

accounts, privatized Social Security, or personal job retraining accounts. They want a government that helps individuals provide for themselves and their families.

Senator Wagner wrote the National Labor Relations Act in 1934 to ensure that workers would have an unambiguous, unmitigated right to representation in the workplace. He said then that “the denial or observance of this right means the difference between despotism and democracy.”

Let us give Americans a fair shot at organizing again. They deserve protection under the law. I urge my colleagues to support the Employee Free Choice Act.

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

(Mr. BURTON of Indiana addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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

(Mr. MORAN of Kansas addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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

(Mr. BURGESS addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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

(Mr. LARSON of Connecticut addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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

(Mr. GINGREY addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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

(Mr. PENCE addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

#### THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE DEMOCRATS' ACTIONS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentlewoman from

Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Madam Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to stand before the body today and talk about what we are seeing happen with some of the actions our colleagues on the other side of the aisle, the Democrats, have taken and what those actions, the consequences that they are having on our Nation's economy and the Nation's health.

Madam Speaker, we all feel like that one of the defining, iconic, fundamental items of this great Nation is our free-enterprise system. It is an imperative that individuals have the opportunity to show up to a proper job, to work hard, to get that job, to succeed and then to share that success with their families. We all call that the American dream, when you can work hard and build a life and build a nest egg and retire and enjoy the benefits of that.

It has been of tremendous concern to us, as we have seen the actions of this Congress and the effect that some of those actions are having on our Nation's economy. We have seen spending go up. There was a continuing resolution, supposed to be, that was passed by this body, but it turned out to be a head scratcher for most Americans because it was not level funding. It was not continued funding. It was \$10 billion more in increased funding than had been there previously.

Now, where I come from in Tennessee, if you have one number and you add to it, you end up with more. That is an increase. It is an increase, and I think most Americans see it just that way.

What we also saw was that departments and agencies did not end up getting what they had had last year. There was some creative bookkeeping, some sleight of hand, if you will, that was taking place in smoke-filled rooms, not on the floor of the House, but with comments being made like, I am going to pick up the phone and call over to an agency and tell them how I want them to spend that money.

So that meant picking winners and losers out of the pot of money, and, of course, in my district, where I come from in Tennessee, we were very, very concerned that the loser was military construction. The loser was our men and women in uniform who are fighting to defend our freedom so that everything we do here is relevant. How shameful, how shameful that it is their projects that hit the chopping block.

So we saw that spending in that budget go up. Then we have been able to see what has happened with tax increases. All the language through the campaign of we are not going to increase your taxes, but we are going to do all these things, but we are not going to increase your taxes.

Well, I did a little figuring today to see what had happened with mandates and taxes and where we were on this

issue, and, Madam Speaker, just to do a quick little checklist, as we have them, we have H.R. 2, the minimum wage bill. That was a \$17 billion mandate on this Nation's small businesses, 17 B, billion, mandate on small businesses. That does not sound like something that is very friendly to our Nation's free-enterprise system.

Then we had H.R. 5, the student loan. That was a \$7.1 billion repeal of lender subsidies, \$7.1 billion more that the taxpayers then have to pick up the bill on.

□ 1500

Oh, and I know it is sometimes fun to say, wink-wink, nod-nod, fees and user fees aren't always taxes. But, yes, indeed they are, because, as Ronald Reagan said, it's the taxpayer that pays. It's coming out of their pocket. So we see \$17 billion on small businesses. We see \$7.1 billion on lender subsidies and student loans. That is going to make education more expensive. H.R. 6, the CLEAN Energy bill, \$7.6 billion in tax increases. And then, to add insult to injury, \$314 million in repeal of tax credits on those that are out there trying to make certain that we become independent of foreign oil.

Now, some things are not only counterintuitive but they are counterproductive. And as we look at this, certainly raising taxes on those that are working to find alternative energy, raising taxes on our businesses who are working for clean energy, it just doesn't make good sense. It defies common sense. We see that in the CLEAN Energy Act.

Continuing on through the list, H.R. 976, the small business bill, actually is a \$45 million increase in taxes. So what we have is since we have been here and since our colleagues across the aisle have taken control of the majority, they have increased taxes on their constituents by \$32 billion. That is just tax increases. That doesn't count the added spending that is coming to this floor day after day after day, and we know that as we begin to work on budgets in coming years that that is going to continue to mount up. Because what we have learned is that the bill always comes due. Isn't it amazing, Madam Speaker, the bill always comes due. Somebody has to pay the bill. Or, as my used car dealership in my town says, Somebody's got to tote the note. And unfortunately it is the American taxpayer that is toting the note for the Democrats' spending habits.

