

continuing the short term, business as usual, unsustainable course that has led us to this point of economic and fiscal disaster.

My hope and prayer is that Congress will be able to meet the President's challenge and work with him to refine his bold budget, treat our problems with the gravity they merit, and the public with the respect that it is due.

FRUIT OF THE BAILOUT MANIA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) for 5 minutes.

Ms. FOXX. Madam Speaker, it is time for a brief history lesson. In the fall of 2008, the Bush administration came running to Congress with an historic ask: \$700 billion with no strings attached to save the country from financial meltdown. At the time I didn't buy it, so I voted against the bailout plan twice. In fact, my distaste for the bailout plan and the unfettered access to taxpayer money that it gave the Treasury Department and the executive branch was so strong that I soon introduced a bill to stop the bailout mania.

It was a simple bill, but it had to be considered by Congress thanks to the way the bailout law had been written. In a nutshell, it would have stopped the second half of the \$700 billion TARP bailout. I introduced it in 2008 and again in 2009. President Bush's request for the second half of the bailout money in early 2009 triggered consideration of my bill. That's when things got interesting.

The week before we considered my bill to stop the bailout, we also considered another bill called the TARP Reform and Accountability Act. Nice name, but what it essentially did was give a tacit thumbs-up on the second half of the bailout and even more wasteful bailouts with taxpayer money of failed automakers. It had some provisions to increase oversight and transparency. But ultimately, it would have expanded the use of taxpayer money for bailouts.

As I look back over the debates from those two days in January and in the ensuing weeks, I found some comments to be rather surprising, especially in light of the news last week about the outrageous bonuses awarded at AIG, a company which received another \$30 billion this month in government bailout cash. The comments and questions from my friends on the other side of the aisle focused on their unwavering trust in the Obama administration's intentions to stop these sorts of executive bonus payments at companies that received bailout money.

During the debate on the anti-bailout measure, my colleague, Chairman FRANK said, "We saw bankers saying I got the money, it's none of your business what we do with it. We saw bonuses given that shouldn't be given. I am confident that the Obama adminis-

tration has learned from that." In his defense, I know that the chairman of the Financial Services Committee does not support these AIG millionaire bonuses, but we can draw a useful lesson from his comments. It's a simple lesson: the Obama administration pledging that there will be no more excessive bonuses does not make it so.

While I regret that my colleague was so gravely mistaken about the Obama administration, I do think that it is important to point out how quickly the new administration's actions have fallen short of its inflated rhetoric.

Let's take a look at some of the other comments made over the past couple of months. Last month, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. JACKSON) trumpeted President Obama's promise to limit executive compensation at bailed out companies. He said, "Today, the President will limit executive compensation for executives of companies that take advantage of taxpayer bailout funds. This is the right thing to do." And in January, Mr. POMEROY of North Dakota defended his vote to give the Obama administration the \$350 billion in bailout cash, "The written pledges of the Obama administration to operate TARP with firm conditions, greater oversight and transparent accountability abide with the conditions passed by the House."

So what exactly did the Obama administration pledge to do? It pledged to ensure that bailed out financial institutions did not go overboard with excessive executive compensation bonuses. Specifically, his National Economic Adviser wrote a letter to Congress on January 12 that stated: "The President-elect is committed to using the full arsenal of tools available to us to get credit flowing again to families and businesses. He will ask his Department of Treasury to put in place strict and sensible conditions on CEO compensation and dividend payments until taxpayers get their money back." He continued: "We will ensure that resources are directed to increasing lending and preventing new financial crises and not to enriching shareholders or executives. Those receiving exceptional assistance will be subject to tough but sensible conditions that limit executive compensation until taxpayer money is paid back."

One of my colleagues, Mr. MCGOVERN, was very encouraged by this letter from the incoming administration. I will read what he said in response to the administration's pledge: "And I should say that the statement by the Obama administration, the statement by Larry Summers, is all very encouraging. It demonstrates a real appreciation of what average people are going through."

I will leave it to the American people to judge how well the Obama administration has stood by its pledge to "limit executive compensation until taxpayer money is paid back," and I will leave it to the American people to judge how well this administration ap-

preciates what average people are going through—unless, of course, you consider people who get million-dollar bonuses for running a massive company into the grounds to be average.

SAFE MARKETS DEVELOPMENT ACT

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

Mr. DOGGETT. Madam Speaker, with all of the recent talk about unearned bonuses, I want to talk about a bonus that we Americans can give to ourselves and the world. We can do that by approving President Obama's plan to "make clean, renewable energy the profitable kind of energy." Because we can build a clean energy economy by reducing greenhouse gas emissions—carbon pollution—through a market-based system, as the President has proposed, I am today, together with a number of my colleagues, introducing the Safe Markets Development Act.

This legislation will help to ensure that any future market for carbon allowances is not abused by price speculators or undermined by excessive price volatility. This is the first cap-and-trade measure to be filed in this Congress, and it is unique both in responding to concerns about market manipulation, and in its broad support bringing new members and a broader array of interests behind this new idea about how to resolve one aspect of our transition to a cleaner world.

The Safe Markets bill offers an approach that will provide a narrow auction and trading environment for the start-up phase for a cap-and-trade or cap-and-invest system. Experts on commodities markets tell us that price volatility is not unusual with new markets. And certainly legitimate concern recently over speculation in fossil fuel and financial markets must not stand in our way of new clean energy policy.

How does this bill achieve science-based emission reductions? It creates an independent board with strict conflict-of-interest provisions and post-employment restrictions to determine the annual prices per ton of carbon necessary to meet science-based annual emission targets from 2012 to 2020. The Treasury Department would conduct quarterly allowance auctions designed to maintain this price. Under the legislation, the board would conduct an annual review of its success in meeting emission goals in order to adjust for gas prices to ensure compliance with the next year's targets.

Just as a child removes training wheels after becoming comfortable cycling, or tries the shallow end of the pool before moving into the deep end, so too we can gain experience over these first eight years to move eventually to a more traditional cap-and-trade system.

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Like President Obama, I believe that the best approach is one that relies