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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. POE of Texas).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
November 17, 2011.

I hereby appoint the Honorable TED POE to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 5, 2011, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes each, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

HONORING THE LIFE OF DR. ETHEL HARRIS HALL

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

Ms. SEWELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of Dr. Ethel Harris Hall, who passed away last Saturday at the age of 83. Dr. Ethel Hall was one of Alabama's premier educators and one of our Nation's strongest advocates for children. She was the first African American to serve on the Alabama State Board of Education, and she was the first African American and the longest-serving vice chairman of the board of education. She served as the State board of education's vice president for 10 years and presided over meetings in the absence of the Governor. Dr. Ethel Hall retired 10 months ago after serving on the Alabama State Board of Education for 24 years.

Dr. Ethel Hall was born to Harry and Fannie Mae Harris on February 23, 1928. The Harris family lived in Morgan County, Alabama, and due to the limited educational opportunities in their area, they sent their daughter to live with her grandparents in Jefferson County so she could attend school in north Birmingham.

She attended Parker High School in Birmingham until she moved back home with her parents to attend Council Training School, a laboratory high school of Alabama A&M. She graduated valedictorian of her high school class and then attended Alabama A&M University, where she graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree cum laude in 1948.

Dr. Ethel Hall went on to obtain master's degrees from the University of Chicago and Atlanta University. She taught in the Hale County, Jefferson County, and Birmingham city school systems, and later became the first African American faculty member of the University of Montevallo. Dr. Ethel Hall continued to further her education by attending the University of Alabama where she earned a Doctorate of Social Work in 1979. She later taught in the School of Social Work at the University of Alabama.

After decades of teaching, Dr. Ethel Hall entered politics, and she was elected the first African American member of the Alabama State Board of Education on January 19, 1987. She went on to serve six terms before becoming vice chair in 1994. Dr. Ethel Hall served on the State board of education for 24 years and was named vice president emerita.

Dr. Hall served on the State board of education during many of its tumultuous battles over issues such as funding levels in schools, teacher testing, accountability standards for schools, and academic standards for students. In making these tough decisions, she also remained principled, putting Alabama's children first.

Dr. Ethel Hall wrote about her long career in education in a recently published autobiography, ''My Journey: A Memoir of the first African American to Preside Over the Alabama Board of Education.''

I rise today to remember Dr. Ethel Hall on the floor of the United States Congress as a trailblazing Alabamian, a gifted teacher, and a strong advocate for the education of our Nation's children.

Dr. Hall was a mentor to so many educators throughout the State of Alabama and this Nation, including my own mother, Mrs. Nancy Gardner Sewell. Through her numerous mentoring relationships, Dr. Hall encouraged teachers to use their talents to positively affect the lives of the students they taught. Not only did she lead by example; she also trained and mentored the next generation of educational leaders.

Indeed, my generation owes pioneers like Dr. Hall a debt of gratitude. Dr. Ethel Hall sowed the seeds for the opportunities that now flourish for so many. I know that I stand on the shoulders of many great giants like Dr. Ethel Hall.

On election night, November 2, 2010, several trailblazing Alabama women made the trip to Selma, Alabama, to be there when I was elected. I will never forget that Dr. Ethel Hall was one of them. Her presence meant so much to me, more than she will ever know. It was her light that guided the path that led me to become Alabama's first African American Congresswoman.

Dr. Ethel Hall was the epitome of a servant leader. She led by example and was motivated by a driving passion

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that all children deserve a quality education.

Dr. Hall was preceded in death by her husband of 55 years, Mr. Alfred Hall. She is survived by two children, Donna and Alfred, and a host of family and friends who will miss her dearly.

Today, I ask my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives to join me in celebrating the life and legacy of this extraordinary Alabamian. Let Dr. Hall's life stand as a testament to the courage and strength of one individual's ability to shape the lives of so many. We should be renewed by her love of learning and recommit ourselves to providing the resources that our Nation's greatest advocate—its children—need. I ask that we all pay tribute and homage to Dr. Ethel Hall.

HONORING FORMER CONGRESSMAN MEL HANCOCK

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

Mr. LONG. Mr. Speaker, there once was a man named Mel, and when he stepped to this microphone, he'd give 'em Mel.

I rise today to recognize a former Member of this body and a friend and mentor, Congressman Mel Hancock. He would sign all of his letters or emails, whatever he'd sign, with the same thing: ''Yours for better but less government.'' That's what Mel believed.

When Senator Jim Talent first came to this body, he asked Mel to help him vote. He said: Mel, can you show me how to use the voting machine here?

Mel said: Sure, Jim, come over here. You see, if you want to vote ''no,'' you push the red button. And if you have a conflict, you can't vote on an issue, you push the yellow button for ''P'' for ''present.'' And he turned and walked off.

Senator Talent said: Hey, Mel, what's the green button?

Mel turned around and said: I don't know, never used it.

Mel died peacefully in his home in his sleep on November 6 in Springfield, Missouri. Mel was a champion of limited government. Mel knew that our Founding Fathers understood the corrupting influence of power on the human character, which is why they championed personal freedom, the idea that a government by the people and for the people should preserve liberty for future generations. Like our Founders, Mel was a wise man, a good man, who worked tirelessly to defend people's liberty. Mel was a true Ozarkian.

He was born in Cape Fair, Missouri, in 1936. He graduated from college and enlisted in the Air Force in 1951 where he would serve in active duty until 1953. Following active duty, Mel stayed in the Air Force Reserves until 1965 where he attained the rank of first lieutenant.

After military service, Mel went into business, co-founding a security system equipment leasing company. However, Mel's dedication to his country did not end with his military service. As a businessman and a voter, Mel was upset with the way things were being done in the State of Missouri and Washington, DC. In 1977, Mel founded the Taxpayer Survival Association—I can still see the bumper sticker today with a lifesaver on it, like you'd throw off of a boat or a ship—a not-for-profit organization dedicated to advancing a constitutional amendment to limit taxes. He was a one-man show. He would go around Missouri getting signatures. You might see him up in Kansas City standing in a parking lot in front of a mall in a rainstorm getting people to sign his tax-and-spending amendment petition to put on the ballot.

Through his hard work, the ''Hancock amendment'' was added to the Missouri Constitution in 1980. Mel used its passage to continue his advocacy for responsible government and for the rights of individuals to be free from overburdensome government.

Mel's convictions took him to Congress in 1988 where he represented southwest Missouri for 8 years. I always called Mel the reluctant Congressman. He didn't want to be a Congressman; he didn't want to come to Washington, DC, but he was just pulled in that direction by people who said: Mel, you've got to go. You've got to do it.

□ 1010

I am honored to now occupy that same Congressional seat, Missouri 7.

During his time in Congress, from 1988 to 1996, Mel worked at the House Ways and Means Committee to advance the cause of liberty. He also championed a balanced budget amendment, his signature issue, and I'm proud to say we're going to vote on a balanced budget amendment this week.

Mel retired from Congress in 1996. He didn't retire because he couldn't win another election, but because he had promised the people of southwest Missouri that he would not serve more than four terms in office. With Mel, a promise made was a promise kept, something that Washington would do well to learn today. And I am honored to now occupy that same congressional seat, Missouri 7.

Now, over 30 years since the passage of the Hancock amendment, our current budget problems reveal just how right Mel was. We would not have a $15 trillion debt or massive runaway government spending if we had a Hancock amendment on a national level.

Mel was much beloved by his many neighbors, friends, and family in Missouri's Seventh District and was one of my mentors. Our thoughts and prayers are with his wife, Sug, whom Mel always referred to as the Boss, his sons, Lee and Kim, and his daughter, Lu Ann, and their families.

Mel will be missed, but the legacy that he has created and the ideas that he championed will continue. His legacy will forever be a part of Missouri through the Hancock amendment and his service to his constituents. Mel meant the world to me, and I will continue to champion the ideas that he dedicated his life fighting for.

CREATE JOBS AND REDUCE THE DEFICIT THROUGH LARGE-SCALE INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. HIGGINS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, we are approaching the deadline for the supercommittee to propose a debt reduction plan. Most economists are in agreement on what we need to do: in the long term, reduce the debt by at least $4 trillion over 10 years through a mix of added revenue and reduced spending. And in the short term, make immediate investments to create jobs and to reduce unemployment.

I encourage the supercommittee not to ignore the second of those priorities because now is the perfect time to create jobs by making large-scale investments in American infrastructure. Since World War II, every economic contraction was followed by a period of economic expansion; but although economists tell us the recession has ended, we have had no economic expansion. Unemployment remains at 9 percent, and economic growth is projected to be moderate at best. The reason our economy is taking so long to recover is because this recession was more severe than any since the Great Depression, something that seemingly few in government, finance, or academia realized at the time.

Because of the historic severity of this recession, American households, local and State governments—even European governments—find themselves in debt like never before. Consequently, consumer demand is and will be depressed while households and governments reduce spending. And when demand falls, businesses don't hire. It is that simple.

Some believe this period of decreased demand will last 5 to 7 years. A policy of fiscal austerity will make matters only worse. We only have to look back at the United States in 1937, Japan in the 1990s, and Europe last year and this year to understand that when consumers are not spending, the worst thing a government can do is stop spending itself.

The New America Foundation report makes the case that investing $1.2 trillion over the next 5 years in rebuilding our infrastructure will create 22 million jobs—22 million jobs over a 5-year period. That is more than the 22 million jobs that were created under President Clinton. And the job creation of the 1990s raised so much revenue that our Federal budget reached record surplus. Times were so good that we were debating, at that time, the implications of repaying the entirety of the

Nation's debt. The lesson is that the greatest debt-and-deficit reduction tool is job creation. That is why the supercommittee must include significant job creation components in its recommendations.

Let me add, Mr. Speaker, that our infrastructure is sorely in need of massive investment. Our roads, bridges, airports, energy grid, and water infrastructure are all in horrible condition. The World Economic Forum ranks America 23rd in infrastructure quality. The American Society of Civil Engineers gives our infrastructure a D grade. Transportation for America reports that there are 63,000 structurally deficient bridges in our country—including 99 in my community in western New York. The Chamber of Commerce has said that unless we repair our infrastructure, we will suffer $336 billion in lost growth over the next 5 years.

To my colleagues who believe that we can't afford to make investments at this time, I say we can't afford not to. Delaying the repair or replacement of infrastructure by just 2 years can increase the cost of doing those repairs by a factor of five.

I also note that we just spent $62 billion nation-building in Iraq and $73 billion nation-building in Afghanistan. There was no objection then to borrowing to finance that nation-building, nor should there be objection now when we're proposing to do nation-building right here at home.

And given the current economic conditions, financing American infrastructure projects will never be cheaper. Interest rates are extremely low, the cost of labor and materials are low due to lack of demand, and the equipment is cheap because it is idle. Repairing and expanding our infrastructure is work that we need to do to stay globally competitive, and it will never be cheaper to do it than it is today. Quite simply, there is much work to be done, and a lot of Americans need to do work. Now is the best time to do that.

Mr. Speaker, a large scale, $1.2 trillion, 5-year investment in infrastructure would create 27 million American jobs that cannot be shipped overseas. It will reduce unemployment, it will reduce the deficit and, in the end, we will have an infrastructure our country needs and our country deserves.

PANCREATIC CANCER RESEARCH AND EDUCATION ACT

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

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 733, the Pancreatic Cancer Research Education Act. Oftentimes, we talk about numbers, Mr. Speaker, but often there's the occasion to actually talk to the people who are behind the bills. One of the most moving experiences I have had is to have had a visit to my office by a young woman by the name of Sienna Gonzalez, who visited with her mother and her family. You see, Sienna's mother is a victim of pancreatic cancer; and Sienna is on a mission, along with many of her friends, to help people fight to find a cure for pancreatic cancer.

She took a lead by urging so many of her friends and colleagues in her classroom, and I hold in my hand just one of the volumes of hundreds upon hundreds of letters that came and were so moving.

The facts speak for themselves: 43,000 Americans will be diagnosed with pancreatic cancer; 36,000 will die just this year; and the life expectancy after announcement of that is about 3 to 6 months. I think the words are better said, however, by some of the students.

People are losing a lot of friends and family, writes Aly, because of this horrible, horrifying disease. We are trying to help. Did you know that this disease is one of the few cancers for which survival has not improved substantially? In over 40 years, survival rates have not changed. The average life span after diagnosis is 3 to 6 months. Please use more of your research money to help these people if you can. Thank you.

That's just one of the hundreds of letters.

I want to express my deep appreciation of Dr. Timothy Quinn, the superintendent of the Methacton School District; Mrs. Melissa Gora, the principal; but, mostly, the hundreds and hundreds of students who have taken the time to ensure that their voices are heard. As they said: pancreatic cancer: know it, fight it, end it.

Thank you for your role in making sure that my colleagues understand the importance of this great challenge and the opportunity that we have to fight for those with pancreatic cancer.

□ 1020

FIRST TROOP PHILADELPHIA CITY CAVALRY'S 237TH ANNIVERSARY

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the First Troop Philadelphia City Cavalry on the occasion of their 237th anniversary. This volunteer cavalry troop was the first of its kind organized in the defense of our country during the American Revolution. Through those hard-fought years is where the original members forged concepts of service and a body of tradition which is kept alive today by its current members.

The First Troop Cavalry is a private military organization whose membership is comprised of members of the Pennsylvania Army National Guard who serve with A Troop 1st Squadron, 104th Cavalry in the 28th Infantry Division. Many of their members have served overseas, including Afghanistan and Iraq. Their service to our country is immeasurable, and we should all be extremely thankful.

POVERTY AND UNEMPLOYMENT IN AMERICA

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

Ms. LEE of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise again to really beat the drum about the ongoing crisis of poverty and unemployment in America.

On November 6, the Associated Press reported that we have crossed a terrible threshold. More job seekers now in America have run out of unemployment benefits than are receiving them. Simply put, the majority of Americans who are struggling to find a job are no longer getting unemployment benefits.

We need to extend unemployment benefits and we need to do it now, not just for those who are about to run out, but for the millions of Americans whose benefits ran out a long time ago—the millions who ran out of time to establish their careers, the millions who ran out of time to safeguard their families' futures, and the millions who ran out of time to ignite the fires of the American Dream.

Congressman BOBBY SCOTT and I have a bill, H.R. 589, which will give millions of families just a little more time to find a good job, to make a secure home, and would provide a bridge over troubled waters while our Nation and the economy recovers.

Extending benefits for the 99ers is the right thing to do for millions of Americans who were laid off through no fault of their own. They watched as corporations took over their government and ran the economy into the ground. They watched as the banks raided the Nation's treasury and lined their pockets with massive bonuses while millions of Americans lost their jobs. They watched as our Nation's future was traded away for needless wars and tax cuts for billionaires.

Mr. Speaker, the American people are sick and tired. They don't want to watch anymore. They don't want to wait anymore. They have run out of time.

Nearly 50 million Americans are already living in poverty, struggling to feed their families and keep a roof over their heads. Countless millions more are living on the edge. They are desperately trying to stay one step ahead of disaster, living from paycheck to paycheck and waiting for the other shoe to drop.

The American people really have run out of patience. They don't want to hear that the most powerful nation in the world is broke. They don't believe it when they are told that we can't afford Medicare or Medicaid or Social Security or unemployment benefits when we are spending $1 trillion on wars halfway around the world. They don't want to hear empty promises from Republicans in Congress about taking responsibility to ensure that the poor in America have ''food in their stomachs and they have a roof over their head,''

even while they pass bills that slash affordable housing programs and cut nutrition funding for women and children, a program which is very important.

Americans know that the rich should pay their fair share and that working men and women of America deserve more. They don't want this generation to be the first generation of Americans who won't do better than the last one. Americans want to move ahead, and they want those who have benefited the most from our economy to pay what they owe to the 99 percent of the American people who are the real engines of our economy and the heart of our democracy. The generation that is marching in the streets right now is asking what went wrong in the pursuit of the American Dream.

So let's pass H.R. 589 and give Americans a little more time to land that job that gets their family back on their feet. You know, when you run out of unemployment benefits after 99 weeks, that's it. That's it. So we must extend unemployment benefits, but we also need to extend, as our bill says, at least an additional 14 weeks so that those who have hit the 99-week wall have some form of survival until we can figure out a way to create jobs.

So we must pass the American Jobs Act to reinvest in the future of this country and build up our roads and bridges, repair our sewer lines, and build 21st century schools for all of our students.

Let's put America back on track with American jobs, American manufacturing, American ingenuity, and American leadership toward a brighter tomorrow for all Americans.

We must build these ladders of opportunity. We have to remove these barriers and obstacles. And let me tell you, not having a job is a huge barrier and a huge obstacle to reigniting the American Dream.

And so we must extend unemployment benefits, but we must not forget that there are those who have had 99 weeks who are no longer even eligible for unemployment benefits. And as the AP article says, we now have over 2 million people who won't even be eligible for unemployment compensation. That's 2.2 million people that won't even be eligible even if we extend unemployment benefits.

So let's work to try to figure out how to, one, create jobs, but to provide some safety net for those who really do want to work. And people want to work.

[From the Associated Press, Nov. 6, 2011]

MOST UNEMPLOYED AMERICANS ARE NO LONGER RECEIVING UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS

WASHINGTON, DC.—The jobs crisis has left so many people out of work for so long that most of America's unemployed are no longer receiving unemployment benefits.

Early last year, 75 percent were receiving checks. The figure is now 48 percent—a shift that points to a growing crisis of long-term unemployment. Nearly one-third of America's 14 million unemployed have had no job for a year or more.

Congress is expected to decide by year's end whether to continue providing emergency unemployment benefits for up to 99 weeks in the hardest-hit states. If the emergency benefits expire, the proportion of the unemployed receiving aid would fall further.

The ranks of the poor would also rise. The Census Bureau says unemployment benefits kept 3.2 million people from slipping into poverty last year. It defines poverty as annual income below $22,314 for a family of four.

Yet for a growing share of the unemployed, a vote in Congress to extend the benefits to 99 weeks is irrelevant. They've had no job for more than 99 weeks. They're no longer eligible for benefits.

Their options include food stamps or other social programs. Nearly 46 million people received food stamps in August, a record total. That figure could grow as more people lose unemployment benefits.

So could the government's disability rolls. Applications for the disability insurance program have jumped about 50 percent since 2007.

''There's going to be increased hardship,'' said Wayne Vroman, an economist at the Urban Institute.

The number of unemployed has been roughly stable this year. Yet the number receiving benefits has plunged 30 percent.

Government unemployment benefits weren't designed to sustain people for long stretches without work. They usually don't have to. In the recoveries from the previous three recessions, the longest average duration of unemployment was 21 weeks, in July 1983.

By contrast, in the wake of the Great Recession, the figure reached 41 weeks in September. That's the longest on records dating to 1948. The figure is now 39 weeks.

''It was a good safety net for a shorter recession,'' said Carl Van Horn, an economist at Rutgers University. It assumes ''the economy will experience short interruptions and then go back to normal.''

Weekly unemployment checks average about $300 nationwide. If the extended benefits aren't renewed, growth could slow by up to a half-percentage point next year, economists say.

The Congressional Budget Office has estimated that each $1 spent on unemployment benefits generates up to $1.90 in economic growth. The CB0 has found that the program is the most effective government policy for increasing growth among 11 options it's analyzed.

Jon Polis lives in East Greenwich, R.I., one of the 20 states where 99 weeks of benefits are available. He used them all up after losing his job as a warehouse worker in 2008. His benefits paid for groceries, car maintenance and health insurance.

Now, Polis, 55, receives disability insurance payments, food stamps and lives in government-subsidized housing. He's been unable to find work because employers in his field want computer skills he doesn't have.

''Employers are crying that they can't find qualified help,'' he said. But the ones he interviewed with ''weren't willing to train anybody.''

From late 2007, when the recession began, to early 2010, the number of people receiving unemployment benefits rose more than fourfold, to 11.5 million.

But the economy has remained so weak that an analysis of long-term unemployment data suggests that about 2 million people have used up 99 weeks of checks and still can't find work.

Contributing to the smaller share of the unemployed who are receiving benefits: Some of them are college graduates or others seeking jobs for the first time. They aren't eligible. Only those who have lost a job through no fault of their own qualify.

The proportion of the unemployed receiving benefits usually falls below 50 percent during an economic recovery. Many have either quit jobs or are new to the job market and don't qualify.

Today, the proportion is falling for a very different reason: Jobs remain scarce. So more of the unemployed are exhausting their benefits.

Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke has noted that the long-term unemployed increasingly find it hard to find work as their skills and professional networks erode. In a speech last month, Bernanke called long-term unemployment a ''national crisis'' that should be a top priority for Congress.

Lawmakers will have to decide whether to continue the extended benefits by the end of this year. If the program ends, nearly 2.2 million people will be cut off by February.

Congress has extended the program nine times. But it might balk at the $45 billion cost. It will be the first time the Republican-led House will vote on the issue.

BRING OUR TROOPS HOME

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) for 5 minutes.

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, thank you very much.

I again will keep coming to the floor twice a week when we're in session to talk about bringing our troops out of Afghanistan. Bin Laden is dead, and we need to start thinking about, as the lady said before me, let's think about what America needs and not what Afghanistan needs. And that brings me to this point of the talk I want to give today, Mr. Speaker.

On February 16, 2011, then-Secretary of Defense Gates testified before the House Armed Services Committee, which I serve on, and I'd like to read his comments:

''By the end of this calendar year, we expect less than 100,000 troops to be deployed in both of the major post-9/11 combat theaters, virtually all of those forces being in Afghanistan. That is why we believe that, beginning in fiscal year 2015''—and that's important, Mr. Speaker. ''That is why we believe that, beginning in fiscal year 2015, the United States can, with minimal risk, begin reducing Army active duty end strength by 27,000 and the Marine Corps by somewhere between 15,000 and 20,000. These projections assume that the number of troops in Afghanistan would be significantly reduced by the end of 2014, in accordance with the President's strategy.''

Mr. Speaker, I read that because I read the same statement to the new Secretary of Defense, Mr. Panetta, whom I have great respect for, and I asked him, Do you have the authority to change those timelines? He said no, because this is what the President has agreed to.

Well, Mr. President, I'm calling on you to reconsider. Because beside me is a poster, and beside that poster is a flag-draped coffin coming off of a plane at Dover. And the headlines in the

Greensboro paper said, ''Get Out.'' It is time to bring our troops home. They've done everything they've been asked to do.

And that reminds me, a few weeks ago, I went to Walter Reed at Bethesda—it's the new consolidated military hospital here in Washington—and I saw four marines from my district, Camp Lejeune. Three of the four had lost both legs. The one that had not lost both legs was a lance corporal who asked me, with his mom in the room, Congressman, why are we still in Afghanistan? And I looked into the young man's face and I said, I don't know why we're still there. You all have won many, many battles, and it's time to bring you home. And the only thing he said, Mr. Speaker, was, Thank you.

That brings me to a letter that I received from a retired marine down in my district about a year ago. He said, ''I am writing this letter to express my concern over the current Afghanistan war. I am a retired marine officer with 31-plus years of active duty.''

Let me go down in the letter because there is another point I want to make.

''Our senior military leaders in Afghanistan continue to say that we are making progress, but at what cost to our country? This war is costing the United States billions of dollars a month to wage and we still continue to get more young Americans killed. The Afghanistan war has no end state for us. I urge you to make contact with all the current and newly elected men and women in Congress and ask them to end this war and bring our young men and women home.''

□ 1030

''If any of my comments will assist you in this effort, you are welcome to use them and my name.''

Mr. Speaker, I don't know why we are—we've got this debt crisis facing our country, and yet we've got a corrupt leader in Afghanistan named Karzai that one day likes America, and the next day he hates America; and we send him $10 billion a month, and it's borrowed money from the Chinese.

And yet we're going to say to the American people we're going to cut the programs for little children; we're going to cut the programs for senior citizens. But Mr. Karzai, you'll get your $10 billion.

And that brings me toward the end of my comments, Mr. Speaker. I contacted a marine general who's been a very dear friend of mine for a number of years, and he sends me questions to ask in committees to the Secretary of Defense and others who might be testifying.