You can go back to the Great Society and the New Deal and you can look at the way this bureaucracy has grown and grown and grown in this town. Madam Speaker, I would guess that many of this body are like me. They have individuals and constituents from different agencies that are coming in and visiting with them this week and what we are hearing is good programs, veterans programs, conservation programs, the money is not making it to the local level. And why isn't it? It is

because the bureaucracy is soaking up all of the money right here in D.C. and our constituents' money is not leaving town. So we look at this \$32 billion that has been raised in taxes since the Democrats took control, and we know that there is more note that we are going to have to tote on this budget, but we know they are going to come along and try to raise taxes again to pay for their spending habits.

We have got the spending that is increasing, we have got the taxes that they are increasing, and lo and behold this week we have a bill. It is called, well, you know, I kind of forget the name of it sometimes. Employer, some kind of name they have for it, or Card Check. I actually, Madam Speaker, prefer to call it the Worker Intimidation Act. I think it is a very fitting name for this legislation because it is not employee friendly, it is not security friendly, it is not job friendly. What it does allow is intimidation. And I find it so unfortunate that we see that embodied in this piece of legislation. I had read a poll that had taken place over the weekend, and it seems that most Americans, about nine out of 10 Americans, agree with me on this issue, Madam Speaker. What we see is that most people agree that an employee should be able to have a secret ballot. That it is something that as our Secretary of Labor has said, it is an intrinsic right. It is something that we hold very, very dear, the right to cast that ballot, to express our opinion, and to do it without fear and to do it without intimidation. Every worker deserves the right to cast their ballot and express their opinion.

So this Card Check bill, we are going to hear more about this this hour as we talk about the actions that have been taken and as we talk about the consequences that those actions have on the productivity of this Nation, the actions that those have on those consequences that affect this Nation's health and its economy.

At this time I would like to yield to the gentleman from Georgia as he is joining us in this Republican Study Committee hour to talk about this issue and the Republican Study Committee.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Thank you, Ms. Blackburn. I really want to ask you a couple of questions, if I could, just to have a little conversation here. You talked about taxes and what was being done. How about the alternative minimum tax, the AMT, that was put in under the Democratic majority back in the late sixties or early seventies, that was really targeted to try to get 28 millionaires out of 250 million people that live in this country, to target 28 people, to come up with this alternative minimum tax that says, you know, if you fill out your 1040 and we don't feel like you paid enough tax, in other words, if you had too many deductions or if your tax really wasn't where we thought it needed to be, then you have to pay the alternative minimum tax.

I think the lady from Tennessee may have some numbers. I don't know. I have heard the number that as high as 32 million people are going to be affected, 10 percent of our population or over 10 percent of the population is going to be affected by something that the Democrats did to get 28 people to pay taxes. It should have been a little more simple than that, shouldn't it?

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Yes. That is one of the things we have seen with these unintended consequences or maybe intended consequences, because we know for the liberal elite, you can never pay enough tax. And one of the things when somebody says, well, we need to be taxing somebody more, I say, you know what, walk on up here, write out a check for what you think you owe and put it in the box. And I will offer to Madam Speaker and my colleagues, I have never had anybody say, "I am not paying enough." I have never had one single person offer to write out that check and give the government a little bit more. But it is so easy to say, pay more, when it's not you, it's not me, it's the guy behind the tree. And that, many times, is where they go, always wanting more money, because government never gets enough of your money. They always want more. They think they have a better idea. They think they're smarter. They think they're brighter. They think that they know more than anybody else. And the liberal elites do that.

We can go back and look at the beginning of the Federal income tax in 1913. It started in February 1913. Just 1 percent. Just on the few millionaires in the country to make them pay for a war. And look where it got us. And with the AMT, it was just going to be on 28 people, just for a little while, just to get a little bit more out of their pocket. And now, as you said, estimates of 30 million Americans, men and women who are both working in order to be able to provide for their children and their families so that they have that little piece of the American Dream. And then they are affected by the AMT. They are affected by the small business tax that has been paid, going to take another \$45 million out of their pocket. They are affected by H.R. 2, that minimum wage bill, that is going to put another \$17 billion worth of mandates on them. We see it just never stops. You give them an inch, they're going to take a mile. And it is the hang onto your wallet Congress. They just are coming for everybody's wallet and can't get to it fast enough.

We want everyone to stay in touch with us on this issue, and as I yield to the gentleman, I would like to call attention to our poster there so they can stay in touch with us on the Card Check bill and on different issues that are coming before us.

