

managing and in improving both water and soil quality. The farm bill is the guiding authorization for the Department. Programs such as the Conservation Reserve Program, or the CRP, the Environmental Quality Incentives Program, or the EQIP, and the Regional Conservation Partnership Program, or the RCPP, are a few of the critical ones that directly impact soil and water quality in our country and certainly in Pennsylvania.

As we have seen so many times in Pennsylvania and around the country, once a watershed or water source is harmed, it often takes generations to recover. History shows us just how important clean water is. It also demonstrates how hard it is to fix a water source once it has been contaminated.

I remain committed in Washington and certainly in my home State of Pennsylvania to helping our professionals, volunteers, business community, nonprofits, such as Trout Unlimited and Watershed Associations, as well as academic and research institutions, such as Penn State, in their efforts to preserve our State's water and our country's water for future generations.

MR. SCOTT'S VISIT TO OREGON

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

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Speaker, when I travel around northwest Oregon, I often hear from parents who struggle to afford child care, which in Oregon can cost as much as a year of college tuition. I hear from people who can't find work because their skills don't match up with the jobs that are available in their areas, and I hear from students who are overwhelmed by the cost of their college educations.

These are not problems without solutions. As policymakers, we should be addressing the challenges our families face. It is possible to give every child the opportunity to succeed, to close the achievement gap, to make college accessible and affordable, to expand family-friendly workplace policies, and to make sure we have a 21st century workforce. In fact, we can't afford to let these problems continue to hold us back.

This week, I welcomed to Oregon Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, the ranking member of the Committee on Education and the Workforce. Together we saw and discussed some of the struggles our working families face. We had a whirlwind day that included substantive discussions about how to give children, young people, and working families the support they need to succeed. We talked about how to open the doors of opportunity that are closed for too many.

I invited Mr. SCOTT to Oregon because he has a remarkable record of standing up for working families. On the Education and the Workforce Committee, we worked together on the

Every Student Succeeds Act to strengthen our public schools, and on the Older Americans Act to support our growing population of older adults.

He has also been a leader for working families by his standing up to attacks on the National Labor Relations Board and by his protecting retirees through his support for the Department of Labor's rule to ban conflicts of interest in retirement advice. During his visit this week, I showed Mr. SCOTT the innovative and collaborative nature that sets Oregon apart.

Oregon is a leader in addressing barriers that are faced by working families. Last year our State legislature raised the State's minimum wage and passed legislation to provide workers with paid sick days to care for themselves or their families.

At our forum on early childhood development, we discussed how this country's workplace policies have not kept up with our changing workforce. Andrea Paluso from Family Forward Oregon told us that even the iconic image of the Cleaver family does not accurately reflect the diversity of American families.

In fact, Barbara Billingsley, the actress who played June Cleaver on "Leave It to Beaver," was in real life a single, working mom.

We heard from others about how food insecurity and hunger interfere with the ability of too many children to focus in school and about how early childhood education correlates to positive health outcomes and academic achievement later in life.

I am proud of Oregon for taking so many positive steps to protect working families, but these changes shouldn't be happening just for some. We should be having these conversations and discussions in Congress as well. Our economy will be stronger and our families will be healthier when we acknowledge that families need policies that work for them, not against them. We need equal pay for women, good wages, paid leave, and affordable child care to support families in Oregon and across the country.

Looking toward our future, I want students today to have the same opportunities I had. I worked my way through community college, college, and law school, and I graduated with a very manageable amount of student debt. Unfortunately, that opportunity is out of reach for too many of today's families.

Again, Oregon is a national leader. Oregon Promise, our State's free community college plan, will help put education within reach for thousands of students. Oregon's leaders have recognized that the future of our economy relies on an educated and innovative workforce to create and fill the jobs of the 21st century.

During our visit, I introduced Mr. SCOTT to Fernando, who participates in the Portland Community College's very successful Future Connect Program. This program connects low-in-

come, first-generation college students with financial aid resources, personalized academic advising, internships and job training, and an intensive summer orientation, all of which help them to succeed in college. This program is critical to Fernando, who is a DACA student, and to other first-generation college students. Fernando told us that Future Connect made a difference, it made him feel at home in college. Oregon knows it is not enough just to get students to college, but that it is important that they stay there and finish their degrees. Now Fernando is off to a 4-year university and is pursuing his plans to become a dentist.

