The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FLEISCHMANN). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Pennsylvania?

There was no objection.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, proceedings will resume on motions to suspend the rules previously postponed. Votes will be taken in the following order:

H.R. 3004, de novo;
H.R. 2660, de novo;
H.R. 2415, de novo;
H.R. 1791, de novo.

PRIVATE FIRST CLASS ALEJANDRO R. RUIZ POST OFFICE BUILDING

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the question on suspending the rules and passing the bill (H.R. 2415) to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 260 California Drive in Yountville, California, as the "Private First Class Alejandro R. Ruiz Post Office Building".

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. DENHAM) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed. A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

TOMBALL VETERANS POST OFFICE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the question on suspending the rules and passing the bill (H.R. 2660) to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 122 North Holderrieth Boulevard in Tomball, Texas, as the "Tomball Veterans Post Office".

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. FARENTHOLD) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed. A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GOP JOBS OFFENSIVE: ROLLING BACK JOB-KILLING REGULATIONS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 5, 2011, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CARTER) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. CARTER. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

We're all glad to be back in the capital city to talk about the regulations that are drowning our country, and we have got some legislation that's going to try to do something about that.

I see that some of my colleagues are here to join me in talking about these things. I've been on the floor of this House now for the last 18 months explaining to people how these regulations are killing jobs in this country. And really what it cuts down to is the overwhelming amount of regulations.
Thousands of regulations just this year have been proposed, many of which will kill hundreds of thousands of jobs across the country.

I have two of my colleagues that are here. I will first recognize my friend from Kentucky, Mr. Davis, who has come to tell us a little bit about a solution that he has proposed.

Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate your holding this tonight and your flexibility in allowing us some time to share with you what we’ve talked about before at times on the floor various aspects of the growth of the regulatory State.

The issue is not being against regulation or for regulation. The issue is having transparency and accountability.

We’ve seen in this administration and the last administration, the administration before that, an ever-increasing reach in agencies where they’re stretching the law, whether it’s the Clean Air Act of 1972 that’s being stretched to far beyond the original intent of Congress or issues related to the Clean Water Act that stretch beyond the bounds of science, to unfunded mandates in No Child Left Behind from the last administration.

We can think of a wide variety of these issues.

For me, I think the American public wakes up when it hits them in the pocketbook. In our case, you probably experienced the same thing in your district. We could not get through the United States Congress, so we’re seeing a federal government that is say, Stop, Mr. President. Stop, Cabinet Secretary. You have to have the advice and the consent of the representatives of the American people before you’re going to move for something that’s going to hit us that hard. We have 197 cosponsors on the bill so far. Two hearings were held on this in the Judiciary Committee. It was passed out of the Judiciary Committee 2 weeks ago. We had a markup in the Rules Committee to go over some technical pieces inside of the bill regarding the timelines on the bill. It passed out of the Rules Committee; and we’re looking for a vote here, hopefully tonight.

The administration proceeded at that point to attempt to enact cap-and-trade rules—an energy tax on every American—by regulation. When the American people spoke in that election, they also spoke in the election that followed last year in that they did not agree with the overreach, be it legislative or on the regulatory side; and they made a change, certainly, in this house.

The administration did not pass those bills in order to send them to the President’s desk, they were intent on doing it by executive order.

It’s the same thing that we see happening potentially with the card check-forced unionization bill. It could not pass in the last Congress, so we see attempts to move that by regulation.

There are issues with unfunded mandates on our schools. We’re even seeing an extension of that inside the Department of Education, which further hamstrings already strapped local school districts. It could not get through the United States Congress, so we’re seeing attempts to do that by regulation.

What the REINS Act would simply do is say, Stop, Mr. President. Stop, Cabinet Secretary. You have to have the advice and the consent of the representatives of the American people before you’re going to move for something that’s going to hit us that hard.

What the REINS Act would do is stop the process of enacting mandates by executive order.

Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky. I think the gentleman has a great point. In fact, it comes down, I think, to about $10,000 for every man, woman, and child in the United States of America for the cost of regulatory compliance.