I yield to the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. That is exactly right. Here is the Web site right here: [rsc@mail.house.gov](mailto:rsc@mail.house.gov). And you can

go to the Hensarling Web site, our chairman, and let us know how you feel about the AMT. If this thing has affected you, we want to know about it, because we are going to make sure that we do everything that we can to make sure that this AMT does not continue to affect more and more of our taxpayers that go out every day and work hard for their money. And, by the way, they are probably still at work right now trying to earn some money.

Getting back to the Employee Intimidation bill, is it going to be an open rule or a closed rule? I don't want to talk inside baseball or get down in the weeds here, but are we going to be able to offer amendments? Am I going to be able to offer an amendment to perfect this bill? Or is it going to be a closed rule like we have been having where the people of the Third District of Georgia or some of the people from the lady from Tennessee's district or the gentleman from Texas' district that has no say-so in the process? Have you heard if we are going to be able to perfect this bill? Or is this bill perfect? Is this bill perfect and doesn't really need any perfecting?

Mrs. BLACKBURN. I think that what we are hearing from the other side, they think that they have a perfect piece of legislation. It probably in their minds would be something that they considered to be perfect. As I said, they name it the Employee Choice or something but it is indeed the Worker Intimidation bill, and they don't want anybody to really bring this, they want it on and off the floor as fast as they can get it.

One of the questions that we are asked a lot is wouldn't this give employees more choice over their employment decisions? And we know that the answer to that is a big "no." It will not. It is going to have the opposite effect.

We know that just as they don't want a lot of discussion on this floor about this bill, they don't want employees to have more choice and more freedom in how they choose to construct their work situations.

I would like to yield to the chairman of the Republican Study Committee, Mr. HENSARLING from Texas, who is joining us. Again, anyone who would like to be in contact with us and talk about what they are seeing in the workplace, talk about the increased taxes that the Democrats have brought forward, talk about the increased spending that our Democratic colleagues have brought forward, we would encourage them to be in touch with us at [rsc@mail.house.gov](mailto:rsc@mail.house.gov).

At this time I yield to the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. HENSARLING. I certainly thank the gentlelady from Tennessee for yielding. I particularly appreciate her leadership not only within the Republican Study Committee, the conservative caucus in the House of Representatives, but also her great leadership on issues that impact the family budget,

spending, because we know in this institution that you can't increase some Federal budget without decreasing some family budget.

At the moment we are talking about this thing, what most people call Card Check, which sounds innocent enough on its face, but I would note, as my colleagues have said, that it took the Democrats about 2 days to go ahead and waive their own pay-as-you-go provision that supposedly made sure we weren't going to get deeper in debt, it took them about 2 weeks to raise taxes on the American people, and, also, almost took them 2 full months before they started to try to repudiate the right to a secret ballot of American workers, before they try to take back the franchise from American workers. They have been very busy since they took over the House.

Now, the formal title of this piece of legislation that we are speaking about this afternoon is the Employee Free Choice Act. Now, Madam Speaker, we know that somewhere running around here in the Capitol are people who are paid to come up with clever titles for pieces of legislation. Well, whoever came up with that title surely deserves a bonus.

San Francisco, California, not exactly known as a bastion of conservative thought in America, one of their daily newspapers, the San Francisco Examiner, called that title exquisitely Orwellian, in referring to the famous author George Orwell and his book, 1984.

□ 1515

Madam Speaker, I don't know about you, but I know when I was in high school many, many years ago in College Station, Texas, that was required reading. For those who have read it either voluntarily or involuntarily, they may recall that to be Orwellian meant to turn things on their head to call black, white; to call up, down; to call good, bad. I must admit that the Orwell estate must be doing well, because people are still clearly buying his works.

This proposed Act has nothing to do with freedom. This proposed Act has nothing to do with choice. This proposed Act is nothing less, nothing less than a full frontal assault, a full, frontal assault of a worker's fundamental right to cast a secret ballot to choose whether or not they want to be a member of a labor union.

What is more fundamental to our democracy than the secret ballot? It is one of the pillars. It is one of the pillars of democracy, and yet the Democrats, in this cleverly titled bill, they want to take that away.

I might suggest that if they want to take that away, that Members of Congress who are going to vote for this Act, which will be on the floor tomorrow, maybe they ought to think about cosponsoring some companion legislation, and let's go ahead and just spread it all over America. Why don't we just

go ahead and provide for card check for congressional elections?

Let's get rid of that secret ballot booth. Instead, why don't you publicly have to come down and take a little card and check in front of your friends, your neighbors, not to mention those who may not be too friendly to you, and just say who you are voting for. If it is good enough for congressional elections, it ought to be good enough for labor union elections.

Yet, again, Democrats are going to come to this floor tomorrow and vote on a piece of legislation to fundamentally take away the right to a secret ballot from workers all across America. By the way, poll after poll of labor union members say they are against this. They say it is fundamentally unfair to take away their secret ballot.

