

waste and fraud in the Medicare system. Our efforts on that front have been dramatically improved by things that were in the health care bill that was passed earlier this year, giving Medicare the power to do commonsense things that any small business in America would do, do a better job of checking new providers as they come into Medicare, do a better job of putting people on probation and checking up on them in that first year to make sure they are not abusing our system.

There is a rampant problem with waste, fraud and abuse in our Medicare system. The health care bill we passed earlier this year is making steps to bring that into check. Today we had a hearing here in Congress about other things that we can do. And I testified about my legislation to put more tools in the hands of our law enforcement professionals and CMS to cut down on the waste and fraud in Medicare. I look forward to continuing to work on this and making sure that we use the dollars in Medicare to provide health benefits to our seniors, not allow criminals to run rampant.

GEERT WILDERS—CHAMPION OF THE PUBLIC LIBERTY

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, free speech is under assault from Islamic terrorists worldwide. They use threats and political correctness to silence anybody who speaks out about their violent beliefs. Dutch lawmaker Geert Wilders made a movie about these Islamic clerics who incite violence in the name of religion. But the Dutch Government is putting Wilders on trial for incitement to hatred. The oppressive Dutch Government says it's irrelevant that the speech in the movie may be true.

You see, there is no freedom of speech in the Netherlands if a person is critical of radical Islam. Freedom of speech is a basic human right. Political speech and religious speech are the most controversial types of all speech. That is why these types of speech should be protected the most. Benjamin Franklin said, "There can be no such thing as public liberty without freedom of speech." Geert Wilders is a champion of the public liberty and the free speech that guarantees that liberty.

And that's just the way it is.

□ 1145

PASS ANNUAL BUDGET

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

Mr. DJOU. Mr. Speaker, last month I left the Honolulu City Council for the

great honor of entering this Chamber as a Member of the United State House of Representatives. Last week, my former chamber, the Honolulu City Council, passed its annual budget. The budget was \$3.5 billion. My position is that the Honolulu City Council budget is too big, increased taxes by too much, and increased government size by far more than the citizens of the city and county of Honolulu could afford. But at least the city and county of Honolulu passed a budget. It was \$3.5 billion. The Federal Government will spend that money in about 5 minutes.

Here today in mid-June, the United States Congress still has yet to pass a budget. If the Honolulu City Council, which I just departed, can pass a budget for \$3.5 billion, which the Federal Government will spend in just a few minutes, it is the responsibility of our government here in the United States Congress to pass a budget. We are spending far too much money. Even worse than that, we are spending far too much money on programs that are not working. Even worse than that, we have no plans to pay it back. Let us get to work and pass a budget.

ECONOMIC TURNAROUND

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

Mr. ALTMIRE. Mr. Speaker, I would ask my friends to take a walk down memory lane and consider where our economy was at the beginning of last year compared to where it is today: 2009 had the biggest single year turnaround this Nation has seen in more than 30 years, going from negative 6 GDP in the first quarter of last year to plus 6 GDP in the last quarter. And we are currently in the midst of our fourth consecutive quarter of strong GDP growth.

We have had positive job growth for six of the past 7 months, and the stock market, which bottomed out at 6500 just before we passed the stimulus, is over 10,000 today. Housing starts are up, consumer confidence is on the rise, the auto industry is coming back, and manufacturers are increasing orders and hiring back thousands of workers.

No, everything is not where we want it to be or even where we need it to be, but things have gotten better, and there can be no doubt that the bold action of this Congress is the reason why.

TWO MONTHS LATE ON PASSING BUDGET

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

Mr. BOEHNER. Mr. Speaker, the House is 2 months late in passing a budget. In that time, unemployment has remained nearly 10 percent, and the national debt has now exceeded \$13

trillion. Last week, I gave the President a letter signed by more than 100 top economists from around the country that urges both parties to cut spending now in order to create jobs and boost our economy. Less spending, more jobs, it really is just that simple.

But the President responded Saturday night with a letter asking for another \$50 billion in stimulus bailout money. Without specifying where this money would come from, the President asked us to be patient with his administration for its continuing job-killing spending spree.

This money comes from our kids and grandkids who this year are going to get stuck with 43 cents out of every dollar the Federal Government spends. The debt is going to be laid on them.

The American people are shouting at the top of their lungs: Stop, and stop now. They are making their voices heard through YouCut, where more than 830,000 votes have already been cast to cut spending.

And today, on America Speaking Out, PAUL RYAN has posted a plan to cut spending now and to reduce the budget deficit. You can visit AmericaSpeakingOut.com right now and check out these ideas and vote on them in order to cut spending quickly.

FILLING THE DOUGHNUT HOLE

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

Ms. WATSON. Good news, Mr. Speaker, the first \$250 checks have been sent out, 3 weeks ahead of schedule, to about 80,000 people who are already in the doughnut hole. The rest will be mailed at monthly intervals through the year as more part D enrollees, about 4 million in all, hit that gap. The one-time rebate will be sent directly to anyone who falls into the Medicare part D doughnut hole during 2010.

Health care reform will eventually close the doughnut hole completely. Additional checks will be sent to seniors who fall into the doughnut hole every month or so after that, with a total of 4 million seniors receiving these \$250 checks in the mail. While the Medicare part D program has helped millions of seniors obtain prescription drug coverage, there will be more.

CONGRESS ISN'T LISTENING

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

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Mr. Speaker, the American people know when they are being ignored. Congress just isn't listening. Unemployment is nearly 10 percent. The national debt is skyrocketing past \$13 trillion; and even more spending is coming down the pipe this week. Dependency on the Federal Government is rising at an alarming rate, and