

a small fraction of that funding, that modest investment produced impressive results. MEP helped more than 2,700 Ohio businesses to create or retain more than 1,100 jobs, increase sales by \$20 million, cut costs by \$47 million, increase investments by \$58 million. That is exactly the sort of helping hand Ohio and the Nation's small manufacturers need.

Then the President proposed an MEP funding cut of 88 percent, ended up signing a law a couple of years ago that cut it almost that much. Not surprisingly, services to Ohio businesses dropped significantly. This year, the President's budget request asked for a funding cut of another 50 percent. Less than \$1 million per State will be left for MEP. We should be supporting a funding level five times that amount because it would mean more tax revenue, more jobs, more success for U.S. manufacturers.

Ohio's Republican governors urge the President to change his position on MEP. Working men and women from my State and across the Nation understand that our economic future is at stake. We should pass a bill this week ensuring increased MEP funds over the President's request, but this body probably will not do it.

To support our Nation's manufacturing, we should pass a bill to stop China from manipulating its currency by artificially pegging it below the dollar. China starts out with a 40 percent advantage over American manufacturers by this illegal act, not to mention having no minimum wage and forced labor camps and child labor and all the other advantages, artificial advantages if you will, in a free marketplace that China has. But I do not think that legislation to deal with currency manipulating will be on the House floor this week.

To support our Nation's manufacturers, we should pass such a bill making sure China plays fair and meets its World Trade Organization obligations, but I do not see a bill on the floor this week to do that.

To support our Nation's manufacturing, we should pass the bill of the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN), the Foreign Debt Ceiling Act of 2005, that would create an emergency trade review group at the U.S. Trade Representative's Office to develop a plan of action if the trade deficit is above 5 percent of U.S. GDP or if foreign debt climbs above 25 percent of GDP. But that is not being considered this week either.

The manufacturing industry is the backbone of our country. This industry, these workers, these communities built America. And when these industries suffer, our communities suffer, our families suffer, our schools suffer, our Nation is hurt. Yet many in Congress continue to support measures that move these jobs overseas. Let us be clear about whom we should support.

Congratulate manufacturers, is what the resolution on the floor will do and

nothing else this week, who have remained in the U.S. and refrained from sending manufacturing jobs overseas. But it is not just about keeping our middle class strong; we should be concerned about national security. Without a strong manufacturing base, there can be no strong reliable national security in this country.

Mr. Speaker, I hope that we, finally, in this Congress adopt a manufacturing policy.

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ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to speak out of order.

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

There was no objection.

SOCIAL SECURITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BURGESS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, the American people are hearing a lot of information about our Social Security system, and I am sure they have got legitimate questions: Is there a crisis or not? If there is a crisis, then is there a trust fund or not? If there is not a trust fund, where did it go, who took it and when?

There are, of course, those who say that there is no crisis, that we have a system that is awash in cash and can fund all future benefits but it needs minor tweaking to ensure solvency.

Perhaps crisis is the wrong word. Captive may be a better selection because certainly we are held captive by our demographics. If our current system is to work and work well, we need large numbers of young people to pay into the system, and we need retirees to live relatively short intervals after their retirement; but in fact, neither of these situations reflects reality.

Birth rates are down in this country, although not to the degree as seen in some Western European countries, still resulting in a smaller pool of younger workers to support retirees. Life expectancy is up, largely because of the unbelievable advances in medical care that have occurred in the last 70 years since 1935. Both situations are arguably good news, but they do portend a serious situation for our Social Security system.

For example, in the country of Japan there are now four retirees to be supported by every new job that is created. It becomes extremely difficult to remain competitive in such an environment. Raising taxes to deal with the Social Security shortfall arguably has been done several times in the past 70 years; but, unfortunately, that makes the problem even worse. The old axiom states that you tax what you do not

want, but surely we want jobs for tomorrow's Americans, but increasing the payroll tax may mean ultimately there are fewer such jobs.

In 1937, the Supreme Court ruled that excess Social Security funds were to be placed in the general revenue fund. Mr. Speaker, that is what happened to the trust fund. In fact, nonnegotiable government instruments housed in a metal filing cabinet in West Virginia represent the surplus in Social Security, and that surplus has been spent over the last several decades by Congress. Congress spent the money, Congress wrote out an IOU for the money, and we continue to write IOUs for the interest.

Mr. Speaker, where is the fairness in a system that holds captive 12 percent of the country's payroll and pays no interest on the money? This, I think, is the heart of the problem. What Albert Einstein described as the miracle of compound interest is denied to American workers.

What are the solutions that might be there for us to help with Social Security? We could cut benefits. I did not come to Congress to do that. We could raise taxes. Not this guy.

There are, of course, those who feel that growth in the economy will help those two workers that are going to have to support every retiree into the future; and I will tell my colleagues, Mr. Speaker, I will bet on the American economy every time, but I am not sure if we can improve productivity to that degree.

Mr. Speaker, what we can do is take those excess funds being paid into Social Security and place them into individual accounts that would not be accessible to government spenders and not be accessible to congressional appropriators. Allow these accounts to earn interest by following a conservative investment strategy, and now perhaps we begin to see the opportunity to preserve Social Security and ensure its solvency well into the future.

The question is always asked how to pay for this transition. I have already excluded a tax increase or benefit cut as a viable mechanism. The money to finance the transition would have to be borrowed; and in fact, this does not represent new debt because the obligation has already been incurred. The borrowing is only to refinance an obligation that already exists, a situation analogous to refinancing a mortgage.

Mr. Speaker, we should always be for good government. The principle of good government would suggest that the current obligation is present, but we are not acknowledging its presence. By financing the transition, we can convert an unknown obligation into bonded indebtedness. It becomes a marketable instrument; and that, in fact, would be a commitment to good government.

Financial markets are not known for their courage. They do not like uncertainty; and, clearly, the uncertainty of