Now the labor union bosses making the six-figure salaries out of their dues, they have a different opinion. In fact, one was quoted saying "there is no reason to subject the workers to an election." No reason to subject the workers to an election. Kind of sounds like something Hugo Chavez might say in Venezuela.

You know, there is just no reason to subject the people to an election. But it does appear to be every single reason to subject workers to pressure and intimidation, and that is what this bill is all about. There have been card check campaigns in the recent past. This is known, you can go to public sources.

Now there was a union organizing at MGM in Las Vegas and union organizers threatened those people who would not check that they wanted to join a union. They said if we want to take over, we will get your job one way or another. We will get your job.

There was a United Steel Workers official. He was told to threaten migrant workers with deportation if they would not pick up the card and check that they wanted to be in the labor union. I don't know where the freedom is. I don't know where the choice is, but I certainly know where the pressure and the intimidation is.

Recently, just this last week, we had testimony from a worker in Oregon who said that when she would not publicly check the card that she wanted to join a labor union, that her work life became miserable, miserable when she refused to do this. Again, this is nothing more than assault on a fundamental right to a secret ballot in a labor union election.

This overturns decades and decades of custom and practice and law in America on how people can choose.

Now, listen, we live in a free society. We should live in a free society. Workers ought to be able to choose if they want to be part of a labor union. That is not a question. There is only one question that is going to be before the floor and that question is, should workers have the right to a secret ballot? Are they going to be open to intimidation, pressure and shakedown? Not one worker in America, not one worker in

America is going to be benefited by this.

Now, I can think of others who are going to be benefited by this, because all of a sudden, labor union bosses are automatically going to have access to hard-working Americans' paychecks where they used to not have that, to source the money, and unfortunately, so many of these issues come down to money.

Indeed, follow the money. It may be instructive. The Pew Foundation has indicated that over half a billion dollars of labor union money has gone to the Democrat party since 1994. You know, even in Washington DC, a half a billion dollars is a lot of money. Seven out of the top ten political contributors in America are organized labor. The American people don't want this, workers don't want this, even unionized workers don't want this, but labor union bosses do. They want a fundamental assault on the right, the right to a secret ballot. What a day of infamy it will be in this House, should we approve that.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. I thank the gentleman from Texas for those well-structured remarks. Again, we are talking about a bill, a piece of legislation that would be a big win for big labor. It is something that they have wanted for a long time. It is something that they have said would strengthen them, the labor union, and, as my colleague from Texas said, the labor union bosses. This is where they want to go to build some power, to have access to those paychecks and access to the information of what their members are doing.

Now, we have a couple of documents that some of our friends may want to actually log on and get. Again, at [www.house.gov/hensarling/rsc](http://www.house.gov/hensarling/rsc), you can come to these documents and pull them down. One is the card check issue, the end of secret ballots in America. I think this is very instructive.

It is important for individuals to read, and as my colleague from Texas said, are Members of Congress ready to do away with secret ballots in their elections? If it is good enough for the American worker, should it be considered for Members of Congress?

Now, in this document that I have just shown you, there is a list of groups that are opposed to card check and a list of groups that support it. Those that support it are ACORN, AFL-CIO, Americans for Democratic Action, Center for American Progress, Council on American Islamic Relations, the Democratic Leadership Council, the Democratic National Committee, Earthwatch, Human Rights Watch, NAACP, Sierra Club, Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations in Washington, DC, and UNITE HERE!

Now, the groups that are in opposition to the card check proposal, the American Hospital Association, the American Hotel and Lodging Association, Associated Builders & Contractors, Associated General Contractors,

Independent Electrical Contractors, International Council of Shopping Centers, International Food Service Distributors' Association, International Franchise Association, National Association of Manufacturers, National Restaurant Association, National Retail Federation, Printing Industries of America, U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

I also have in front of me the statement that has come to us from the Fraternal Order of Police. The Fraternal Order of Police in this great Nation stands against the card check bill. They are not for this, and their national president has called on Congress to reject the bill.

A couple things I would like to read to be certain that we get these in the RECORD, because the men and women who are members of our local law enforcement communities are there on the front line every single day defending our streets and our communities and keeping our homeland safe.

I think that it is worthy that we listen to them and that we heed what they tell us. There is some wisdom in the thoughts that they present to us. I am quoting from this press release. It says, "The legislation as proposed would replace the current democratic process of secret ballots with the card check system that invites coercion and abuse."

Under this process, the identity of workers who signed or refused to sign union organizing cards would be made public to the union organizers as well as to the workers' employer and co-workers, leaving these individuals vulnerable to threats and intimidation from union leaders, management or both.

