

In closing, Mr. Speaker, for our ally Israel, for our U.S. service men and women, and for the rights of free democracies everywhere, there is no time to lose.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. KAPTUR addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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

(Mr. JONES 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. 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 PROGRESSIVE MESSAGE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. ELLISON) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Speaker, my name is Congressman KEITH ELLISON, and I am here to claim the time on behalf of the Progressive Message which comes to the American people every Thursday night to discuss critical issues and a progressive perspective on these same issues. The Progressive Message is put on and organized by Progressive Caucus members who happen to represent one of the largest caucuses in the Congress.

The purpose of this message is to focus on critical issues from a progressive perspective. That means a perspective that all Americans are welcome and included; that we need civil rights, human rights; we need economic justice for working people and working families; we need to address poverty; and we need to address peace in the world; the idea that America, a country blessed, could help bestow blessings on other people in the world through example and not through imposition; the idea that the United States, a country blessed, can help demonstrate through an example what human rights can do, what respect for the rule of law

can do, what respect for human rights, women's rights can do. The Progressive Caucus is an instrument through which progressive ideas are shared.

Tonight what we want to talk about, Mr. Speaker, is jobs. Absolutely that's the topic tonight. Jobs is what we will be talking about. I would like to hear from anyone who might be listening later on what their perspective is on the jobs picture and what we can do about it.

Mr. Speaker, the unemployment rate is 10.2 percent at this time. It could well climb higher by the end of the year. The fact is we have a jobs crisis, we have a jobs emergency, and we must do something about it now.

It's important to point out that as much as people who are unemployed need jobs, and they do, other people who are employed also need the unemployed to get jobs. It's important to bear in mind that when people are not working, their income goes down, their purchases at the store go down, their ability to consume and buy things that they need goes down, and if the store isn't selling, then the store can't put on more workers; they may even have to lay some off.

So this unemployment problem actually puts downward pressure on demand which puts other businesses who do have employees on the payroll in a position where they have to reconsider that.

Not only is the lack of a paycheck detrimental to the family that is not employed, but it also creates generational problems and it creates problems for the person who's unemployed, because when the economy turns around and they can get back in a position where they can maybe find that job, the employer is going to ask, Hey, what was going on with you over the last 3 years? Or 2 years? Or 6 months? And that hole in the resume has real consequences for that worker which may extend over the course of that person's lifetime.

Obviously, when unemployment is chronic and people are out of work for long stretches of time, their children sometimes are impacted by this and have to not only go with lower family income, which is obviously harmful to their development, but still are in a position where they have seen a parent go jobless for quite a long time which disadvantages them in terms of their ability to know how to access the job market and their hope, prospect and optimism as it relates to getting work. So unemployment is a problem, we've got to do something about it, and it is time to act.

Though the Democratic Caucus and Congress did not create the situation, and it certainly wasn't created overnight, it does need to be fixed very soon. Ten months of the new leadership of the White House cannot eclipse that of nearly 10 years of George Bush and the Republican Congress who bankrupted the public trust.

After nearly a decade of handing over middle-class tax dollars to the wealthy

est 1 percent, we've now got to take real action for working Americans. After nearly a decade of a policy that encouraged multimillion-dollar CEO bonuses over raises for American workers, we've got to do something about the job picture in America.

The economic policies of the last 10 years put President Obama and this Congress in a situation where it may not have been a situation of our making, but it is a problem that we have responsibility to correct. We're not going to say that, Yeah, we got handed two wars; yeah, we got handed hundreds of billions of dollars of debt, a crumbling infrastructure, a home mortgage foreclosure crisis—one out of eight mortgages is in default—a global climate crisis, and a financial sector ravaged by greed and lax regulation.

We're not going to rely on any excuse. We're going to get after the problem, and we're going to do it now. In short, the greatest economic and financial crisis since the Great Depression is visiting the American economy right now and people are feeling it, and it's time to do something about it.

This is why we are proposing, and I am proposing, and I am encouraging other people to support a jobs bill that would do a few things: American jobs. Invest in transportation and schools. Schools all over America are crumbling. Schools all over America have old pipes. Schools all over America are drafty and need windows replaced and the paint is peeling in many of them, not all of them but many of them. And any school teacher, any principal or any school kid can tell you that.

We need people to do the work. We have people who are willing to do the work, and we have things that need to be worked on. What we have to do is bring the two together: invest in transportation, including transit, urban transportation, light rail, and schools. This is an urgent problem, it needs fixing, and people need work. Let's pay them to do it.

State and local government relief. All over this country, States and cities and localities are having to cut back on services that they provide to their citizens. Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger has taken the public circle and said without the stimulus package, a hundred thousand teachers in California would be out of work. So that was an example of a good thing. But it's not nearly enough.

We need more to be done, because in this era and in this time, we see local governments having to lay off police officers, firefighters, public works people, teachers. We can't allow this to happen. State governments and local governments around the country are facing serious deficits and the Federal Government should step in to help.

We also need to strengthen safety nets. During times of economic downturn, there's greater pressure on our food shelves, greater pressure on our clothing shelves; and we need to understand that when unemployment runs