But something that has always stuck with me is what he closes this email with—and I have many emails—''What do we say to the mother and father or the wife of the last marine killed to support a corrupt government and a corrupt leader in a war that cannot be won?''

That is the question. And I hope the American people will call on Congress, both parties, to bring our troops home before 2014.

Mr. Speaker, I close by asking God to please bless our men and women in uniform, ask God to please bless the families of our men and women in uniform. I ask God, in His loving arms, to hold the families who've given a child dying for freedom in Afghanistan and Iraq. I ask God to bless the House and Senate that we will do what is right in the eyes of God for His people, and I ask God to give wisdom, strength, and courage to President Obama that he will do what is right in the eyes of God for His people.

And three times I ask, God please, God please, God please continue to bless America.

Let's bring our troops home.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to address their remarks to the Chair and not to a perceived audience.

SMART SECURITY: PROTECTING AMERICA BY RELYING ON THE VERY BEST OF AMERICAN VALUES

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

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, every one of us in this Congress believes that keeping the Nation safe, as well as providing benefits to our veterans as promised, is our very top priority. It's a question, however, of just how do we do that. And a decade of war and military occupation is not the best way.

Whenever spending cuts are on the agenda, as they are right now with the supercommittee racing to meet its deadline, military and defense programs continue to get a pass. Why should the Pentagon get a blank check while safety-net programs have to look for ''change in the couch cushions'' to keep their programs going?

It's time for the Pentagon to share in the sacrifice, especially since it's been so generously funded over the years, a 50 percent increase in the DOD budget over the last decade, bigger in real dollars today than it was at the height of the Cold War.

Ending the war in Afghanistan would save at least $10 billion a month—actually, it's more like 12 now—to say nothing of the lives we would save and the injuries that would be avoided.

But I think we should go further in cutting the base Pentagon budget. Just to give a few examples, I'm a longtime advocate of eliminating the V–22 Osprey aircraft. It's a program that, if we eliminated it, would save $10 billion, and it's a program that is notorious for cost overruns and for huge safety concerns.

And we can dramatically reduce the Nation's nuclear arsenal. Why do we need—I ask you this—why do we need 5,000 warheads when just one is enough to destroy life on Earth?

We can wring huge savings out of the system by fundamentally changing how we think and how we deal with national security. For pennies on the dollar we can keep America safe by implementing a smarter security policy, by supporting a civilian surge over a military surge.

My SMART Security platform, which is H. Res. 19, would make war a very last resort and adopt a different posture toward the rest of the world. It's not isolationism. When I say I want to bring our troops home from Iraq and Afghanistan, I'm not saying we abandon those countries. I'm saying we must engage them in a different way. That means investing in their people and their capacity to lead lives free of deprivation and despair.

So instead of weapons systems, let's invest more on development in humanitarian aid, more on maternal health programs, more on mosquito nets to prevent malaria, more on education, health care, microlending, et cetera, et cetera.

You know what would promote our national security, Mr. Speaker, like nothing else is a genuine, well-funded commitment to eradicating poverty and malnutrition in the developing world. Instead of invasions and occupations, SMART Security emphasizes diplomacy. It emphasizes the civilian surge, multilateralism, and peaceful conflict resolution.

It also calls for more investment in energy independence, nuclear nonproliferation, democracy promotion, and civil society programs abroad. Isn't that a better way to combat terrorism than sending 100,000 troops to a part of the world known for widespread anti-American sentiment?

We must stop equating national security with armed aggression because that's how we ended up with out-of-control Pentagon budgets and an ever more dangerous world. In fact, Mr. Speaker, military force has been proven to oftentimes undermine our security instead of enhancing it.

SMART Security protects America because it relies on the very best of American values, moral leadership, compassion, our commitment to peace and freedom. It costs pennies on the dollar. It is efficient and fiscally responsible.

So let's bring our troops home, cut the Pentagon budget, and implement SMART Security now. Then we can have real cost savings in the United States.

And, Mr. Speaker, that's just the way it is.

PFC CODY NORRIS—TEXAS SOLDIER

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, halfway around the world, in the desert of the sun and the valley of the gun, the American warrior stands fighting the forces of the enemy.

But one such soldier returns from battle to America with a flag-draped coffin. He is Cody Norris, Army private first class, a machine gunner in the infantry, just 20 years old, barely an adult, but still an all-American man.

For the Norris family in La Porte, Texas, Cody was a son and a little brother. He died in a gun battle last week in Afghanistan for our country. He was the 38th warrior in my area of Texas to give his life for his country.

Cody grew up in La Porte. He graduated from La Porte High School just last year, but he quickly volunteered for the United States Army in October.

In high school, Cody loved to restore old military trucks. He restored a 1952 Dodge M–37 Army truck and drove it to school. He was a member of the Junior ROTC Color Guard at La Porte High School. But this year, his former classmates and peers in the Color Guard honored his life.

He was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 34th Armor Regiment, 1st Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division at Fort Riley, Kansas, before deploying to Afghanistan. It was his first deployment in Afghanistan.

October 1 marked his 1-year anniversary in the United States Army. Cody was killed in Kandahar province last week on November 9 when the enemy forces attacked his unit with small-arms fire.

Kandahar province in Afghanistan has been called the birthplace and fanatical home of the notorious Taliban. It is a dangerous part of the world. I've been to Afghanistan several times, and the sun is unbearable in the summer and the cold is brutally piercing in the winter. And our soldiers fight on, undeterred, tenaciously focused.

They go to battle in a land seemingly cursed by God. Our military in Afghanistan go where others fear to tread and the timid are not found.

When I spoke to Cody's mother, Teresa Denise Norris, she told me Cody marched to the beat of his own drum. He didn't care what others thought of him; he did what he thought was right.

She said Cody was proud to be a solider and that their family believes in the red, white and blue; and they all love this country. That pride is carried through in Cody's older brother, Michael Norris. He's a cadet in his last year at the United States Military Academy at West Point.

□ 1040

The Norris family is a soldier's family. Cody's Facebook page is filled with heartfelt messages from his friends, classmates, and fellow soldiers. It is evident how much he made people laugh in his very young life.

Cody wrote on his Facebook in the ''About Me'' section, ''I'm in the Army and I am an infantryman. I love what I do as my job and my dream in life, and no one can take that away from me. I am trained by the best, and I will be the best I can. Wanna do all I can for the ones I love and my country—to keep us all free, even if it means death, so that every American can live their dreams out as well.''

Cody loved what he did. He loved his country. He was selfless, and he was an American patriot.

For his service in the United States Army, Cody has been awarded the Army Commendation Medal, the National Defense Service Medal, the Afghanistan Campaign Medal with two campaign stars, and the NATO Medal and the Combat Infantry Medal.

Cody Norris was a part of the rare breed, the American breed—soldiers who take care of the rest of us and watch for the evildoers who would bring us harm. They prove their commitment to America by giving their lives for this Nation.

General George Patton said of the fallen soldiers, ''Let us not only mourn for the men who have died fighting, but let us be grateful to God that such men ever lived.''

Mr. Speaker, we are grateful to Private First Class Cody Norris and that he lived. He was a Texan, a soldier, an American Warrior.

And that's just the way it is.

NATIONAL ADOPTION DAY

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

Ms. BASS of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the 12th Annual National Adoption Day this Friday, November 18. As we prepare for Thanksgiving festivities with loved ones, many of us take for granted our opportunity to spend time with family and friends. But for thousands of foster youth around the country, celebrating a holiday with a permanent family remains out of reach.

In the United States today there are more than 400,000 children in foster care, some waiting years to be adopted by a permanent, loving family. Although the number of youth without a home seems discouraging, there is hope.

This week, in recognition of National Adoption Day, an unprecedented number of courts in 400 communities throughout the country will open their doors to finalize the adoption of thousands of children from the foster care system.

National Adoption Day is a nationwide effort to raise awareness of children in foster care who are eligible and waiting for adoption, as well as to celebrate families that have been chosen to make a lasting difference in the life of a child through adoption or relative-based care.

Since 2000, more than 35,000 children have been adopted through National Adoption Day activities. This year, nearly 5,000 adoptions will be finalized. In California alone, my home State, 500 youth will be adopted through these special events.

While the number of children in foster care has significantly decreased over the past decade, the number of adoptions has remained unchanged. Youth often wait years in foster care before finding a permanent family through adoption. During their time in foster care, children are moved from home to home, changing schools, losing friends, coping with separation from siblings, and wondering if they will ever have anyone to call Mom or Dad again.

What's worse is that nearly 28,000 youth age out of foster care each year never having been adopted, often going through life alone without the support systems children with permanent families have, not to mention sharing holiday traditions or a family meal.

As the cochair of both the Congressional Coalition on Adoption and the Foster Youth Caucus, I look forward to continuing to work in a bipartisan fashion to identify solutions to improve the quality of life for our Nation's most vulnerable children.

National Adoption Day reminds us that it is our responsibility and in our best interest to find solutions to ensure children have the opportunity to live in a safe and loving home. Nearly 48 million Americans have considered adopting from foster care, according to a recent national survey. If just one in 500 of these adults adopt, all the 107,000 children in foster care waiting for adoption would have permanent families to help create Thanksgiving traditions of their own.

In closing, in this spirit of giving thanks, I'd like to express sincere gratitude to all of the adoptive parents, relative caregivers, and child welfare caseworkers. Their commitment to improving the lives of today's youth is truly commendable.

BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT

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

Mrs. HARTZLER. Washington has a problem. It spends more than it brings in, and it has been doing that for a long time. That's why we are over $15 trillion in debt. That's over $46,000 of debt for every American man, woman, and child. Washington is currently borrowing 36 cents out of every dollar it spends, and under President Obama, our national debt has increased 34 percent. That's the fastest increase in the debt under any U.S. President in history.

Our government is digging a hole it might never get out of. We don't have the money, yet Big Government hasn't been able to restrain itself and keeps putting more and more of its spending on a credit card—our children's credit card.

Our national debt-to-GDP ratio rivals that of countries like Ireland, Portugal, and Greece, which are facing sovereign debt crises. Soon our Nation's Federal debt will equal our GDP. It is a losing proposition. It's like

someone's total credit card debt equalling the total amount of income that they bring in each year.

And so what do people do? If they do that at home, unfortunately a lot of people go and get another credit card and they borrow money from that to pay the minimum on the first credit card. But then they have to go and get another credit card to pay the minimum on that one to pay the minimum on that one. It doesn't work. It spirals down and down until finally it ends in bankruptcy. It's unsustainable.

Most American families understand that. They live within their means. Washington should, too.

I grew up watching my mom and my dad wrestle with balancing the budget on our family farm. They would sit down around the kitchen table at the start of the year and develop a cash flow projection for the upcoming year listing the expenses that would be necessary to put in the crops and projecting the anticipated yields and prices to see how we were going to fare and to ensure that we didn't go over budget.

Then my parents would monitor it throughout the year to see how it was doing. My mother would spend hours with her pencil erasing and adjusting the budget as conditions changed either up or down. They used to make my sister and me sit down and participate in the process with them. And I can tell you, as a child, we weren't that thrilled with this tedious task because sometimes it would take hours. But now I'm thankful that they did, and they had the foresight to teach us the importance of balancing a budget.

I conveyed that importance to my students when I used to teach personal family finance as a home economics teacher. I told the students that when you budget, the expenses shouldn't be more than the income. They got it. Washington should, too.

Now we have the opportunity this week to bring the common sense and the business sense of American families and American small businesses to Washington to force it to live within its means by passing the balanced budget amendment. I firmly believe that this constitutional amendment is the best way to restrain the out-of-control Federal spending of Big Government. Forty-nine States have some form of a balanced budget requirement, and it works for them. I know it works for Missouri, and I believe it will work in our Nation's capital, too.

When I was a Missouri State representative, we budgeted according to the revenue projection given us and designed our budget to match the income. If we didn't have the money, we didn't spend it. Because of that, Missouri is on sound financial footing. Clearly, Washington is not because it has failed to balance its budget.

Passing the balanced budget amendment will force Washington to cut up these credit cards and to start living within its means. Families are tightening their belts at home to make ends meet. Our Federal Government needs to do likewise.

President Ronald Reagan understood the importance of the balanced budget amendment. He said, ''Only a constitutional amendment will do the job. We've tried the carrot, and it failed. With the stick of a balanced budget amendment, we can stop government squandering, overtaxing ways, and save our economy.''

□ 1050

That's why I am excited about this historic vote that we're going to take tomorrow, and I urge all of my colleagues, Republicans and Democrats, to get behind this commonsense provision that will set us back on the path to a strong financial footing. Now is the time to stop the reckless course that we are on and get things right. I look forward to applying the cash-flow knowledge I learned around the kitchen table as a child to our Federal budget. It worked at home. It's time to make it work in Washington.

REFLECTIONS OF A LIFE

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

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, there are unsung heroes and heroines among us. These are the persons who overcome great challenges just to do the ordinary. They're not born into plenty—they're often born into poverty—but they have lives that are rich in that they overcome great obstacles in life just so that they can be of benefit to the lives of others.

One such heroine was born on January 26, 1934. She passed last week on November 9, 2011. Her story is one that I would hope we would remember simply because it exemplifies the life of a person who met challenges, who did everything that was required, who played by the rules—and sometimes these persons go unnoticed.

Lola Mae Bolton Davis was born in Anderson, Texas, to Arllie Pratt Sanders and Charlie Bolton. She was their second born. She attended Allen Farm School up to the eighth grade. She joined Rockwest Baptist Church.

At the age of 16, she moved to Houston, Texas, where she acquired her first job as a housekeeper. At the age of 18, she met the love of her life, Ruben George Davis, Sr. A year later, they had their first child, Pamela. She went on to attend Franklin Beauty School. Eventually, she opened her own business, and it was known as the Lola Davis Beauty Nook. She later had three additional children—Ruben, Paula and Renwick.

She was hired by Texas Instruments in 1969. While she was working there, she received her GED. Later, she received her associate's degree from Houston Community College. She enrolled at Texas Southern University and graduated with a degree in education. She taught in the Houston Independent School District.

Mind you, this is a person who dropped out of high school, who received a GED, who went on to get an associate's degree, who got her degree in education, and now she's teaching in the Houston Independent School District.

She was known as ''Grandma Davis'' to her students. Her son Ruben became a constable in Harris County. He is still a constable, but is now in Fort Bend County. Her children have done well.

She played by the rules. She did not receive all of the awards that one might receive who has excelled and made a great contribution by way of an invention or maybe made a great contribution of having been elected to public office, but she did do this—she was a good citizen who did the right thing: took care of her family and produced offspring who have done well.

So, today, I salute her as an unsung heroine. Thank God for the many unsung heroes and heroines who are at the very foundation of what makes this Nation great. God bless you.

God bless the United States of America, and God bless our unsung heroes and heroines.

LET US PASS A BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. GARRETT) for 5 minutes.

Mr. GARRETT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak in favor of a balanced budget amendment, and some would say it's the only solution to our current fiscal crisis.

Statesmen throughout the history of our Republic have stressed the importance of fiscal responsibility, but it's the voice of Thomas Jefferson that, I think, we must pay particular attention to.

Thomas Jefferson bore the burden of debt throughout his entire life, and some historians have argued that Jefferson's personal experiences influenced his thinking about the public debt as well. Jefferson inherited a significant amount of debt at the young age of 31, and some say his own spending added to that and worsened his financial condition personally during his life. When he died, he, unfortunately, passed his debt on to his descendants, which is exactly what this Federal Government is doing now to future generations today.

So, if the Federal Government says that it's so concerned about the welfare of our children and the next generation and the next generation, then we should be taking the time right now to address this staggering public debt that our children and our grandchildren will stand to inherit if our leaders here in Congress fail to have the courage to—what?—cut spending and to balance our budget and to live within our means.

Jefferson had a moral message to the future public servants in this regard. He believed that those who are entrusted by their constituents to represent them, as he said, ''shall consider themselves unauthorized to saddle posterity with our debts and are morally bound to pay them ourselves.''

Jefferson expanded on this message in a letter he wrote to James Madison in 1798. He said, ''Neither the representatives of a nation, nor the whole nation itself assembled, can validly engage debts beyond what they may pay in their own time.''

Still writing to Madison, he explicitly endorsed a balanced budget amendment, stating, ''With respect to future debts, would it not be wise and just for a nation to declare in its constitution that neither the legislature nor the nation, itself, can validly contract more debt than it may pay within its own age.''

So what would Jefferson think about where we are in this country today?

The CBO, the Congressional Budget Office, has projected that maintaining all of our current spending would eventually require that the middle class in this country would have to have a tax rate of almost two-thirds of all their income—63 percent—and that the small businesses in this country would have to see their tax rates skyrocket up to 88 percent in order to cover all the spending.

These numbers have a real impact on the lives of individuals, on families, and on businesses. So, if Congress were then to keep on spending and have to raise taxes as much as the CBO has prescribed, Congress would do what? Congress would basically doom our families to a crushing tax burden, and this would smother the ability of businesses to expand and, therefore, to create jobs.

See, the economics of all this is very clear. If we refuse to address our spending problems, tax rates are going to have to rise, and they will rise in such a manner that would commit future generations to a tax burden to pay for—what?—the spending of today.

So we now, as often is the case, stand at a crossroads. We can continue to do as we have done in the past, which is to overspend and borrow and put this burden on our children, or we can do something else. We can demonstrate our commitment to a balanced budget by making it the supreme law of the land in this country.

Let me conclude then with a final quote from Jefferson:

''To preserve the people's independence, we must not let our government load us up with perpetual debt. We must make our selection between economy and liberty or profusion and servitude.''

So let's make Jefferson's dream a reality. Let us pass a balanced budget amendment.

MF GLOBAL

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

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, thank goodness some Americans continue to analyze the real causes of job loss and turmoil in our economy. While all eyes are on Europe, the problem just isn't in Greece.

On October 31, U.S.-based MF Global Holdings, Limited filed for chapter 11. It reportedly is the eighth largest bankruptcy in U.S. history. Its failure, like the crash in 2008, revolves around the actions of money traders using slick instruments called ''credit derivatives.'' As analysts try to piece together what happened at MF Global, one word seems to keep popping up: fraud.

I would like to include in the RECORD a few recent articles on the Wall Street perpetrators of this crisis.

[From Reuters, Nov. 7, 2011]

FRUSTRATION MOUNTS FOR MF GLOBAL CLIENTS

(By Lauren Tara LaCapra)

The sudden collapse of MF Global Holdings Ltd is leaving some small and independent futures traders angry and frustrated.

Customers of the bankrupt firm are starting to complain about getting checks that bounced, having requests to transfer funds denied and receiving inaccurate account statements.

The growing litany of woes is adding to the tasks for the receiver assigned to liquidate MF Global and causing some investors to voice concern about the basic plumbing of the financial services system.

Steve Meyers, an independent futures trader in Florida, said he asked for $500,000 from his MF Global account to be wired back to him on October 28 because he was concerned about the firm filing for bankruptcy.

The money never was wired.

Instead, on November 2, Meyers received several checks from MF Global that were dated October 28. By the time he went to deposit the checks, MF Global had filed for bankruptcy on October 31 and the checks were not honored for payment.

Between himself and several clients he manages money for, Meyers said he has several millions of dollars still tied up with MF Global.

''I am sitting with hundreds of thousands of dollars in returned checks,'' said Meyers. ''I just think the industry has suffered irreparable damage from this.''

Other clients of the firm led by former New Jersey Governor Jon Corzine are telling similar stories.

Chris Ries, who co-manages a commodities brokerage and grain dealer in Iowa that cleared trades through MF Global, said several clients had checks bounce even though they deposited them before MF Global's bankruptcy on October 31.

The situation has been made worse, he said, because customers' account balances appear as though they received the cash even though the checks did not clear.

''Eventually it may all get cleared up,'' said Ries, ''but for now, accounts with bounced checks don't reflect the balance that they should.''

Missing $600 Million

Some clients' checks were drawn on an MF Global account held at a Harris Bank branch in Illinois. Harris Bank is a subsidiary of Bank of Montreal.

Jim Kappel, a spokesman for Harris, said the bank began denying payment and returning checks on November 1, at the direction of the bankruptcy trustee. While some checks might have been dated before October 31, he said, they were likely debited at a later date.

Clients' issues with bounced checks come as MF Global and its regulators continue to hunt for $600 million in client money that has gone missing. It is not clear if some of the bounced checks are part of the unaccounted money.

It appears MF Global began issuing checks to customers seeking funds—instead of wiring the money—as a way to buy some time for the firm, which was hoping to arrange a last-minute sale to Interactive Brokers, some of the customers say. The deal fell apart last Monday when the issue of the missing customer money arose.

A week later, regulators have yet to provide an answer on what became of the missing $600 million, although some money has been located in an account with JPMorgan Chase.

Brokers who cleared through MF Global say they have been allowed to move some of their money to new firms, but not all of it. They have been waiting for guidance from the trustee or regulators on when they will get access to all of their funds.

Frustration

MF Global's trustee, James Giddens, had frozen 150,000 accounts when the firm filed for bankruptcy protection.

On Monday, Giddens said $1.5 billion worth of client money had been transferred to other firms. But the trustee and CME Group Inc, which regulates futures exchanges, have held back some $1 billion in customer funds as they search for the missing money, angering clients who can trade again but are still frozen out of their excess collateral and cash.

''We can understand the frustration of customers,'' Kent Jarrell, a spokesman for the trustee, told Reuters. ''That is why we are working around the clock to facilitate the transfer and return of customer assets. Unfortunately, this will take time as we conduct our independent and thorough investigation and maximize the estate for all stakeholders in a fair process.''

Some traders who tried to move their money from MF Global to other clearing firms or banks even before the company went belly-up have also been left in the lurch.

One independent options trader in Chicago said he placed a wire request on the morning of October 28 to transfer $1.25 million from MF Global to JPMorgan Chase.

The transfer never occurred.

An MF Global representative said JPMorgan rejected the transfer because of errors in the account number, the trader said, but upon double-checking the wire request form he found no mistakes. The funds have remained frozen at MF Global since its bankruptcy, he said.

''We pretty much have zero clarity,'' said the trader, who did not want to be identified. ''I have a feeling the wire instructions probably just got lost in the turmoil.''

□ 1100

In a recent posting, attorney William Black describes the failure of our justice system to investigate ''accounting control fraud as a systemic risk that underlies the damage still being done.''

The collapse of MF Global has garnered massive attention, partly because Jon Corzine sat at its helm. Mr. Corzine is a former chief executive officer of infamous Goldman Sachs. He is also a former U.S. Senator and former

Governor of New Jersey. Mr. Corzine's firm even held a special status as a primary dealer at the New York Federal Reserve. That's like the Good Housekeeping stamp of approval. Mr. Corzine isn't the only former government leader whose cozy relationship with the financial services industry is being publicly questioned.

Former Speaker of this House Newt Gingrich appears to have had a significant financial relationship with Freddie Mac, one of the mortgage industry giants led by its management into financial ruin. Freddie Mac played a key role in the financial meltdown. As countless American families have lost their homes, Freddie Mac assumed the toxic assets that were handed to it from the banks. And it is now under conservatorship of the Federal Government, living off the taxpayer dime. Mr. Gingrich is apparently $1.8 million richer, though he claims he isn't sure how much Freddie paid him.

I now see why Congress has consistently failed to investigate what happened at Freddie Mac along with Fannie Mae to determine exactly what decisions, by whom—by whom and when led to this financial ruin. I have a bill to do just that. H.R. 2093, the Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac Commission Act. It's well past time to pass it, and I invite Members to join me in this effort.

The allegations against MF Global are serious. Mr. Corzine's firm had essentially placed a $6.3 billion bet on the sovereign debt of several European governments. After its most recent quarterly returns showed almost $200 million in losses, MF Global's stock lost 67 percent of its value. But this is not just a case of an investment firm being lured by the higher returns of riskier bonds. CME Group, Inc., who audited MF Global's accounts, found that Mr. Corzine's company violated key requirements to keep its accounts separate from its clients'. The details are still being sorted out, but as much as $600 million appears to be missing from customer accounts.