The most common method for determining whether or not employees want a union to represent them is a private ballot election overseen by the National Labor Relations Board.

Then going on further and quoting from Mr. Canterbury's release, without the anonymity of the secret ballot, the FOP would probably not exist today. The only way to guarantee worker protection from coercion and intimidation is through the continued use of secret ballot elections so that personal decisions about whether to join a union remain private.

That is just comments from one of the organizations that understand how harmful this piece of legislation, the card check bill, or, as I have called it, the worker intimidation bill, would be on our Nation's business structure. This is something that we need to think very, very carefully about.

Another document that I would love to call attention to, from our Republican Study Committee, and, again, send us your thoughts at [rsc@mail.house.gov](mailto:rsc@mail.house.gov), and you can go to our Web site, [www.house.gov/hensarling/rsc](http://www.house.gov/hensarling/rsc), and you can pull this information down. But it is a Q&A on the card check issue, with some of the myths and some of the facts, the rights and the wrongs that spell this out,

what it would mean to our Nation's law enforcement community, what it would mean to our Nation's business community.

Mr. HENSARLING. I wanted to follow up on the gentlelady's point, again. We are trying to preserve the fundamental right to the secret ballot in labor union elections. No matter what the opposition says that this is going to do, what we know is from the actual people, actual workers who are subjected to this card check procedure, we know intimidation and harassment is taking place.

Madam Speaker, I submit for printing in the RECORD a statement from Mike Ivey, materials handler at Freightliner Custom Chassis Corporation in Gaffney, South Carolina.

STATEMENT OF MIKE IVEY, MATERIALS HANDLER, FREIGHTLINER CUSTOM CHASSIS CORPORATION

My name is Mike Ivey, and I appreciate the opportunity to share with the committee my experiences under an abusive card check organizing drive which is still ongoing after 4½ years.

Freightliner Custom Chassis Corporation (FCCC) in Gaffney, South Carolina, has employed me for approximately 7 years. We are a non-union facility and more than the majority of employees are extremely proud of that fact. The problems we have started in the fall of 2002.

During contract negotiations for their union facilities, the UAW and Daimler Chrysler Corporation reached a card check agreement to allow the UAW to try to organize their non-union facilities. This agreement prevents FCCC from doing anything positive for their employees, or discussing the situation with the employees. This agreement also allows the union to recruit and pay FCCC employees at this facility to handle their card check system.

The card check system consists of coercing employees to sign a card for the union. If enough cards are signed, 50 percent + 1, then the facility is considered to be a union facility. In this process of obtaining the needed signatures, there are a lot of untruths told.

Early on, the employees for a non-union FCCC signed and submitted a petition which clearly states that they want no union representation at this facility. More than 70 percent of all employees signed this petition. The UAW and Daimler Chrysler Corporation received these petitions with no response, nor any halt in the card check drive.

In April 2003, the CEO of Daimler Chrysler promised the employees of FCCC a wage increase at a plant-wide meeting. In August 2003, when the time came to make good on that promise, the union threatened a lawsuit against Daimler Chrysler if the wage increase was implemented. They feared that if employees got the wage increase they had long been promised, it would reduce support for the union. We obtained free legal aid from the National Right to Work Legal Defense Foundation, and only after we filed charges at the National Labor Relations Board, did the union allow the pay increase.

Employees are told at off-site meetings that signing a card only certifies that they attended the meeting. Employees are also offered a free t-shirt if they sign a card. What they are not told is that these cards are a legally binding document, which states that the employee is pro union—thus placing the union one step closer to their goal of complete control of the employees' workplace lives without the employees even realizing it.

In the workplace, the employees running the organizing campaign for the UAW are relentless in trying to get the employees to sign union cards. This has created a hostile work environment, with employees who once were friends who are now at odds with each other.

The employees who are not in support of the union should have the right to go to work and not be harassed every day. This harassment has been going on more than 4 years with no end in sight. Faced with this never-ending onslaught, we employees feel that the UAW is holding our heads under water until we drown.

In April 2005, the UAW obtained the personal information of each employee. It wasn't enough that employees were being harassed at work, but now they are receiving phone calls at home. The UAW also had union employees from other facilities actually visit these employees at their homes. The union's organizers refuse to take "no" for an answer. If you told one group of organizers that you were not interested, the next time they would send someone else.

Moreover, in many instances, employees who signed cards under pressure or false pretenses later attempted to retrieve or void this card. The union would not allow this to happen, telling them that they could not do so.

After 4½ years of trying to organize our facility, the majority of employees are still against the union by roughly a 3 to 1 ratio.

