

the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression.

Our economy began this downward spiral as a result of irresponsible trade policies that have outsourced millions of good-paying American jobs. With the unemployment rate at 8.5 percent, the last thing our economy can afford is more of the same.

I intend to work with the Obama administration and my colleagues in Congress to forge a new direction on trade that addresses the devastation caused by NAFTA and, instead, creates jobs and grows industry in the United States.

AMERICANS HAVE THE RIGHT TO PROTEST

(Mr. FLEMING asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. FLEMING. Mr. Speaker, last week I joined thousands of citizens in my district to protest the reckless disregard Washington has shown for the taxpayers of this Nation and their hard-earned dollars.

People are angry, they are frustrated, and they feel that Washington is not listening, so they came together to protest in the same manner as our forefathers. Their message was simple. Stop spending our money, taxing our families and borrowing against the future of our children.

How did the media and our Democrat leaders here in Washington respond? They were dismissive.

The Speaker of the House, in fact, referred to this grassroots effort as Astroturf.

At the same time, Homeland Security released a report labeling political opponents of the administration as potential terrorists. The right of citizens to speak out against their party in power is at the heart of our democracy.

For a party that carps about bipartisanship and freedom of speech, the Democrat leadership should back their words with actions.

RESET THE COURSE ON TRADE POLICY

(Mr. MICHAUD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MICHAUD. Mr. Speaker, United States Trade Representative Ron Kirk said this week that the administration wants to move forward with the Bush-negotiated Panama and Colombia Free Trade Agreement "sooner rather than later." This is absolutely outrageous and a serious mistake, and contrary to what the President campaigned on.

Why would we be moving forward on a trade agreement negotiated by President Bush during a time where our economy is struggling? This makes no sense whatsoever. It does not represent a new model on trade. It represents a recycled model that doesn't work.

At home, people are furious about these trade deals. During the economic

downturn, do we really want to push forward a Bush-negotiated free trade agreement? I believe the American people deserve more. I believe they demand more from their elected officials.

We have a historic opportunity with a new administration to reset the course of trade policy. I look forward to working with the administration to change the course of direction.

LAST FIRE ALARM FOR FIREFIGHTERS JAMES HARLOW, SR. AND DAMION HOBBS

(Mr. POE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the safety of our Nation's citizens often depends on the courageous Americans who choose to serve as firefighters. They answer the sound of the alarm every day to protect and to serve.

On April 12, 2009, two Texas firemen were killed in the line of duty while rushing into a burning home to look for an elderly couple. Captain James Arthur Harlow, Sr. and Firefighter Damion Jon Hobbs both served at Houston Fire Station Number 26.

Captain Harlow served 29 years at the Houston Fire Department. He was married to Debbie, and a wonderful father and grandfather. He also liked to hunt and to fish.

Firefighter Hobbs served our country for 10 years in the United States Army, where he just recently returned from Iraq to join the Houston Fire Department. He left behind parents, siblings and his longtime girlfriend, Crystal. The fire that took his life was his very first alarm call.

Mr. Speaker, our country is better because of remarkable Americans that risk their lives to protect us from harm. Firefighters rush to the sound of the alarm to fight the fires that destroy our communities and threaten lives of citizens. Two of those firefighters, James Harlow, Sr. and Damion Hobbs, gave their lives in that sacred duty.

And that's just the way it is.

LAS VEGAS SUN PULITZER PRIZE

(Ms. TITUS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. TITUS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Las Vegas Sun and reporter Alexandra Berzon for the top-notch reporting that carried them and earned them the prestigious Pulitzer Prize for public service earlier this week.

Alexandra's investigation into the deaths of construction workers on the Las Vegas Strip, combined with the efforts of editorial writers, Matt Huffman and David Clayton brought attention to this serious issue and resulted in critical safety reforms that will save lives in Nevada.

Nine workers had died on the job when Alexandra wrote her first of more

than 50 stories chronicling the dangers construction workers face when safety is sacrificed for speed or profit. Her findings will be very valuable to Congress as the Education and Labor Committee examines this issue further.

The first Pulitzer for the Las Vegas Sun is a momentous occasion for the paper and for our community, so I, again, congratulate the Sun and Alexandra for earning journalism's highest honor.

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FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY

(Mr. SMITH of Nebraska asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Yesterday, the Savings Recovery Act, legislation designed to help Americans rebuild their retirement, college and personal savings, was introduced. This legislation will make it easier for Americans to save more for their retirement by increasing the contribution and catch-up limits for individuals and families. It will restore college savings by extending the existing credit for contributions made to college savings accounts. The Savings Recovery Act will ensure workers retain control over their hard-earned 401(k)s, not the Federal Government.

Mr. Speaker, the American people need more than just lip service when it comes to their futures. They need real solutions, solutions which come from empowering the public, not from racking up more debt.

I urge my colleagues to support the Savings Recovery Act.

HONORING THE MEMORY OF SANDRA CANTU

(Mr. MCNERNEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MCNERNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of Sandra Cantu, a child whose life was tragically cut short. Eight-year-old Sandra lived in Tracy, California, a town I am honored to represent.

Now known as "Tracy's precious angel," Sandra was a cheerful, friendly girl whose joyful life was evident whether she was doing cartwheels or playing on the jungle gym. She brightened the lives of everyone she came into contact with, even those who never met her, as was seen in the number of people at her memorial last week.

Her horrific kidnapping and death are a tragedy beyond description. No parent should have to experience the loss of a child, especially at such a young age.

I am touched by the outpouring of support for Sandra's family from the Tracy residents and for the tireless work of the Tracy Police Department.