

alma mater, Villa Maria Academy. To care for the sick and elderly, the sisters founded St. Vincent Hospital in Erie and the St. Vincent School of Nursing.

The dedication of the Sisters of St. Joseph has no bounds. They serve as nurses, teachers, social workers, ministers, and community leaders. As a former student of the sisters, I am eternally grateful for their love and guidance.

Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to honor the Sisters of St. Joseph of Northwestern Pennsylvania today, and I thank them for 150 years of service to our community.

VAT TAX IS ONE TAX AMERICA CAN'T AFFORD

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

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, we've heard a lot lately about the need for a European-style value-added tax in the U.S. to solve our budget problem. And just yesterday, the ruling coalition in Britain announced that it wants to raise their nation's value-added tax from 17.5 percent to 20 percent. It's estimated that this increase would cost 163,000 jobs and reduce consumer spending by \$5.3 billion in the United Kingdom.

It's not a surprise that the VAT tax is creeping up in Britain. The average rate in Europe is now around 20 percent, and Greece raised their VAT rate to 21 percent as part of their bailout agreement. This is yet more evidence that the VAT taxes are easy for countries to raise during times of fiscal crisis.

With so much discussion about an American VAT, we have to be aware of what the true cost of such a tax would be to our own job growth and consumer spending. Early proposals might call for a 5 percent VAT tax, but in truth, the seemingly easy revenue would make it all too easy for the U.S. Government to quickly raise taxes to European levels. This seemingly easy tax revenue would have a great cost—American jobs. The VAT tax is one tax we can't afford in America.

HONORING MARNA DAVIDSON

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

Mr. KLEIN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor Marna Davidson, a great educator and leader in our community. Marna has worked in the south Florida office of the United Federation of Teachers for many years and has helped to run an extraordinary program for retired teachers in our community. After a total career of 45 years, Marna has decided to retire this year, and I would personally like to thank her for her service and wish her a wonderful retirement.

People like Marna are what make south Florida the best place to live in the country. Her lifelong dedication to teachers and her tireless dedication and commitment have had a real and lasting impact in our community. Of her decision to retire this year, Marna said she wants to "leave while I'm still in love." That sentiment truly captures Marna's spirit. And while the Boca Raton-based UFT office will surely be sad to see her go, we all respect her wise decision and wish her the very best in the next phase of her life.

Thank you, Marna.

AMERICA SPEAKING OUT

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

Mr. FLEMING. Mr. Speaker, from the bailouts to the failed stimulus bills to the government takeover of health care to the failure to prevent and respond timely to the BP spill disaster, Americans are sick and tired of being ignored by their government. Republicans have heard this outcry and believe it is time to let Americans lead the way, so we've launched a new initiative aimed at giving every American a voice in Washington.

America Speaking Out was created as a platform for Americans to share their priorities and ideas for a national policy agenda. In addition to open forum town halls held across the country, we've launched Americaspeakingout.com, an online tool where Americans can go and express their opinion about what issues they believe government should be addressing regardless of party affiliation.

Through initiatives like America Speaking Out, Americans can make their voices heard in Washington. Now is your time to speak out, America.

JOB CREATION

(Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to discuss a very important matter, job creation.

2010 has shown that America is slowly getting back to its feet in terms of recovery. The newest job numbers indicate that over 419,000 jobs were created last month. According to a recent Associated Press release, Texas has the greatest amount of job creation in 2010.

Texas employers expanded payrolls by 43,600 during the month of May, making it the State's largest monthly gain in more than 3 years. Companies like American Airlines, AT&T, and Texas Instruments are creating jobs in my district because north Texas is a good place to do business.

As a country, we are getting stronger and stronger, but we still have a long ways to go. We must continue to invest in American businesses and in the American people. I urge my colleagues

both in the House and Senate to come together to enact policies that create and encourage job creation.

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WHY DOES THE ADMINISTRATION WANT TO PURPOSELY AND PUNITIVELY DESTROY JOBS?

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, a Federal judge stated yesterday the administration's ban on deepwater drilling was improper and illegal. The government imposed a 6-month moratorium after the BP disaster. Non-BP oil-related industries sued, saying the ban would put them out of business and cost thousands of jobs.

The government tried to justify the ban, but the judge said, "The government's explanation abuses reason and common sense." The government claimed its engineers supported the ban, but that's just not true.

The judge granted the injunction, stating the ban was "arbitrary", "capricious" and "punitive". In other words, the administration had no scientific basis for this absurd moratorium. The judge stated the oil-related industries "would suffer irreparable harm" by the moratorium. Of course, the administration doesn't care. Determined to stop deepwater drilling, the administration is going to appeal and issue another moratorium.

Mr. Speaker, why does the administration hate the energy industry in the gulf? Why does the administration want to purposely destroy American jobs? President Reagan was right: "The government is the problem."

And that's just the way it is.

DISCLOSE ACT

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

Ms. EDWARDS of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, I rise with regret today to express my concern about proposed changes to the DISCLOSE Act that I cosponsored. One particular change is deeply troubling—both on the politics and the policy. Having worked on campaign finance and ethics reform for many years, I didn't come to this conclusion lightly or uninformed. I was among the first to say that the Supreme Court decision in Citizens United was both wrong and shouldn't have given corporations a blank check in our elections.

As an early cosponsor of DISCLOSE, I am dismayed that, in order to gain passage, we have fallen prey to bullying and threats from one of the most powerful special interest lobbying organizations in the country. Carving out an exception on behalf of one big group like this is just not the way to do reform. Shame on us.

I proposed an amendment that would treat all of these organizations the