

here in the Congress passed an economic stimulus package that, yes, reinforces the safety net to assist Americans through rebates and low-income benefits, assist Americans who are struggling. But we also passed tax relief to working families, small businesses, and even large corporations to say we want to reinvigorate Americans in these difficult and uncertain economic times, to bring those Hoosiers and bring those Americans back to work and back to gainful employment.

There is talk on the editorial pages and in the hallways of this institution that we are about to give birth to an economic stimulus package that has very little stimulus to it at all. It seems to be developing into a potpourri of giveaways to moderate- and low-income and unemployed Americans while turning a deaf ear and a stiff arm to the wage payer in America.

I submit today that thanks to President Bush's foresight in arguing through this institution a tax relief through this summer, this economy is already improving. We will find our way out with or without an economic stimulus package from our present malaise. But the reality is that this institution should heed the advice of many who have gone before, pro-growth conservatives like Jack Kemp and others; and we should go big or go home. We should either pass an economic stimulus package that truly speeds relief and invigorates the American economy at every level, for the wage earner and the wage payer, or we should just go home and enjoy our families over Christmas and be confident that this economic ship will right itself. I urge my colleagues to move on a real bill with real substance and real stimulative effect. Let us go big, Mr. Speaker, or let us go home.

#### U.S. TERRITORIES IN DIRE NEED OF ECONOMIC STIMULUS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, the gentleman from Guam (Mr. UNDERWOOD) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. UNDERWOOD. Mr. Speaker, today as the House considers yet another version of the economic stimulus package, and while House and Senate negotiators continue to work out a potential agreement with the President, I would like again to speak on behalf of my home island of Guam and the U.S. Territories in the hope that some of our colleagues would understand the dire circumstances that we find ourselves in. We need economic relief. We need it now. We need balanced economic relief. We need relief that not only speaks big, but also seeks to ameliorate the real live conditions of human beings for whom this Christmas will be a very dim one indeed. If we go home without addressing their needs and their concerns, then we would be in the position of robbing them of having a decent and hopeful Christmas.

Prior to the September 11 attacks, Guam's economy was already struggling as a result of the Asian economic crisis. During 1999 and the year 2000, Guam's unemployment rate was 15.2 and 15.3 percent respectively. For this year, Guam's unemployment rate was already over 15 percent and is anticipated to be near 20 percent by the end of this year. When Members start talking about they have a few hundred or a few thousand workers that have been displaced or unemployed as a result of the September 11 attacks, and even previous to that, I do not think that there is a single community that can match the kinds of trials and tribulations that we face in Guam. This unemployment rate that we are experiencing today is three times the national average.

Already the Government of Guam has been seeking ways to ameliorate the first phase of tax cuts earlier this year. Because of the nature of the tax system in the Territories, in Guam and the Virgin Islands, we have a mirror Tax Code. We collect the income taxes, but whatever tax cuts are delivered are anticipated to come from so-called local revenues rather than national revenues.

Mr. Speaker, we could not even afford the first level of tax cuts. No taxpayer in Guam has yet received the advanced rebates that were promised this summer. Considering all of the factors that we have to deal with, the unemployment rate, the Asian economic crisis which has affected the nature of our economy, the President's tax relief plan which hindered the collection of Government of Guam revenues, Guam's economic situation has been exacerbated by the September 11 attacks.

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The most immediate effect has been on tourism. Tourism and international tourism drives Guam's economy. It is a \$3 billion economy in which we get about 1.5 million tourists a year, of which about 80 percent come from Japan.

Guam was impacted by flight cutbacks and employee layoffs of Continental Micronesia, a subsidiary of Continental Airlines, which is Guam's largest private employer. Guam is also hindered in trying to deal with the dislocation and the misery created by this because we have caps on Medicaid. We have a 50/50 share with the Federal Government, but we are capped, we have caps on TANF and the fact that there is no unemployment insurance available to private sectors in Guam means that the between 15 and 20 percent of the working population in Guam who find themselves dislocated face a dismal future indeed.

I have worked over the last several weeks to try to tell this story and to try to work on a bipartisan basis to ensure Guam's and other territories' inclusion in this stimulus package, no matter how it may look like. Particularly, for example, the national emer-

gency grants, the President's proposal, when it first left the White House, it did not include the territories, an oversight as it was indicated. I am very pleased to note that the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BOEHNER), chair of the Committee on Education and the Workforce, has agreed to make the territories eligible should this be part of the final stimulus package. We are also talking about making sure that the territories are included in any payroll tax rebate which we anticipate could be part of the final package. We also want to make sure that health insurance for the unemployed again include the territories. Finally, we want to make sure that unemployment benefits which are generally available, the extension to other American citizens, are also available to American citizens in the territories.

In summary, if we are not able to get all of this and we are not able to get the stimulus package, we call on the executive branch to at least provide discretionary funding to the territories.

#### NATION'S CAPITAL PLAYS A ROLE IN MAINTAINING AN OPEN SOCIETY DURING TIME OF WAR

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CULBERSON). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor this afternoon to speak about a subject which may seem abstract, except that in wartime it is very real. We had a meeting with top White House officials, the Mayor, several city officials, business and labor officials and yes, some officials from here in the House to discuss maintaining an open society in a time of war.

Mr. Speaker, we have got to make sure that the words "open society" do not become cliches. We have been tested recently. The test goes on. Are we able to fight a war even in the homeland and maintain the normalcy that the President admonishes us to maintain? Or will we, little by little, close down the society so that we resemble somebody else's society, a society we try not to be?

Let us recall that this House was on the steps of this House on the evening of September 11 sending a brave message to the country and the world that we were going to keep this House open, that we could not be chased from the House and that they could not shut down democracy. It was one of the proudest moments probably in the 200 years that we have had a Congress. The importance, of course, there, was that it occurred in Washington and it occurred from the Nation's leaders. Then, of course, there was the anthrax scare, and we are still suffering from that. The House and the Senate took different paths. The House paid a price.