

often neglects this duty. Every year, nearly 750,000 American teens become pregnant. Every year, 70 percent of these new teen mothers drop out of school. Every year, the lack of services to keep low-income parents in school focuses this problem on our Nation's most underprivileged communities.

That's why I have introduced the Teen Parents Graduation and College Act. This bill would fund grants to help teen parents finish high school and college. It would provide tutoring and child care and counseling to help them succeed. It would let teen parents and their children lead better, fuller lives. This basic support is the least we owe our young people. Together we will ensure that the beginning of a new life doesn't mark the end of an education.

Alix Klein's Bat Mitzvah

(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, I am delighted to wish a happy bat mitzvah to a wonderful young lady in my congressional district, Alix Klein. She recently celebrated her bat mitzvah surrounded by family and friends and chose to mark the occasion with more than just a party, but with a concert to benefit those less privileged than she is. Alix's kindness and generosity has made a difference in the lives of the young patients of Alyn Hospital and Rehabilitation Center in Israel. These patients have physical disabilities.

Alix has demonstrated a maturity beyond her years, and she serves as a role model for her fellow teenagers. Alix's selfless contributions will provide much-needed support for these patients and their families in Israel.

MEDICARE PART D DOUGHNUT HOLE IS BEGINNING TO CLOSE

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

Mr. WILSON of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to deliver some good news to Medicare participants around the country. This week, seniors who fall into the Medicare part D doughnut hole will begin receiving \$250 checks in their mailboxes to help them cover their prescription drug costs. This is one of many benefits for Medicare participants included in the health care reform law that Democrats passed earlier this year.

Across the country, nearly 4 million seniors will be helped by these checks. In my district alone in Ohio, over 9,000 people will receive this benefit. While the doughnut hole will soon be closed completely, seniors will continue to see lower prescription drug costs. Next year, those experiencing a coverage gap will receive a 50 percent discount on their brand-name drugs. I am proud to work hard to improve Medicare for all seniors.

NO NEW ENERGY TAX

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

Mr. POSEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to echo the concerns that I have heard from thousands of my constituents. They tell me that Washington has failed to focus on economic recovery; and you know what, they are right. Last year, the House passed a massive national energy tax known as cap-and-trade, and it's similar to legislation passed in Europe in the 1990s. It cost Europe hundreds of thousands of jobs and made virtually no change or effect whatsoever on their environment. Estimates are that if Washington forces this bill on the American public, it will kill more than 2.5 million more American jobs.

Fortunately, the national energy tax is now stalled in the Senate, and I sure hope it stays there. With unemployment near 10 percent, the last thing America needs is more job-killing legislation and more taxes. America does need to know that Congress is listening to them.

PAY THE DOCTORS FOR TREATING PATIENTS ON MEDICARE

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

Ms. BERKLEY. The Republicans in the Senate are once again doing everything they can to destroy Medicare for millions of seniors by blocking legislation that will stop the 21 percent cut in payments to doctors who care for our elderly citizens. They say they are worried about the deficit, and paying the docs will add to the deficit. Excuse me, we're fighting two wars not paid for. We have homeland security needs not paid for. Medicare part D, not paid for.

Not a word from the Senate Republicans. But they are drawing a line on paying the doctors who treat Medicare patients. This is going to add to the deficit. Let's stop playing politics with Medicare, pay the doctors, and provide health care for millions and millions of our senior citizens.

THE U.S. NEEDS A BUDGET

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

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Mr. Speaker, at its most fundamental level, the duty of Congress is to steward the tax revenue. Lately, all Congress has been doing is spending it. Through the first 8 months of the current fiscal year, the Federal Government amassed \$941 billion in deficit spending. Every penny of debt accumulated must be paid for by our children and grandchildren. Without a budget, the only spending rule is, there are no rules.

The deadline for the House of Representatives to pass an actual budget has come and passed, and we still have nothing to show the American people. The budget process can be frustrating, but that's what we're here to do, to make the tough decisions. Families, small businesses, cities and States have to put together a budget. Congress must do the same for our country. We need a practical, workable Federal budget which restrains spending and puts us on a path to solvency, economic growth and prosperity.

PAYMENTS TO MEDICARE BENEFICIARIES

(Mr. MURPHY of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MURPHY of New York. Today we're seeing the implementation of one of the things in the health care reform bill: payments of \$250 to help our seniors with the doughnut hole coverage. One of the things that's also going on that most Americans don't know about is fundamental reforms with respect to 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.

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 States 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 the Democrats have failed to even propose a budget.

Our Founding Fathers would not be pleased with this situation, and neither are the American people. That is why I am launching The Empowerment Project. To get America back on track, we must restore our founders' principles of empowerment by having more limited government, increasing personal freedom and responsibility, and having greater choices and opportunity. The Empowerment Project will work to highlight Member initiatives that empower the American people to prosper.

Our Nation cannot thrive if it is built on government dependency. It is time to put America back on the path of empowerment. To learn more about The Empowerment Project, go to my Web site at Randy.house.gov.

CONSUMER CONFIDENCE ON RISE

(Mrs. DAHLKEMPER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. DAHLKEMPER. Mr. Speaker, each month the numbers come in, and the signs are clear: Our economy is growing in the United States.

Consumers agree. Consumer confidence rose to the highest level in more than 2 years this month. I believe our economy is on the rebound largely because we are making the move back to a manufacturing and production economy and away from the paper economy of Wall Street.

Our manufacturing sector is up for the 10th month in a row. Manufacturing has added more than 125,000 jobs this year. Companies like Acutec in Crawford County, a manufacturer of aerospace parts, have been performing well and hiring new employees despite the recession.

A strong economy is one that makes things, produces goods and products that people want to buy here and all over the world. American can-do attitude and entrepreneurship will continue to lead us out of this recession. I am proud to support our American manufacturers, and I urge my colleagues to do the same.