We feel that the aggressive behavior of UAW organizers will only escalate in 2007. All the union Freightliner facilities are facing major layoffs in the coming months. We expect the UAW to turn up the heat at our Gaffney facility to make up for the dues revenue shortfalls at the union facilities.

I understand that some members of Congress would like to mandate this abusive card check process for selecting a union so that employees everywhere will go through what we continue to experience. Rather than increasing this coercive practice, Congress should ban it.

Everyone in public office is elected by secret ballot vote. Please give us a chance in our workplace to make the decision on representation in the same manner.

I will read from it in part, "My name is Mike Ivey, and I appreciate the opportunity to share with the committee my experiences under an abusive card check organizing drive which is still ongoing after 4½ years."

So 4½ years this fight has been going on in Gaffney, South Carolina. Apparently it is dating back to fall 2002. This gentleman talks about what is going on in these 4½ years.

To quote from his letter, "The employees who are not in support of the Union should have the right to go to work and not be harassed every day. This harassment has been going on more than 4 years with no end in sight. Faced with this never-ending onslaught, we employees feel that the United Auto Workers is holding our heads under water until we drown."

Quoting from his statement further, "In April of 2005, the UAW obtained the personal information of each employee. It wasn't enough that employees were being harassed at work, but now they are receiving phone calls at home. The UAW also had Union employees from other facilities actually visit these employees at their homes." The organizers would not take no for an answer.

“Some employees have had five or more harassing visits from these union organizers. The only way, it seems, to stop the badgering and pressure is to sign the card.” That’s the pressure, that’s the intimidation.

I would quote further from this statement, “Moreover in many instances, employees who signed cards under pressure or false pretenses later attempted to retrieve or void this card.”

□ 1530

The union would not allow this to happen. After 4½ years of trying to organize the facility, 4½ years, Madam Speaker, the majority of employees are still against it by roughly a 3-1 ratio.

He goes on to say, and imploring this body, Madam Speaker, “Rather than increasing this coercive practice, Congress should ban it. Everyone in public office is elected by secret ballot. Please give us a chance in our workplace to make the decision on representation in the same manner.”

Madam Speaker, again, every single person who comes to the floor of the House, the Members of this institution, are elected by secret ballot. Our constituents, our workers, both union and nonunion, cry out for the same fundamental fairness and the same fundamental democratic rights.

But since labor union bosses helped the Democrats, since labor union bosses need more money in their coffers, they have found a new and innovative way to get money, and that is through this thing called “card check.”

And what is interesting, also, Madam Speaker, if you will look at those who are bringing this legislation to the floor, for example, the gentleman from California, the chairman of the Education and Labor Committee, well, he seems to have done a bit of a flip-flop on the issue. He and several other lead sponsors of this legislation, just a few years ago, for whatever reason, counseled the Mexican Government about labor union elections. Let me quote from their letter.

“We understand that the secret ballot is allowed for, but not required by Mexican labor law. However, we feel that the secret ballot is absolutely necessary in order to ensure workers are not intimidated into voting for a union they may otherwise not choose.”

I mean, this was sent by the sponsor of this legislation. So 5, 6 years ago, he believed that Mexicans fundamentally should have the right to a secret ballot in labor union organizing. But now, in 2007, he wants to deny that very same fundamental right to American workers. I don’t get it, Madam Speaker. What has changed?

Well, what has changed is clearly, number one, declining union membership and an election. And I understand elections have consequences, but the American people need to be watching very, very closely, very closely what this is all about, because my guess is most of them did not vote to fundamentally deny Democrat rights to

American workers, to fundamentally strip them of their right to a secret ballot on whether or not they care to join a labor union. And so I hope, Madam Speaker, that the entire attention of America will be on this body tomorrow.

Again, 90 percent of Americans believe fundamentally you ought to have the right to a secret ballot in these elections. Survey after survey of workers, including unionized workers, believe this as well. But apparently the Democrat majority and labor union bosses who put all kinds of money into these races believe otherwise. And so it will be a very significant vote on this House floor tomorrow.

Will this body stand for democracy? Will this body stand for the secret ballot? Will this body stand for American workers? Or will this body stand for labor union bosses who want to get their hands on more worker money?

And with that I would be happy to yield back to the gentlelady.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. I thank the gentleman from Texas.

And, Madam Speaker, as he said, it took 2 days to go about raising spending. Within a couple of weeks taxes were raised. We have seen those taxes be raised on the American worker to the tune of \$32 billion that the Democrat majority has passed since taking control as the majority party in this body; \$32 billion in tax increases. We have seen spending increased. And now what we are seeing is within the first couple of months they are going to come along and they are going to compromise the workplace. And they are going to push a piece of legislation on the American worker that the American worker does not want.

