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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
March 12, 2014.

I hereby appoint the Honorable ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 7, 2014, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

FREE AMERICA TO PROSPER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. BROOKS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BROOKS of Alabama. Madam Speaker, in 1945, at the end of World War II, America's Federal debt to gross domestic product ratio was 120 percent. Washington responded with leadership. In 1946, the Federal budget was slashed a massive 40 percent.

In 1947, the Federal budget was slashed by another 38 percent. The result? America rose to the challenge, and America prospered. By 1980, even though per-capita inflation adjusted

Federal spending had tripled, Federal debt had shrunk to 30 percent of GDP.

Since 1980, America's per-capita Federal spending has exploded to five times more than 1948 levels. The result? America faces a skyrocketing \$17 trillion debt burden.

America's Comptroller General warns that America's financial path is unsustainable. Instead of confronting our debt dependence, Washington kicks the can down the road and immorally sells our children into the equivalent of indentured servitude and poverty, while driving America's Federal debt to dangerous levels.

To preserve the liberty and prosperity our ancestors sacrificed to give us, we must free Americans to again earn their prosperity and significantly cut Federal non-defense spending to restore financial responsibility and provide the stable monetary environment needed for economic growth.

If the Federal Government will be financially responsible and stop killing job creation, America's economy will soar because we have, within our grasp, a massive new technology and energy boom.

Mark Mills, adjunct fellow, Manhattan Institute states:

By 2020 or so, the United States is expected to surpass Saudi Arabia in oil output and Russia in gas, according to the International Energy Association's best estimate.

Dan Yergin, one of the world's leading energy experts, estimates that the United States turnaround in energy has generated 1.7 million new jobs . . . and that number should almost double by 2020.

The RAND Corporation adds:

The pace of technological change—whether through advances in information technology, biotechnology, or such emerging fields as nanotechnology—will most certainly accelerate in the next 10 to 15 years, with synergies across technologies and disciplines generating advances in research and development, production processes, and the nature of products and services.

Amazing economic possibilities abound if the Federal Government will simply allow Americans to seize them.

Unfortunately, too many paternalistic Washington politicians distrust the American people to earn a better life for themselves or to take care of each other without government coercion or intervention.

Financially irresponsible Washington politicians insist on spending money we do not have, risking a debilitating American insolvency and bankruptcy, debasing our currency, punishing success, rewarding destructive behavior, and strangling job creation in bureaucratic red tape.

The Federal Government, by attempting to supply and command all things, saps America's spirit of energy and devours the financial capital needed for innovation, productivity growth, and jobs.

America must stop kicking the can down the road to a day when the debt challenge is even more daunting. The time to act is now, while America has sufficient economic strength to succeed. We cannot wait until America is bankrupt and defenseless, our currency is valueless, and we are overwhelmed by closed businesses, lost jobs, and poverty.

Congress must use the debt limit, the budget, appropriation bills, and every other means available to free America from the growing burden of crushing debt and a dictatorial Federal bureaucracy.

America ended Democrat President Jimmy Carter's economic malaise with one election in 1980, giving us the wildly successful economic policies of Republican President Ronald Reagan in 25 years of unparalleled prosperity.

America's choice is between economic depression brought about by socialist, heavy-handed, bureaucratic Big

☐ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., ☐ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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Brother economic policies and prosperity brought about by policies centered on free enterprise, individual liberty, and faith in the American people—the same economic policies and freedoms that made America the greatest Nation in world history.

America, please choose wisely. Your future and America's depends on it.

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE IN NEVADA

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAMALFA). The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Nevada (Mr. HORSFORD) for 5 minutes.

Mr. HORSFORD. Mr. Speaker, right now, thousands of Nevadans have the full-time job of looking for work. It has gotten worse for many since December 28 of last year, when emergency unemployment insurance benefits for many expired.

There are now over 2 million Americans, Mr. Speaker, who have been cut off from unemployment insurance because of Congress' failure to act. That includes 26,023 Nevadans. These are not numbers; these are real people.

Every week that Congress fails to act, it is projected that an additional 842 Nevadans will lose their benefits each week during the first half of 2014.

Nevada's economy has lost over \$54 million because Congress has stalled; but I, along with many of my colleagues, have not forgotten about our constituents.

Today, Democrats will sign a discharge petition to force Speaker BOEHNER and the House Republicans to bring up a bill to extend unemployment benefits for all Americans who have lost their jobs through no fault of their own.

These benefits are used to put food on the table, to put gas in the car, so that they can go look for an interview and to pay for rent. Extending these unemployment benefits used to be bipartisan.