To your point, why it’s so critical now is that we’ve seen agencies in the last administration and in this administration that have gone into overreach. Most importantly, what we saw happen in the last Congress was a Democratic supermajority in the House, in the Senate, with a liberal Democratic President, who was out to keep his campaign promises. I can remember the American people spoke in that election, but they also spoke in the election that followed last year in that they did not agree with the overreach, be it legislative or on the regulatory side; and they made a change, certainly, in this house.

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What the REINS Act would simply do is say, Stop, Mr. President. Stop, Cabinet Secretary. You have to have the advice and the consent of the representatives of the American people before you’re going to move for something that’s going to hit us that hard.

I appreciate what the gentleman from Texas is doing to champion this move to not only awaken the American people to the huge economic impact of
overregulation, but to present a wide variety of legislative fixes that you and many of our colleagues have authored to stem this tide of overreach of the government and to allow our economy to stand up in energy, in manufacturing, and agriculture. With that, I thank the Chair.

Mr. CARTER. I thank the gentleman from Kentucky for the work you’ve done on the REINS Act.

This is a good bill. This needs to be passed. I hope that my colleagues over on the Senate side, when they grab ahold of this, get excited about it and realize that regulations impose more burdens on the American people than this Congress does. In many instances, they come to us and say—Why did you pass this law that puts this burden on us?—when the real issue is they don’t understand that it was done by regulations, by people who were not elected, unlike the Members here. We have to answer to our boss, and we’re the American people. Unfortunately, with regard to these regulations done by the executive branch agencies, I guess the only boss they have to answer to is the President.

In many instances, they’re even independent of the President. Some of these regulations are not thought out in the real world. They’re, in fact, thought out in the minds of somebody who sits at a desk and just thinks. This has got to be a good idea. Sometimes these good ideas overwhelm us in costs and, quite frankly, interfere with our lives.

So we’ve been talking about this. The American people are talking about it. When you go home, they want to know, What are you going to do about allowing the businesspeople to have an idea of what the playing field is going to look like? because these regulations are changing the rules every time we look up.

This leads us into what, I think, is another excellent piece of legislation that I’m proud to be a part of. My friend from Wisconsin (Mr. RIBBLE) is the actual originator of this bill, and I jumped on it with him because I thought it was a good idea.

So I’m going to yield to my friend and let him have a chance to explain this to you and what his idea was and why we both got into this mess of trying to make it clear for those who would make our economy grow, just exactly what the playing field looks like.

Mr. RIBBLE. I want to thank my friend from Texas. Thank you so much for allowing me to join you on the floor today.

I spent my entire adult life running my own business, so this is something that I’ve had the opportunity—or maybe the misfortune—to deal with firsthand. I found it interesting that, just a few weeks ago, on October 25, Politico ran an article which said right here: “Regulations: Top Issue for Small Businesses.” In fact, they cite a Gallup Poll that, indeed, 41 percent of small business owners said that government was somehow related to the biggest problem facing their companies. More small business owners view the costs of complying with government regulations as a bigger problem than any other issue.

I’ve heard this time and time again. Just recently, I was up in northern Wisconsin, in Rhinelander, Wisconsin, where three other Members of Congress and myself held an all-day session with the timber industry. We invited Chief Tidwell, from the U.S. Forest Service, to come in to talk about harvesting timber in our national forests. I had a timber manager come up to me who harvests timber up in the Wisconsin North Woods.

She said to me, Congressman, I want to show you something. If I do a timber sale here that’s regulated by one of the counties here in northern Wisconsin, this is the contract that I have to fill out to harvest timber. That’s the county contract.

Then she said, But do you know what, Congressman? If the State of Wisconsin manages that timber sale, the contract gets about twice as long, and I have to manage that contract. However, if the Federal Government manages the timber sale, this is the contract that we have to fill out for the Federal Government.

There are pages and pages and pages of bureaucrat red tape just to allow them to harvest timber that’s owned by the taxpayer.

