flexibility to Promote Reemployment Act. Under the Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012, States were granted unprecedented flexibility in the use of unemployment insurance funds to help unemployed individuals

collect paychecks instead of benefit checks.

Unfortunately for States, the DOL issued restrictive, burdensome, and costly application requirements. To date, one State has completed the application process, only to have the application swiftly denied. The Flexibility to Promote Reemployment Act increases flexibility in the use of State UI funds by enabling the DOL to revisit current application guidance and allow States to operate demonstration projects that test alternative means of helping the unemployed return to work.

At a time when our unemployment rate remains unacceptably high, we need to be doing everything we can to advance solutions that will promote job creation. I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support this commonsense legislation.

EMERGENCY UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS

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

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, on December 28, 3 days after Christmas, this Federal Government allowed 1.3 million American families to be cut off of long-term unemployment insurance. It comes at a time when we are in the dead of winter, at a time when construction employment is dormant, when agriculture is not hiring. It comes at a time when the national unemployment rate is close on 7 percent, when the national long-term unemployment rate is 2.6 percent, which is twice what it ever was when we ever cut off long-term unemployment before, going back to 1959. It comes at a time when jobs growth is its weakest in 3 years, and it comes at a time when we know it is going to cost 240,000 jobs for our economy. This is money, Mr. Speaker, that goes right back into the economy because people are living hand to mouth on these checks and they need to spend it right away.

At this point, Mr. Speaker, I urge you to bring up the modest 90-day extension for unemployment insurance before we break for recess.

GROW ECONOMY, NOT FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

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

Mr. YODER. Mr. Speaker, the new year is an opportunity for Congress to get back to work for the American people, and that means supporting good-paying jobs and a growing economy.

Over the coming weeks, we are going to hear debating of proposals that would put more people on unemployment support for longer periods of time. Frankly, Mr. Speaker, that is the wrong direction for our country.

What the American people want and need are greater job opportunities, not

bigger government programs. Let's grow the economy, not the Federal Government. Mr. Speaker, we live in the land of opportunity, the greatest Nation on Earth, a place for everyone. No matter what their economic or racial or socioeconomic background, everyone has a chance to live the American Dream.

The policies of bailouts, borrowing, and Big Government only serve to threaten those opportunities. Rather than focus on expanding government programs, let's expand opportunity. Let's empower the American people to grow and build and create. Let's focus on bills that create more opportunities for employment, and let's come together to help honest, hardworking Americans realize the great American Dream.

RAISE MINIMUM WAGE

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

Ms. HAHN. Mr. Speaker, the Federal minimum wage has remained the same for 4 years and has failed to keep up with the cost of living. According to the recently released Shriver Report, nearly two-thirds of minimum wage workers are women, and 42 million American women either live in poverty or are right on the brink of it. This is wrong. No one who works hard at a full-time job to provide for their children and family should be living in poverty.

Today, with one in five children in America still living in poverty, we must act and pass the Fair Minimum Wage Act, which would increase the Federal minimum wage to \$10.10 an hour for American workers over the next 3 years. This modest increase would raise the wages of approximately 30 million Americans and bring over 4.5 million people above the poverty line. Increasing the minimum wage to \$10.10 an hour will not only put more money into the pockets of those in need, but it will infuse an additional \$51 billion into our economy.

Mr. Speaker, this will not be a job killer; it actually will help to create 140,000 new jobs. Our success as a Nation hinges on the success of women. When women succeed, America succeeds.

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE EXTENSION

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

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, because of the House Republican leadership's inaction, 3 days after Christmas, 127,000 New Yorkers were cut off from their jobless benefits. Every week in 2014, another 5,100 working families in New York lose unemployment compensation. These families are struggling to make ends meet and put food on the table.

This inaction not only harms dislocated workers who stop receiving a check in the mail, but it also slows economic growth. When families have to further cut spending, there is a ripple effect. As families spend less on necessities like food and clothing, local businesses take a hit. Indeed, it has been estimated that failing to pass an unemployment insurance extension will cost our economy 310,000 new jobs.

Mr. Speaker, this could end today. Let's do what is right for working families and for the American economy. Let's reinstate unemployment insurance, and let's do so now.

WAR ON POVERTY

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

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I rise to remind my colleagues that the war on poverty, begun 50 years ago by President Johnson, is still relevant today. As we debate the great issues, we must not forget that nearly 50 million Americans in 2012 were below the poverty level, and that includes 13 million children. Most startling, Mr. Speaker, 16 million of those live below half of the poverty line. Were it not for the safety net that some want to dismantle, 41 million more would live in poverty.

It is undeniable that the poverty rate has decreased, but the fact remains that the face of poverty continues to be low-income Whites and racial minorities and females and children. The omnibus bill will continue to dismantle nondefense discretionary spending to a level that will reverse the gains made over the past 50 years.

I plead with my colleagues to be vigilant in our fight to end poverty in America. Our oath requires us to provide for the common defense, but it also requires that we provide for the common good and enable every American to achieve the American Dream.

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WAR ON POVERTY

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

Ms. TITUS. Mr. Speaker, 50 years ago, President Johnson declared an unconditional war on poverty in America and established landmark programs—such as Head Start, Medicare, and Job Corps—that were designed to give all Americans the opportunity to succeed.

These programs have had a substantial impact, cutting poverty by one-third since 1967. Despite the progress, however, we still have a lot to do.

Today, 100 million Americans live in or near the brink of poverty, including 42 million women and 28 million children. In Nevada, nearly 18 percent of women and 24 percent of children live in poverty, a situation made even