

challenge our own views of the importance of cities.

These may be tough conversations, but they are absolutely necessary that we have to take on as a Nation. We cannot sit idly by and pretend that Detroit won't matter and that it won't affect us and wait for the next Detroit to happen. It is important for our Nation, it is important for our people, it is important for our competitiveness, it is important for our economy, it is important that we be a competitive place. And the only way we do that is with vital and rich growing communities, and we have to get places like Detroit and Flint and Saginaw and Pontiac and other places that are important to this economy back on that trajectory.

UNEMPLOYMENT AND JOBS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) for 5 minutes.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to draw attention to the recent rising unacceptable unemployment numbers in some regions of our Nation. The fact is Republicans control this House, and they are not only doing nothing to create jobs in America, they are actually creating more unemployment.

In my home State of Ohio, the unemployment rate jumped up to 7.2 percent. In the city of Cleveland, the unemployment rate rose from 9 percent to 10.1 percent over the past month. In the city of Lorain, unemployment dramatically rose from 8.7 to 10.6 percent. In the city of Toledo, we saw an increase in unemployment from 8.7 to 9.3 percent.

Nationally, the unemployment rate remains stalled, stuck, at 7.6 percent. But in too many neighborhoods across our country unemployment is a daily reality.

When you incorporate labor underutilization, the real national unemployment rate is actually 14.3 percent. There are currently 11.8 million, nearly 12 million, unemployed people in this country—4.3 million people have been jobless for 27 weeks or more and are considered long-term unemployed.

New Federal Government employment has declined by 65,000 persons over the past 12 months—65,000 more people spit out.

The unemployment rate for the construction industry is 9.8 percent. Manufacturing employment has declined in the past 4 straight months.

Do those job numbers sound like an economic recovery to you? What is the Republican response to these dubious unemployment and jobs numbers? Block the President.

So what do they do? Let's repeal the Affordable Care Act 38 times. And they've tried again and again to do that.

Let's not appoint budget conferees so we can negotiate a budget deal that puts people to work and strengthens the middle class. No. Sequestration is

arguably the primary driver of these poor job numbers. So, let's ignore the harmful effects of sequestration. The Congressional Budget Office estimates just the unemployment resulting from sequestration costs our economy an additional 1.5 percent in lost economic growth.

Remember when the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office estimated that sequestration would reduce economic growth and cost about 750,000 jobs? Well, they were right. We are seeing the effect of that today. The sequester was the largest cause of the negative growth numbers in the fourth quarter of last year.

According to the Bureau of Economic Analysis, the economy is growing far slower than expected, despite the fact that personal consumption and business inventory spending has increased recently. You would think that if consumer and business spending is up, we would see strong GDP growth, given that our economy is based on consumer spending.

Unfortunately, this is where the sequester and the Republican policy of cut and run, cut and run, cut and run comes into play. Government spending has declined in 11 of the last 13 quarters since the first quarter of 2010.

We may have seen robust growth if we took a sensible, long-term approach to deficit reduction instead of using the Republican shortsighted sequester and steep unfair budget cuts. They are even kicking thousands of mentally ill citizens out of their assisted housing—thousands—over 27,000 people who can't make it on their own being kicked out of their humble shelters across this country.

With the Republicans refusing to replace their mindless sequester, 600,000 civilian defense workers are currently being furloughed. The economic impact of these defense furloughs will be the loss of over an estimated \$2 trillion for our economy; just in Ohio 22,000 furloughs in the civilian defense sector. The policies of this Republican House are hampering robust economic growth across our country.

The Federal Reserve agrees with what I am saying. In a recent hearing the chair of the Fed said, "the economic recovery has continued at a moderate pace in recent quarters despite the strong headwinds created by Federal fiscal policy."

Unfortunately, Republicans will likely continue to refuse to compromise and focus on slowing the economy even further. Congress has already cut spending by \$2.5 trillion. That has real impacts on job creation. Discretionary spending is at its lowest level in 45 years. The Federal deficit is projected to be at its lowest level in recent memory. And the Treasury has actually even recently made payments on the national debt.

We need a jobs bill here, not more reckless cuts. The President has a plan; the Republicans don't. I would urge my Republican colleagues, bring to the

floor the President's jobs agenda. Let's show America which party is committed to job creation in this country, not more stalling.

UPDATE ON PUERTO RICO'S POLITICAL STATUS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Puerto Rico (Mr. PIERLUISI) for 5 minutes.

Mr. PIERLUISI. Mr. Speaker, as we approach the birthday of the late Dr. Jose Celso Barbosa, the father of the statehood movement in Puerto Rico, I rise to update my colleagues on the progress that has been made to resolve the territory's political status.

Last November, Puerto Rico held a referendum. As I described in a floor speech the following week, the results show that a majority of the U.S. citizens of Puerto Rico do not support the current territory status, a supermajority favor statehood among the three alternative options, and more voters want statehood than any other option, including the current status. These results are now part of the historical record, and they cannot be dismissed or diminished by those who find them inconvenient.

Now that American citizens living in an American territory have informed their national government, in a free and fair vote, that they do not consent to a political status that deprives them of the most basic democratic rights, it is incumbent upon the Federal Government to take appropriate action in response. For the President and Congress to do otherwise would be to contravene the principles that have made this country a light to the world.