The financial press is reporting a staggering amount of malfeasance in the days before MF Global filed for bankruptcy. In an apparent effort to buy themselves time, MF Global sent checks instead of wiring money. The checks turned out to be bogus. There are stories of requests to transfer funds being denied and even inaccurate account statements being issued. Even more egregious are accounts of people receiving bounced checks, going back and finding that their accounts were also altered inappropriately. If this isn't fraud, what is?

What should concern all of us is the knowledge that fraud is not limited to a case here or there. In the financial services sector, fraud has become systemic. In 2009, the FBI testified before the House Judiciary Committee, ''The current financial crisis has produced one unexpected consequence: It has exposed prevalent fraud schemes that have been thriving in the global financial system. These fraud schemes are not new, but they are coming to light as a result of market deterioration.''

This isn't the first time our country has seen a massive crime wave in the financial services industry. In the 1980s, it was the savings and loan crisis, and the FBI responded with a staff of 1,000 agents and forensic experts based in 27 cities. That crisis was much smaller than what we are seeing today, yet today the FBI only has a couple hundred agents able to investigate. I have a bill, H.R. 1350, that asks that number to be increased by 1,000. I ask my colleagues to help cosponsor it, and let's bring some reason and prudence back to the financial markets of our country and let's exact real justice for the American people.

THE VIRGIN CRISIS: SYSTEMATICALLY IGNORING FRAUD AS A SYSTEMIC RISK

(By William K. Black)

One of the most revealing things about this crisis is the unwillingness to investigate whether ''accounting control fraud'' was a major contributor to the crisis. The refusal to even consider a major role for fraud is facially bizarre. The banking expert James Pierce found that fraud by senior insiders was, historically, the leading cause of major bank failures in the United States. The national commission that investigated the cause of the S&L debacle found:

''The typical large failure [grew] at an extremely rapid rate, achieving high concentrations of assets in risky ventures. . . . [E]very accounting trick available was used. . . . Evidence of fraud was invariably present as was the ability of the operators to ''milk'' the organization.'' (NCFIRRE 1993) Two of the nation's top economists'' study of the S&L debacle led them to conclude that the S&L regulators were correct—financial deregulation could be dangerously criminogenic. That understanding would allow us to avoid similar future crises. ''Neither the public nor economists foresaw that [S&L deregulation was] bound to produce looting. Nor, unaware of the concept, could they have known how serious it would be. Thus the regulators in the field who understood what was happening from the beginning found lukewarm support, at best, for their cause. Now we know better. If we learn from experience, history need not repeat itself' (George Akerlof & Paul Romer. ''Looting: the Economic Underworld of Bankruptcy for Profit.'' 1993: 60).

The epidemic of accounting control fraud that drove the second phase of the S&L debacle (the first phase was caused by interest rate risk) was followed by an epidemic of accounting control fraud that produced the Enron era frauds.

The FBI warned in September 2004 that there was an ''epidemic'' of mortgage fraud and predicted that it would cause a financial ''crisis'' if it were not contained. The mortgage banking industry's own anti-fraud experts reported in writing to nearly every mortgage lender in 2006 that:

''Stated income and reduced documentation loans speed up the approval process, but they are open invitations to fraudsters.'' ''When the stated incomes were compared to the IRS figures: [90%] of the stated incomes were exaggerated by 5% or more. [A]lmost 60% were exaggerated by more than 50%. [T]he stated income loan deserves the nickname used by many in the industry, the 'liar's loan' '' (MARI 2006).

We know that accounting control fraud is itself criminogenic—fraud begets fraud. The fraudulent CEOs deliberately create the perverse incentives that that suborn inside and outside employees and professionals. We have known for four decades how these perverse incentives produce endemic fraud by generating a ''Gresham's'' dynamic in which bad ethics drives good ethics out of the marketplace.

''[D]ishonest dealings tend to drive honest dealings out of the market. The cost of dishonesty, therefore, lies not only in the amount by which the purchaser is cheated; the cost also must include the loss incurred from driving legitimate business out of existence.'' George Akerlof (1970).

Akerlof noted this dynamic in his seminal article on markets for ''lemons,'' which led to the award of the Nobel Prize in Economics in 2001. It is the giants of economics who have confirmed what the S&L regulators and criminologists observed when we systematically ''autopsied'' each S&L failure to investigate its causes. Modern executive compensation has made accounting control fraud vastly more criminogenic than it once was as investigators of the current crisis have confirmed.

''Over the last several years, the subprime market has created a race to the bottom in which unethical actors have been handsomely rewarded for their misdeeds and ethical actors have lost market share. . . . The market incentives rewarded irresponsible lending and made it more difficult for responsible lenders to compete.'' Miller, T. J. (August 14, 2007). Iowa AG.

Liar's loans offer what we call a superb ''natural experiment.'' No honest mortgage lender would make a liar's loan because such loans have a sharply negative expected value. Not underwriting creates intense ''adverse selection.'' We know that it was overwhelmingly the lenders and their agents that put the lies in liar's loans and the lenders created the perverse compensation incentives that led their agents to lie about the borrowers' income and to inflate appraisals. We know that appraisal fraud was endemic and only agents and their lenders can commit widespread appraisal fraud. Iowa Attorney General Miller's investigations found:

''[Many originators invent] non-existent occupations or income sources, or simply inflat[e] income totals to support loan applications. Importantly, our investigations have found that most stated income fraud occurs at the suggestion and direction of the loan originator, not the consumer.''

New York Attorney General (now Governor) Cuomo's investigations revealed that Washington Mutual (one of the leaders in making liar's loans) developed a blacklist of appraisers—who refused to inflate appraisals. No honest mortgage lender would ever inflate an appraisal or permit widespread appraisal inflation by its agents. Surveys of appraisers confirm that there was widespread pressure by nonprime lenders and their agents to inflate appraisals.

We also know that the firms that made and purchased liar's loans followed the respective accounting control fraud ''recipes'' that maximize fictional short-term reported income, executive compensation, and (real) losses. Those recipes have four ingredients:

1. Grow like crazy
2. By making (or purchasing) poor quality loans at a premium yield
3. While employing extreme leverage, and
4. Providing only grossly inadequate allowances for loan and lease losses (ALLL) against the losses inherent in making or purchasing liars loans

Firms that follow these recipes are not ''gamblers'' and they are not taking ''risks.'' Akerlof & Romer, the S&L regulators, and criminologists recognize that this recipe provides a ''sure thing.'' The exceptional (albeit

fictional) income, real bonuses, and real losses are all sure things for accounting control frauds.

Liar's loans are superb ''ammunition'' for accounting control frauds because they (and appraisal fraud) allow the fraudulent mortgage lenders and their agents to attain the unholy fraud trinity: (1) the lender can charge a substantial premium yield, (2) on a loan that appears to relatively lower risk because the lender has inflated the borrowers' income and the appraisal, while (3) eliminating the incriminating evidence of fraud that real underwriting of the borrowers' income and salary would normally place in the loan files. The government did not require any entity to make or purchase liar's loans (and that includes Fannie and Freddie). The states and the federal government frequently criticized liar's loans. Fannie and Freddie purchased liar's loans for the same reasons that Merrill, Lehman, Bear Stearns, etc. acquired liar's loans—they were accounting control frauds and liar's loans (and CDOs backed by liar's loans) were the best available ammunition for maximizing their fictional reported income and real bonuses.

Liar's loans were large enough to hyper-inflate the bubble and drive the crisis. They increased massively from 2003–2007.

''[B]etween 2003 and 2006 . . . subprime and Alt-A [loans grew] 94 and 340 percent, respectively.

The higher levels of originations after 2003 were largely sustained by the growth of the nonprime (both the subprime and Alt-A) segment of the mortgage market.'' ''Alt-A: The Forgotten Segment of the Mortgage Market'' (Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis 2010).

The growth of liar's loans was actually far greater than the extraordinary rate that the St. Louis Fed study indicated. Their error was assuming that ''subprime'' and ''alt-a'' (one of the many misleading euphemisms for liar's loans) were dichotomous. Credit Suisse's early 2007 study of nonprime lending reported that roughly half of all loans called ''subprime'' were also ''liar's'' loans and that roughly one-third of home loans made in 2006 were liar's loans. That fact has four critical implications for this subject. The growth of liar's loans was dramatically larger than the already extraordinary 340% in three years reported by the St. Louis Fed because, by 2006, half of the loans the study labeled as ''subprime'' were also liar's loans. Because loans the study classified as ''subprime'' started out the period studied (2003) as a much larger category than liar's loans the actual percentage increase in liar's loans from 2003–2006 is over 500%. The first critical implication is that it was the tremendous growth in liar's loans that caused the bubble to hyper-inflate and delayed its collapse.

The role of accounting control fraud epidemics in causing bubbles to hyper-inflate and persist is another reason that accounting control fraud is often criminogenic. When such frauds cluster they are likely to drive serious bubbles. Inflating bubbles optimize the fraud recipes for borrowers and purchasers of the bad loans by greatly delaying the onset of loss recognition. The saying in the trade is that ''a rolling loan gathers no loss.'' One can simply refinance the bad loans to delay the loss recognition and book new fee and interest ''income.'' When entry is easy (and entry into becoming a mortgage broker was exceptionally easy), an industry becomes even more criminogenic.

Second, liar's loans (and CDOs ''backed'' by liar's loans) were large enough to cause extreme losses. Millions of liar's loans were made and those loans caused catastrophic losses because they hyper-inflated the bubble, because they were endemically fraudulent, because the borrower was typically induced by the lenders' frauds to acquire a home they could not afford to purchase, and because the appraisals were frequently inflated. Do the math: roughly one-third of home loans made in 2006 were liar's loans and the incidence of fraud in such loans was 90%. We are talking about an annual fraud rate of over one million mortgage loans from 2005 until the market for liar's loans collapsed in mid-2007.

Third, the industry massively increased its origination and purchase of liar's loans after the FBI warned of the developing fraud ''epidemic'' and predicted it would cause a crisis and then massively increased its origination and purchase of liar's loans after the industry's own anti-fraud experts warned that such loans were endemically fraudulent and would cause severe losses. Again, this provides a natural experiment to evaluate why Fannie, Freddie, et alia, originated and purchased these loans. It wasn't because ''the government'' compelled them to do so. They did so because they were accounting control frauds.

Fourth, the industry increasingly made the worst conceivable loans that maximized fictional short-term income and real compensation and losses. Making (or purchasing) liar's loans that are also subprime loans means that the originator is making (or the purchaser is buying) a loan that is endemically fraudulent to a borrower who has known, serious credit problems. It's actually worse than that because lenders also increasingly added ''layered'' risks (no downpayments and negative amortization) in order to optimize accounting fraud. Negative amortization reduces the borrowers' short-term interest rates, delaying delinquencies and defaults (but producing far greater losses). Again, this strategy maximizes fictional income and real losses. Honest home lenders and purchasers of home loans would not act in this fashion because the loans must cause catastrophic losses.

To sum it up, the known facts of this crisis refute the rival theories that the lenders/purchasers originated/bought endemically fraudulent liar's loans because (a) ''the government'' made them (or Fannie and Freddie) do so, or (b) because they were trying to maximize profits by taking ''extreme tail'' (i.e., an exceptionally unlikely risk). The risk that a liar's home loan will default is exceptionally high, not exceptionally low. The known facts of the crisis are consistent with accounting control frauds using liar's loans (in the United States) as their ''ammunition of choice'' in accordance with the conventional fraud ''recipe'' used that caused prior U.S. crises.

It is bizarre that in such circumstances the automatic assumption of the Bush and Obama administrations has been that fraud isn't even worth investigating or considering in connection with the crisis. It is as if millions of liar's loans purchased and resold as CDOs largely by systemically dangerous institutions are an inconvenient distraction from campaign fundraising efforts. Instead, we have the myth of the virgin crisis unsullied by accounting control fraud. Indeed, contrary to theory, experience, and reality, the Department of Justice has invented the faith-based fiction that looting cannot occur.

Benjamin Wagner, a U.S. Attorney who is actively prosecuting mortgage fraud cases in Sacramento, Calif., points out that banks lose money when a loan turns out to be fraudulent. ''It doesn't make any sense to me that they would be deliberately defrauding themselves,'' Wagner said. Wagner's statement is embarrassing. He conflates ''they'' (referring to the CEO) and ''themselves'' (referring to the bank). It makes perfect sense for the CEO to loot the bank. Looting is a ''sure thing'' guaranteed to make the CEO wealthy. ''Looting'' destroys the bank (that's the ''bankruptcy'' part of Akerlof & Romer's title) but it produces the ''profit'' for the CEO. It is the deliberate making of masses of bad loans at premium yields that allows the CEO to profit by looting the bank. When the top prosecutor in an epicenter of accounting control fraud defines the most destructive form of financial crime out of existence he allows elite fraud to occur with impunity.

As embarrassing as Wagner's statement is, however, it cannot compete on this dimension with that of his boss, Attorney General Holder. I was appalled when I reviewed his testimony before the Financial Crisis Inquiry Commission (FCIC). Chairman Angelides asked Holder to explain the actions the Department of Justice (DOJ) took in response to the FBI's warning in September 2004 that mortgage fraud was ''epidemic'' and its prediction that if the fraud epidemic were not contained it would cause a financial ''crisis.'' Holder testified: ''I'm not familiar myself with that [FBI] statement.'' The DOJ's (the FBI is part of DOJ) preeminent contribution with respect to this crisis was the FBI's 2004 warning to the nation (in open House testimony picked up by the national media. For none of Holder's senior staffers who prepped him for his testimony to know about the FBI testimony requires that they know nothing about the department's most important and (potentially) useful act. That depth of ignorance could not exist if his senior aides cared the least about the financial crisis and made it even a minor priority to understand, investigate, and prosecute the frauds that drove the crisis. Because Holder was testifying in January 14, 2010, the failure of anyone from Holder on down in his prep team to know about the FBI's warnings also requires that all of them failed to read any of the relevant criminology literature or even the media and blogosphere.

In addition to claiming that the DOJ's response to the developing crisis under President Bush was superb, Holder implicitly took the position that (without any investigation or analysis) fraud could not and did not pose any systemic economic risk. Implicitly, he claimed that only economists had the expertise to contribute to understanding the causes of the crisis. If you don't investigate; you don't find. If you don't understand ''accounting control fraud'' you cannot understand why we have recurrent, intensifying financial crises. If Holder thinks we should take our policy advice from Larry Summers and Bob Rubin, leading authors of the crisis, then he has abdicated his responsibilities to the source of the problem. ''Now let me state at the outset what role the Department plays and does not play in addressing these challenges'' [record fraud in investment banking and securities].

''The Department of Justice investigates and prosecutes federal crimes. . . .''

''As a general matter we do not have the expertise nor is it part of our mission to opine on the systemic causes of the financial crisis. Rather the Justice Department's resources are focused on investigating and prosecuting crime. It is within this context that I am pleased to offer my testimony and to contribute to your vital review.'' Two aspects of Holder's testimony were preposterous, dishonest, and dangerous.

''I'm proud that we have put in place a law enforcement response to the financial crisis that is and will continue to be is aggressive, comprehensive, and well-coordinated.''

DOJ has obtained ten convictions of senior insiders of mortgage lenders (all from one obscure mortgage bank) v. over 1000 felony convictions in the S&L debacle. DOJ has not conducted an investigation worthy of the

name of any of the largest accounting control frauds. DOJ is actively opposing investigating the systemically dangerous institutions (SDIs).

Holder's most disingenuous and dangerous sentence, however, was this one:

''Our efforts to fight economic crime are a vital component of our broader strategy, a strategy that seeks to foster confidence in our financial system, integrity in our markets, and prosperity for the American people.'' Yes, the ''confidence fairy'' ruled at DOJ. It is the rationale now for DOJ's disgraceful efforts to achieve immunity for the SDIs' endemic frauds. The confidence fairy trumped and traduced ''integrity in our markets'' and ''prosperity for the American people.'' Prosperity is reserved for the SDIs and their senior managers—the one percent.

PUT AMERICA BACK ON A PATH TO PROSPERITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT) for 5 minutes.

Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about passing a balanced budget amendment today. I will tell you, there's been a global debate most recently over the finances of the world. And even in Europe, in the eurozone, Merkel and Sarkozy are proposing that balanced budget amendments be a part of the constitutions of those countries that make up the eurozone. It's not often that you will find me agreeing with President Sarkozy. He is certainly not the great leader that Benjamin Netanyahu is. But on this one, I do believe that he was right to come out of his foxhole and support the balanced budget amendments.

Every year, our Americans sit down at the kitchen table, pencil and paper in hand, and balance their budgets in their households. Every American business owner will tell you that they cannot continually deficit spend the way this country has well over the last decade.

Mr. Speaker, the people of Georgia's Eighth Congressional District are hardworking and responsible people. They expect the same of their government leaders. They work each day to ensure that the future remains bright for their children and grandchildren, and they sent me here to do the same.

The work that will be required by the balanced budget will not be easy, but Americans are counting on us. They are counting on us to make tough decisions and put America back on a path to prosperity. Passing the balanced budget amendment is the first step to that.

THE TROJAN HORSE BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT

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

Ms. MOORE. Later on today we will be considering the so-called balanced budget amendment. And while I join my colleagues in sharing the view that we need to gain control of our national debt, I rise to commiserate our loss of a balanced perspective on what we, as elected Representatives of the people of the United States of America, regard as assets and liabilities on our American Government balance sheet. I am appalled, Mr. Speaker, at our loss of perspective on what good government really means as we balance our policy priorities in this moral document, our budget.

Mr. Speaker, we have perverted the concept of a healthy balance sheet as we worship at the feet of a religion that tones that government should be limited and, perhaps, have no role in the health, welfare, and safety of the American people.

Balancing the budget sounds so simple, so appealing, but that's not a truthful description of what this balanced budget amendment would do. This amendment is nothing more than a Trojan horse hiding the Republicans' true ambition, which is requiring major cuts to vital programs, dramatically shrinking the legitimate role of government, and enshrining this agenda in the United States Constitution.

A balanced budget? A balance sheet contains both assets and liabilities.

I would submit, Mr. Speaker, that it is a perversion of our American values to see our children, our future, as mere liabilities; our students, who need the government to invest in their higher educations, as mere liabilities; our communities, the economic engines of our economy who may be subjected to natural disasters such as hurricanes and other liabilities, who need to rebuild modern transportation systems, to see these as mere liabilities; and American folks, who need to breathe clean air and drink clean water, as mere liabilities on the Federal Government balance sheet.

According to an analysis released this week by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, the amendment we are considering today would force cuts to all programs by an average of 17.3 percent by 2018. And if revenues are not raised, which there seems to be an anathema to doing that, all these programs will be cut by the same percentage. Social Security cut by $184 billion in 2018 alone; Medicare cut by $117 billion in 2018; Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program cut by $80 billion in 2018.

We have constructed a balance sheet where our people are not viewed as assets. Our American universities, our students, the next generation of inventions and innovators are seen as welfare recipients when we provide them with Pell Grants. Seniors who have earned retirement security are now seen as a drain on our system. These seniors who built our economy through their ingenuity and sweat, Medicare and Social Security for them is seen as socialism.

Mr. Speaker, we have heard the constant drumbeat demanding that we severely restrain the benefits and the rights we provide to our seniors and our people. And what do we regard as our assets on our balance sheet? Our bloated, cold war-era military buildup.

And what kind of balance sheet, Mr. Speaker, expends trillions of dollars on tax breaks to millionaires and expatriate corporations and treats revenue loss needed for the legitimate operation of the government like assets?

□ 1110

This is a balance sheet reminiscent of a corporate raider that strips down all of the assets and leaves the company limping lifeless in the dust.

What kind of country lauds a balanced budget that achieves this balance on the backs of children, students, working class families, the disabled, the hungry, the infirm, the elderly, the environment, victims of natural disasters, and wounded veterans returning to unemployment and a jobless economy? Is this a balanced budget, Mr. Speaker, or is this our unbalanced priorities?

Mr. Speaker, I thank you for your indulgence in listening to me today.

THE ABLE ACT

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

Mr. CRENSHAW. Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to make my colleagues aware of some legislation that I filed this week, along with 28 original cosponsors, Democrats and Republicans. The legislation was filed in the Senate, as well, so it's a bipartisan, bicameral effort. It's going to be known as the ABLE Act, Achieving a Better Life Experience. This is legislation that will paint a brighter future, make a brighter pathway for individuals with disabilities to meet the uncertainties that they face.

I think we all recognize that individuals with disabilities, be it autism, be it Down's syndrome, they face tremendous challenges today. They face struggles, both financial struggles and personal struggles, that most of us can't even imagine. And they face those struggles without the advantage that our Tax Code offers for a lot of people in our society.

For instance, if you want to save for college, you can set up a tax-free savings account. The proceeds grow tax free, and you can use those moneys to pay your college tuition. If you want to save for retirement, you can set up a tax-free savings account. Those proceeds grow tax free, and you can use those dollars in your retirement years. If you want to save for medical insurance premiums, you can set up a health savings account and that account has tax advantages. And yet there are no vehicles like that for individuals with disabilities.

You can imagine, there are real-world examples where individuals with disabilities, they receive certain government benefits; but if they accumulate more than $2,000 of assets in their

own name, then they're penalized. We have examples of individuals who have had to say ''no'' when somebody wanted to give them a birthday check, to say ''no'' when somebody said I'd like to help you with your housing.

We have to ask ourselves, is this any way to treat those among us who are the most disadvantaged? Of course it's not. The answer is, no. That's why we have created this legislation. That's why we proposed this ABLE Act. It's very simple; it's very straightforward. It's understandable. What it does is allow individuals with disabilities to set up a tax-free savings account as long as those proceeds are used for qualified expenses like maybe special equipment, maybe educational needs, maybe transportation or housing. It's only fair that we make our Tax Code deal with the injustice that goes on today. It's trying to make that Tax Code more fair to treat everyone more equal.

I think those of us who are more fortunate have an obligation to help those who are less fortunate. So, Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to take a look at this. Again, it is bicameral, bipartisan; and it shows that we can work together to meet the needs of those among us who need our help. It is much needed and it's long overdue, and I hope we can pass it this year.

TRIBUTE TO GLEN A. KEHREIN

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

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to Glen Kehrein, a neighbor, a good friend, and one of the most dedicated, committed, and focused individuals that I've ever known. He was founder and CEO of Circle Urban Ministries in Chicago, Illinois. A few days ago, Glen Kehrein passed away, but he leaves a legacy that will live for many, many years to come.

More than 30 years ago, Glen and his family and a circle of a few friends moved into the Austin community of Chicago which was undergoing rapid change from a predominantly white community to what is now a more than 95 percent black, or African American, community. With his circle of friends, Glen organized Circle Urban Ministries, which has lasted for more than 30 years and has become one of the most effective faith-based urban redevelopment organizations in the Nation.

Under Glen's leadership, programs in health care, legal assistance, housing rehabilitation, management, youth outreach, leadership development, homelessness, ex-offender reentry, food distribution, and education are bringing hope and help to thousands of people each year.

Glen coauthored an award-winning book with a black minister and friend of his, Reverend Raleigh Washington, entitled ''Breaking Down Walls,'' a model of reconciliation in an age of racial strife. He has traveled extensively to speak on the topic of racial reconciliation and has been a frequent guest on television and radio. He has been a contributing author of three other books about inner-city life and work, and has written many other articles for publication.

Glen has a B.A. in Bible theology from the Moody Bible Institute and a B.A. in sociology from Wheaton College. Except for a brief 2-year period while studying at Wheaton College, Glen; his wife, Lonnie; and their three children have lived in the Austin community for more than 30 years. In 1997, he was recognized for his contributions by becoming the first American to be awarded a Doctorate of Peacemaking from Westminster College. In receiving this honor, he joined the ranks of previous grantees: Nobel Laureate Mairead Maguire of Northern Ireland; Mrs. Leah Rabin, wife of the slain prime minister of Israel; and the Grand Mufti of Egypt, Dr. Muhammad Sayed Tantawi, the highest authority on Islamic law in Egypt.

Glen is a legend in our community. His family, neighbors, friends, and community will truly miss him; and may he rest in peace.

PROTECTING CHILDREN FROM SEXUAL ABUSE

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

Mr. RUSH. Mr. Speaker, earlier this month some of our darkest fears came to light. As parents and mentors of young children, we were horrified to hear and read about news allegations of a sexual abuse scandal involving the Penn State University football program.