And again, looking at the poll that I have quoted from, when you ask the question, tell me if you agree or disagree with the following statement, every worker should continue to have the right to a federally supervised secret ballot election when deciding whether to organize a union, and nearly 9 out of 10 individuals think that the worker deserves that right.

You know, Madam Speaker, it is so interesting. We have moved away from the days of coercion and intimidation and union bosses that would beat up on people. That is how the National Labor Relations Board came about, when people sought to have relief from that type of coercive, intimidating activity that would strike fear in the hearts of families and fear in the hearts of workers.

And how sad, how very, very sad that in this year and in this time, and in this 110th Congress, we would take steps that would return to those ways that would limit the freedom of men and women who have chosen a profession, chosen a career, chosen a job that they want to perform and would place them under the heavy-handed fist of a union boss who would seek to challenge their viability in the workplace and who would seek to challenge their freedom.

It is my hope that more of our Members will become familiar with the statistics on this issue, and the desires of the American people, and will realize there is nothing in this legislation that speaks to free choice at all. That is a fancy, dressed-up name for card check, which is a fancy, dressed-up name for a return to worker intimidation and coercion. And it is unfortunate that we see it happening here in this body.

One of the things that we do, that we put a focus on when we talk about our job here and our work here, and those of us in the Republican Study Committee as we gather and we talk, we talk a lot, Madam Speaker, about what are we going to do to preserve this great union. What are we going to do to protect its sovereignty? What are we going to do to extend individual freedoms? How do we make decisions that are going to be so that we are certain that we extend the opportunity for prosperity to future generations?

And I can honestly say, increasing government spending doesn’t do that. Increasing taxes on our families does not do that. Increasing taxes on our children and increasing the debt that they are going to bear does not do that.

History shows us that when you create a government program, a government program continues to grow. I have said many times on this floor, as Ronald Reagan said, there is nothing so close to eternal life on Earth as a Federal Government program.

We have 141 programs that we would like to see eliminated or reduced this year. Unfortunately, we don’t see that happening. What we do see happening is they are increasing your taxes, they are increasing spending, and now they are going to limit your freedom in the workplace.

And I yield to the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. HENSARLING. I thank the gentlelady for yielding once again. And we are going to have a very important debate tomorrow in this institution about whether or not the Democrat majority will strip workers of their fundamental right to the secret ballot in labor union organizing elections.

But beyond that we know what is next on their agenda. It didn’t take them too long, about 2 weeks, to first raise taxes on the American people; and that is the next big debate that will be taking place in this institution. It is all about the budget.

Now, everybody in this House, both Republican and Democrat alike, will all tell you they want to balance the budget. And you know what? I believe each and every one of them. But there is a very, very different way to go about it.

Today the debate in the House tends to be whether or not tax relief that has been granted over the last 5 years was a good thing or bad thing. Well, guess what? We put tax relief into the economy on this end, and let’s see what comes out on the other end: 7.2 million jobs; 7.2 million Americans who used to

not have work now have work. How many of them used to have to settle for a welfare check, but now they have a paycheck?

How many took from the system, from unemployment and food stamps and Aid to Families with Dependent Children, who now get to pay in the system because they have a paycheck?

We have one of the strongest economies that we have had in decades. We have one of the lowest unemployment rates we have had. All of that was due to tax relief.

And, Madam Speaker, for purposes of this debate, and this is a very important point, and don't take my word for it, go to the United States Treasury. Tax rates have been lowered, and guess what? We have more tax revenue. We have more tax revenue than we have ever had in the history of the United States of America.

Now, how can that happen? Well, maybe it is difficult to understand in Washington, D.C., but it is pretty easy to understand in Tennessee Colony in Anderson County, Texas, that I have the pleasure of representing in the United States Congress. If you will allow farmers and ranchers, if you will allow small business people, if you will allow American families to keep more of what they earn, guess what? They will save. They will invest. They will go out and create their American dream and put a new automobile transmission shop on one street corner. They will add another couple of jobs at a barbecue stand. And guess what? They create jobs of the future, and we have more revenue.

Now, Madam Speaker, some people may reject this theory. You can't, you may have your own opinion, but you are not entitled to your own facts. You cannot debate that we have more tax revenue. But some people don't see a link between job creation and tax relief.

Even if I am wrong, Madam Speaker, if you will look at the Federal budget, if you will look at the Federal budget, if we had a line item called tax relief in the Federal budget, it is 1 percent, a little more than 1 percent of the entire Federal budget. Even if that money was wasted, burned, buried and didn't do any good to the economy, had no connection to job creation, to home ownership, to people being able to send their kids to college, it is about 1 percent of the budget.

