

country control as much wealth as 150 million other Americans. We have a crisis, all right, in our country, and it's called a disappearing middle class. The rich getting richer, the poor getting poorer, and the middle going into poverty.

We have a jobs crisis in our country. And poverty has taken an entirely new face as a result of the financial crisis, the recession, and our Nation's slow economic recovery. In Skokie, Illinois, a solid middle class suburb, now 40 percent of the kids who go to school there qualify for a reduced or free lunch. And the food pantry is bulging now with new people waiting in line. I went to a mortgage foreclosure workshop in suburban Des Plaines, Illinois, and I felt like I was watching the American Dream slip through the fingers of hard-working Americans. More than one in five children is now called "food insecure," meaning they go to bed hungry some nights.

And what have the Republicans decided to do? They decided to cut the programs that will help those people. That's how they want to reduce the deficit. They passed a bill called the Cut, Cap, and Balance bill. And it cuts, and it caps, and it balances. It cuts Medicare. It caps Medicaid. And it balances the budget on the backs of the seniors, the poor, and the WIC program, taking food out of the mouths of hungry children. There is something very wrong and very un-American with the Republican proposal that makes it easier to cut Medicare than to cut subsidies for oil and gas companies; easier to cut Social Security than to ask for one penny more for the billionaires, like John Carlson, and easier to cut subsidies for food for little children than to cut subsidies for corporate jets.

I heard from a woman who lives on \$1,023 a month. That's her Social Security. And she doesn't have enough money to make it through the month and often goes hungry. Is this right in the richest country in the world? We can reduce our debt, but not on the backs of the middle class that are becoming poor and those who are already poor.

AMERICANS NEED WORK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JOHNSON) for 3 minutes.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, according to the latest figures available, an estimated 43.5 million Americans are living in poverty. Ladies and gentlemen, that's more than the entire State of California. Unbelievable. Communities of color continue to be disproportionately affected by poverty. The national unemployment rate is 9.2 percent. In my home State of Georgia, it's even higher, at 9.8 percent.

With millions of Americans in poverty and a high unemployment rate, you would think the Congress would do what it was elected to do, which is to

create jobs and pass legislation that spurs economic growth. But in the past 7 months, the Republican majority has not moved one single jobs bill. Instead, this House majority is pushing bills through that take away Grandma's Social Security check, dismantle the Affordable Care Act, which would provide health care to millions of uninsured Americans, and cut a first-generation college student's Pell Grants. They want to crash our economy by ignoring the need to raise the debt ceiling and ignoring the catastrophe that would occur if we don't. Instead of bringing us opportunities and the American Dream, the Republican majority gives us cut, cap, and kill. Kill Medicare, Social Security, Medicaid. Those are the prisoners who are awaiting execution. It's really about crash, slash, and trash.

Staying committed to safety net programs and health, education, housing, and employment is both a moral and an economic responsibility that we cannot ignore. However, Congress seems to be doing all that it can to keep families from getting back on their feet during times of economic distress. They shouldn't be trying to pull the wool out from under the people of this great Nation, regular working people.

The record debt run up by the Bush administration was a direct result of Republicans' two unfunded wars, failed economic policies, and failed oversight of the financial services sector. And what we need to do is support more programs like Pathways Out of Poverty, which puts residents in my district back to work doing green jobs. But instead, what we want to do is give Rupert Murdoch a tax break and give all of the big oil companies tax loopholes that you could drive a submarine through. Americans need to go to work. So let's focus on getting Americans what they need, which is jobs, jobs, jobs.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 11 o'clock and 40 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess until noon.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer:

Eternal God, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

Once again we come to You to ask wisdom, patience, peace, and under-

standing for the Members of this people's House. The words and sentiments that have been spoken and heard in these recent days were born of principle, conviction, and commitment.

We ask discernment for the Members, that they might judge anew their adherence to principle, conviction, and commitment, lest they slide uncharitably toward an inability to listen to one another and work cooperatively to solve the important issues of our day.

Give them the generosity of heart and the courage of true leadership to work toward a common solution, which might call for compromise, even sacrifice, on both sides. We pray that their work results not in a result where some are winners and some losers, but where all Americans know in their hearts that we are winners.

May all that is done this day be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. WALZ) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. WALZ of Minnesota led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain up to 15 requests for 1-minute speeches.

DEBT CONTRIBUTION ACT

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

Mr. STIVERS. Mr. Speaker, sometimes small steps can make a big difference, and often the best legislation comes from our constituents. That's the case with legislation that I have introduced called the DEBT Contribution Act, which gives Americans simpler ways to make a tax-deductible contribution specifically to reduce our national debt.

Recently, I have received letters from constituents like this one asking how they can donate funds to pay down our national debt. I voluntarily give \$700 out of every paycheck to go toward paying down the national debt, and I want to make it easier for like-minded citizens to do the same. That's why I've sponsored the DEBT Contribution Act. It does three things:

First, it creates a check-off box on the individual tax return form to make it more user friendly to give a tax-deductible contribution to pay down the national debt.

Second, it makes sure that 100 percent of those funds are used to reduce the national debt and not redirect it for any purpose.

And, finally, it makes it clear that it is tax deductible, as it has been to give that charitable contribution.

Our national debt is now \$14.2 trillion, and we need to do everything we can to pay down our national debt. I urge my colleagues from both sides to support this measure.