So I thought, after hearing a lot of these things and after having run my business, that maybe what this country needs more than anything—and I certainly support Congressman DAVIS’ REINS Act. I think it’s exactly the right thing to do. But I’ll take it a little step further.

You and I together put together a bill called the Regulatory Moratorium on Job Killing Rules. This bill simply does one thing. It says that the government can’t promulgate any new rules until unemployment goes below 7.8 percent, because you and I know full well, in talking to all the businesses in our own districts, that unemployment and regulatory environment are connected. They’re linked together.

Now, this rule does not remove any that’s already there. I have heard people say, Well, you are just trying to destroy the environment, you want to breathe clean air, as if I don’t want to breathe clean air, as if I want my grandchildren to swim in lakes and streams that are polluted. It’s ridiculous on its face. I want to breathe clean air like every American. I want to eat safe food like every American. And this bill will do nothing to remove any of those protections whatsoever. What it will do, though, is stop the administration from creating new rules and regulations that haven’t been created by this Congress. It will stop.

I was listening as my colleague from Kentucky was speaking, and I was struck by something. I was struck by this: Article I, section 1 of the United States Constitution says, ‘‘All legislative powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States, which shall consist of a Senate and House of Representatives.’’ The word ‘‘all,’’ that word ‘‘all,’’ is pretty inclusive. ‘‘All.’’ It means all of them. And what the REINS Act does, it says that any rule that gets promulgated, the Congress, the duly elected Representatives of the citizens of the United States, get to say whether that means I don’t want that. We get to say because the Constitution gave us, the Members in this body and the Members in the U.S. Senate, the authority to execute legislative power, not some Federal agency. And this REINS Act will feel it in.

My bill and your bill, Representative CARTER, will extend this control by the Congress, and it will simply return the
power back to our legislative, duly elected Members of Congress.

Mr. CARTER. Reclaiming my time, you just said a magic word that I want to repeat—"responsibility." Our Founders designed our form of government to defend right in the Bill of Rights, but it also points out where the responsibility lies. And I would argue that these creations of regulatory acts, it allows people to avoid being responsible. They pass a law that affects the timber industry, and they give the authority to a branch of the executive to write rules to implement that legislation, and it allows this Congress to hide from those regulations. It’s one of the reasons I’ve been talking here for a year and a half now about regulations.

We all know our rights. It’s time for those of us who have accepted a position of responsibility to be responsible. And when an unknown bureaucrat in a cubbyhole somewhere in the vast jungle of offices in this town can write a regulation that affects the very lives of American citizens—and he’s going to get his paycheck. Nobody elected him. He’s not going to get fired. You don’t get run off for writing that regulation. He has been assigned to do rules and regulations. He doesn’t take responsibility for it. He’s hiding as a bureaucrat back there as civil servant.

It’s time for the Congress to step back up, based on the Articles of the Constitution that you just read and take our responsibility. And then those of us who answer to the people every 2 years and every 6 years—they’re our bosses. They’re the people who have hired us for this job. And when they have one of these regulations, they have somebody they can go to and say, You need to be responsible for implementing the regulatory moratorium and for stopping these regulations. They are killing us.

Let me give you some examples real quickly that we’ve gathered on just some stuff that—these are current events. This is like looking back at the current events of today, just some stuff that—these are current events. This is like looking back at current events for the last 6 or 8 months.

EPA greenhouse gas regulations, the potential job loss as a result of those regulations, 1.4 million jobs; new utility regulations, 1.4 million jobs; offshore oil and gas lease delays, 504,000 jobs; offshore drilling permitorium—they have one of these permits, but then they just don’t ever get right around to doing it—430,000 jobs; reclassification of coal ash as hazardous—it affects this area right here—316,000 jobs; the new boiler regs that are coming out, 60,000 jobs; the Alaska drilling delays, 57,000 jobs; the new cement kiln regulations, 15,000 jobs. Just that little block adds up to 4,182,000 jobs that regulations are going to add to the unemployment rolls at a time when we have got unemployment at 9 percent.

And, by the way, I like the concept that you introduced and explained to me: Go back to what the unemployment was at the time that this administration came into being, 7.8 percent. I think that’s more than reasonable.