On December 14, 2002, in his weekly radio address, then-President George W. Bush scolded Congress, saying, "No final bill was sent to me extending unemployment benefits for about 750,000 Americans whose benefits will expire on December 28."

He went on to say, "These Americans rely on their unemployment benefits to pay for the mortgage or rent, food, and other critical bills. They need our assistance in these difficult times, and we cannot let them down."

The unemployment rate in December 2002 had just hit 6 percent. Congress then extended unemployment benefits by a vote of 416-4. If it was an emergency then, it is an emergency now. It is time to do the right thing and extend unemployment insurance benefits for Americans.

It is an emergency for my constituents, like Alfordeen, who I met at a local Workforce Connection center as she searched for work.

It is an emergency for Monty, who recently signed up for Medicaid be-

cause of the Affordable Care Act. He is homeless now; and because Congress failed to act, his unemployment insurance has been cut.

It is an emergency for Tamika, who I brought as my guest to the State of the Union. She is an electrician, and she knows what it means to work hard, but has fallen on hard times and can't find work.

The Nevadans on unemployment insurance that I meet are scrambling to make ends meet, and no one wants to live on unemployment insurance; and no, Mr. Speaker, they are not lazy.

Despite repeated Democratic efforts, Republicans in Congress refuse to listen and have callously rejected restoring this vital economic lifeline that serves as a financial bridge for those who are looking for work, so this discharge petition is an extraordinary step.

But for my constituents, there is no time for politics, and there is no time for waiting. Action to create jobs and build an economy that works for everyone must start with renewing unemployment insurance benefits for those Americans who were laid off at no fault of their own. It is time to extend unemployment insurance now.

I encourage the Speaker, after this discharge petition is signed by Members, to bring up a vote so that we can provide this important lifeline to 2 million Americans, 26,000 Nevadans, families, and veterans who desperately need this benefit.

REPAY SUPPLIES ACT OF 2013

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) for 5 minutes.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, every day, teachers across our Nation reach into their own pockets to pay for classroom supplies like books, software, and pencils, without ever being reimbursed by their schools; and since 2002, teachers could at least count on a \$250 above-the-line tax deduction to help defray the cost of these purchases.

But at the end of last year, this tax deduction was allowed to expire, meaning that teachers are not able to claim it on their individual returns this tax season or count on it next year, as they continue to purchase supplies for their classrooms and their students.

The REPAY Supplies Act, introduced by CAROL SHEA-PORTER and cosponsored by more than 50 of our colleagues from both parties, aims to fix this problem and make the educator expense deduction permanent.

Ms. SHEA-PORTER and I were disappointed to learn that this modest deduction was not included in the recent tax reform proposals, and we will send a letter in the coming days to ask that a hearing on the REPAY Supplies Act be held as soon as possible.

I hope that my colleagues will join us in signing this letter to the Ways and Means Committee and give teachers

the opportunity to testify before Congress about the impact the deduction has had on their checkbooks and on their classrooms.

Mr. Speaker, I am a former Florida-certified teacher, and I know how important it is that students come to school prepared and ready to learn; but without the basic supplies needed to take part in lessons, students are put at a disadvantage in the classroom, forced to rely on outdated materials and without essential learning tools, and too often, teachers go into their own pockets to make up the difference.

For many educators, teaching is more than a full-time job. They arrive at the school while many of us are still getting ready for work. They stay late into the evening. They prepare lesson plans, grade papers, and deal with parents and grandparents, like us, who can admittedly be a handful when guaranteeing that their child is receiving the best education possible.

Teachers care deeply about their students and are often willing to sacrifice personal needs in order to provide them with the best learning experience possible. According to the latest status of the American public school teacher report by the National Education Association, educators are spending approximately \$477 per year on basic school supplies for their students and their classrooms.

Mr. Speaker, we all want the best for our children. We work hard every day in this Congress to make sure that our children have a bright future; and education, we know, is a key to this success, an essential component of that brighter future that we are trying to create for the next generation.

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But it doesn't seem to make a whole lot of sense that we are hamstringing the very people we have entrusted with their education. Teachers are giving up their own time and money to help students learn and be engaged in school. The least we can do is to provide them with this modest \$250 deduction to help mitigate the financial and personal sacrifices that they are already making.

Every 2 years since 2002, Congress has come together in a bipartisan manner to extend this deduction on behalf of our country's educators. By making this tax deduction permanent, Congress can give teachers certainty that at least some of their purchases will be paid back, that it will improve access to essential learning materials, and that it will give our educators the recognition they deserve.

I urge Members to join Ms. SHEA-PORTER and me in this fight, and I look forward to working with all of us to ensure that our Nation's teachers and our children have the education and the tools necessary to succeed.

PERSONALIZE YOUR CARE ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from