In piecing the news together, there were clues and red flags along the way, suggesting that the allegations are regrettably and probably true. Based on what is known now, it is also not inconceivable that the horrible actions alleged to have occurred at Penn State could have just as easily occurred at any other major collegiate sports program in the country.

□ 1120

What this sad and tragic episode affirms is that the abuse of children is real and alive in the sports world today. And it is just as alive and real in collegiate sports as it could be in any institutional system that has commonalities with big-time college sports.

A little more than a week ago, even before the news of this scandal broke, I hosted two collegiate sports roundtables here in our Nation's Capitol. I invited sports journalists, economists, parents of former big division athletic scholarship recipients, and current professionally qualified basketball players and former collegiate student athletes to speak openly.

They were asked what they thought about some of the NCAA's new proposed reforms, like compensating student athletes with a stipend and increasing academic accountability of student athletes who play in Bowl Conference Series tournaments. The roundtables dispelled some of the widely held myths about the manner in which the colleges go about recruiting high school athletes. They also corrected some persistent misunderstandings about what and how much NCAA athletic scholarships and medical insurance cover. And they did an excellent job of exposing hardships that student athletes and their families face for being unable to come up with the extra money to pay the differences in the medical costs and the costs of these athletic scholarships.

The roundtables sadly affirmed that, just as the scandal does, the business of college sports is not beneath using—and can even thrive upon, in too many instances—collusion, corruption, and cover-ups.

As part of its core purpose, the NCAA says its mission is to ''integrate intercollegiate athletics into higher education so that the educational experience of the student athlete is paramount.'' But, unfortunately, I must say that I am highly suspicious of this creed, in that the NCAA system culture has increasingly become more shadowy and exceedingly exploitative. Exploitation maximizes revenues for colleges and conferences. Exploitation also helps member conferences and athletic programs hide behind flimsy excuses that doing more to support student athletes financially would be unprincipled and unacceptable.

Mr. Speaker, as a Nation, we must hear the voices of young victims, pray for their healing, and dedicate ourselves to doing all that we can to end outrageous abuse of vulnerable children. We, as Members of Congress, have two primary responsibilities: one, to protect our Nation against foreign enemies, and, two, to protect our children.

God bless America, and God bless our children.

THE FAIR TAX

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

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, it's always nice to come to the House floor after someone has just said ''God bless America.'' It makes me feel good, sir, and I want to associate myself with those remarks.

Candidly, I'm a little worried about what happens here in this country. Mr. Speaker, I know you have the pleasures I do of seeing all the folks from across America who come here to see the procedures that go on here on the House floor, and I know folks often wonder and probably ask you, Mr. Speaker, Where is everybody? What's going on? Well, of course, with the exception of those of us on the House floor, everybody is in their office watching on the

closed-circuit TV so you can multitask and do it all. I came down here to bring words to those folks who are watching on TV.

But really, Mr. Speaker, it's about the youngest folks we have in the country. It's about the economy that you and I are going to leave to the next generation of Americans. And we can do things here in this House today that guarantee a better economy in the years to come. Right now—right now—I don't tweet. I don't use Twitter. I'm not that interesting that I have something to say to folks every moment of the day, but if I were tweeting, I would say that right now in the Joint Economic Committee there's a hearing on fundamental tax reform, asking the question can tax reform boost investment and job creation? And the answer is absolutely, it can.

Here, in this country, what we tax, we destroy. Think about that. The power to tax is the power to destroy.

Mr. Speaker, when I go to speak to high school students, I say, okay, I've got a $20-an-hour job working in my congressional office. Who wants to come work for me? Everybody raises their hand. I said, I'm going to need to tax you about $19 an hour on that, so you're only going to get to take home 1. Who wants to come work for me? And all the hands go down. The hands go down because they don't want to work for $1 an hour. They want to keep what they earn.

The power to tax is the power to destroy. Today, in this country, we tax income. We are the only Nation in the OECD that does not have a consumption tax. We tax income. And when you tax income, which is productivity, you destroy productivity.

I have a proposal that is the most widely cosponsored fundamental tax reform proposal in either the House or the Senate, and it's called the Fair Tax. It's H.R. 25 here on the House side. And I have the great pleasure of working with so many of my colleagues to push that bill forward. It abolishes the income tax in favor of a consumption tax.

Now, when we're in a tough economy like this, folks say, But Rob, I'm cutting back on my consumption. Would we still be able to bring in the revenue that we need with a consumption tax? Well, I bring charts. What you see here in the blue line is personal consumption, and what you see in the red line is personal income. The red line represents what we tax in the income tax, and the blue line represents what we would tax in the consumption tax. And what you see are two things. Number one, they are roughly the same—roughly the same.

Yes, we can tax consumption and bring in the same revenue we get today by taxing income, but when they're different, it's because the volatility of the income is greater than the volatility of consumption. When you tax income, all you get to tax is income. When you tax consumption, you end up taxing income, plus savings people are spending, plus borrowing that they're doing. It's a much more stable tax.

Why is that important? Mr. Speaker, what you know in your time here in the House, as I know from my time here in the House, is that if you give this House more money, we're going to spend it. I don't want to spend it. I wish we wouldn't. And I'm going to vote ''no,'' but I'm going to lose.

If you tax something that's volatile, in the boom years, the money comes pouring in. Do you think we save it for a rainy day? We don't. We spend it. And then when the down year comes, folks are accustomed to a high spending level. What do we do? We borrow it from our children and our grandchildren and spend it anew.

Having a stable income stream that doesn't have the highs and doesn't have the lows will lead to a better Federal budgeting process. And taxing consumption, which is what we take out of the economy, instead of taxing the income, which is what we put into the economy, will grow it;

Mr. Speaker, a few years ago, the Joint Tax Committee here did a study and said, How would we evaluate consumption tax? We don't even have a model for it. How would we do it if we did away with the income tax and brought in the consumption tax? They brought in economic groups from the left and the right. Of course they disagreed about absolutely everything, those groups from the left to the right, all the way across the spectrum, except for one thing, Mr. Speaker. Every single economic model and group agreed that if we moved to a consumption tax from today's income tax, America's economy would grow faster.

Mr. Speaker, every dollar we can grow, every job we can create, they matter today. And I encourage folks to take a look at H.R. 25, the Fair Tax, as a mechanism for making that happen.

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 30 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

Reverend Martin R. Springer, Trinity Lutheran Ministries, Edwardsville, Illinois, offered the following prayer:

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, amen.

Almighty God, grant Your blessings to our land. Thank you for the freedoms that are ours as Americans. Help us to be mindful of the principles on which it was founded: freedom and equality, justice and humanity. Grant Your blessings to the Members of the United States House of Representatives, that they may serve our Nation with honesty and integrity and they may seek Your guidance as they make these important decisions that affect us all.

Protect all who serve in the Armed Forces of this land. Bless their families during times of military deployment and give Your peace to those whose loved ones have paid the ultimate price in the defense of liberty. Protect our Nation from terrorist threat.

Hear these prayers and grant us Your peace, which passes all understanding. These things we pray in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.

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 Indiana (Mr. DONNELLY) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. DONNELLY of Indiana 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.

WELCOMING REVEREND MARTIN R. SPRINGER

The SPEAKER. Without objection, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. JOHNSON) is recognized for 1 minute.

There was no objection.

Mr. JOHNSON of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor our guest chaplain, Pastor Marty Springer, who has served as both an example of his faith and civic duty.

Pastor Springer was raised in southern California, the youngest son of Marshall and Doris Springer. After graduating from high school, he worked in a bank while attending junior college and joined the United States Air Force in December of 1982. During his time serving on active duty, he was selected for the honor of serving in the Office of Presidential Protocol at Andrews Air Force Base during the Presidency of President Ronald Reagan.

He entered the Air Force Reserve in 1986 and also took a civil service position at Scott Air Force Base where he was the director of personnel for an Air Force telecommunications agency responsible for all aspects of manpower, personnel, and training. During Operations Desert Storm and Desert Shield,

Pastor Springer was recalled to serve in active duty and received the Air Force Achievement Medal for his service.

After 15 years of service to his Nation, Pastor Springer was called to serve God and entered Concordia Seminary in St. Louis in 1977. After graduating, Pastor Springer was ordained as a pastor of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod in 2000.

He received his first call to Saint John Evangelical Lutheran Church and School in Chester, Illinois. His service to his church and his community, including his work as chairman of the Chester Veterans Memorial Committee, earned him the honor of Outstanding Citizen of Chester in 2001.

Today, Pastor Springer serves as senior pastor of Trinity Lutheran Ministries of Edwardsville, Illinois, where he oversees a church, Christian day school, and a day school center. He has completed three mission trips to Kazakhstan, Haiti, and Honduras and is working to complete his clinical pastoral education at Alexian Brothers Medical System in St. Louis.

Pastor Springer has been a model of service for his community, his church, and his Nation; and it's truly my honor, Pastor, to join my colleagues in welcoming you as our guest chaplain. It's a privilege to represent you, and it's a privilege that you're here today.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BASS of New Hampshire). The Chair will entertain up to 15 further requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT

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

Mr. FLEISCHMANN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of a balanced budget amendment to our Constitution.

For 24 years, I ran my own small business with my wife. We had to balance our budget every month and every year. I've also raised three boys with my wife, and we've had to balance our budget as a family in order to live within our means.

I believe the United States Constitution is one of the greatest documents ever written, and I don't take amending it lightly. However, we must curb the voracious appetite of the Federal Government and get our fiscal House in order.

We passed the $15 trillion mark in our national debt yesterday, and we are seeing other countries around the world succumb to their debt. We must fix our debt crisis before it's too late.

I am proud to be a cosponsor of this balanced budget amendment to our Constitution, and I urge all of my colleagues to vote in favor of House Joint Resolution 2. Our kids and grandkids are depending on it.

SANCTITY OF VEGETABLES

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Congress seems determined to undermine recent nutrition standards proposed by the Obama administration. It's shameful that we are poised to intervene to make sure that pizza continues to count as a vegetable and that we protect the privileged status of French fries on the lunch tray.

The problem we have in front of us is the institution of vegetables has been weakened in this country, and the effort to redefine it on this vast social experiment that we have going on, redefining vegetables differently than they have ever been defined by mankind before. This effort of this vast social experiment, the early data that we see from other places harms the institution of the family, the raising of the next generation, and is harmful to the future of the Republic.

BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT

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

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. You know, this month the national debt will reach the unprecedented level of $15 trillion. That's nearly $48,000 per American.

Under President Obama, the national debt's increased faster than any other U.S. President in history. Now more than ever, it's time to get our Nation's fiscal house in order to prevent another big, fat Greek catastrophe.

The American people have made it abundantly clear that Congress should balance the Federal budget just like families and business owners across the country have to do every single day. A balanced budget amendment is the solution we need to break Washington's reckless spending habit.

I implore the President and my colleagues in the Senate to join the House in passing the balanced budget amendment and send it to the States. We can't endure this any longer, and we need to fix it. Americans want, need, and deserve to know we're going to live within our means just as they all live within their means.

PRESERVE MEDICARE AND SOCIAL SECURITY

(Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak in strong opposition to cuts in Medicare and Social Security.

In these last few days and the most important days that we face, I challenge the supercommittee to put politics aside and to work together to come up with a balanced, bipartisan deal that will strengthen and preserve our Nation's most successful health care and anti-poverty health programs.

Across-the-board cuts, which will result from the supercommittee's failure to work together, will do nothing more than increase health care costs to seniors and the disabled and weaken our already vulnerable economy.

I have received countless phone calls, stacks of letters, boxes of cards from concerned constituents all over north Texas who wait in fear to hear the fate of their economic future. I urge the supercommittee to reject any policies that will result in higher costs for our Nation's sick and elderly.

BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT

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

Ms. HAYWORTH. Mr. Speaker, last week a constituent from Washingtonville, New York, wrote this to me:

''I balance my family budget, so please explain to me why we don't have the will to balance the Federal budget? Pass a balanced budget amendment and future generations will be far better off. If not, we will have left them our errors.''

Another one of my constituents—his first name is Joseph—and Joseph, I want to assure you that I agree with you completely. These are my sons. This is my family. These are Will and Jack. Together, as our distinguished colleague from Texas just told us, they owe nearly $100,000 to the national debt as of today. They had no part at all in creating it.

Every dollar that the Federal Government spends has 40 cents in debt. That is unconscionable intergenerational theft. It must stop, and we must stop it this week. I urge all of our colleagues across the aisle to pass the balanced budget amendment.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will remind Members to direct their remarks to the Speaker and not to a perceived viewing audience.

□ 1210

A BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION

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

Mr. DONNELLY of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the balanced budget amendment to the Constitution.

The fact is for too long Washington has not made the necessary and tough decisions that need to be made to get our budget deficit under control. Working families in Indiana know all too

well the importance of balancing their budgets even when times are tight. Just as Hoosier families must make tough decisions about how to manage their budgets, so, too, must we in Congress make those tough choices about where to invest and what to cut.

I have always supported a balanced budget amendment because it is another important tool that can be used to help get our fiscal house in order. Having a balanced budget amendment in place is crucial to the country going beyond speaking about tough decisions and actually making them. I am aware this will not be easy and that tough decisions that affect many people will have to be made to match our revenues with our spending priorities. We have to live within our means.

We are facing significant fiscal challenges, and the American people expect us to come together on a bipartisan basis and to do something that will more effectively deal with them.

BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT

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

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, today we begin debate on H.J. Res. 2, the balanced budget amendment. This resolution is similar to the amendment that nearly passed the Congress over 15 years ago. I can only imagine how much improved our current fiscal situation would be today if the amendment would have passed then. In that time, we have seen the national debt increase from just over $5 trillion then to more than $15 trillion now.

This rapid rise in public debt endangers our currency and creates deep economic uncertainty. For some of that time, we had a balanced budget; and we did it with a government divided between the political parties. It was not easy to negotiate, but we made it happen. We need to get back to balanced budgets and go further to pay down our debt. A balanced budget amendment will require us to take that action.

We cannot endlessly pile up debt. That is a recipe for disaster, and we have to turn things around. To help us accomplish that, we need a constitutional amendment ratified by the American people.

H.R. 3346, THE EMERGENCY UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION EXTENSION ACT

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

Mr. COHEN. This past week, I joined with Congressman LLOYD DOGGETT and with many other Democratic colleagues to introduce the Emergency Unemployment Compensation Extension Act.

If Congress fails to pass this bill by the end of the year, Americans who have lost their jobs not by any fault of their own will begin losing their unemployment benefits in January. By mid-February, 2.1 million will have lost their benefits, and by the end of 2012, six million will have, which includes 34,600 Tennesseans.

Congress has never allowed emergency unemployment benefits to expire when the unemployment rate is anywhere close to where it is now—9 percent. This extension not only will help the unemployed, but it will also promote economic recovery.

The Congressional Budget Office has declared that unemployment benefits are ''both timely and cost-effective in spurring economic activity and employment.'' The Economic Policy Institute has estimated that preventing UI benefits from expiring could prevent the loss of over 500,000 jobs. They are timely, targeted and temporary—the best way to stimulate our economy. In addition, there are benefits for the States that are having problems with their unemployment insurance programs and with certain extensions there.

I urge the Republicans to join with us in passing this Emergency Unemployment Compensation Extension Act.

BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT

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

Mr. LAMBORN. Mr. Speaker, the big spending policies of the Obama administration have failed America. Millions of Americans have lost their homes, their jobs—and even their hopes for a brighter future. Our economy has stalled, and the American people are looking for solutions.

This week, the House will vote on a balanced budget amendment. It is an honest and bipartisan solution to the problem of overspending that threatens our economic recovery and prevents job creation. Forty-nine States, including Colorado, comply with a balanced budget amendment. Spending cuts, caps and promises, though helpful, are only temporary. A balanced budget is permanent.

When the Federal Government starts living within its means, the Nation's job creators will have the confidence to create more jobs. That certainty is essential to restoring our economy and putting Americans back to work. In an otherwise bleak economy, a balanced budget amendment is our brightest ray of hope.

OUR RIGHT TO VOTE IS UNDER ATTACK

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

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, our right to vote is under attack. Photo ID laws on the books in nearly a dozen States, including in my home State of Georgia and pending in 35, are most troubling.

Proponents say State-issued photo ID laws prevent voter fraud, but in-person voting fraud has not been a significant problem throughout the years. The problem was that too many people went to vote for President Obama. An estimated 21 million people do not have current government-issued photo IDs. The numbers are even higher for blacks and Hispanics and other minorities. The Texas legislature passed one of the worst laws whereby a concealed-weapon permit qualifies as a voter ID while a student ID does not. The Justice Department should vigorously challenge these voter ID laws.

Nothing is more fundamental, ladies and gentlemen, than our right to vote. We must reject any attempts to curb citizens in the exercise of their right.

SUPPORTING THE PASSAGE OF A BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT

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

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Speaker, today the House is scheduled to consider House Joint Resolution 2. This bill proposes a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution. I am a very proud cosponsor of this legislation.

Earlier this year, the Texas Legislature called on Congress to propose and submit to the States a balanced budget amendment. I am pleased that the House is taking the first step today to fulfill this request by Texas and other States. As a former city council member and mayor and State representative, I was always required to present a balanced budget.

We must act now before we further ruin the economic futures of our children and grandchildren. We cannot ignore our fiscal situation any longer. The Federal Government should balance its budget.

I strongly urge my colleagues to join me today in voting in favor of this resolution.

SUPPORT THE STOCK ACT

(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. Mr. Speaker, it has been 4 days since the CBS News program ''60 Minutes'' ran a troubling piece on insider trading in this very House. Mr. Speaker, you and I and our colleagues are the only people in this august body today who are exempt from insider trading rules.

How do we expect the public to take us seriously about anything we do when there is the belief that people here are enriching themselves from the knowledge they gain on the job? Even the perception of wrongdoing undermines the trust in the democracy.

The good news is that Ms. SLAUGHTER, myself, and now 55 of our colleagues have joined together to put an

end to this practice. The STOCK Act that I rise and encourage my colleagues to join us on would stop trading on congressional knowledge. It would put Congress on the same playing field of every teacher, firefighter, small business owner, and investor. Then we can get down to the business of making America right—by creating jobs. I encourage my colleagues to join me.

□ 1220

BREAK THE CYCLE OF RECKLESS SPENDING

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

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in favor of House Joint Resolution 2 and sending a balanced budget amendment to the United States Senate and to the States. Congress has nobly, yet unexpectedly, tried seven times to stop the increasingly massive growth in our national debt. At the first attempt in 1985, with the Gramm-Rudman-Hollings Act, our national debt was $2 trillion, or $8,700 for every American. Today our national debt is $15 trillion, $48,500 for every American, higher than it has ever been in American history. Our current spending environment has failed to create jobs and is threatening our standard of living and our national security.

While the Founding Fathers could not foresee a nation this stricken with debt, they did recognize the danger to our prosperity and instilled a constitutional process that gives us the flexibility to deal with this crisis. As Thomas Jefferson said: I place economy among the first and most important republican virtues, and public debt as the greatest of dangers to be feared.

Congress has a rare opportunity to break the cycle of reckless spending that has taken us to this current fiscal breaking point and ensure the fiscal financial stability and prosperity for our children and our grandchildren. I urge adoption of the resolution.

SANTA BARBARA COUNTY VETERAN TREATMENT COURT

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

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the opening of Santa Barbara County's first veteran treatment court. Last week our country came together to remember and pay respect to our veterans, and I was humbled and honored to participate in memorial services honoring our veterans, 50,000 of whom live on California's central coast. Their sacrifice is never forgotten, just as our work to support them is never finished. And that's why I support this new innovative and collaborative treatment court in my congressional district, which will better serve our veterans, especially those struggling with substance abuse, mental health issues, or other disorders. This veterans court fills a critical gap in care for our veterans by helping former servicemembers who are struggling and in pain.

Mr. Speaker, it's our duty to serve those who have served us so gallantly. Our veterans have sacrificed and shown their unquestioning commitment to this country; and veteran treatment courts, like the one in Santa Maria, provide another straightforward way for us to better serve them. So I urge my colleagues to join me in recognizing Santa Barbara County for taking this critical step in supporting our veterans by establishing this veteran treatment court.

THE BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT

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

Mr. PALAZZO. Mr. Speaker, every month Americans sit down at kitchen tables or computers to balance their checkbooks and bank accounts to ensure their spending doesn't overwhelm their way of living. I've been at that kitchen table for those discussions. Now the United States Congress is finally coming to the table to have a similar discussion with the American people.

By passing a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution, we tell the American people we are serious about putting our financial house in order. No longer will we overpromise and overspend at the expense of trillions of dollars and our children's future.

This week I will stand with my colleagues to support a notion that seems foreign within the beltway, that we cannot spend more than we take in. The fact that this is a radical concept in Washington, D.C., demonstrates just how out of touch this town has become and how far we have to go. But getting to where we need to be won't occur without the critical step we take this week to pass a balanced budget amendment. This action puts us in line towards economic recovery, sustainability, and, above all else, with the needs and priorities of the American people.

I urge my colleagues to support the balanced budget amendment.

WELCOMING ESPN TO HOUSTON

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

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to welcome ESPN's College GameDay to the campus of the University of Houston. This is the first time in the history of that show that the University of Houston and the city of Houston has been given this honor.

The University of Houston Cougars, led by Heisman hopeful Case Keenum, is the highlighted game, as the 10–0 Cougars face the SMU Mustangs this Saturday. The Cougars will push for an undefeated season and potential at-large BCS bowl opportunity.

The University of Houston has a long, storied tradition of athletic success, including 55 NCAA individual championships and 17 NCAA team titles, 19 college football bowl appearances, five NCAA men's basketball Final Fours, and a trip to the College World Series.

The University of Houston has received the Tier-One research university distinction from the Carnegie Foundation. The University of Houston is one of only three Carnegie-designated Tier-One public research universities in Texas.

The University of Houston is also known as a first-generation school, for many of the students are the first in their families to attend college. Our undergraduates choose from 120 majors and minors. The University of Houston also offers 139 master's, 54 doctoral, and three professional degree programs.

The University of Houston is the second most ethnically diverse major research university in the United States. Students come from as many as 137 nations and from across the Nation.

As a proud alumnus of the University of Houston, I salute the successes of the athletic and academic programs and welcome ESPN to our campus today.

JOBS FAIR

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

Mr. REICHERT. Mr. Speaker, we've heard some of the partisan comments this morning, and I think America is tired of that. America needs jobs now, and they're looking at us to work together.

There's been a lot of discussion and debate around job creation and economic recovery—rightly so. But I believe we all want to put America back to work, Democrats and Republicans together. We all want that. We must work together now to make that happen. Just because we have different ideas doesn't mean we can't work together.

ADAM SMITH and I, both from Washington State, in fact, next week will be putting together a jobs fair that we call Helping Identify Real Employment in America. We're going to do that together, a Democrat and a Republican. There will be 75-plus different vendors, different businesses who have jobs, actually have jobs waiting. We're going to match employees with employers, bring them together so they can find jobs. And our hope is that before Christmas, before Thanksgiving, ADAM SMITH and I can get some people back

to work and energize their families and help energize our community.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of us in this House to do the same—work together to identify jobs.

BIPARTISAN JOB FAIR IN WASHINGTON STATE

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

Mr. SMITH of Washington. I rise in support of a bipartisan effort to create jobs.

Just as Congressman REICHERT said, he and I are hosting a job fair next week. At a time when unemployment is over 9 percent in this country, when our economy desperately needs to put people back to work, I think this is the way we need to do it, in a bipartisan manner. At the end of the day, we're not going to have any job creation bills that aren't bipartisan because of the nature of Congress.

I applaud Congressman REICHERT for working with me on this idea, and it's really a very good idea in terms of job creation.

Yes, there's huge unemployment, but less well known is there are actually employers out there that have jobs that are trying to find people to fill them. Matching the skills necessary with those jobs is critical. And that's what the HIRE America job fair that we're going to do next week in Kent is all about—bringing in 75 employers that actually have jobs available, with unemployed people looking for work, to match them up, to try to put people to work to get this economy moving again. It's a great idea.

