

rampant inflation, which means we're going to be hit with higher prices and higher interest rates. That is going to be a tax.

So I see the only solution is to cut spending. Now, the reason we don't cut spending is one side loves entitlements and the other side loves war. And even this token attempt, \$100 billion of cuts when we have this huge, huge deficit will accomplish very little.

But there's no mention of cutting military spending. I don't want to cut defense spending. This military spending doesn't defend us; it makes things worse.

Our problem in this country doesn't come only from the Congress; it comes from the people. The people still have a strong appetite for Big Government programs. They're not willing to cut. They think government can take care of us from cradle to grave and that we can be the policeman of the world.

So some day we, as a country, we, as a people, and we, as a Congress, will have to ask, what should the role of government be? The Founders had a pretty strong suggestion. They wrote a Constitution and said the government should be very limited and the government should be protecting our liberties and providing national defense and a sound currency. We don't do any of that. We've embarked on a course that was destined to end badly, and this is where we are today.

So if we don't understand this, this default will not be because we don't send out the checks. We will send out the checks. It will be defaulted on because people will get their money back, or they will get their Social Security checks, and it won't buy anything. That is much, much worse than facing the fact that we not raise the debt limit and work our way out of this.

That is devastating economically, and it's devastating politically, because we just saw a taste of what happens, how the anger is built when you see other countries in Europe now defaulting and can't pay their bills. So this is more significant than ever because we provide the reserve currency of the world.

#### THE FUNDAMENTAL RIGHT TO VOTE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE) for 5 minutes.

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, the right to vote is a fundamental right which is at the heart of this Nation. This right is under attack.

I came to this floor, after the stolen Presidential elections in Florida and Ohio, to protest the results of these two elections that were filled with voter suppression. Now, years later, 34 States, once again, in our map of shame, require voters to present IDs to vote in Federal, State, and local elections. And in 15 of those States, voters must present a photo ID. Some States require that the ID be government-

issued, mind you, in order to cast a ballot.

However, for any number of reasons, 21 million Americans do not have a government-issued ID required by these voter ID laws; and, thus, the fundamental right of American citizens is taken away. Most State legislatures have enacted or have proposed legislation echoing similar detrimental voting changes. Many of these bills have only one true purpose, and that is the disenfranchisement of specific populations of eligible voters.

In California, unfortunately, there is a voter ID bill pending to suppress voter participation. It would cost, mind you, \$26, \$26 just to get the required documents to qualify for a government ID. This certainly looks like a poll tax to me, which all of us from the South know and remember as a way to keep African Americans from voting.

These voter ID laws have a partisan agenda seeking to deny specific populations of people the opportunity to not to vote, which is really very shameful before they have an opportunity to elect their representatives in government. And we cannot allow this.

So I have to thank Congresswoman MARCIA FUDGE, the Congressional Black Caucus, and all of our colleagues for their voices to protect the right for all citizens across this Nation. And I urge the Department of Justice to be vigilant and aggressive in protecting the civil rights and voting rights of Americans.

We go around the world preaching democracy and the importance of voting; yet we are going in the opposite direction in our own country.

Now I would like to yield to the gentleman from Tennessee, Representative COHEN.

Mr. COHEN. Thank you, Ms. LEE. I appreciate your yielding, and I appreciate Congresswoman FUDGE for bringing this issue to the floor.

We previously heard from other Congresspeople and particularly the distinguished Congressman JOHN LEWIS, who was a civil rights hero in the 60s and risked his life, as others did, and gave their lives for the right to vote.

We are experiencing today, after International Nelson Mandela Day, yesterday was Nelson Mandela's 91st birthday. Next month we'll dedicate a memorial to Dr. Martin Luther King on the Mall. When you think about Martin Luther King and Nelson Mandela and JOHN LEWIS, you've got to think about voting rights and how far the Nation and the world have come in the last 45 years and how long it took to get there.

And to think that there are impediments being placed in the way of people to vote, whether intentional or not, I believe those impediments are being placed there intentionally to dissuade African Americans and Democratic-leaning groups from voting in the 2012 election, Rovian tactics to stop President Obama from being re-elected and

from the public to pick Democratic Representatives to switch the priorities of this House to those that would be more reflective of the middle class and people who are yearning for opportunity.

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But whether they're intentional or not, if they have an effect that is harmful to voting rights, just like other laws, if they have an effect in practice, they are just as harmful and just as wrong as if they were intended. And there is no question that these types of impediments to require people to get voter IDs, when 25 percent of African Americans in this country don't have that type of ID and 8 percent of Caucasians are in the same limitation of not having that type of ID, it's obvious that African Americans and students and others are the ones that are designed to be targeted by these laws.

In my State of Tennessee that passed such a law, to get a photo ID is not easy. I went myself to get a driver's license with a photo ID. It took 1 hour and 20 minutes, constantly standing in line, no place to sit. It was not easy and people will not be able to do it. It will be an impediment to them and limit their opportunity to vote. It's wrong.

I would like to thank Ms. LEE and Congresswoman FUDGE for bringing this to the American public's attention.

Ms. LEE. Thank you.

#### IT'S TIME TO BALANCE OUR BUDGET

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Missouri (Mrs. HARTZLER) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. HARTZLER. Mr. Speaker, only in Washington can you hear people say that it's irresponsible to balance the budget. I actually heard Democratic leaders on TV this weekend complaining that it would require a supermajority vote to raise taxes on the American people but only a majority to cut spending.

Well, maybe some people have been in Washington too long to realize it, but the American people want to tie Washington's hands and make it easier to cut spending than raise taxes. They want to cap the growth of government. They want to require a balanced budget.

For decades we've heard excuses for why Washington's special and shouldn't be forced to balance its budget. It's time to tell those people that their scare tactics are over. This is a new day. In America the people are sovereign, and today the people demand accountability. They demand a responsible, constrained government. They demand a balanced budget. Clearly Washington is never going to choose to balance its budget; so the people demand that we force it to.

Forty-nine out of fifty States have some form of a balanced budget amendment. If 98 percent of the States know