Mr. RIBBLE. I couldn’t agree more. As a matter of fact, unemployment has never been lower since the day President Obama was sworn into office.

I’m a Member of the House of Representatives. I had the privilege of sitting in this Chamber for the President’s State of the Union address. And the President said in that State of the Union address that he was going to ask for a regulatory review of the executive branch. He wanted to know what they were going to be doing, and he would make jokes about some of the ridiculous regulations.

And what we’ve done now—we’ve got one more President who’s followed the traditions of dozens of Presidents who have ordered another study. In the meantime, the American people suffer while we study something that we already know. This is not so much about whether the government can create jobs. It’s about whether the government is obstructing job creation, which is exactly what’s happening. And that’s why we decided to pick that number.

Mr. CARTER. I think that’s a creative thought. We need to get unemployment below 7.8 percent. But it’s a good point to start, and it gives us an opportunity to target what I honestly believe and a lot of economists agree with: The real solution to this situation is, in both our country right now is to get American businesses back to work.

The President believes one more stimulus. The last one didn’t work. The massive spending, the trillions of dollars of additional debt we’ve accumulated in the last 3 years didn’t quite work. It wasn’t quite big enough. We need to do it just one more time. And this time it will push it over the top. Well, I just don’t think that the American people are buying it. They’re watching the current events of today, where it’s not profitable for you to hire somebody. They have this person who you hope will make your business more profitable. You can’t hire somebody if there’s unknown around the corner. Because when you hire them, you get around the corner, you might have to fire them because that unknown is going to make it to job. And what’s going to be the bottom line? I don’t know, so I’m not hiring. I’m not expanding my business. I’m not building a building because I don’t know what that means. Unknown regulations in the minds of entrepreneurs—what’s going to be the new financial regulations which have made financing unknown, whether it be the hidden tax increases in the health care bill, or whether it be regulations that we don’t understand that we were surprised to get, we don’t know what’s going on, we’re not doing anything. We’re sitting with our hands in our pockets, hope there’s a little money in those pockets while we sit there, and we’re not doing anything until we know what is going on. That’s why this moratorium is perfect—perfect.

Mr. RIBBLE. I think there is something salient here that we really need to hit on. We, you and I, believe, as do many of our colleagues and, more importantly, as do large business owners alike believe that this type of bill will actually increase employment. The very interesting point about this is it doesn’t cost the taxpayer a penny. What this will cause is businesses that have now been putting their money in the bank and have been holding it because of fear, we will unleash that money back into the private sector to create jobs and get this economy going, and not a single penny of taxpayer dollars will be expended as a result of this. This is a simple thing.

You know, since the President talked to us back in January, over 70,000 pages...
have been added to the Federal Register. Seven thousand pages. 538 rules have been deemed significant under Executive Order 12866. Stop and think about these numbers: 116.3 million hours of annual paperwork burden being added. And all of this continues to create uncertainty. What we're saying to you as a business owner spend any money when you have no clue what that future cost will be.

And just recently, I was talking to some friends of mine in my district. Thilmany Pulp and Paper Company in Kaukauna, Wisconsin, the hometown where my roofing company is; and they were sharing with me their concerns about the EPA clean-air ruling and a new rule called Boiler MACT. They said that if that rule was promulgated, Wisconsin's paper industry would be decimated. But what is really most troubling is the fact that this is a revision of a rule that they just put in place a few years ago. So the entire paper industry in Wisconsin had to upgrade their boilers, spend millions of dollars of investment; and then a few years later the EPA came back and said, whoops, we made a mistake, we need to move the bar up again.

And this was just one of many, many, many, many small businesses under 5 years years of age, very small businesses. But in reality, it's the analysts when they ought to be hiring they are now spending money and in-vesting. So small business owners are saying the things that caused our economic crisis

appreciate the intent of getting at the credit. I've been very critical about the dumping on the American entrepreneur. This time it's me. I'm sure you've heard from them in your own district, owners are calling their Congressman. This is a quote from there:

Obama's massive intrusions into the heart of the Nation's economy have not helped: Buying auto manufacturers and running roughshod over bankruptcy law and investor rights in the process, taking over the economy devoting 18 percent of the economy devoted to health care, imposing a new regulatory regime on the financial sector and spending hundreds of billions of borrowed dollars with no very great benefit.