I am incredibly proud of the State I represent. Congress can learn a lot from the Oregon spirit of innovation and collaboration. I was glad to show Mr. SCOTT the progress we have made in Oregon, and I look forward to working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to remove the many obstacles that are holding back working families and that are keeping young people from achieving their full potential, because when we open the doors of opportunity to everyone, we all succeed.

A STRONGER AMERICA OR A PATH TO ECONOMIC DISASTER

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

Mr. GIBBS. Mr. Speaker, in 2009 and 2010, when the other side of the aisle had complete control of Congress and the White House, the American people saw what liberals would pass when given free rein and a blank check.

With Dodd-Frank, Democrats deemed it necessary to punish small community banks with burdensome regulations they cannot afford to comply with. Dodd-Frank created a new, unaccountable bureaucracy called the CFPB, which is funded in a way that obscures its transparency and prevents Congress' direct oversight of the agency. The lack of accountability like that seen with the CFPB and the heavy hand of agencies like the EPA and the IRS have become hallmarks of this administration.

With the stimulus bill, Democrats gave handouts to their union and so-called green energy friends. Taxpayers were on the hook for loan guarantees to companies like Solyndra, which used its political connections in the White House to push through irresponsible loan approvals. When Solyndra went bankrupt, it was at the cost of the American people. Many other smaller boondoggles came out of the stimulus: silly studies on ducks, over \$1 million on road signs that promote the stimulus, and over \$3 million for a tunnel for turtles in Florida.

This leaves ObamaCare. Too many Americans have felt the negative consequences of what boils down to a government takeover of the healthcare industry. The President claimed this law would decrease premiums by \$2,500 per

year. Instead, they have risen since ObamaCare has been enacted. To go with the increase in cost, many Americans have seen a sharp decrease in their choices. There are fewer plans available, restricting the ability of hardworking families to choose coverage that is appropriate for their circumstances.

Taken together, this trio of liberal policies is adding layers of bureaucratic red tape, forcing Americans to pay more for health care and putting taxpayers on the hook.

In 2009, Democrats used the blank check to add \$1.5 trillion in discretionary spending. When Republicans gained control of the House of Representatives in 2011, we put discretionary spending on a downward trend. Discretionary spending funds our Federal agencies such as the EPA and the IRS, as well as the Department of Defense. We have made real cuts in spending, not slowdowns in growth and not projected cuts down the road—honest-to-God cuts in spending. Since I took office in 2011, discretionary spending has been cut significantly by \$434 billion.

But this does not address mandatory spending, which is the real driver of our national debt. This includes programs like food assistance, welfare, Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security, and interest on our debt. Reforms are needed to ensure these programs work efficiently and are sustainable. Because of the way ObamaCare was written and enacted, mandatory spending also includes large portions of ObamaCare funding. Mandatory spending is on autopilot and will continue with or without Congress' annual appropriations process.

The fact is we have to change the law. That means both Chambers of Congress have to pass reforms and the President has to sign them or we have to override a veto. Mandatory spending accounts for three-quarters of all money spent by the Federal Government. This is a 180-degree change from when I was a teenager, when in 1970, mandatory spending was only about a third of government spending.

Realistically, there is only one path to a balanced budget and shrinking our national debt. That path is to pass a budget and use a process called reconciliation. A budget facilitates reconciliation, which only requires a 51-vote majority in the United States Senate and avoids a filibuster by liberals who want to continue running up America's credit card. Not doing a budget forfeits the opportunity to do reconciliation. Reconciliation with mandatory spending program reforms, coupled with real tax and regulatory reforms, will send a strong signal to our entrepreneurs and businesses, which will unleash innovation and the American spirit and will, thus, grow our economy and provide for our national defense. A vibrant economy will provide for our national security and priorities without raising taxes.