I thank Congressman REICHERT for working with me to do this. It's bipartisan. And it's focused on the number one most important issue this country faces, getting Americans back to work and getting our economy moving.

NATIONAL DEBT HITS $15 TRILLION

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

Mr. YODER. Mr. Speaker, yesterday was another landmark day in Washington's borrow-and-spend legacy. The national debt now stands at a staggering $15 trillion. This comes at a time when our economy is struggling, the unemployment rate is high, and Americans are tightening their belts and doing more with less. It remains clear that the Washington theory of borrowing and spending to create wealth and grow jobs simply is a fraud on the American people.

Both political parties know that this staggering debt is a cancer on the future of our Nation and something we can no longer ignore. I ask my colleagues to join together and save the future of this country, to stop the suffocating debt and spending. Let's pass a constitutional amendment that requires a balanced budget, that prohibits Congress from borrowing from the future, and let's pass a legacy of prosperity and wealth to the next generation.

INCOME TAX RETURN IDENTITY THEFT

(Ms. CASTOR of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. CASTOR of Florida. Mr. Speaker, there is a growing problem across America involving identity theft and tax fraud. This new kind of criminal will steal Social Security numbers and then file for a fraudulent tax return.

The City of Tampa Police Department recently uncovered a multi-million-dollar fraud scheme, lost moneys to the taxpayers. So Congressman RICH NUGENT and I, a Republican colleague from Florida, have been working together to tackle this problem.

I intend to file a bill this week that would, one, give local law enforcement the tools it needs to be an effective participant with the IRS in these tax fraud investigations. Right now Federal law doesn't allow local law enforcement to be an active participant. And, two, for folks that have their identities stolen, often months and months and months go by before the IRS is able to fix their return and their credit, and we've got to do that. It's leaving them hanging for months.

So I encourage my colleagues to join in our efforts to tackle tax fraud and this criminal enterprise.

□ 1230

LISTEN TO AMERICA'S JOB CREATORS

(Ms. FOXX asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, if the Obama administration is serious about helping create jobs for the American people, then it should start by listening to America's job creators. House Republicans understand the importance of freeing our Nation's businessmen and entrepreneurs from the confidence-killing threat of higher taxes and more regulations so that they can invest, grow, and hire again.

This means protecting job creators from needless tax burdens. This means reforming Federal spending. This means supporting a fairer, flatter and simpler Tax Code. This means stopping job-killing regulations that constrain employers from hiring more workers.

On each of these issues, House Republicans have already acted. Following our Plan for America's Job Creators, we've passed more than 20 job-creation bills so far this year.

The path to new jobs has been paved by House Republicans. It's long past time for Senate Democrats and President Obama to follow our lead and enact these jobs bills.

GETTING AMERICANS BACK TO WORK

(Ms. SLAUGHTER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, in the past few days, many Americans have contacted me through Facebook and Twitter with their thoughts, and their message was very clear: They want jobs, and they want them now. On behalf of these Americans, I urge the leaders of the House to respond by passing major legislation that will create high-paying jobs.

They write to me: ''I hope you mean living-wage jobs that are meaningful, filled with dignity, and generated locally.

''Job creation begins at home. Close the loopholes that send jobs overseas and make it tougher to bring the profits and products back here.

''An additional suggestion would be to fund a Works Program Administration modeled after the first one implemented by Franklin Roosevelt, a new deal for the new millennium.

''We need to stop the manufacturing drain going out of the country, revisit the WPA to jump-start the economy, and fix our aging infrastructure.

''Heck, we need someone to clean weeds out of sidewalks. We need an energy policy and concrete plans to accelerate the use of renewables. Too much of our fuel costs end up in our trade imbalance.''

These are the words from my constituents that I'm glad to share with you as we work very hard to get Americans back to work at meaningful jobs.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 2112, CONSOLIDATED AND FURTHER CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2012

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 467 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 467

Resolved, That upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider the conference report to accompany the bill (H.R. 2112) making appropriations for Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies programs for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2012, and for other purposes. All points of order against the conference report and against its consideration are waived. The conference report shall be considered as read. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the conference report to its adoption without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate; and (2) one motion to recommit if applicable.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman from North Carolina is recognized for 1 hour.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. SLAUGHTER), pending which I yield myself such time as I

may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from North Carolina?

There was no objection.

Ms. FOXX. House Resolution 467 is a closed rule providing for consideration of H.R. 2112, the Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, also known as the mini-bus.

Mr. Speaker, this conference report was approved by the conference committee on a wide bipartisan basis with all but one of 38 House and Senate conferees signing off on the report. The bill contains a continuing resolution to avoid a government shutdown and continue Federal operations until December 16, 2011, or until Congress completes the remaining nine FY 2012 appropriations bills. It is important to highlight that this CR is a clean extension and includes no new funding provisions.

In accordance with the Budget Control Act, this conference report upholds the overall discretionary spending level of $1.043 trillion and includes $2.3 billion in disaster relief funding, which falls under the disaster designation cap set by the act.

The Agriculture agencies and programs in this bill will receive a total of $136.6 billion in both discretionary and mandatory funding, a reduction of $4.6 billion from the President's request based on the administration's midsession review. Discretionary funding in the legislation totals $19.8 billion, a reduction of $350 billion below last year's level and a cut of $2.5 billion from the President's request.

It is important to note that mandatory food and nutrition programs within the Department of Agriculture—including SNAP, also known as food stamps, as well as child nutrition—are funded at $98.6 billion. This funding will allow all individuals and families who meet the programs' criteria for aid to receive all the benefits available to them, and includes $3 billion in reserve funds in case of unanticipated increases in participation or food price increases.

Additionally, school lunch and school breakfast programs will receive $18.2 billion in mandatory funding in the agreement. This funding will help low-income students with free or reduced-price meals at schools in every community in the Nation.

The conference agreement includes provisions to prevent overly burdensome and costly regulations and provide greater flexibility for local school districts to improve the nutritional quality of meals in the national school lunch and school breakfast programs. Without these provisions, the cost of these important programs would balloon by an additional $7 billion over the next 5 years, leaving States and local school districts in the lurch.

The WIC program is funded at $6.6 billion. This funding will provide supplemental foods, as well as nutritional and other preventative health services, to low-income participants.

I am pleased to report that the bill places restrictions on the implementation of a Grain Inspection and Packers and Stockyards Administration, GIPSA, proposed rule that would have allowed harmful government interference in the private market for livestock and poultry.

The Commerce, Justice, and Science section of the conference report includes a base total of $52.7 billion, a decrease of $583 million below last year's level, and a decrease of almost $5 billion below the President's request.

The conference agreement includes numerous provisions that protect the Second Amendment right to keep and bear arms. Three of these protections are made permanent law beginning in fiscal year 2012. These three provisions prohibit the Department of Justice from consolidating firearms sales records, electronically retrieving the records of former firearms dealers, and maintaining information on persons who have passed firearms background checks. The conference agreement also contains numerous 1-year firearms protections and new language prohibiting DOJ from requiring imported shotguns to meet a sporting purposes test.

The bill extends important provisions related to Guantanamo Bay, including a prohibition on the transfer or release of any detainee into the U.S. and a prohibition on the acquisition or construction of any new prison to house detainees. Under no circumstances should we endanger our communities by allowing some of the most dangerous people in the world to set foot on American soil.

The conference agreement includes important provisions to protect unborn human life, including a ban on abortion funding for Federal prisoners and a conscience protection for prison employees, and a prohibition on the Legal Services Corporation funds for organizations that engage in abortion-related litigation.

The Transportation, Housing and Urban Development section of the conference report includes a base total of $55.6 billion, representing a decrease of $19.4 billion below the President's request.

□ 1240

The conference agreement provides $500 million for National Infrastructure Investments, commonly referred to as the TIGER program, and includes language prioritizing rail, highway, and transit projects that improve or expand existing systems.

The conference agreement provides $39.9 billion for the Federal highway program, which is the annual spending level set by the latest Surface Transportation Extension Act.

The agreement provides $1.66 billion for the Federal Highway Administration's Emergency Relief program, which assists States in rebuilding Federal highways that were damaged by major natural disasters such as Hurricane Irene and the flooding of the Missouri River.

Included in the conference agreement is $12.5 billion for the FAA. The agreement provides $3.35 billion for airports and $2.7 billion for facilities and equipment. Language is included to restore the Block Aircraft Registry Request program, or BARR, and to prohibit future changes to the program. Also included is $878 million for FAA Next Generation funding to ease congestion and reduce air traffic delays.

The legislation includes a total of $37.3 billion for the Department of Housing and Urban Development, a decrease of $3.8 billion below last year's level and $4.7 billion below the President's request.

The bill does not extend the increased maximum loan limits for Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac. These entities have been under public scrutiny for their questionable business practices and use of billions in Federal bailout funds, some of which have been used for extravagant management bonuses. The bill does allow an increase in the conforming loan limits to the Federal Housing Authority, FHA, which is subject to greater congressional scrutiny and oversight.

Mr. Speaker, I am appreciative of the members of the conference committee and cognizant of the tough jobs they had to get to this bipartisan agreement coming to the floor for consideration. It is for this reason that I urge my colleagues to support the rule, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. I thank my colleague for yielding me the customary 30 minutes, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, this is a sad day for the House of Representatives—another demonstration that the House has failed to meet its basic responsibility to the American people. The new budget year began over 6 weeks ago, but not a single routine appropriations bill, not a single one, has been enacted. Instead, we are considering a massive $100 billion hodgepodge of unrelated programs and agencies all crammed into a single bill that no Member of the House saw before this week.

In fact, most of the provisions in this bill have never been considered by the House at any time in any form. Let me repeat that. A massive $100 billion bill, most of which has never been considered by the House, brought up for a single, all-or-nothing vote under a completely closed process. And what's worse, we will be back here in a few weeks with another massive omnibus bill to keep the rest of the government open. As I said, Mr. Speaker, this is a sad day for the House.

Fortunately, there is one hint of good news in this mess. The bill does

reject some of the absurd cuts proposed on the other side of the aisle. For example, the bill does not contain proposed cuts that would have denied 700,000 women, infants and children valuable nutritional supplements or defunded the COPS program.

But those welcome steps are not enough to make this a good bill. I am especially disturbed by the unwise and shortsighted cuts to programs important to America's role as a competitive global power. High-speed and intercity passenger rail, for example, gets no funding under this agreement. The bill allows the country to maintain Amtrak at its current state, but does nothing to help us keep pace with countries like China and Germany, who have already built a rail infrastructure that will expand their economies well into the 21st century. If our country hopes to remain a global superpower in the 21st century, we have to do more to invest in our country than the meager steps that we are taking today.

Especially in tough economic times like these, we need to rebuild our infrastructure, to be educating our children, and creating jobs for the millions of unemployed. Instead of the Band-Aid measure we are considering today, we have to truly begin to invest in our future and ensure that we not only survive, but that we thrive, in the century to come.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I just want to say to my colleague from New York that I think the American people are beginning to realize that government spends money; it doesn't invest money.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts, a member of the Committee on Rules, Mr. MCGOVERN.

Mr. MCGOVERN. I thank my ranking member for yielding to me.

Mr. Speaker, there are some good things in this minibus. I'm especially pleased with the funding levels for the SNAP and the WIC programs, which will ensure that hungry people have access to nutritious food during these tough economic times. And I regret very much that those programs were under attack by the Republican majority in this House, but in this minibus, those levels are adequate. And I'll likely support the final passage of this bill.

But, Mr. Speaker, for the life of me, I can't understand why policy riders were allowed to be included in the final bill. Some were even airdropped in the dark of night without being considered by either the House or the Senate. Most troubling, the underlying bill includes a special carve-out for Maine and Vermont to allow 100,000-pound trucks on their interstate highways for the next 20 years.

Mr. Speaker, current law allows only trucks up to 80,000 pounds to travel on interstates—and for good reason. Bigger, heavier trucks are an enormous safety threat. Oversized rigs are more likely to be involved in crashes, not to mention that it's unnerving to see one in your rearview mirror bearing down on you on the highway. And if the safety risks are not convincing enough as to why heavier trucks are a bad idea, consider the economic arguments. We're here talking about deficit reduction, and already bigger trucks don't pay their fair share for the damage they incur on our roads and our bridges. An 80,000-pound truck only pays 80 percent of its damage costs, and a 97,000-pound truck would pay only half of the damage it causes.

Our Nation's infrastructure is crumbling, and the highway trust fund is woefully underfunded. Where are we going to get this money to repair our infrastructure? And the Maine and the Vermont exemptions will only make this problem worse.

And it also starts us down a slippery slope of allowing other States to ask for special weight-limit exemptions. We'll end up with a patchwork of truck-size and truck-weight laws that will make the business of transporting goods by truck across State lines a confusing mess.

Mr. Speaker, there were no hearings—none, zero—no hearings held in the House on the Maine and Vermont exemption. The House didn't even consider a Transportation Appropriations bill. So to be making such a major policy change without thoughtful consideration and vigorous debate is absurd.

I would remind my colleagues that there's bipartisan opposition to increasing truck size and truck weight. I have a bill to freeze truck size and truck weight at 80,000 pounds across the entire national highway system, and it has 60 bipartisan cosponsors. The issue of increasing truck size and weight needs to be fully understood and debated before making any long-term policy changes. I strongly oppose the Maine and Vermont policy rider in this appropriations bill; and I regret very, very much that this was included without the appropriate hearings, without the appropriate oversight, and without doing it out in the open so people could understand what the policy implications are by making this exemption.

Ms. FOXX. I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Colorado, a member of the Committee on Rules, Mr. POLIS.

Mr. POLIS. I thank the gentlelady from New York.

Mr. Speaker, I have to voice my opposition to an insidious provision that has been added to this bill at the last minute by agribusiness and the frozen food industry, and that is a change that allows pizza to be counted as a vegetable. They started with French fries; now they've moved on to pizza. This language equates pizza with vegetables and weakens otherwise good school nutrition standards.

This false equivalency harkens back to the ludicrous labeling of ketchup as a vegetable made infamous 30 years ago by President Ronald Reagan. Again, this bill's actual language requires crediting of tomato paste—again, crediting of tomato paste from page 90 of this bill—as a vegetable under the school lunch program to be subsidized by taxpayers as a vegetable.

□ 1250

I had a family from my district, from Eagle County, Colorado, in my office earlier this morning and I asked the mom, I said, When your kid is eating, do you count pizza as his vegetable? And she said, No. And parents across the Nation agree.

Pizza can be incorporated into a healthy diet. I eat pizza. Most of my constituents eat pizza. But when we're talking about taxpayer subsidies for healthy vegetables, to make sure that they're available for kids on the side of pizza, making sure there's some broccoli, making sure there's some spinach, making sure there's something healthy for them to eat at the school lunch counter, pizza alone—particularly pizza with no vegetables on it, just tomato paste—it's common sense that it's not a vegetable. What's next? Are Twinkies going to be considered a vegetable?

Rather than having a deliberative effort, we have special interests inserting these provisions into these bills, contrary to the public health. And we wonder why Congress is so unpopular nationally. No one can help but to look at us and scratch their heads when we say that french fries count as a healthy, nutritious vegetable, that pizza counts as a healthy, nutritional element.

You know, poor children's health is something we all have a stake in. Not only are the kids and the families affected, but we're all affected. The costs of Medicaid and Medicare, government spending, rising obesity rates. The empty calories in french fries are not equal to truly nutritious vegetables like carrots, spinach, lettuce, broccoli, cucumbers.

I know it's hard to get kids to eat vegetables. I have a 9-week-old. He hasn't been weaned yet, so we haven't had to deal with that yet. But you know what? You don't define vegetables down. You don't call a Twinkie a vegetable. You don't call pizza a vegetable. What you do is you have to make sure that kids know how to incorporate healthy food into their diet so they can grow up strong and keep all of our costs down and make sure to keep America healthy.

Mr. Speaker, this bill has many important provisions, but I feel it's critical to highlight the ludicrous definition that Congress is giving by redefining nutrition down and providing taxpayer subsidies for unhealthy food in our schools.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Our colleagues across the aisle often try to distract from what are the real

issues facing our country and get into the weeds, and bills like this give them a perfect opportunity to do that. But when I'm home every weekend and talk to my constituents, what they're concerned about is they have incredible outrage with the inaction of the liberal Democrat-controlled Senate.

My constituents are aware of the many bills that the House has passed but which are stalled in the Senate, and many of these bills deal directly with promoting jobs, which remains the prevailing issue of so many Americans.

Our colleagues are upset about the quality of the free lunches that we provide. Well, we have more people in poverty and getting free lunches because the Democrat-controlled Senate refuses to work with the Republicans in the House to set an environment where more jobs can be created and fewer people would be dependent on food stamps and be dependent on getting free breakfast and free lunches in the schools.

My constituents understand the colossal failure of the Obama stimulus bill and the general policies that existed when the Democrats were in control of the House for 4 years. My constituents understand that government can create jobs only for more government bureaucrats. And those bureaucrats must justify their existence by creating more regulations that wind up killing more private sector jobs.

The liberal Democrat elites in Washington keep asking for one Republican jobs bill. Well, Mr. Speaker, we've passed at least 20 jobs bills that help the private sector—the only sector of our economy that can actually create real jobs through growth in their businesses.

The liberals keep buying into the false theory that government will create millions of jobs. The reality is that, unless we provide the private sector with an environment that is conducive to job creation, jobs will be very hard to come by.

Mr. Speaker, Republicans have been listening to our constituents, and we're acting to provide private business owners and entrepreneurs with the tools that they need to create jobs. However, the bills we pass and send over to the Senate just sit there and nothing is done with them.

Mr. Speaker, we could reduce the number of children, again, on free and reduced lunches by creating jobs and getting people out of poverty in this country. That's what we should be focused on right now. We could solve a lot of the problems in this country by doing that.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Ohio, a member of the Committee on Appropriations, Ms. KAPTUR.

Ms. KAPTUR. I thank the ranking member, Congresswoman SLAUGHTER, for her incredible work and rise today, Mr. Speaker, to support the rule for fiscal year 2012 appropriations for agriculture, transportation, training and justice. Technically—or maybe untechnically—this bill is called the ''mini-bus.'' I completely commend the conferees for including language based on legislation we introduced directing additional resources for the Federal Bureau of Investigation's White-Collar Crime Division for Wall Street financial crime prosecution.

Moreover, with the Federal deficit requiring our rigor, this mini bill makes difficult cuts, but also provides support for those most hurt by the current recession. Let me state for the record that the trillions of dollars of deficit being racked up in this country come from some pretty clear sources: first of all, two wars—the longest wars in American history, lasting over a decade now; also, the cost of unemployment to this economy caused by Wall Street malfeasance; and, finally, looking back, the tax cuts for the rich enacted during the last Bush administration that continue to rack up mounting deficits every year. It's very clear what's happening to cause the deficits. And then with the rising deficit, the cost of added interest is included in the debt total.

This bill meets the spending caps set in the Budget Control Act compromise and includes a clean continuing resolution to prevent a government shutdown, which would only further hurt our economy.

With over 15 percent of Americans living in poverty now, our moral responsibility as a Congress must be to help our fellow citizens weather this storm—which they didn't create. Thus this bill maintains funding for key programs, such as for food for needy children and poor women who are pregnant, for food commodities for food banks across this country that are strapped with rising need, and for food sustainment for the unemployed.

In particular, this bill includes language, based on legislation I authored, to allow the FBI to hire hundreds of new agents to fully investigate white-collar crime in the financial services sector. People across Ohio, from Toledo to Cleveland, are hurting because of the recklessness of Wall Street. Those who broke the law in order to get rich at the expense of everybody else should be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. I commend the conferees for including my language to help provide the FBI with the necessary resources to investigate those who are responsible.

I urge my colleagues to support the rule and the underlying bill, which is quite balanced despite the very difficult choices that they had to make.

Ms. FOXX. I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlelady from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. I thank the gentlelady from New York for her kindness in yielding. I thank the hard work of the Appropriations Committee. I thank the gentlelady from Virginia for managing. And I thank Mr. DICKS as well for accepting the challenge in these very difficult times.

It's not a happy time to come to the floor and indicate that this is what we have to do, but it's important to acknowledge some challenges that we still have. And those challenges are: the many food programs that have to be capped in spite of the numbers of people who are hungry in this country; the dumbing down of food resources, in particular, as my colleague from Colorado mentioned, listing tomato paste and french fries as vegetables; and then an issue that I hope that I will be able to continue to work on with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and that is food deserts, where there are pockets in rural and urban centers where we have no food access, good healthy food, vegetables.

But I am glad that the New Starts, under the transportation bill, includes the north and southeast lines for the city of Houston, creating jobs, putting people to work, and improving mobility, some $94,616,000.

□ 1300

I am also delighted that TIGER grants are in at $500 million, but disappointed in the community planning, that we have lost some $830 million for community block grants, $1.6 billion below the President. That's where we help rebuild communities and jobs.

The Legal Services Corporation that I've been a supporter of and actively was on our local board, board of directors, now has been reduced by $348 million; but it has been reduced, which creates what we call the justice gap.

I also am concerned about providing more developmental training for our law enforcement that covers our Federal sectors. In particular, I am concerned about the police in the Supreme Court and the Chief of Police there, and the concern for the lack of professionalism and the need for training.

I believe that in the Capitol Police scenario, there is an orderly process of the Chief, the Sergeant-at-Arms, and we work wonderfully together with these outstanding men and women. It's a shame for those who have to protect the other body of government, the Supreme Court, to have individuals who do not recognize IDs, are not professional in their handling of their business. And I will be raising this issue with the Department of Justice and relating it to the funding which I think is necessary to either provide them with more funding or to put more stringent guidelines in their hiring policies and the way they train people.

So I rise today to say that I am glad that we will have the government open, and that we have funded agriculture programs, not at the best; we've funded infrastructure. But we can do more. And I believe we should not adhere to any cuts going forward, and I hope the

supercommittee will not do that. I ask for support of the underlying bill.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I would advise my colleague from New York that I have no requests for time. I do have some more comments that I will make that I am reserving until a little bit later in the time.

I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. I am prepared to close.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New York.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, although I'm encouraged that we were able to reverse some of the most severe cuts proposed, I am disappointed that our budget process has come to this, $100 billion packed with provisions that the House has never considered. Therefore, on process, I urge a ''no'' vote on the rule.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, the rule before us today allows us to proceed to the general debate of a bill that encompasses three major appropriation measures. I want to thank the conferees for their work on this agreement.

As we move forward with the debate, we must keep in mind the dire fiscal situation that our country is in, and we must continue to work in a fiscally responsible manner.

With that, I urge my colleagues to vote for this rule. I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The previous question was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the resolution.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF MOTIONS TO SUSPEND THE RULES

Mr. NUGENT. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 466 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 466

Resolved, That it shall be in order at any time through the legislative day of November 18, 2011, for the Speaker to entertain motions that the House suspend the rules, as though under clause 1 of rule XV, relating to the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 2) proposing a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution of the United States. Debate on such a motion shall be extended to five hours.

SEC. 2. The Chair may postpone further consideration of a motion considered pursuant to this resolution to such time as may be designated by the Speaker.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Florida is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. NUGENT. Mr. Speaker, for purposes of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. HASTINGS) pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time is yielded for the purpose of debate only.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. NUGENT. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

There was no objection.

Mr. NUGENT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of this rule, House Resolution 466. The rule provides for consideration of what may be the very single most significant piece of legislation that I've had the opportunity to vote on since coming to this body over 10 months ago.

This rule is what allows the House of Representatives to move forward and vote on H.J. Res. 2, a balanced budget amendment to the United States Constitution.

My resolution that we're considering here today suspends the rules and allows the House to vote on H.J. Res. 2. I'm sure that some of my colleagues may be concerned we're moving to consider the balanced budget amendment under suspension of the rules for fear it would somehow limit debate.

I agree with them. Amending the United States Constitution is not to be taken lightly. This is why the rule provides for 5 hours of debate on this vital issue, because, you see, Mr. Speaker, what we're doing here today is something that should be discussed, something that must be discussed.

We're fundamentally challenging the way Washington works. And you know what? It's about time. It's about time we had real conversation about how our Nation spends its money. It's about time that we made the Federal Government budget the way I did when I was a sheriff of a county in Florida.