Today, I can report that positive steps have been taken. In April, the administration requested an appropriation of \$2.5 million, which would be provided to the Puerto Rico Elections Commission to conduct the first federally-funded status vote in the territory's history, with the specific purpose of resolving this issue. The administration's action was favorably received by Members of Congress from both sides of the aisle, who rarely find common ground. Earlier this month, thanks to the leadership of Congressmen WOLF, FATTAH, and SERRANO, that funding was approved by the Appropriations Committee, confirming that the effort to secure fair treatment for Puerto Rico is not, and should never become, a partisan issue.

The committee's report endorses the conditions proposed by the administration stating that Federal funding will not be obligated until DOJ has certified that the ballot and voter education materials are compatible with U.S. laws and policies, thereby ensuring that the vote will deal with one or more status options that can actually be implemented and that would settle the issue.

I will continue to fight for the approval of this appropriation by the full

House and for its retention in any conference negotiation with the Senate.

There is additional progress to report on another front in this struggle. In May, I introduced stand-alone legislation that proceeds from the indisputable premise that statehood obtained more votes than any other option in the November referendum. The bill outlines the rights and responsibilities of statehood and asks voters in Puerto Rico whether they accept those terms.

□ 1100

If a majority says "yes," the bill provides for the President to submit legislation to admit Puerto Rico as a State after a transition period.

Two months after its introduction, this bill already enjoys support from 100 Members of Congress from both parties and from every region of this country despite the predictable opposition of the status quo party in Puerto Rico and its allies in Congress. I always find it ironic when some of my colleagues from the States, who, along with their constituents, enjoy all the benefits of statehood, seek to prevent my constituents from exercising those same rights and responsibilities. I have concluded that these forces cannot be reasoned with. They must simply be defeated, and they will be.

Next week, I will appear as a witness at a Senate hearing on the November referendum and the Federal response to that vote. Just as I told a United Nations committee last month, I will testify that I have faith that the Federal Government will fulfill its obligation to facilitate Puerto Rico's transition to a democratic and dignified status but that deeds, not words, are required.

Much work remains to be done, and like any civil rights struggle, it will not be easy; but through our sound and steady action, we are closer than ever to finally realizing Dr. Barbosa's dream of equality for the U.S. citizens of Puerto Rico.

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 1 minute 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

Reverend John Reynolds, Volusia County Baptist Church, Orange City, Florida, offered the following prayer:

Father, we are humbly grateful for Your blessings on our lives and on our

Nation. We ask Your forgiveness in every area where we have failed You.

I pray these honorable Representatives elected to serve You here in this House will seek, find, and follow Your wisdom. You can give simple solutions to complex problems. Our country needs a revival of solutions.

I pray, also, for the needs of all in the House today. Bless them, their families, and their constituents with Your loving care and protection.

Please bless and protect those serving in our military striving to maintain the peace and freedom we enjoy. May we not neglect nor abuse those blessings.

My Father, at Your instruction, I pray for all those in authority over me. I ask that You help Your people to be good citizens for Your glory and the good of this Nation.

In Jesus' name I pray.
Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

Mr. DAINES. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 1, rule I, I demand a vote on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The SPEAKER. The question is on the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The question was taken; and the Speaker announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. DAINES. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER. Pursuant to clause 8, rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. DUNCAN) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will remind the House that on July 24, 1998, at 3:40 p.m., Officer Jacob J. Chestnut and Detective John M. Gibson of the United States Capitol Police were killed in the line of duty defending the Capitol against an intruder armed with a gun.

At 3:40 p.m. today, the Chair will recognize the anniversary of this tragedy by observing a moment of silence in their memory.

RESIGNATION FROM THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following resignation from the House of Representatives:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, July 23, 2013.

Hon. JOHN BOEHNER,
The Capitol,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: In light of the fact that I have been working with Alabama Governor Robert Bentley to find the earliest possible date for the special election which will occur following my resignation, so that my successor can be seated at the earliest possible time during the 113th Congress, I wish to inform you that I will resign my seat effective 11:59 p.m., August 2, 2013.

Sincerely,

JO BONNER,
Member of Congress.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, July 23, 2013.

Hon. ROBERT BENTLEY,
Governor, State Capitol,
Montgomery, Alabama.

DEAR GOVERNOR BENTLEY: Pursuant to our conversations, I am notifying you that I will resign from Congress at 11:59 p.m. on August 2, 2013. I share your view that the seat should be vacant for as short a time as possible, and I am pleased the August 2nd date will allow the special election to be completed during 2013.

I remain grateful to the people of the First District of Alabama for allowing me the honor of representing them. Thank you for your leadership.

Sincerely,

JO BONNER,
Member of Congress.

WELCOMING PASTOR JOHN REYNOLDS

The SPEAKER. Without objection, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MICA) is recognized for 1 minute.

There was no objection.

Mr. MICA. Mr. Speaker, it's a great honor today to introduce to the House our Guest Chaplain, Dr. John Reynolds of Orange City, Florida.

To our good fortune in Florida, he was invited by four families to found a church in Orange City, Florida, in 1996. It now has 1,500 members—one of the largest congregations in Volusia County in central Florida—and supports hundreds of missionaries worldwide. In addition to his pastoral work, Dr. Reynolds has preached at conferences across the Nation and foreign countries. His leadership and willingness to help others is an inspiration to us all.

Dr. Reynolds graduated in 1964 from Tennessee Temple College in Chattanooga and started his church ministry. He returned to Temple Baptist Seminary and graduated in 1968. His life experiences include many positions, which include president of a Christian recording company, vice-president of development at his alma mater, and minister of music.

Dr. Reynolds married his lovely wife, Becky, in 1964. They have four children, two of whom are preachers.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in welcoming Dr. Reynolds and