We have an opportunity with a new President next year to send two reconciliation bills to his desk—one for this fiscal year and another for the next fiscal year. Elections do matter, and this one has historic implications—one being a path to a stronger America and opportunity for every American or a path on a downward spiral of economic disaster, risking our personal and economic freedoms. God help us.

AMERICA IS SADDLED WITH BAD TRADE DEALS

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

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, how does America get saddled with these bad trade deals?

If we look at our free trade agreements, we see a 425 percent increase in our trade deficit with those FTA countries. You get that statistic if you include NAFTA, which, of course, is the granddaddy of all of our free trade deals, and that doesn't even count our worst deal, which was granting most favored nation status to China.

So how do we end up with such bad deals?

First, the elites convince themselves that it is good for the country. They do this because they love the theory of the economic textbook and don't feel comfortable looking at the practice of how business actually works.

Second, the elites benefit from these deals. These deals help economists and Wall Street and attorneys, so they convince themselves that they are good for the country as a whole and create a subcultural echo chamber in which it is a subcultural norm that all smart people realize that these are good trade deals. In having convinced themselves to support these deals, they use a combination of condescension, false appeals to patriotism, and sneaky tactics to saddle the American people with these trade deals.

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Take a look at the effect on working families. America needs a raise. To get it, we need a severe labor shortage. We would have millions of additional jobs, a desperate labor shortage, if only we had balanced trade with the world.

Let's look at TPP and its inclusion of Vietnam. We were told that the Trans-Pacific Partnership will give us free access to the Vietnamese market. There is only one problem: in Vietnam, there is no freedom and there is no market. In fact, we will not have access except as the Communist Party of Vietnam decides to grant it on the basis of crony capitalism, but our workers are going to have to compete against 40-cent-an-hour labor. Chinese goods will be fast-tracked into the United States with "Made in Japan" and "Made in Vietnam" stickers on them.

Now, we are told that in Vietnam, under this deal, it won't be illegal to organize a union. They won't put you in jail for organizing a union. What

they will do is they will plant drugs on every union activist and arrest them for that. You are not going to see free unions in Vietnam, and that will hurt working families in the U.S.

So how do they sell it? They claim that it may take jobs away, but it is a necessary sacrifice because we have to contain China. As the ranking member of the Asia and the Pacific Subcommittee, I am here to tell you the TPP is great for China.

First, we are told, well, we get to write the rules. No. These are Wall Street's rules. They are not the rules of the American working family.

Second, TPP enshrines the idea that currency manipulation is just fine. So China gets the single most important change in the rules of international trade.

Finally and most obscurely, there are the rules of origin. Now we know that, under this deal, goods that are made in Vietnam or Japan come right in to the United States with no tariffs. What you don't know is the goods that are 50, 60 percent, 70 percent made in China then go to Vietnam or Japan where they can put a made-in-Japan sticker on it and send it to the United States—that is when they admit that it is 50 or 60 percent made in China.

As a CPA, I will tell you, if you are in a position to admit that your goods are 60 percent made in China, that means they can be 90 percent made in China. So China gets to fast-track their goods into the United States, no tariffs, and we get no access to the Chinese markets. So it is a really bad deal.

How do you pass it? You use sneaky tactics. They don't have the votes to pass it now. The American people would rise in opposition to try to pass it now. So they are going to wait for the lame duck and then have a group of retiring Members of this body shaft the American people with the TPP.

We do have a solution. We need to get all three remaining Presidential candidates to declare, if sneaky tactics and lame duck sessions are used to impose TPP on America, that they will, in their first month in office, pull us back out of TPP. Unless we hear that clearly from the three Presidential candidates, all of whom oppose TPP, that they not only oppose it, but they will erase anything that happens in a lame duck session, then the elites will prevail. We will lose jobs again. Our workers will have to compete with 40-cent-an-hour labor. Chinese goods will be fast-tracked into the United States with "Made in Japan" and "Made in Vietnam" stickers on them.

It is time for the Presidential candidates to go beyond saying they are against it. They have to declare that they will make sure that any lame duck approval of TPP that happens in December will be erased the following January.