Add to this the recent actions of the Demo-crat-controlled National Labor Relations Board. Perhaps its most damaging move has been to bring legal action against aircraft manufacturer Boeing Company for building a manufacturing plant in South Carolina. The NLRB seeks to punish a company for cre-ating new jobs, at a time when unemploy-ment is more than 9 percent and the Nation's economic growth barely registers.

The chilling effect on other companies that are considering building new plants is incal-culable. These moves have cowed, usurped, paral-yzed or blocked the private-sector decision-making that is necessary to get the Nation moving again.

That's a quote from the Columbus Dispatch on 9/5/11, this year. And that's a perfect statement of a big picture of the regulatory burden that's made the papers. But you can have just as much trouble with one bug. So, as we deal with this, we've got to have something that says King's X until we get this economy back rolling.

I will once again yield to my friend, and you tell me if you've got other things you want to talk about.

Mr. RIBBLE. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I just thought it would be interesting, the President was here in just a few weeks ago with his jobs bill, and I was struck—I actually came into the Chamber with the President. I was really being critical but to try to find out what is it that we could agree on so we could maybe, for the good of the American people, move those things forward. But I was struck that the President didn't mention energy a single time.

Now, we've lost millions of jobs in the energy sector. Just recently, the President decided to punt on Keystone, the TransCanada pipeline which would have created thousands of jobs by even the Department of Energy's own analysis of high-paying union jobs. Fully, labor was supportive of it, and he decided to kick of punt on that and not let jobs.

Mr. CARTER. Absolutely. You'd be dealing with the EPA. You'd be dealing with the situation on endangered species, and that's clear down to the microscopic animals that you can't even see. All that. There's no way the Hoover Dam would get built like that.

There was a thing on the History Channel, I guess it was the night before last that I watched, about the building of the Alaskan highway. We had gone to war with Japan, and everybody looked at the United States and said this is a project that needs to be done. We are so committed to the Alaskan— at that time Alaskan Territory, they're right close to the Japanese, and they're probably going to invade those islands. And how are we going to get materials, supplies, and men up to Alaska? We've got to build a road between the United States and Alaska. Nobody checked a single regulatory act. Nobody did anything but say: Get every bulldozer we've got and head for the border. We're cutting a road straight up through Canada. We'll de-sign it on the way up there. We'll direc-tion it on the way up there. They took off and they built a road. It was a grav-el road, but it was the first road that connected the lower 48 to Alaska.

I looked at that thing and I said: My gosh, they wouldn't have gotten a mile and a half before they would have been enjoined by every kind of group on God's green Earth in this country under the present regulations we have in place, not even expanded regulations which are getting worse, the present regulations.

So when the President made that fa-mous statement now that I've enjoyed very much, he laughed and said that I found out shovel-ready today is not really shovel-ready. And it's exactly the same regulations we're talking about here that keep it from being shovel-ready.

We're building about a 21-mile stretch of road in my home county—trying to build one. We've been at it for 8 years. The money's in place. Section 1 has got bulldozers sitting on the ground because section 1 has been approved, and we're still trying to get 21 miles of road built through regulation.

I will say now, after a little work on our part, some regulators are being pretty reasonable, and we want to thank them for it. But the days of the Hoover Dam and the Alaskan highway we will never come back, not with the reg-ulatory environment we have here. What we're trying to do is not let this thing expand any further. We're not trying to kill species. We're not trying to mess up the air, like you said, or the water. We're trying to say we've got a good situation in place.
It seems like the President’s job plan is really at the regulatory agencies where, since he’s been sworn into office, employment has increased 13 percent. While the private sector is shedding millions of jobs, the President has doubled the number of people at Federal regulatory agencies. I guess it is may be so they can implement the 3,573 new rules that have been put in place since January 2010.