It's about time that we balance the Federal checkbook the way American families do every day. It's about time. That's what I think and, more importantly, that's what the majority of the American people think.

The mere fact that we're here today is a failure of leadership. For decades, Washington politicians have kicked the can down the road, choosing deficit spending over fiscal responsibility, choosing frivolous pork projects, wasteful programs, and easy answers over making tough decisions and cutting back. Republicans did it when they were in power, and Democrats did it when they were in power too. Nobody is blameless in getting us to where we are today.

But the days of finger-pointing are over. We don't have the luxury of time to look back and play the blame game. We need to move forward and find a solution to get us out of the hole that we're already in. A balanced budget amendment is a vital part of doing just that.

Yesterday, the United States surpassed $15 trillion in debt. Let me say that again: we're now $15 trillion in debt. While recognizing this sad landmark, I can't help but think about the fact that this didn't have to be the way it is.

In 1997, the House of Representatives passed a balanced budget amendment. Unfortunately, the Senate failed to pass this amendment by one vote. One vote, Mr. Speaker, one vote that would separate us from a road towards fiscal responsibility to where we are today. So here we go again, 14 years later, having the same debate.

I can't stand here today without thinking about my three sons. With a debt of $15 trillion, each of my boys owes over $48,000 in national debt. It means the children and grandchildren of each and every person in this room owes $48,000 to the Federal Government, $48,000 that they didn't spend, that they didn't ask for, and that they now are saddled with by a government of excesses.

Only one Senator stood between where we are now and $15 trillion in debt and where we could have been. So today I stand up in support of this rule and support H.J. Res. 2. I stand up for my kids, my future grandkids, and for all Americans who are saddled with that $48,000 in debt from the day that they're born.

□ 1310

I stand up for giving Congress a second chance, a chance to get it right this time. Unfortunately, I understand the Democratic leadership is whipping against this.

Mr. Speaker, I don't know how else to say this. This simply baffles me. Thanks to the whipping efforts of the Democratic leadership, there are Members in the House who voted for the balanced budget amendment in 1997 who now say they're going to oppose it. In fact, two members of the Democrats' three-person leadership team voted for the 1997 amendment.

I've only been here in D.C., like I said, for a little over 10 months, but of all of the inexplicable things I've seen since coming to Congress, this just stumps me more than just about anything else I've seen here. What could these Members have been seeing between 1997 and today that makes them say, Yeah, you know what? Spending is right on target. Let's just stick with the status quo. It's dumbfounding.

It's often said the definition of insanity is to do the same thing over and over and over again and expect a different outcome. I don't understand how anybody can argue that we can continue to spend the way we do and expect to free ourselves from this monstrous, burdensome debt. We need to break the cycle. We've got to hold Congress' feet to the fire now and into the future. A balanced budget amendment

is the change away from the status quo and back to sanity.

I don't think I can say it better than Congressman DEFAZIO said in his letter to his Democratic colleagues when he wrote that Democrats who walk away from sincere bipartisan effort will have let the American electorate down. If any of us walk away from this effort, we will have let all Americans down.

We've been working without a budget, this greatest Nation, for over 900 days now. Continuing resolutions and debt ceiling increases are not the answer. Supercommittees and sequestration is not the answer. Enough's enough.

Today we have a clear choice: whether you want to change the status quo or you don't; either you believe that the government must operate responsibly on a balanced budget or you don't; either you want to rescue our Nation, ourselves, our children, and our children's children from crippling debt or you don't.

I would like to close with the words of Ronald Reagan, who once said this: ''The congressional budget process is neither reliable nor credible. In short, it needs to be fixed. We desperately need the power of a constitutional amendment to help us balance our budget.''

Now, that is presidential leadership.

With that, I encourage my colleagues to vote ''yes'' on the rule, ''yes'' on the underlying legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend for yielding the time, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

What we have before us today should not be called the balanced budget amendment. What it should be called is the unbalanced budget amendment because that is what this bill is—unbalanced. It upends prudent fiscal policies, makes a mockery of congressional authority, and does nothing to address the economic struggles of millions of Americans.

This proposed amendment no more balances the budget than passing legislation to declare the tooth fairy as real. Saying it out loud doesn't make it true. What this proposal says, instead, is that Congress needs to enact legislation that balances the budget. It doesn't tell us how to do it, just what we must do.

Well, if we could do that, Mr. Speaker, we wouldn't need a constitutional amendment telling us to do it, would we? If Congress could enact legislation that balanced the budget, it could do that without a constitutional amendment requiring a balanced budget. Merely imposing a mandate within the Constitution does not mean that Congress will be able to fulfill it.

With this kind of circular reasoning, we could go back and forth until the next election and never have to spend one more minute on creating jobs to improve the economy. But that is exactly what my colleagues on the other side want.

They've been in the majority for nearly a year now in the House of Representatives and have failed to put forth any kind of plan to create jobs and improve the well-being of millions of Americans, unless you count reaffirming ''In God We Trust'' as the national motto, weakening the Environmental Protection Agency, or watering down gun safety laws.

I was here in 1995 when this body passed a balanced budget amendment. And let us not forget that under President Clinton and, yes, Speaker Newt Gingrich, we did manage to balance the Federal budget and leave a hefty surplus for President Bush. But then President Bush and the Republican Party squandered that surplus on two wars. And people should never forget that. They squandered it on tax cuts for the richest Americans, and they squandered it on unpaid-for prescription drug benefits, leaving a big old doughnut hole that we've been talking about ever since.

Now the Republicans in this body are so extremist that they refuse to consider any tax increases of any kind on even the best off of us in America. Instead, they're leaving it up to the struggling middle class and poor people to bear the burdens of the Republican Party's free-spending ways over the last decade. And I wish I had the time to really lay all of that out.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, the Republican Party's intransigence makes this amendment's voting requirements particularly unbalanced. This proposal requires a two-thirds vote, 290 votes here in the House, to pass an increase in the debt ceiling. Do you know what the definition of insanity is, as said by my friend? Repeating the same thing over and over again. And real crazy insanity is just doing it over and over and over and over again and expecting the same result. Or as Ronald Reagan put it, ''There you go again.''

The Republican majority wants to enshrine in the Constitution a permanent hostage crisis for our economy. This supermajority requirement for basic economic management will ensure that we will, on a regular basis, bring our economy to the brink of collapse. Just look at the Republican's performance over the debt ceiling vote. I don't have any confidence that they'll act rationally just because there's a constitutional amendment telling them to do so. That is why this proposal is unbalanced.

By mandating so many onerous, supermajority votes, this amendment guarantees permanent gridlock in the budgeting process. And without the inclusion of a general emergency waiver, this amendment imperils our national security. Let me repeat that. Without the inclusion of a general emergency waiver, this amendment imperils our national security by creating a scenario in which Congress cannot agree whether or not to vote on funding for national emergencies such as a military conflict.

Mr. Speaker, this unbalanced proposal does not even include a clear enforcement mechanism. I asked about that at the Rules Committee, and I got an answer that I still don't understand.

Making the balanced budget a constitutional requirement means that budget disputes would be solved by America's court system. This body has already failed to pass a balanced budget when the power of the purse is already our constitutional obligation. How can we be expected to pass one when each and every provision is also subject to years of litigation?

The Republican majority wants to hand off our constitutional obligations to the Federal courts that will have the power to raise revenue. No less an authority than Judge Robert Bork made a statement regarding that.

□ 1320

He opposed a balanced budget constitutional amendment, declaring ''the result would likely be hundreds, if not thousands, of lawsuits around the country, many of them on inconsistent theories and providing inconsistent results.''

Celebrated late-Professor Archibald Cox of Harvard Law School predicted ''there is a substantial chance, even a strong probability, that Federal courts all over the country would be drawn into its interpretation and enforcement.''

Since my friend used President Reagan, the former Solicitor General to President Reagan, Professor Charles Fried, has testified ''the amendment would surely precipitate us into subtle and intricate legal questions, and the litigation that would ensue would be gruesome, intrusive, and not at all edifying.''

The former Attorney General to President George H. W. Bush, William Barr, opined that judicial power could be invoked ''to address serious and clear-cut violations.''

The Republican majority wants to hand off our constitutional obligations to these courts that will then have the power to raise revenue, impose taxes, cut spending, and reform major government programs.

I guess, if that's the case, we can all just go home now, Mr. Speaker.

This body has previously considered balanced budget amendments on numerous occasions, initiated by both Democrats and Republicans. The majority party has always ensured sufficient floor time for debate and to allow the minority to offer alternatives; but here we are in a situation where the proposal before us was never marked up in committee, never had a hearing, and, in fact, was drafted late this past Thursday night by some mysterious tweaking of H.J. Res. 1 that became H.J. Res. 2. This version was changed in secret and was filed with last-minute surprises that fundamentally changed the nature of the legislation and will come under a procedure that doesn't even allow a motion to recommit.

This is no way to amend the Constitution.

By all means, Mr. Speaker, if we want to balance the budget, let's not do it on the backs of the hardest hit in America. I don't need a constitutional amendment to tell me that balancing the budget without raising taxes on those of us who are best off in this country is unbalanced.

Where Americans need the Federal Government to support the economy, Republicans are trying to strangle it. Where Americans need us to put politics aside, Republicans are bringing forward legislation written in secret. Where Americans need this Congress to focus on economic issues, Republicans are insisting that we vote on God and gays and guns. We don't need to be voting on God and gays and guns. What we need are some guts to tell the American people that, yes, we can do this and that we can't wait any longer for those who are waiting for us to create jobs.

Now the Republican majority wants to pass a constitutional amendment to tell us that we have to balance the budget every year in a way that no individual, State or local government or business does: no borrowing, no trust funds, no way to plan for long-term projects like highway construction, national defense, and public schools.

This amendment guarantees budgetary gridlock forever and moves budget decisions to the Federal courts, not to Congress. This proposed amendment locks into the Constitution the most far right of the Republican Party's policies, forcing future generations to reap the pain imposed by the callous disregard for the least among us—the ones who need the most help.

Mr. Speaker, as of yesterday, there were 273 national organizations that oppose H.J. Res. 2, the balanced budget amendment. It's too lengthy to place into the RECORD or to put forward, but some of them are among the most celebrated organizations in our country.

I also would recommend to the membership an article written by the American Constitution Society for Law and Policy, a nonpartisan group that discusses how unnecessary this particular provision is, and it ends with the following paragraph:

The threat a balanced budget amendment would pose to our constitutional order is unavoidable. Congress, of course, remains free to enact a balanced budget if it believes this is sound economic policy. It also remains fully equipped to institute effective controls to ensure restraint and balance in the budgeting process. Therefore, there is no sufficient reason to incur the dramatic risks that the balanced budget amendment would entail for our Constitution and our Nation.

This is not a balanced budget amendment, Mr. Speaker—but it is an unbalanced one.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. NUGENT. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from California, the chairman of the august Rules Committee, Mr. DREIER.

(Mr. DREIER asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I want to begin by expressing my appreciation to both of my friends from Florida who serve on the Rules Committee.

This is a very, very important debate. It's a debate that we haven't had since January of 1995, which is the last time that the House of Representatives had a vote on the issue of a balanced budget amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

Back in 1995, when we had just won our majority, Mr. Speaker, I was one of the enthusiastic supporters, one of the two-thirds of the House of Representatives who voted in favor of the constitutional amendment requiring a balanced budget. I felt very strongly at the time that as we looked at the fiscal challenges that we as a Nation faced that the only thing that we could do to achieve a balanced budget would be to have an amendment to the U.S. Constitution that would call for that.

Mr. Speaker, I have changed my mind. I have changed my mind, and I will be voting against the constitutional amendment calling for a balanced budget.

Now, this is not something that I have done lightly. My friend from Spring Hill was absolutely right when he said that looking at the tough challenge of amending the Constitution is something that needs to be addressed; but I will say that I agree with a number of the arguments that were put forward by my friend from Fort Lauderdale and with a lot of the arguments put forward by my friend from Spring Hill. At the end of the day, I concluded that we should not amend the U.S. Constitution in calling for a balanced budget.

I said I've changed my mind, and I am reminded of a statement that was made by our former colleague, the mentor of our friend JEB HENSARLING, who is working tirelessly to ensure that we get our fiscal house in order with the work of the Joint Select Committee. His mentor was Phil Gramm—a Democrat, then a Republican—who served in the House and the Senate. Phil Gramm once said that ours is one job where you can never admit to having learned anything.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that I've learned something, and I'd like to take just a few minutes to explain why it is that I've come to the conclusion that I have.

I said at the outset that I believed when I cast that vote in January of 1995 in favor of a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution that it was the only way that we would be able to achieve a balanced budget. I was wrong. Two short years later, we balanced the Federal budget. We balanced the Federal budget, and that went on for several years. It went on until 2001.

My friend was talking about the fact that we had two wars. We've got to remember that it took literally billions and billions of dollars to deal with national security issues, like establishing the Department of Homeland Security and many other things that were very, very costly; but what I found, Mr. Speaker, is that we were able to balance the Federal budget without touching that inspired document, the U.S. Constitution.

Now, James Madison in Federalist No. 58, I believe, gave the real description of the power that lies here in the House of Representatives. He said that the power over the purse is the most complete and effectual weapon that can empower any group of elected representatives of the people.

We in this institution, Mr. Speaker, have the power of the purse. We have the power of the purse, and we proved in the late 1990s that we have the will to balance the Federal budget without touching that inspired document, the U.S. Constitution. Those were the words of James Madison in Federalist No. 58, that the power over the purse is the most complete and effectual weapon that elected representatives have.

□ 1330

Now some people point to Thomas Jefferson who famously, in a letter to John Taylor written November 26, 1798, talked about how it was essential for us to have a single amendment to the Constitution that would call for a balanced budget. Well, I've got to say, Mr. Speaker, it appears that Thomas Jefferson obviously learned something as well, because 5 short years later, in the third year of the first term of his Presidency, he embarked on the largest deficit expenditure to take place since the Revolutionary War. It was not a war expenditure. It was not any kind of emergency expenditure. It was the 1803 Louisiana Purchase. And that was a decision that Thomas Jefferson made that most of us inferred led to a change in his position from the November 1798 letter that he wrote to John Taylor.

As we look at some of the other arguments—my friend from Fort Lauderdale went through the Fried, Barr, Archibald, Bork arguments on the court. I think it's important for us to look at not just that part of it, but we also need to look at the enumerated powers provision in the U.S. Constitution. I believe that not only could we create, as these brilliant jurists said, a real problem within the court structure, but what we create is a transfer of power from the first branch to the third branch of government, something that is completely contrary to Article I, section 7 of the U.S. Constitution, where the power lies right here in the United States House of Representatives. Why? Because most have said that if we were to get into these protracted legal battles, this could end up in the court, and we could have, several years from now, a court deliberating over a budget that had passed, again, literally years before.

So, as we look at these arguments, Mr. Speaker, I will tell you that I will take a backseat to no one when it comes to our commitment to get our fiscal house in order. I do happen to believe that our former colleague Jack Kemp was right when he said we shouldn't have to worship at the altar of a balanced budget; but we all know that with this $15 trillion figure that my friend from Spring Hill pointed to, we need to do everything we can to reduce that debt and our annual deficit. But it's important for us to focus on economic growth. And that's why I congratulate those on the Joint Select Committee who are working on that, and I believe that that's something that we need to do.

But having a balanced budget does not guarantee job creation and economic growth. Yes, of course having a degree of fiscal solvency goes a long way towards generating a climate that can make that happen; but we need to have pro-growth economic policies, and fiscal restraint is only one of those tools. That's why I believe that, as we look at the challenges that lie ahead, I don't want to say to the American people that I'm going to protect you from your future leaders that you are going to elect.

The American people deserve the Congress that they elect. I personally think they deserve better than some of what we have had here over the past several years. Right now we all know we've got a 9 percent approval rating. But the American people cannot have Representatives who say, We are going to say to you that you can't have the leaders that you elect do what you think is right. Maybe there is another Louisiana Purchase out there, and that decision is something that should be made by leaders.

I believe in very carefully amending the Constitution. And I will say that I have always been troubled by some who argue that the level of your commitment to a public policy issue is based only on your willingness to amend the Constitution to implement it. Well, I think that's silly. I think that's ridiculous. I think that someone can be passionately committed to an issue like saying we shouldn't burn the American flag and yet be willing to say it shouldn't be enshrined in the U.S. Constitution. I feel the same way about the issue of a balanced budget.

I'm proud to have voted to bring about these kinds of spending cuts. I'm proud to have done everything possible to try to reduce the size and scope and reach of the Federal Government. I do think that a lot of work has to be done. And my friend from Spring Hill, again, correctly pointed to the fact that both sides have responsibility for increases in spending. But I think we can come together. I think we can have the will to do this.

Even if we pass a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution, we all know very well we're not going to balance the budget overnight with a $15 trillion debt and now multitrillion-dollar deficits. We're not going to do it overnight. But we have to get ourselves on that road, and I'm convinced that we can. And I don't think that amending the Constitution is going to do anything to help us get there.

So I do support the rule, and I think the rule—by the way, I should say to my friend—is one that was used when the Equal Rights Amendment passed the House of Representatives. The argument was made that somehow having this done under suspension of the rules is not fair. There's going to be 5 hours of debate. There's going to be an opportunity to do this.

I've had the opportunity to say my peace. I know that I'm in the minority in my party. I know that there's not a lot of enthusiastic support on my side. I know that there are many Democrats who are going to be supporting the amendment to this. So we are going to have a chance to discuss these as we move through today and tomorrow.

I do support the rule and the work of the Rules Committee. We've worked long and hard on this. But at the end of the day, I have come to the conclusion that I have.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend for yielding.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I wish to compliment the chairman of the Rules Committee.

Mr. DREIER. Will the gentleman yield?

I don't want to get into any more trouble than I already have. So if the gentleman could withdraw his compliment, I would be very appreciative of that, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. I am delighted to withdraw the compliment.

What I wanted you to be able to do, since you had become so enlightened about the balanced budget amendment, was to be equally enlightened with reference to the rules and allow us a motion to recommit.

Mr. Speaker, if we defeat the previous question, I am going to offer an amendment to the rule to provide that immediately after the House adopts this rule, it will bring up H.R. 639, the Currency Reform for Fair Trade Act, which will help create jobs in the United States by making American-manufactured products more attractive to Chinese consumers.

At this time, I am pleased to yield 3 minutes to my good friend from the State of Washington (Mr. MCDERMOTT).

(Mr. MCDERMOTT asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MCDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, today we have another triumph for the Republican public relations office. Their job is to hide the fact that the select committee of 12 isn't going to get anything done and their members are going home for Thanksgiving. But what will they talk about? A failure? No. They want to give them something. So this balanced budget amendment—that's why we're out here debating a rule on a job-destroying, poorly thought-out amendment to the Constitution. This House is considering an amendment to the Constitution that did not go through the regular order, is not even the product of any committee debate. It has not been an open and thoughtful process.

Mr. Speaker, the job of this Congress at this time should be creating jobs. For 11 months, the Republicans have talked about it but have done nothing. Now, instead of wasting the people's time with this doomed and irresponsible constitutional amendment, we should deal with this country's serious economic concerns, one of which is the Chinese currency manipulation and how it hurts American businesses and our workers. It's time for this House to vote on the Currency Reform for Fair Trade Act.

The Speaker needs to stop standing in the way of this important legislation. We've been discussing this issue with the Government of China for more than 8 years. American manufacturers should not be forced to compete against a 28 percent discount on imports from China, all because of China's predatory currency practices. This legislation will help to provide meaningful relief to U.S. companies and our workers who are injured by the currency manipulation of China.

This is a bipartisan measure. The China currency bill passed the House last year with a strong majority of Republicans. The majority of the House has cosponsored this bill, including 62 Republicans, and we can't get it up.

□ 1340

The Senate has already passed a similar bill with a strong bipartisan vote. The Speaker is the one who has his foot on it because he's got his foot on the Rules Committee, and they won't bring it out.

American workers expect every one of us on both sides of this aisle to fight against China's predatory trade policies and to fight for American workers. We should be fighting for the American economy rather than pandering to the Republican base with this terrible attempt to use the Constitution as a partisan playground and a way to hide from the American people that we're not doing what they sent us here to do, which was to create jobs.

Mr. NUGENT. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT), a Rules Committee member.

Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina. Let me first thank Sheriff NUGENT from Florida. Sheriff, you're doing a fantastic job with this rule, and I thank you for leading this important debate.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask a simple question of my friends who oppose the whole concept of a balanced budget amendment: What makes us, the Federal Government, any different than the State and local governments

who have to abide under a simple balanced budget concept? But more importantly, what makes us any different than the 74 percent of Americans in a CNN poll who simply say a balanced budget amendment is in the best interests of the citizens of this country?

Simply put, Washington needs to stop this runaway train of spending. So often, too often even, it seems that this town has lost sight of the fact that taxpayer dollars don't just appear from some magical piggy bank but rather are paid by hardworking American families. We have a duty to spend these dollars wisely. And, unfortunately, in this town that simply doesn't happen very often at all. The last 3 years, not the last 30 years, not the last three decades, but the last 3 years we have seen the largest increase in the debt of this Nation, in the history of this Nation, and it is very clear that a constitutional amendment is the strongest option we have today to ensure that this doesn't happen again.

How can we expect to create a proper environment for job creation when we can't even keep the Federal Government's checkbook in balance? How does the current administration think we can continue to force small businesses to completely revamp their budgets under an onslaught of burdensome regulations while Washington does not have to do the same thing?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. NUGENT. I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina. It simply doesn't make sense. We should get this work done. We should get this fixed today. I will say as part of the majority-making class of 2010, with 86 out of the 87 freshmen on the Republican side supporting some form of the balanced budget amendment, we should move forward now. The American people demand it, and they should get it.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, my friend on the Rules Committee, the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN), I'm sure has views that are similar to mine. I yield to him 3½ minutes at this time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, my friends on the other side of the aisle claim to be about fiscal prudence; that they are here to get our fiscal house in order; that a balanced budget amendment is the only way to do so. Once again, Mr. Speaker, my friends on the other side of the aisle are wrong. The right way to balance the Nation's budget is by making good, solid, smart policy, something the Republicans have proven to be incapable of over the past decade.

President Bush was handed a gift by President Bill Clinton. He was given a budget surplus. And instead of crafting a smart, long-term fiscal plan, he blew it in a couple of big spending sprees in the first few months of his term, with a lot of help from congressional Republicans. Let me be as clear as I can be. You don't squander a surplus on tax cuts for the rich, and you don't put two wars on your credit card. You certainly don't do those two things at the same time. But that's exactly what the Republicans did, and they drove this economy into a ditch with unpaid tax cuts and unpaid wars. And now they want to amend the Constitution with a balanced budget amendment. You've got to be kidding.

What's worse, the Republican leadership has decided to break their transparency pledge. Not only are they thumbing their nose at their own rules, they are actually bringing a bill to the floor that has never been read, amended, or voted on in a committee. That's right, Mr. Speaker. Despite all of their rhetoric, this balanced budget amendment was never marked up in committee. And, even worse, it was changed without a vote before it came to the Rules Committee. Even though there has been no official consideration of this specific bill by the Judiciary Committee, something this new Republican Congress promised to do, the sponsor of this bill had the audacity to say that this bill and the changes made in the dark of night were supported by the committee.

And if this process weren't bad enough, these changes actually allow war funds to be exempt from the balanced budget amendment. These wars have gone on too long, and they should be paid for. They should have been paid for from day one. That's a mistake we should learn from instead of repeating. We have already spent $1.3 trillion on the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. That's $1.3 trillion that's unpaid for, $1.3 trillion on our grandchildren's credit cards.

Mr. Speaker, I oppose these wars. I want them to end now. But if you support them, the least you can do is pay for them. And yet the Republicans are repeating their same mistakes. And I shouldn't be surprised. This is the party that decries government spending, but turns to FEMA with outstretched hands in times of need. This is the party that says the Recovery Act doesn't work, but shows up at ribbon cuttings for projects paid for by the Recovery Act. And now this is the party that says we should balance the budget, but we shouldn't pay for the wars that increase our debt.

