

as an intern. In 1985, he was promoted to community development director. In 1988, he continued his career as the community development director for the city of Downey. He later became Downey's assistant city manager and director of economic development. He served as the city manager in the city of South Pasadena for 4 years before coming to the city of Signal Hill.

Under his guidance, the city of Signal Hill established three commercial centers, the Town Center North, the Town Center West, and the Signal Hill Gateway Center.

He facilitated the relocation of a Mercedes Benz dealership to Signal Hill and the expansion of the Glenn E. Thomas Dodge dealership, growing sales and tax revenues from \$6 million to more than \$12 million. Additionally, he completed the development of six community parks and a new police station.

Ken has been active in regional issues, also, and he has been a leader with expertise on water issues, working with 27 of the area's Gateway Cities Council of Governments on water, storm water, and urban runoff regulations and practices.

He has served as the chair of the city manager's steering committee for the Gateway Cities manager's group, and he was a member of the water quality task force for the League of California Cities.

As you can tell, I respect and admire Ken Farfsing's leadership and service to the community of Signal Hill, and he will be greatly missed. I want to wish him the very best as he retires. His impact on the city of Signal Hill will always be remembered.

Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to ask all my distinguished colleagues to join me in thanking Ken Farfsing for his 19 years of public service within the city of Signal Hill.

□ 1100

POWER OF THE PURSE ACT OF 2015

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

Mr. RIBBLE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Power of the Purse Act of 2015. I wrote this bill to restore Congress' ability to set priorities within Federal spending and, quite frankly, to better control it. To do that, my bill simply removes the firewall that exists within sequestration between defense spending and non-discretionary spending. It allows Congress to regain the power of the purse so that we can take discretionary spending and take defense spending, but right now, the firewall requires us to spend equally on both. The Constitution gives the power of the purse clearly to Congress, and, as elected Representatives, we have an obligation to make the hard choices about where your tax dollars are spent.

Mr. Speaker, I want to take you back to 2011. The country was facing its

third year in a row with trillion-dollar deficits. Republicans and Democrats alike here in the House, Republicans and Democrats in the Senate, and the President of the United States signed into law the Budget Control Act, the result of a failure of Congress to come to a better agreement.

The intention of that act was to control spending, to put caps on spending. But to get Democrats to agree to it, we had to say we would only spend 50 percent of discretionary spending on defense spending; yet Republicans, we would only put 50 percent on non-defense spending. So we locked ourselves and tied our hands, but we couldn't actually prioritize.

In 2011, you could make the argument, as some did—I was here at the time, but prior to that, I was not here—when they argued that we should spend more money here in the United States on domestic spending, and they passed an \$800 billion stimulus bill. They had the ability to do that and adjust to the global financial crisis. In 2011, they responded to the terrorist attacks and decided to spend more money on defense.

But today we don't get to respond. We have to say, 50 percent here, 50 percent there, without regard to the circumstances that we face. This makes no sense at all.

Today we are facing a new and an unprecedented number of threats. They are coming at us from all around the world. ISIS poses one of the greatest terrorist threats that we have seen since 9/11, while Iraq, Syria, and Yemen descend further into chaos. Iran remains committed to advancing its nuclear infrastructure while continuing to meddle and support instability in the region. And we have seen an alarming rise in cyber threats from both nonstate and state actors like Russia, Iran, and North Korea. China has started to build islands in the China Sea, raising tensions in Southeast Asia.

By removing the arbitrary firewall that exists under sequestration, budget caps on defense and nondefense discretionary spending, we restore spending control back to the Congress, and we can appropriately respond to these international and global threats and require more focus on defense.

Tomorrow could be just as well something else. It could be infrastructure right here at home or education. This is National Alzheimer's Month. Maybe it would be spending more there to cure that horrible disease. We need to have the ability here to respond to the climate and environment that we face today, not what it was 4 years ago. My bill simply allows us to do that. By taking the taxpayer dollars that are sent by hard-working taxpayers here, it allows this Congress to make the determination on what the priorities ought to be at the time that we face those priorities.

Now, I know Democrats are concerned that we will just blow up and spend more money on defense, and Re-

publicans are concerned that if Democrats control it they would spend more money on discretionary spending. My bill does not remove the caps, but it does make this Congress have to debate with each other and find a conclusion that makes the most sense for the American people, because times have changed right here in the Congress.

Today there are many Republicans who are more libertarian-minded, and they would prefer not to spend money on defense. They would prefer to spend it domestically. Rather than building roads in Afghanistan, they would prefer to build roads here. I have got colleagues on the Democratic side of the aisle that feel we need to focus on national defense. They serve on the House Armed Services Committee or the Foreign Affairs Committee and are well aware of the national defense threats that we face. But we can't do anything because we reluctantly hold onto bad policy.

My bill is designed to correct this once and for all. By removing the firewall, we get to have the control of the purse once again that the Constitution has given us.

Benjamin Franklin said that a nation is best off when control of its money is handled by those who are the most "immediate representatives of the people." This Chamber, Mr. Speaker, is called the people's House. Each of us represent well over 700,000 Americans, and our job is to represent them to the best of our ability. We should not and can not continue to tie our hands with some arbitrary decision that was made maybe out of necessity 4 years ago but doesn't recognize the threat today.

I encourage my colleagues to be part of this process and to cosponsor the Power of the Purse Act of 2015.

RECESS

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

Accordingly (at 11 o'clock and 4 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

PRAYER

Dr. Chandra Bhanu Satpathy, Shri Sai Cultural & Community Center, Seattle, Washington, offered the following prayer:

O, Lord, by Your will, we are born in different nations, speak different languages, and follow different religions and cultures; yet we are all Your children and ever grateful for Your love and protection.

Evoke in us pious thoughts and feelings to shun all hatred and violence