We have to get to a place where we understand the connection between employment, job creation, costs and jobs, and just American competitiveness. How in the world can we have businesses compete in this day and age when there’s a constant onslaught from the Federal Government?

I thought I might read a quote from CNBC. We asked several CEOs leading up to the President’s speech what bold steps President Obama could take to reduce the 9.1 percent unemployment rate. John Schiller, chairman and CEO of Energy21 says:

If the government would get out of the way from a regulation standpoint and let us, 21, do what we do good, you’ll see us continue to hire and grow this economy. I think that’s a message boards.

And I believe it is a message. For some reason, it just doesn’t seem like the executive branch fully understands how this economy actually works. Obstacle after obstacle, each one of them hurting job growth and employment in this country.

David Park, President and CEO of Austin Capital, said:

Regulations have companies running scared. They are becoming businesses, and some new regulations are already taking a toll while others will soon. This could be a real deterrent to future entrepreneurs.

And since most jobs are created by entrepreneurial companies under 5 years old, the difficulty of actually even forming and starting a company today is burdensome, and it’s hugely complex, all because of this endless stream of control and regulations as if Washington, D.C., as if you and I, Judge, have all the answers. We don’t have the answers. The answers are found in the private sector. The answers are found in the citizens of this great country.

Recently, we passed a bill just the other day on ballast water. I sit on the Transportation Committee, and I noticed while reading the bill that the Federal Government was going to promulgate rules for ballast water for ships that come into the United States and traverse throughout the Great Lakes. Now, my home is in Appleton, Wisconsin, just near Lake Michigan, just south of Green Bay, Wisconsin.

We have the Port of Green Bay there, and the concern was—I was reading the bill—that the Federal Government exempted that they were going to promulgate a whole new level of bureaucracy, red tape and rules that they were going to promulgate on private shipping companies but not on themselves. So a Federal science ship or an EPA vessel could traverse the whole globe and not have to manage ballast water the same way that everybody else did. So I added an amendment, and this body passed it, that said that if the Federal Government is going to promulgate rules on private shipping companies, they have to live by those same rules themselves. It’s high time that the Federal Government begins to treat the government the same way with the private sector. I think if we start doing that type of thing, some of these problems will begin to go away.

Mr. CARTER. That’s good common sense. Thank you for doing that. We appreciate it.

Congressman RIBBLE, I understand you have some support for this bill in the Senate. Would you like to tell us a little bit about the Senate?

Mr. RIBBLE. Yes. There’s a companion bill that is going through the Senate right now. It’s the identical piece of legislation. It was drafted by Senator Ron Johnson, a colleague of mine from the great State of Wisconsin. We thought it would be good for us to do a project together. We talk quite often, and the idea of attaching the moratorium to unemployment was Senator Johnson’s idea. I thought it was a terrific idea. And he now has a companion piece of legislation. He told me that there are more than 20 cosponsors in the U.S. Senate.

And this bill now has over 70 cosponsors here in the House of Representatives, and it continues to move forward. I’m very optimistic that we’re going to be able to pass this bill through this Chamber and send it on over to the United States Senate where I hope reason will rule the day, that they will see this doesn’t remove a single safety, it doesn’t restrict any safety or put something out of the way that’s currently in place. It just says let’s give the American entrepreneur, the American economy breathing space. Let’s give them some room to just have some certainty for the time being, until unemployment starts to get going and the engine of our economy starts moving again.

And I hope that, and I challenge the Senate to send this piece of legislation over to them, that with most haste that they go ahead and pass it. And if they can’t pass it, let’s for sure where the U.S. Senate have a chance and Members of that Chamber to vote on it. They kind of have a method over there where they can protect Members from having to make tough decisions. They just table a piece of legislation and don’t even vote on it. And I would challenge the Senate majority leader that when we send H.R. 2889 over there, that they would actually bring it to a vote, and let’s have our U.S. Senate stand up and say whether they agree with this or not and put it on the record about whether they believe that regulations are a problem in this economy or not.