My point is if you want to do something about the deficit, your focus needs to be on the spending side. We have a deficit not because we are undertaxed; we have a deficit because we are spending too much.

And listen, I take a back seat to no one as far as my concern about passing debt on to future generations. I am the father of a 5-year old and the father of a 3-year old. But even if we were to balance the budget today, and thanks to Republican progrowth economic policies, we will balance the budget, it has very little to do with spending dis-

cipline. We know we don't find any of that among our Democrat colleagues. It has everything to do with tax revenue growth.

But even if we were to balance the budget in the next few years, as my colleague from Tennessee has indicated, in Washington, D.C., tax relief is temporary, but spending is forever. So much spending has been put on automatic pilot. And it just doesn't grow horizontally, it grows exponentially.

If we don't do something now to reform the spending patterns in Washington, D.C., the next generation will face a nasty fiscal fork in the road. And don't take my word for it. Go to the General Accountability Office, the Office of Management and Budget, the Congressional Budget Office. They will all tell you the same thing. We are on the verge of either having to double taxes on the next generation or practically cut out the entirety of the Federal Government except Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security.

Just think about it, Madam Speaker. There will be no United States Marines. There will be no Border Patrol. There will be no student loans. There will be no airport security.

If we don't take fundamental steps now to end wasteful, unaccountable, runaway spending in Washington, D.C., that is the future we are facing. The Comptroller General of the United States has said in testimony before the Budget Committee that we may be on the verge of being the first generation in America's history to leave the next generation with fewer opportunities and a lower standard of living.

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Madam Speaker, I don't plan to be a part of that, and I am going to do everything I can to fight this on this House floor. So those who go around saying we must balance the budget and those who won't do anything to try to find ways to get better retirement security and better health care at a lower cost, what they are really telling you, Madam Speaker, is, I want to double taxes on the next generation. I want to leave your children and your grandchildren with less freedom and less opportunity.

Madam Speaker, how anybody can look themselves in the mirror and do that, I don't know. Again, that is the magnitude of the tax increase that Democrats are going to have to have if they won't join us in a bipartisan fashion and do something about out-of-control entitlement spending. It will be a massive tax increase the likes of which America has never seen before. And once they impose that tax increase on the American people, how many of our children will be able to send their children to college? How many of our children will be able to realize their American Dream and start their first business? How many of our children will be able to buy their first home when this body doubles their taxes for refusing, refusing, to do anything to stop runaway spending?

So, Madam Speaker, that is where the fight is. That is where the fight is. Republicans want to try to reform. Democrats want to raise taxes, but they don't own up to the magnitude of the tax increases. But the future of our country is resting upon this debate, and I hope the American people will watch very, very closely.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Madam Speaker, reclaiming my time, I thank the gentleman. As he has pointed out, in the 2006 budget we had reduced spending by \$40 billion. It was called the Deficit Reduction Act, a first step. Our colleagues across the aisle immediately increased spending in what was to have been a continuing resolution.

Then we look at taxes. We reduced taxes, which stimulated the growth of the economy and growth of jobs. Our colleagues across the aisle have already raised taxes by \$32 billion.

And as my colleague from Texas said, we have more workers than ever in the American workforce at this point in time. There are more Americans than ever holding a job and getting a paycheck. And over the past 4 years, we have seen the addition of 7.2 million new jobs to the U.S. economy. Now, these are not new hires. These are new jobs, newly created jobs. And, Madam Speaker, I think that that is important for us to put the attention on. These are jobs where a business owner sits down and says, "I can create a new position. We have our taxes down. We have seen some regulatory relief. We are doing well. We see growth in this business. We see a future that indicates growth." So they create a new position, and they hire someone to fill that position. That is how we get business growth. That is how we get business expansion.

And now we find that on top of increasing spending and on top of increasing taxes, our friends across the aisle are saying, We want to let the union bosses get another hit at those workers. We want to take away the workers' right to a secret ballot. We want to infringe on that freedom in the workplace that American workers enjoy that was a hard-fought battle decades ago, and we want to compromise that and give big labor a win."

And that, Madam Speaker, is how the liberal elites couch this battle. It is, as was said in the letter that I read, a return to coercion and intimidation. It is something that in the 21st century we should not do. I do personally consider it an inappropriate step for this House. This House should be focused on how do we expand freedom? How do we expand hope? How do we expand opportunity? And how do we make certain that every man, woman, and child has their shot at the American Dream in a safe, free, and productive country.

#### THE 30-SOMETHING WORKING GROUP

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. CLARKE). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the