JOBS

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

Mr. BACA. Madam Speaker, on Tuesday, we passed one of the worst bills I have ever seen in my time in Congress.

The cut, cap, and default plan jammed through by the Republicans is not a real solution to our fiscal crisis. Instead, it threatens Medicare benefits, and it increases out-of-pocket expenses for seniors. It's just another example of special interests holding our country hostage to protect tax breaks for the wealthiest few.

It has been 28 weeks since the Republicans took control of the House, and we have not seen a jobs bill. Instead, we see a bill that makes seniors suffer while cutting taxes for the ultrarich and corporations that shift jobs overseas.

The Bush tax cuts for the wealthy have failed to create jobs. We need a balanced solution to go forward. No new taxes, no new jobs.

Let's work on a plan that solves our Nation's deficit without making our seniors and our middle class pick up the tab.

HONORING TERRE HAUTE POLICE OFFICER BRENT D. LONG

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

Mr. BUCSHON. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Terre Haute Police Officer Brent D. Long. Officer Long was killed in the line of duty on July 11, 2011, while assisting to serve a felony warrant.

A proud member of the Terre Haute, Indiana, Police Department for 6 years as a K-9 handler and a member of the department's SWAT team, Officer Long was 34 years old.

Terre Haute has lost one of its finest citizens, and the community will forever be indebted to Officer Long's service. His sacrifice and valor should be commended, and I would like to offer my most heartfelt condolences to Officer Long's family, friends, and to the Terre Haute Police Department, who have lost one of their own.

WE NEED A CLEAN ENERGY STRATEGY

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

Mr. INSLEE. Madam Speaker, as we search for a bipartisan solution to our fiscal short-term and long-term issues, I don't think we should be unmindful of what is really happening in the real world. In the real world, there are two things: One, we have a jobs crisis; and, two, we have Americans sweltering from coast to coast with unprecedented heat. And these things are connected, because if we adopt a clean energy strategy to develop clean energy sources, we can prevent our climate from continuing to change, which left unabated will leave New York City with three times the number of days with over 95 degree temperatures in the next several decades.

We need to have an energy policy that will invest in those clean energy jobs. And as we look for this bipartisan solution, let's not cut off our energy research, which is going to be successful building a new clean energy strategy for this country and building millions of new clean energy jobs and, by the way, keep us down to a climate that's habitable.

SPACE PROGRAM'S END THREATENS AMERICAN EXCEPTIONALISM

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

Mr. HULTGREN. Madam Speaker, Shuttle Atlantis returned to Earth at daybreak this morning, and it marked the end of America's 30-year shuttle history of scientific and engineering excellence in space.

I am a strong believer in American exceptionalism, and at its heart, the story of America's exploration of space is a story of American exceptionalism. No other nation has mastered manned space flight like the United States, launched anything like the Hubble Space Telescope, or led efforts like the international space station.

Forty-two years ago today, Americans first walked on the Moon. No other nation has come close to matching this achievement. But I am deeply concerned about America's future greatness. Today, the path forward for our space program is unclear. Save for empty political rhetoric, President Obama has been unwilling to lead or articulate a vision for future American endeavors in space.

The Defense Department fears that the loss of our civilian space program will erode our aerospace industry base and threaten our technological edge in all fields. As a result, we are left relying on Vladimir Putin for rides into orbit. This is unacceptable and it's un-American.

I hope we will reform Washington's habit of borrowing and spending. And

after we have cut, capped, and balanced, it's time to lead again in space. It's time again for American exceptionalism.

□ 1210

CONGRATULATIONS, GUSTAVUS ADOLPHUS COLLEGE

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

Mr. WALZ of Minnesota. Madam Speaker, it is my honor to rise today to congratulate Gustavus Adolphus College in St. Peter, Minnesota, on 150 years of academic excellence.

For a century and a half, Gustavus Adolphus College has thrived as a prestigious and nationally recognized liberal arts college and cultivated the values of faith, service, justice, and community in its students. I have had the opportunity to see firsthand the many Gustavus students and graduates who live by the motto of the college: Make your life count.

Gustavus students are bright, engaged, and my interaction with them leaves me feeling optimistic about the future. I am also lucky enough to be married to one of their alums.

Every year, Gustavus hosts a unique and world-renowned science conference named after Alfred Nobel. The conference is dedicated to the ideals of Alfred Nobel as he professed in the final years of his life: international collaboration and science for the sake of improving our lives and progressing the human condition. This conference embodies what Gustavus is all about: pursuing academic excellence with the purpose of making it count.

Gustavus can be proud of its 150 years, and I am confident that its tradition of excellence will continue to leave a profound mark on Minnesota and the world.

HONORING STAFF SERGEANT WYATT A. GOLDSMITH

(Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS. Madam Speaker, it is with a very heavy heart today that I rise to honor the life of Staff Sergeant Wyatt A. Goldsmith. Twenty-eight-year-old Sergeant Goldsmith lost his life on July 15 while defending America in Operation Enduring Freedom.

As a native of Colville, Washington, Sergeant Goldsmith was a medic with the 3rd Battalion, 1st Special Forces Group. He was treating an Afghan commando when insurgents attacked his unit in the Helmand Province last Friday.

While his life was cut way too short, his legacy lives on forever in the hearts of those who knew him, and even those who did not. His many years in the