Mr. CARTER. And when the American people hear that once again we’ve got over 20 bills that could have done something to turn this economy around that have been tabled, I hope they will ask themselves, Why did the Senate table my jobs bill? Because everything’s about jobs. When you table a piece of legislation, you’re tabling somebody’s job.

One of the things that a lot of people don’t understand—and that’s just because they don’t think about it; once they start thinking about it, they can understand it—that they hear something like the pipeline. I happen to have spent every summer of my life from the time I was 15 until I graduated from law school working on pipelines. I’ve worked on pipelines in Texas, Louisiana, and overseas in the Netherlands in Europe, and in Belgium. So, I am an old hand on the pipeline. When you hear “pipeline,” you think the pipeline of the pipeline. But the number of people involved in laying a pipeline and the number of assorted jobs you don’t even think about that involved in the laying.

In many instances, you’ve got to cut roads out to where the pipeline is going to be. So you’ve got road builders involved, you’ve got gravel haulers, and in some instances asphalt layers, if the father will let you.

You’ve got the pipe. The pipe industry is making pipe. The welders are welding the joints. The people that are surveying are surveying the project. The heavy machinery is digging the ditch. Many individuals are cleaning the ditch with hand shovels because it’s got to be a certain way, or you get a process which can cause the pipe to have an electrical charge on it. Engineers are engineering it; scientists are studying it. The product that’s going to flow down that pipeline is being tested so that you see what stress levels you’re going to have. It creates jobs, not just a pipe; but there are hundreds and hundreds of industries that are tied to just laying a pipeline.

If you’re drilling an oil well, the same thing. Those offshore drill rigs, you know who got hurt bad on that? The guys that feed those people out there on those rigs and the helicopter pilots that fly the food out there. I thought it shut down and closed down helicopter businesses in the gulf coast when we had the moratorium. We forget those little guys that are providing those services for the big ExxonMobil or some other platform out there. But in reality, there’s thousands of small businesses connected to any major project like that.

A minimum number of jobs for that construction on the pipeline, it’s been estimated, is 25,000 jobs. I can tell you, unless the world has changed a whole lot since I was a kid, it’s the best-paying job for a laborer that I could find in the State of Texas for a kid my age. I worked until I was 26 years old on
those things in the summertime, and it still was the best-paying part-time job I could find anywhere in the State of Texas, or even better, in Europe.

So the point being that there is a domino effect when there is a big project, the lumber industry you were describing in your State, or the shipping industry on the Great Lakes. It’s not just ships that are involved in the shipping industry. It’s hundreds of other professions that are involved in the shipping industry.

And when the regulators stop something like that pipeline, or when they put a moratorium on it until after the election so you don’t have to talk about it during election time, that hurts little guys as well as big guys. And it’s a wrong concept. We’ve got to make this country once again prosper, and it takes a lot of things to make it prosper. So we’re just asking for the government not to be one of the hindrances. And I think that’s what makes this a great bill.

We’re just about out of time. I want to thank you for joining me and explaining the bill and allowing me to be an original cosponsor with you on this bill so we can work this together. I will do everything within my power to assist you in getting this bill to this floor and passed through this House; and hopefully Senator JOHNSON will get it done over in the Senate, and we’ll help him when and if he needs it. And it will be good for America to try my time out, time out on these regulations.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

RIGHT TO VOTE UNDER ATTACK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker’s announced policy of January 5, 2011, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GONZALEZ) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GONZALEZ. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the subject of my Special Order tonight.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

Mr. GONZALEZ. Mr. Speaker, thank you for recognizing me, and I thank the Democratic leader, Ms. PELOSI, for giving me this time. I thank my colleagues for listening and for joining me in a few minutes. But I am also very sorry to be here in a certain respect. I’m sorry because I stand here tonight to talk about threats to the right of American citizens in States across this great country to cast a ballot in our elections.

The single most fundamental aspect of our democracy—or any democracy—is the right to vote, and that right is under attack. There is no right mentioned more often in the Constitution than the right to vote. In the past 207 years we have amended the Constitution 15 times. Seven of those amendments—almost half of the amendments—over the last two centuries are about protecting, in the words of the 14th Amendment, the right to vote.