Mr. Speaker, the fiscal hypocrisy takes my breath away. This is a bad bill being brought up under a bad process. Vote ''no'' on the rule and vote ''no'' on the bill.

Mr. NUGENT. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Michigan, the ranking member of the Committee on Ways and Means, Mr. LEVIN.

(Mr. LEVIN asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. HASTINGS has indicated that if we vote down the previous question, we will bring up H.R. 639.

It's a fact that China's currency manipulation is hurting U.S. businesses and workers. According to a recent study, imports from China account for 25 to 50 percent of the manufacturing jobs we have lost over the past decade. That's 1 million to 2 million jobs, and our trade deficit with China continues to grow.

An important factor in this picture is currency manipulation. American manufacturers are forced to compete against an estimated 25 percent discount on imports from China due to that manipulation. That's on top of China's massive subsidies and other policies.

Dr. Fred Bergsten, who heads the Peterson Institute, says that elimination of China's undervalued currency would create a million jobs mainly in manufacturing, and that manipulation is by far the largest protectionist measure adopted by any country since the Second World War—and probably in all history.

Meanwhile, the Chinese government is pushing production of high-end manufacturing products that compete head on with American products—high-tech products, solar panels, wind turbines, automobiles, aircraft, and others.

This is a bipartisan measure. A majority of the House, 230 Members, have cosponsored the bill, including 62 Republicans. The time has come for action. Eight years of talk have yielded meager results. American workers and businesses cannot wait any longer, and the U.S. economy cannot wait any longer. The time is now for action.

Defeat the previous question.

Mr. NUGENT. I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, would you be kind enough to tell me how much time remains on each side?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Florida (Mr. HASTINGS) has 9 minutes remaining. The gentleman from Florida (Mr. NUGENT) also has 9 minutes remaining.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

I am very pleased to yield 2 minutes to my good friend, the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR).

□ 1350

Ms. KAPTUR. I thank my able colleague from Florida, Congressman HASTINGS, for yielding and rise in support of Congressman CRITZ's effort here to focus attention on this whole issue of Chinese currency manipulation. When Congress passed permanent most-favored-nation status with China over my objection, we were told by supporters of the agreement that trade with China would create jobs, more economic opportunity and trade surpluses for our country. Well, if you look at the numbers, you'll see since that was passed what's happened is we've got more and more and more and more trade deficits every year, totaling in 2010 over $273 billion. With Chinese

currency manipulation, that's almost an inflated number because it would be cut in half, it would be cut substantially if goods were marked to their true value, not their inflated value.

China has never opened up its market. That's why we get these huge trade deficits. And they aggressively use government intervention through currency manipulation to rig the markets. We know they're the largest intellectual property thief, they counterfeit their goods, and they use industrial policy to promote and protect Chinese industries at the expense of American jobs and factories. Some call these tactics market Leninism because we see state-managed capitalism in China locking down on industry after industry.

Regions like the one I represent in northern Ohio have been especially hard-hit as production shifted from the coasts of the Great Lakes to the shores of China. We can see this draining of wealth from the United States. Last year, our trade deficit again was over a half-trillion dollars globally, and with China, they had over half of that trade deficit.

If you look at the trade data, we're on track to send at least as many jobs to China this year. You can see the jobs being shipped to China in every community in this country. Even scrap metal is being sent over there, for heaven's sake.

Economists tell us that every trillion dollars in trade deficit translates into 14,000 lost American jobs. If we could get the currency manipulation issue solved, we could bring some of those jobs back to this country.

It's time for China to play on a level playing field.

Mr. NUGENT. Mr. Speaker, I just want to make sure that everybody that may be watching this at home understands we are talking about a balanced budget amendment.

I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. I would have my friend to know that we also are talking about the previous question, for which at this time I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. CRITZ).

Mr. CRITZ. I thank the gentleman from Florida for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I had prepared remarks that I was going to talk about to defeat this previous question so that we could bring the Chinese currency manipulation bill to the floor. But we've been talking about this on a weekly basis. We've been talking about this on the floor of the House on a weekly basis. And I think back to 10 months ago when Speaker BOEHNER made the statement that the House works best when it's allowed to work its will.

This same bill passed the House last year overwhelmingly. A similar bill passed the Senate earlier this year overwhelmingly. This bill has broad bipartisan support. Sixty-two Republicans are cosponsors of this bill. Four months ago, I brought a discharge petition, which is now just 30 signatures shy of forcing this bill to the floor. It needs Republican help. I'm imploring the Speaker to bring this bill to the floor of the House.

This is so important. As Congressman LEVIN said earlier, we're talking about jobs. I did a telephone town hall last evening. The topic of discussion was jobs. Everyone wants to know when are we going to put our heads together and work to get this country back to work? Milling jobs. Manufacturing jobs. This is an issue that everyone knows about and everyone can agree on. We just want to level the playing field. This is giving this country the teeth it needs to go after countries such as China that manipulate their currency and hurt American manufacturing companies.

This is about locking arms with the American public and moving forward. So I urge those Republicans, those 62 that are on H.R. 639, anyone can see those names, anyone can call and say, you need to support this bill. You need to support the discharge petition, get on it, let's talk about this. You can't hide behind the Speaker any longer. We're going to continue this fight day in and day out, week in and week out. I urge defeat of the previous question so that we can talk about jobs for the American people.

Mr. NUGENT. I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to yield 2 minutes to my good friend from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. I thank the distinguished gentleman from Florida.

Mr. Speaker, the underlying resolution has to do with a balanced budget amendment, which most Americans might say ''yea'' to, but this is a deja vu because we debated this so many years ago, and it was found that a balanced budget amendment for the Federal Government will not work with all of the restraints and necessities of serving the American people.

But Mr. CRITZ's bill and the idea of correcting the currency manipulation of China will work. It will create jobs. The World Trade Organization cannot help. All the negotiations with China will not help. I would love for them to stand up and be counted in the world family so that we can continue to churn the economy, which all of us would benefit from. But as the euro crumbles and possibly the dollar will step in—I opposed the euro many years ago—we've got to get a currency that responds to all of us. Decent pay for a decent day's work—that does not happen when you have a manipulation of product cost so that some products are so much cheaper than the ones made by Americans.

We are not envious, and we are not jealous, but this resolution or Mr. CRITZ's bipartisan effort can move forward if we vote ''no'' on the previous question, and then we can begin to help create jobs. And we might say to the supercommittee that we thank you for your service, but we can go into 2012 deliberatively and thoughtfully looking at a plan that raises revenue and cuts the areas that do not leave the vulnerable along the highway of despair.

I support Mr. CRITZ's effort. I want to move beyond the supercommittee and fund this government and create jobs in the way that the people elected us to do.

Mr. NUGENT. I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I would advise my friend from Florida that I am going to be the last speaker, and if he is ready to close, I will go forward doing same.

Mr. NUGENT. Yes.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. Speaker, this unbalanced amendment does not belong in our Constitution. It enshrines far-right ideology and makes a mockery of congressional authority to set forth the Nation's fiscal policy. This hardly belongs in the same company as freedom of speech, the abolition of slavery, and a woman's right to vote. This proposal does not balance the budget; it only demands that Congress do so, and yet it does not provide a mechanism to enforce that rule.

So in a situation of partisan gridlock, the Federal budget might very well end up in the courts. This is no way to govern. If this Congress could balance the budget, we wouldn't need a constitutional amendment to tell us to do so. But the fact remains that the Republican majority has steadfastly failed to set forth legislation that will create jobs and grow this economy.

Given their inflexibility, a balanced budget constitutional amendment hardly seems like the magic wand Republicans claim it will be. This Congress needs to be serious about the real causes of economic hardship in this country. Focusing on God, gays, and guns and not having the guts to tell people we're not doing anything to create jobs, that isn't going to keep people in their homes, and it isn't going to help Americans obtain quality health care and education.

These are the critical issues facing our Nation. Wasting our time—and that's exactly what this is, it's going nowhere fast—wasting our time with political gimmicks like an unbalanced constitutional amendment is just that, wasting our time.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to insert the text of my amendment to the rule in the RECORD along with extraneous material immediately prior to the vote on the previous question.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

There was no objection.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote ''no'' and defeat the previous question so we can debate and pass real jobs legislation today, not little old stuff that is appealing to the right wing of the people who are pushing nothing more than symbolism and talking about it being in our United States Constitution. I urge a ''no'' vote on the rule, and I yield back the balance of my time.

□ 1400

Mr. NUGENT. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my good friend from Florida for a lively debate. The issue, though, that has sort of gotten muddled is about a balanced budget amendment, not about anything else that you've heard about on the floor. It is about a balanced budget amendment.

But just to remind everybody, when we talk about jobs, we've passed over 21 jobs bills that are currently sitting idle in the Senate. So I don't know what else you can do, except it gets kind of frustrating that we send great pieces of legislation over to the Senate and nothing happens.

We've heard a lot of debate here about a balanced budget amendment, pros and cons. You're going to hear 5 hours of debate in the very near future about the pros and cons of a balanced budget amendment.

This Congress has done things that are amazing. We used emergency funding to fund the census. Now, I know the census probably snuck up on everybody around here, but I don't understand why you had to use emergency funding to do that.

You know, we talk about the Clinton years. We talk about budget surpluses and how quickly they disappeared. But remember one thing: Part of the Clinton surpluses also hollowed out our force, which required us to put our servicemen and -women at risk for way too long. Some of them weren't allowed to retire through stop-loss, and others had to serve 15 months in combat positions because we had hollowed out our force.

Patrick Henry once said the Constitution is not an instrument for the government to restrain the people; it's an instrument for the people to restrain the government. Today we start building upon those restraints. A balanced budget amendment is more of an instrument to check bloated government, a government that wants to be everything to everyone.

Today we're borrowing 40 cents on every dollar we spend. We're writing checks that we can't cash, hoping future generations will be able to figure out how to get out of this mess on their own. This spending is just unsustainable.

I wasn't happy with the Budget Control Act, but I voted for it simply so we could vote today on a rule to allow us to vote on a balanced budget later this week so we can fundamentally change where we're going.

After 10 months in Congress, I'm convinced that there are not enough people in Washington with the determination, the dedication, nor the fortitude to make the tough decisions for the good of this country. The Constitution has saved us in the past, and it can save us in the future. A balanced budget amendment would give Americans a reason to believe that more efficiently and effectively than any other proposal I've heard of.

One of the things I hear consistently back home is that you all have made decisions in Congress that have put us so far into debt. Our unborn children are facing a debt of $48,000 for every child who's born this year. How can we stand up and look at people and say this Congress can fix it on its own? How can we look people in the eye and say, You know what. Just give us another chance; we've done so well over the last 30 years.

I don't believe that the American people believe that we can do that, and I think that's why they're asking for fundamental changes. I think it's why they're asking us to step forward and do the right thing, Mr. Speaker, not kick the can down the road anymore.

I have the utmost respect for our chairman and for my good friend from Florida (Mr. HASTINGS), but I adamantly disagree. I think that we've had a change in government because there's a necessary need for a change in government. I think that you can't continue to do the status quo, because if we do, we're just going to wind up $15 trillion in debt today, $20 trillion in debt 2 years from now. When does it end, Mr. Speaker?

So I encourage my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support this strongly bipartisan legislation.

The material previously referred to by Mr. HASTINGS of Florida is as follows:

AN AMENDMENT TO H. RES. 466 OFFERED BY MR. HASTINGS OF FLORIDA

At the end of the resolution, add the following new sections:

SEC. 3. Immediately upon adoption of this resolution the Speaker shall, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 639) to amend title VII of the Tariff Act of 1930 to clarify that countervailing duties may be imposed to address subsidies relating to a fundamentally undervalued currency of any foreign country. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Ways and Means. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions. If the Committee of the Whole rises and reports that it has come to no resolution on the bill, then on the next legislative day the House shall, immediately after the third daily order of business under clause 1 of rule XIV, resolve into the Committee of the Whole for further consideration of the bill.

SEC. 4. Clause 1(c) of rule XIX shall not apply to the consideration of the bill specified in section 3 of this resolution.

(The information contained herein was provided by the Republican Minority on multiple occasions throughout the 110th and 111th Congresses.)

THE VOTE ON THE PREVIOUS QUESTION: WHAT IT REALLY MEANS

This vote, the vote on whether to order the previous question on a special rule, is not merely a procedural vote. A vote against ordering the previous question is a vote against the Republican majority agenda and a vote to allow the opposition, at least for the moment, to offer an alternative plan. It is a vote about what the House should be debating.

Mr. Clarence Cannon's Precedents of the House of Representatives (VI, 308–311), describes the vote on the previous question on the rule as ''a motion to direct or control the consideration of the subject before the House being made by the Member in charge.'' To defeat the previous question is to give the opposition a chance to decide the subject before the House. Cannon cites the Speaker's ruling of January 13, 1920, to the effect that ''the refusal of the House to sustain the demand for the previous question passes the control of the resolution to the opposition'' in order to offer an amendment. On March 15, 1909, a member of the majority party offered a rule resolution. The House defeated the previous question and a member of the opposition rose to a parliamentary inquiry, asking who was entitled to recognition. Speaker Joseph G. Cannon (R–Illinois) said: ''The previous question having been refused, the gentleman from New York, Mr. Fitzgerald, who had asked the gentleman to yield to him for an amendment, is entitled to the first recognition.''

Because the vote today may look bad for the Republican majority they will say ''the vote on the previous question is simply a vote on whether to proceed to an immediate vote on adopting the resolution . . . [and] has no substantive legislative or policy implications whatsoever.'' But that is not what they have always said. Listen to the Republican Leadership Manual on the Legislative Process in the United States House of Representatives, (6th edition, page 135). Here's how the Republicans describe the previous question vote in their own manual: ''Although it is generally not possible to amend the rule because the majority Member controlling the time will not yield for the purpose of offering an amendment, the same result may be achieved by voting down the previous question on the rule. . . . When the motion for the previous question is defeated, control of the time passes to the Member who led the opposition to ordering the previous question. That Member, because he then controls the time, may offer an amendment to the rule, or yield for the purpose of amendment.''

In Deschler's Procedure in the U.S. House of Representatives, the subchapter titled ''Amending Special Rules'' states: ''a refusal to order the previous question on such a rule [a special rule reported from the Committee

on Rules] opens the resolution to amendment and further debate.'' (Chapter 21, section 21.2) Section 21.3 continues: ''Upon rejection of the motion for the previous question on a resolution reported from the Committee on Rules, control shifts to the Member leading the opposition to the previous question, who may offer a proper amendment or motion and who controls the time for debate thereon.''

Clearly, the vote on the previous question on a rule does have substantive policy implications. It is one of the only available tools for those who oppose the Republican majority's agenda and allows those with alternative views the opportunity to offer an alternative plan.

Mr. NUGENT. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DOLD). The question is on ordering the previous question.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 and clause 9 of rule XX, this 15-minute vote on ordering the previous question will be followed by 5-minute votes on the adoption of House Resolution 466, if ordered, and adoption of House Resolution 467.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 243, nays 173, not voting 17, as follows:

[Roll No. 854]

YEAS—243

Adams
Aderholt
Akin
Alexander
Altmire
Amash
Amodei
Austria
Bachus
Barletta
Barrow
Bartlett
Barton (TX)
Bass (NH)
Benishek
Berg
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Bonner
Bono Mack
Boren
Boswell
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brooks
Broun (GA)
Buchanan
Bucshon
Buerkle
Burgess
Burton (IN)
Calvert
Camp
Campbell
Canseco
Cantor
Capito
Cardoza
Carter
Cassidy
Chabot
Chaffetz
Chandler
Coble
Coffman (CO)
Cole
Conaway
Costa
Cravaack
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Davis (KY)
Denham
Dent
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Dold
Dreier
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers
Emerson
Farenthold
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Flake
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
Gerlach
Gibbs
Gibson
Gingrey (GA)
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (MO)
Griffin (AR)
Griffith (VA)
Grimm
Guinta
Guthrie
Gutierrez
Hall
Hanna
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings (WA)
Hayworth
Heck
Hensarling
Herger
Herrera Beutler
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurt
Issa
Jenkins
Johnson (IL)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jones
Jordan
Kelly
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kinzinger (IL)
Kissell
Kline
Labrador
Lamborn
Lance
Landry
Lankford
Latham
LaTourette
Latta
Lewis (CA)
LoBiondo
Long
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
Lungren, Daniel E.
Mack
Marchant
Marino
Matheson
McCarthy (CA)
McCaul
McClintock
McCotter
McHenry
McKeon
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
Meehan
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller, Gary
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Myrick
Neugebauer
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Nunnelee
Olson
Palazzo
Paulsen
Pearce
Pence
Peterson
Petri
Pitts
Platts
Poe (TX)
Pompeo
Posey
Price (GA)
Quayle
Reed
Rehberg
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rigell
Rivera
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rooney
Ros-Lehtinen
Ross (AR)
Ross (FL)
Royce
Runyan
Ryan (WI)
Scalise
Schilling
Schmidt
Schock
Schweikert
Scott (SC)
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shuler
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Southerland
Stearns
Stivers
Stutzman
Sullivan
Terry
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Turner (NY)
Turner (OH)
Upton
Walberg
Walden
Walsh (IL)
Webster
West
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Wolf
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Young (AK)
Young (FL)
Young (IN)

NAYS—173

Ackerman
Andrews
Baca
Baldwin
Bass (CA)
Becerra
Berkley
Berman
Bishop (NY)
Blumenauer
Brady (PA)
Braley (IA)
Brown (FL)
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Carnahan
Carney
Carson (IN)
Castor (FL)
Chu
Cicilline
Clarke (MI)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly (VA)
Cooper
Costello
Critz
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
DeFazio
DeGette
DeLauro
Deutch
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Donnelly (IN)
Doyle
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Farr
Fattah
Filner
Frank (MA)
Fudge
Garamendi
Gonzalez
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Hahn
Hanabusa
Hastings (FL)
Heinrich
Higgins
Himes
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hochul
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hoyer
Inslee
Israel
Jackson (IL)
Jackson Lee (TX)
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kildee
Kind
Kucinich
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lee (CA)
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren, Zoe
Lowey
Luján
Lynch
Maloney
Markey
Matsui
McCarthy (NY)
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McIntyre
McNerney
Meeks
Michaud
Miller (NC)
Miller, George
Moore
Moran
Murphy (CT)
Nadler
Neal
Olver
Owens
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor (AZ)
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Pingree (ME)
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rahall
Rangel
Reyes
Richardson
Richmond
Rothman (NJ)
Roybal-Allard
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Schwartz
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell
Sherman
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Speier
Stark
Sutton
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tierney
Tonko
Towns
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz (MN)
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watt
Waxman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Woolsey
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—17

Bachmann
Biggert
Bishop (GA)
Conyers
Courtney
Gardner
Garrett
Giffords
Hirono
Lucas
Manzullo
Napolitano
Paul
Rogers (MI)
Rokita
Roskam
Shimkus

□ 1430

Messrs. HEINRICH, ROTHMAN of New Jersey, CLARKE of Michigan, and Mrs. MALONEY changed their vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

Messrs. HULTGREN, PETERSON, and Mrs. NOEM changed their vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

So the previous question was ordered.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated for:

Mr. GARRETT. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 854, had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

Stated against:

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I was absent during rollcall vote No. 854 in order to attend an important event in my district. Had I been present, I would have voted "nay" on the Motion on Ordering the Previous Question on the Rule providing for consideration of motions to suspend the rules.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DOLD). The question is on the resolution.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 248, nays 169, not voting 16, as follows:

[Roll No. 855]

YEAS—248

Adams
Aderholt
Akin
Alexander
Altmire
Amash
Amodei
Austria
Bachus
Barletta
Barrow
Bartlett
Barton (TX)
Bass (NH)
Benishek
Berg
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Bonner
Bono Mack
Boren
Boswell
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brooks
Broun (GA)
Buchanan
Bucshon
Buerkle
Burgess
Burton (IN)
Calvert
Camp
Campbell
Canseco
Cantor
Capito
Cardoza
Carter
Cassidy
Chabot
Chaffetz
Chandler
Coble
Coffman (CO)
Cole
Conaway
Cooper
Costa
Cravaack
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Davis (KY)
Denham
Dent
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Dold
Donnelly (IN)
Dreier
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers
Emerson
Farenthold
Fattah
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Flake
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
Gerlach
Gibbs
Gibson
Gingrey (GA)
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (MO)
Griffin (AR)
Griffith (VA)
Grimm
Guinta
Guthrie
Hall
Hanna
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings (WA)
Hayworth
Heck
Hensarling
Herger
Herrera Beutler
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurt
Issa
Jenkins
Johnson (IL)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jones

Jordan
Kelly
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kinzinger (IL)
Kissell
Kline
Labrador
Lamborn
Lance
Landry
Lankford
Latham
LaTourette
Latta
Lewis (CA)
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Long
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
Lungren, Daniel E.
Mack
Marchant
Marino
Matheson
McCarthy (CA)
McCaul
McClintock
McCotter
McHenry
McIntyre
McKeon
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
Meehan
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller, Gary
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Myrick
Neugebauer
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Nunnelee
Olson
Palazzo
Paulsen
Pearce
Pence
Peterson
Petri
Pitts
Platts
Poe (TX)
Pompeo
Posey
Price (GA)
Quayle
Reed
Rehberg
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rigell
Rivera
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney
Ros-Lehtinen
Ross (AR)
Ross (FL)
Royce
Runyan
Ryan (WI)
Scalise
Schilling
Schmidt
Schock
Schweikert
Scott (SC)
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shuler
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Southerland
Stearns
Stivers
Stutzman
Sullivan
Terry
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Turner (NY)
Turner (OH)
Upton
Walberg
Walden
Walsh (IL)
Webster
West
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Wolf
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Young (AK)
Young (FL)
Young (IN)

NAYS—169

Ackerman
Andrews
Baca
Baldwin
Bass (CA)
Becerra
Berkley
Berman
Bishop (NY)
Blumenauer
Brady (PA)
Braley (IA)
Brown (FL)
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Carnahan
Carney
Carson (IN)
Castor (FL)
Chu
Cicilline
Clarke (MI)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly (VA)
Conyers
Costello
Critz
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
DeFazio
DeGette
DeLauro
Deutch
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Farr
Filner
Frank (MA)
Fudge
Garamendi
Gonzalez
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutierrez
Hahn
Hanabusa
Hastings (FL)
Heinrich
Higgins
Himes
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hochul
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hoyer
Inslee
Israel
Jackson (IL)
Jackson Lee (TX)
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kildee
Kind
Kucinich
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lee (CA)
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Loebsack
Lofgren, Zoe
Lowey
Luján
Lynch
Maloney
Markey
Matsui
McCarthy (NY)
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Michaud
Miller (NC)
Miller, George
Moore
Moran
Murphy (CT)
Nadler
Neal
Olver
Owens
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor (AZ)
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Pingree (ME)
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rahall
Rangel
Reyes
Richardson
Richmond
Rothman (NJ)
Roybal-Allard
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Schwartz
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell
Sherman
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Speier
Stark
Sutton
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tierney
Tonko
Towns
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz (MN)
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watt
Waxman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Woolsey

NOT VOTING—16

Bachmann
Biggert
Bishop (GA)
Courtney
Gardner
Garrett
Giffords
Gohmert
Hirono
Lucas
Manzullo
Napolitano
Paul
Roskam
Shimkus
Yarmuth

□ 1439

So the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mr. GARRETT. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 855, had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

Stated against:

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I was absent during rollcall vote No. 855 in order to attend an important event in my district. Had I been present, I would have voted "nay" on H. Res. 466—Rule providing for consideration of motions to suspend the Rules.