Minorities, women, adults over 18 years of age, members of our Armed Forces, and of course citizens of our Nation’s Capital—at least if for the Presidential election—all of these groups’ right to vote has been enshrined in our Constitution. That’s why it is so troubling to see the passage of laws that will make it harder for citizens of the United States to vote. Whether by denying them the opportunity to vote after church on Sunday before the election day—perhaps because they cannot work on election day—or requiring them to spend time and money to procure a birth certificate and a photo ID, the only thing that these laws will do is to weaken our democracy. They are just plain wrong.

Hopefully, I will be joined by some of my colleagues. But I do want to spend a little bit of time explaining to the American public and to my colleagues what this is all about. I’m going to start off by the photo ID voter requirement which is being passed obviously out of the legislature in the State of Texas and to be enacted for the 2012 election.

What is it exactly? Well, people will say, you mean, you just have to have a photo ID? It is not just any photo ID; it has to be one that meets all the requirements of a particular State’s laws. So you would say, well, how onerous could that possibly be? As I’ve said, it is not just any government-issued photo ID that will be accepted on election day. It has certain requirements. So, much to my surprise, I recently found out that basically my identification and my voter card that all Members of Congress use would not be sufficient, would not meet the requirements in the great State of Texas. But it should not come as any surprise, because if you are a veteran and you have a physical ID that allows you to go to the Audie Murphy Memorial Veterans Hospital in San Antonio, Texas, in my district, that photo ID will not suffice under Texas law. If you’re a student in one of our State-supported institutions that have a physical ID with your name, all that information, that is not going to meet the requirements in the State of Texas.

So you would ask, why would we pass these laws? What is the need? What is the requirement? Because we all know, whether you’re in the State legislature or in this great House of Representatives at the Federal level, we don’t pass unnecessary laws. So there must be a problem behind these laws as well as other laws that are restricting the rights of individuals to exercise the right to vote.

It is to stop fraud. The photo ID, its whole purpose is to stop people from impersonating an eligible voter.

□ 1900

Now, you would say, so that must be happening across this great country and that’s why we need this law. People are impersonating other people. People that shouldn’t be voting might be impersonating an eligible voter. So let’s discuss that, the reason for the photo ID in these many States.

I’m going to give you the example of the State of Kansas. The secretary of state pushed an ID law on the basis of a list of 221 reported instances of voter fraud. This was supposed to have occurred in Kansas. So from 1997, for about 13 years, there were 221 reported instances of voter fraud. When the newspaper, the Wichita Eagle, looked into the local cases cited by the secretary of state, they found almost all of them were honest mistakes. None were attempted to be perpetrated by someone impersonating someone who they were not.

A great example of that, and I have to read you the excerpt from the Wichita Eagle of October 29, 2010:

Republican Kris Kobach, who has built his campaign for secretary of state around the issue of voter fraud, raised the specter of the dead voting in Kansas.

“Every one of those 1,966 identities is an opportunity for voter fraud waiting to happen,” he said. Furthermore, he said, some were still casting ballots. He gave an example of one person—Alfred K. Brewer, a Republican, registered in Sedgwick County with a birth date listed of January 1, 1900. Brewer, according to the comparison of Social Security records and Kansas voter rolls, had died in 1996 yet had voted in the August primary. Kobach said.

Reached Thursday at his home where he was raking leaves, Brewer, 78, was surprised some people thought he was dead.

“I don’t think this is heaven, not when I’m raking leaves,” he said.

Those are example after example. No one can give you a specific example of voter fraud based on someone impersonating someone who they should not be on Election Day.

Now, between the years 2002 and 2007, at the Department of Justice, at the Federal level of course, had a probe into voter fraud. The result was failure to prosecute a single person for going to the polls and impersonating an eligible voter. Zero prosecutions. After trying for amounts of manpower, time, energy, and money, nothing happened.

Now, the Brandon Center for Justice, the cases for voter fraud, what is it? So