CONSOLIDATED AND FURTHER CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2012

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on adoption of the resolution (H. Res. 467) providing for consideration of the conference report to accompany the bill (H.R. 2112) making appropriations for Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies programs for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2012, and for other purposes, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the resolution.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 262, nays 156, not voting 15, as follows:

[Roll No. 856]

YEAS—262

Adams
Aderholt
Akin
Alexander
Altmire
Amash
Amodei
Austria
Bachus
Barletta
Barrow
Bartlett
Barton (TX)
Bass (NH)
Benishek
Berg
Berman
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Bonner
Bono Mack
Boren
Boswell
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brooks
Broun (GA)
Buchanan
Bucshon
Buerkle
Burgess
Burton (IN)
Calvert
Camp
Campbell
Canseco
Cantor
Capito
Carney
Carter
Cassidy
Chabot
Chaffetz
Chandler
Coble
Coffman (CO)
Cole
Conaway
Cooper
Costa
Cravaack
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Davis (CA)
Davis (KY)
Denham
Dent
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Dicks
Dold
Donnelly (IN)
Dreier
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers
Emerson
Farenthold
Farr
Fattah
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Flake
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxx
Frank (MA)
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
Garrett
Gerlach
Gibbs
Gibson
Gingrey (GA)
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (MO)
Griffin (AR)
Griffith (VA)
Grimm
Guinta
Guthrie
Hall
Hanna
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings (WA)
Hayworth
Heck
Hensarling
Herger
Herrera Beutler
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurt
Inslee
Issa
Jenkins
Johnson (IL)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jones
Jordan
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kinzinger (IL)
Kissell
Kline
Labrador
Lamborn
Lance
Landry
Lankford
Latham
LaTourette
Latta
Lewis (CA)
LoBiondo
Long
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
Lungren, Daniel E.
Mack
Marchant
Marino
Matheson
McCarthy (CA)
McCaul
McClintock
McCotter
McHenry
McIntyre
McKeon
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
Meehan
Mica
Michaud
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller, Gary
Mulvaney
Murphy (CT)
Murphy (PA)
Myrick
Neugebauer
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Nunnelee
Olson
Owens
Palazzo
Pascrell
Paulsen
Pearce
Pence
Peterson
Petri
Pitts
Platts
Poe (TX)
Pompeo
Posey
Price (GA)
Quayle
Reed
Rehberg
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rigell
Rivera
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney
Ros-Lehtinen
Ross (AR)
Ross (FL)
Royce
Runyan
Ryan (WI)
Scalise
Schiff
Schilling
Schmidt
Schweikert
Scott (SC)
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Sherman
Shuler
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Southerland
Stearns
Stivers
Stutzman
Sullivan
Terry
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Turner (NY)
Turner (OH)
Upton
Walberg
Walden
Walsh (IL)
Webster
West
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Wolf
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Young (AK)
Young (FL)
Young (IN)

NAYS—156

Ackerman
Andrews
Baca
Baldwin
Bass (CA)
Becerra
Berkley
Bishop (NY)
Blumenauer
Brady (PA)
Braley (IA)
Brown (FL)
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Carnahan
Carson (IN)
Castor (FL)
Chu
Cicilline
Clarke (MI)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly (VA)
Conyers
Costello
Critz
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (IL)
DeFazio
DeGette
DeLauro
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Filner
Fudge
Garamendi
Gonzalez
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutierrez
Hahn
Hanabusa
Hastings (FL)
Heinrich
Higgins
Himes
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hochul
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hoyer
Israel
Jackson (IL)
Jackson Lee (TX)
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kildee
Kind
Kucinich
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lee (CA)
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren, Zoe
Lowey
Luján
Lynch
Maloney
Markey
Matsui
McCarthy (NY)
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Miller (NC)
Miller, George
Moore
Moran
Nadler
Neal
Olver
Pallone
Pastor (AZ)
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter

Peters	Sanchez, Loretta	Tierney
Pingree (ME)	Sarbanes	Tonko
Polis	Schakowsky	Towns
Price (NC)	Schrader	Tsongas
Quigley	Schwartz	Van Hollen
Rahall	Scott (VA)	Velázquez
Rangel	Scott, David	Visclosky
Reyes	Serrano	Walz (MN)
Richardson	Sewell	Wasserman Schultz
Richmond	Sires	Waters
Rothman (NJ)	Slaughter	Watt
Roybal-Allard	Smith (WA)	Waxman
Ruppersberger	Speier	Welch
Rush	Stark	Wilson (FL)
Ryan (OH)	Sutton	Woolsey
Sánchez, Linda T.	Thompson (CA)	Yarmuth
	Thompson (MS)	

NOT VOTING—15

Bachmann	Gardner	Napolitano
Biggert	Giffords	Paul
Bishop (GA)	Hirono	Roskam
Cardoza	Lucas	Schock
Courtney	Manzullo	Shimkus

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There is 1 minute remaining.

□ 1446

So the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated against:

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I was absent during rollcall vote No. 856 in order to attend an important event in my district. Had I been present, I would have voted "nay" on H. Res. 467—Rule providing for consideration of the Conference Report to H.R. 2112—Agriculture, Rural Development, Food & Drug Administration and Related Agencies Appropriations Act.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall Nos. 854, 855, and 856, had I been present, I would have voted "nay" on all the above.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. MANZULLO. Mr. Speaker, I missed rollcall Nos. 854, 855, and 856. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye."

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include tabular and extraneous material on the conference report to accompany H.R. 2112.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Kentucky?

There was no objection.

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 467, agreed to earlier today, I call up the conference report on the bill (H.R. 2112) making appropriations for Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies programs for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2012, and for other purposes, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 467, the conference report is considered read.

(For conference report and statement, see proceedings of the House of November 14, 2011, at page H743.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. ROGERS) and the gentleman from Washington (Mr. DICKS) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kentucky.

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 5 minutes.

I rise today to present the conference report on H.R. 2112, the Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act of 2012. The House passed H.R. 2112, the bill making appropriations for the Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration and Related Agencies, on June 16. The bill has since been amended to include the Commerce-Justice-Science and the Transportation-HUD appropriations bills as well as a continuing resolution to keep the rest of the government operating until December 16.

With the help of our ranking member, the gentleman from Washington, NORM DICKS, we successfully negotiated with our Senate counterparts to craft this agreement, which is the first appropriations conference report to hit this floor since 2009. This report is the next step in meeting the spending targets set by the Budget Control Act, which will save the taxpayers billions and help continue the effort to bring the Nation's deficit under control. In fact, this bill keeps us on track to cut regular discretionary spending by $98 billion compared to the President's fiscal year 2012 request and some $47 billion below the fiscal year 2010 level.

When all appropriations work this year is completed, it will be the second year in a row that we have reduced total discretionary spending, a remarkable and historic achievement. Yet while we've made significant cuts, we were also able to fund important priorities, such as food and drug safety, Federal law enforcement, agricultural and scientific research, trade, infrastructure, and economic growth. Additionally, we're helping communities, States, businesses, and families deeply affected by a record-breaking year of destructive natural disasters and catastrophes.

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We scrubbed the information from the agencies and were able to reduce the disaster spending in this bill by $850 million compared to the Senate-passed bill. These funds are only for disaster assistance and do not grow the baseline budgets or the scope of the Federal agencies.

This bill, Mr. Speaker, is the next step in breaking the status quo of excess Federal spending that's throwing our budgets out of whack.

Our House conferees thoroughly examined each and every program and agency to ensure that we are reducing spending wherever possible. In this bill, this includes terminating wasteful, poorly planned and controversial programs such as high-speed rail, NOAA's Climate Change Office, and the Livable Communities program. In fact, Mr. Speaker, we have terminated 20 programs for a savings of $456 million.

This legislation also reins in executive branch overreach by including several important policy items. These provisions kill job-killing regulations that create economic uncertainty and limit government involvement in issues of life and liberty, including several provisions protecting human life and the Second Amendment right to keep and bear arms.

Finally, this legislation includes a continuing resolution that will keep the remainder of the government operating until December 16, allowing us an appropriate amount of time, I think, to finish negotiations on the remaining nine appropriations bills so that we will have all 12 out of the way, leaving the Appropriations Committee clear sailing in January to bring to the floor of the House 12 separate appropriations bills.

I'm very pleased that we were able to reach agreement on this bill. It has become all too rare a thing in this Congress to come to an agreement such as this, and I'm proud to say that this conference report was approved by all but one of the 38 House and Senate conferees from both parties, which goes to show us we work best when we work together. While there are no doubt items where Members might disagree in the bill, there are many achievements in this bill of which we can be justly proud.

However, we could not have done this without the tremendous help from our ranking member, NORM DICKS, as well as the dedicated conferees on both sides of the aisle from both Chambers. Chairman WOLF, Chairman KINGSTON, Chairman LATHAM, Ranking Members FARR, FATTAH, and OLVER, as well as our dedicated staff, have worked tirelessly over the last few weeks to bring this bill to completion, and they have all of our sincere thanks and appreciation for a job well done.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. I yield myself an additional 1 minute.

I am proud, Mr. Speaker, that your Appropriations Committee is presenting to you the first Appropriations Conference Report since 2009 and the first conference report of this Congress. Your Appropriations Committee is working.

In closing, I strongly urge my colleagues to support this bill. It's vital we pass this bill to prevent a government shutdown, rein in overzealous regulations, and help put our budgets and our economy on track.

DIVISION A: AGRICULTURE-RURAL DEVELOPMENT-FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION-AND RELATED AGENCIES - FY 2012
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	FY 2011 Enacted	FY 2012 Request	Conference	Conference vs. Enacted
TITLE I - AGRICULTURAL PROGRAMS				
Production, Processing, and Marketing				
Office of the Secretary	5,051	5,883	4,550	-501
Office of Tribal Relations	498	1,015	448	-50
Healthy Food Financing Initiative	---	35,000	---	---
Executive Operations:				
Office of Chief Economist	12,008	15,196	11,177	-831
National Appeals Division	14,225	15,254	12,841	-1,384
Office of Budget and Program Analysis	9,417	9,436	8,946	-471
Office of Homeland Security	1,496	4,272	1,321	-175
Office of Advocacy and Outreach	1,422	7,000	1,209	-213
Office of the Chief Information Officer	39,920	63,579	44,031	+4,111
Office of the Chief Financial Officer	6,247	6,566	5,650	-597
Subtotal, Executive Operations	84,735	121,303	85,175	+440
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights	893	895	848	-45
Office of Civil Rights	22,692	24,922	21,000	-1,692
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Administration	804	820	764	-40
Agriculture buildings and facilities and rental payments	(246,476)	(255,191)	(230,416)	(-16,060)
Payments to GSA	178,113	164,470	164,470	-13,643
Department of Homeland Security	13,473	13,800	13,800	+327
Building operations and maintenance	54,890	76,921	52,146	-2,744
Hazardous materials management	3,992	5,125	3,592	-400
Departmental Administration	29,647	35,787	24,165	-5,482
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Congressional Relations	3,869	4,041	3,576	-293
Office of Communications	9,480	9,722	8,065	-1,415
Office of Inspector General	88,548	90,755	85,621	-2,927
Office of the General Counsel	41,416	46,058	39,345	-2,071
Total, Departmental Administration	538,101	636,517	507,565	-30,536
Office of the Under Secretary for Research, Education, and Economics	893	911	848	-45
Economic Research Service	81,814	85,971	77,723	-4,091
National Agricultural Statistics Service	156,447	165,421	158,616	+2,169
Census of Agriculture	(33,139)	(41,639)	(41,639)	(+8,500)
Agricultural Research Service:				
Salaries and expenses	1,133,230	1,137,690	1,094,647	-38,583
National Institute of Food and Agriculture:				
Research and education activities	698,740	708,107	705,599	+6,859
Native American Institutions Endowment Fund	(11,880)	(11,880)	(11,880)	---
Extension activities	479,132	466,788	475,183	-3,949
Integrated activities	36,926	29,874	21,482	-15,444
Hispanic-Serving Agricultural Colleges and Universities Endowment Fund	---	(10,000)	---	---
Total, National Institute of Food and Agriculture	1,214,798	1,204,769	1,202,264	-12,534
Office of the Under Secretary for Marketing and Regulatory Programs	893	911	848	-45
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service:				
Salaries and expenses	863,270	832,706	816,534	-46,736
Assistance, goods, or services (user fees) NA	---	(141,000)	---	---
Buildings and facilities	3,529	4,712	3,200	-329
Total, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service	866,799	837,418	819,734	-47,065

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	FY 2011 Enacted	FY 2012 Request	Conference	Conference vs. Enacted
Agricultural Marketing Service:				
Marketing Services	86,538	94,755	82,211	-4,327
Standardization activities (user fees) NA	(65,000)	(66,000)	(66,000)	(+1,000)
(Limitation on administrative expenses, from fees collected)	(60,947)	(62,101)	(62,101)	(+1,154)
Funds for strengthening markets, income, and supply (Section 32):				
Permanent, Section 32	1,065,000	1,080,000	1,080,000	+15,000 M
Marketing agreements and orders (transfer from section 32)	(20,056)	(20,056)	(20,056)	--- M
Payments to States and Possessions	1,331	2,634	1,198	-133
Total, Agricultural Marketing Service program	1,213,816	1,239,490	1,225,510	+11,694
Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration:				
Salaries and expenses	40,261	44,192	37,750	-2,511
Limitation on inspection and weighing services	(47,500)	(50,000)	(49,000)	(+1,500)
Office of the Under Secretary for Food Safety	811	828	770	-41
Food Safety and Inspection Service	1,006,503	1,011,393	1,004,427	-2,076
Lab accreditation fees	(1,000)	(1,000)	(1,000)	---
Total, Production, Processing, and Marketing	6,193,419	6,303,410	6,068,601	-124,818
Farm Assistance Programs				
Office of the Under Secretary for Farm and Foreign Agricultural Services	893	911	848	-45
Farm Service Agency:				
Salaries and expenses	1,208,290	1,357,065	1,198,966	-9,324
Equal Credit Opportunity claims (leg. proposal)	---	40,000	---	---
(Transfer from Food for Peace (P.L. 480))	(2,806)	(2,812)	(2,500)	(-306)
(Transfer from export loans)	(354)	(355)	(355)	(+1)
(Transfer from ACIF)	(304,977)	(313,173)	(289,728)	(-15,249)
Subtotal, transfers from program accounts	(308,137)	(316,340)	(292,583)	(-15,554)
Total, Salaries and expenses	(1,516,427)	(1,713,405)	(1,491,549)	(-24,878)
State mediation grants	4,177	4,369	3,759	-418
Grassroot source water protection program	4,241	---	3,817	-424
Dairy indemnity program	876	100	100	-776 M
Subtotal, Farm Service Agency	1,217,584	1,401,534	1,206,642	-10,942
Agricultural Credit Insurance Fund (ACIF) Program Account:				
Loan authorizations:				
Farm ownership loans:				
Direct	(475,000)	(475,000)	(475,000)	---
Guaranteed	(1,500,000)	(1,500,000)	(1,500,000)	---
Subtotal	(1,975,000)	(1,975,000)	(1,975,000)	---
Farm operating loans:				
Direct	(950,000)	(1,050,090)	(1,050,090)	(+100,090)
Unsubsidized guaranteed	(1,500,000)	(1,500,000)	(1,500,000)	---
Subsidized guaranteed	(122,343)	---	---	(-122,343)
Subtotal	(2,572,343)	(2,550,090)	(2,550,090)	(-22,253)
Indian tribe land acquisition loans	(3,940)	(2,000)	(2,000)	(-1,940)
Conservation loans:				
Guaranteed	---	(150,000)	(150,000)	(+150,000)
Indian Highly Fractionated Land Loans	---	(10,000)	(10,000)	(+10,000)
Boll weevil eradication loans	(100,000)	(60,000)	(100,000)	---
Total, Loan authorizations	(4,651,283)	(4,747,090)	(4,787,090)	(+135,807)

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	FY 2011 Enacted	FY 2012 Request	Conference	Conference vs. Enacted
Loan subsidies:				
Farm ownership loans:				
Direct	32,804	22,800	22,800	-10,004
Guaranteed	5,689	---	---	-5,689
Subtotal	38,493	22,800	22,800	-15,693
Farm operating loans:				
Direct	57,425	59,120	59,120	+1,695
Unsubsidized guaranteed	34,880	26,100	26,100	-8,780
Subsidized guaranteed	16,886	---	---	-16,886
Subtotal	109,191	85,220	85,220	-23,971
Indian Highly Fractionated Land Loans	---	193	193	+193
Individual Development Accounts	---	2,500	---	---
Total, Loan subsidies	147,684	110,713	108,213	-39,471
ACIF administrative expenses:				
Salaries and expense (transfer to FSA)	304,977	313,173	289,728	-15,249
Administrative expenses	7,904	7,920	7,904	---
Total, ACIF expenses	312,881	321,093	297,632	-15,249
Total, Agricultural Credit Insurance Fund	460,565	431,806	405,845	-54,720
(Loan authorization)	(4,651,283)	(4,747,090)	(4,787,090)	(+135,807)
Total, Farm Service Agency	1,678,149	1,833,340	1,612,487	-65,662
Risk Management Agency, Administrative and operating expenses	78,842	82,325	74,900	-3,942
Total, Farm Assistance Programs	1,757,884	1,916,576	1,688,235	-69,649
Corporations				
Federal Crop Insurance Corporation:				
Federal crop insurance corporation fund	7,613,232	3,142,375	3,142,375	-4,470,857 M
Commodity Credit Corporation Fund:				
Reimbursement for net realized losses	13,925,575	14,071,000	14,071,000	+145,425 M
Hazardous waste management (limitation on expenses)	(5,000)	(5,000)	(5,000)	---
Total, Corporations	21,538,807	17,213,375	17,213,375	-4,325,432
Total, Title I, Agricultural Programs	29,490,110	25,433,361	24,970,211	-4,519,899
(By transfer)	(328,193)	(336,396)	(312,639)	(-15,554)
(Loan authorization)	(4,651,283)	(4,747,090)	(4,787,090)	(+135,807)
(Limitation on administrative expenses)	(113,447)	(117,101)	(116,101)	(+2,654)
TITLE II - CONSERVATION PROGRAMS				
Office of the Under Secretary for Natural Resources and Environment	893	911	848	-45
Natural Resources Conservation Service:				
Conservation operations	870,503	898,647	828,159	-42,344
Watershed rehabilitation program	17,964	---	15,000	-2,964
Total, Natural Resources Conservation Service	888,467	898,647	843,159	-45,308
Total, Title II, Conservation Programs	889,360	899,558	844,007	-45,353

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	FY 2011 Enacted	FY 2012 Request	Conference	Conference vs. Enacted
TITLE III - RURAL DEVELOPMENT				
Office of the Under Secretary for Rural Development...	893	911	848	-45
Rural Development:				
Rural development expenses:				
Salaries and expenses.....	191,603	234,301	182,023	-9,580
(Transfer from RHIF).....	(453,474)	(411,779)	(430,800)	(-22,674)
(Transfer from RDLFP).....	(4,931)	(4,941)	(4,684)	(-247)
(Transfer from RETLP).....	(38,297)	(39,959)	(36,382)	(-1,915)
Subtotal, Transfers from program accounts.	(496,702)	(456,679)	(471,866)	(-24,836)
Total, Rural development expenses.....	(688,305)	(690,980)	(653,889)	(-34,416)
Rural Housing Service:				
Rural Housing Insurance Fund Program Account:				
Loan authorizations:				
Single family direct (Sec. 502).....	(1,121,406)	(211,416)	(900,000)	(-221,406)
Unsubsidized guaranteed.....	(24,000,000)	(24,000,000)	(24,000,000)	---
Subtotal, Single family.....	(25,121,406)	(24,211,416)	(24,900,000)	(-221,406)
Housing repair (Sec. 504).....	(23,360)	---	(10,000)	(-13,360)
Rental housing (Sec. 515).....	(69,512)	(95,236)	(64,478)	(-5,034)
Site loans (Sec. 524).....	(5,052)	---	---	(-5,052)
Multi-family housing guarantees (Sec. 538)	(30,960)	---	(130,000)	(+99,040)
Multi-family housing credit sales.....	(1,448)	---	---	(-1,448)
Single family housing credit sales.....	(10,000)	---	(10,000)	---
Self-help housing land develop. (Sec. 523)	(4,966)	---	(5,000)	(+34)
Farm Labor Housing (Sec.514).....	(25,724)	(27,288)	(20,791)	(-4,933)
Total, Loan authorizations.....	(25,292,428)	(24,333,940)	(25,140,269)	(-152,159)
Loan subsidies:				
Single family direct (Sec. 502).....	70,060	10,000	42,570	-27,490
Housing repair (Sec. 504).....	4,413	---	1,421	-2,992
Rental housing (Sec. 515).....	23,399	32,495	22,000	-1,399
Multi-family housing guarantees (Sec. 538)	2,994	---	---	-2,994
Site development loans (Sec. 524).....	293	---	---	-293
Multi-family housing credit sales.....	555	---	---	-555
Farm labor housing (Sec.514).....	9,853	9,319	7,100	-2,753
Self-help land dev. housing loans (Sec523)	288	---	---	-288
Total, Loan subsidies.....	111,855	51,814	73,091	-38,764
Farm labor housing grants.....	9,854	9,873	7,100	-2,754
RHIF administrative expenses (transfer to RD).	453,474	411,779	430,800	-22,674
Total, Rural Housing Insurance Fund program.	575,183	473,466	510,991	-64,192
(Loan authorization).....	(25,292,428)	(24,333,940)	(25,140,269)	(-152,159)
Rental assistance program:				
Rental assistance (Sec. 521).....	948,704	900,653	900,653	-48,051
New construction (Sec. 515).....	2,026	3,000	1,500	-526
New construction (Farm Labor Housing).....	2,994	3,000	2,500	-494
Total, Rental assistance program.....	953,724	906,653	904,653	-49,071
Rural housing voucher program.....	13,972	16,000	11,000	-2,972
Multi-family housing revitalization program	14,970	---	2,000	-12,970
Multifamily housing preservation revolving loans..	998	---	---	-998
Total, Multi-family housing revitalization..	29,940	16,000	13,000	-16,940
Mutual and self-help housing grants.....	36,926	---	30,000	-6,926
Rural housing assistance grants.....	40,319	11,520	33,136	-7,183

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Rural community facilities program account:				
Loan authorizations:				
Community facility:				
Direct	(290,526)	(1,000,000)	(1,300,000)	(+1,009,474)
Guaranteed	(167,747)	---	(105,708)	(-62,039)
Total, Loan authorizations	(458,273)	(1,000,000)	(1,405,708)	(+947,435)
Loan subsidies and grants:				
Commmunity facility:				
Direct	3,856	---	---	-3,856
Guaranteed	6,613	---	5,000	-1,613
Grants	14,970	30,000	11,363	-3,607
Rural community development initiative	4,990	8,400	3,621	-1,369
Economic impact initiative grants	6,986	---	5,938	-1,048
Tribal college grants	3,964	---	3,369	-595
Total, RCFP Loan subsidies and grants	41,379	38,400	29,291	-12,088
Subtotal, grants and payments	118,624	49,920	92,427	-26,197
Total, Rural Housing Service	1,677,471	1,446,039	1,521,071	-156,400
(Loan authorization)	(25,750,701)	(25,333,940)	(26,545,977)	(+795,276)
Rural Business-Cooperative Service:				
Rural Business Program Account:				
(Guaranteed business and industry loans)	(889,111)	(822,900)	(822,886)	(-66,225)
Loan subsidies and grants:				
Guaranteed business and industry subsidy	44,899	52,500	45,341	+442
Grants:				
Rural business enterprise	34,930	29,874	24,318	-10,612
Rural business opportunity	2,478	7,483	2,250	-228
Delta regional authority	2,973	---	2,900	-73
Total, RBP loan subsidies and grants	85,280	89,857	74,809	-10,471
Rural Development Loan Fund Program Account:				
(Loan authorization)	(19,181)	(36,376)	(17,710)	(-1,471)
Loan subsidy	7,385	12,324	6,000	-1,385
Administrative expenses (transfer to RD)	4,931	4,941	4,684	-247
Total, Rural Development Loan Fund	12,316	17,265	10,684	-1,632
Rural Economic Development Loans Program Account:				
(Loan authorization)	(33,077)	(33,077)	(33,077)	---
Limit cushion of credit interest spending	(207,000)	(241,794)	(155,000)	(-52,000)
(Rescission)	-207,000	-241,794	-155,000	+52,000
Rural cooperative development grants:				
Cooperative development	7,908	8,924	5,800	-2,108
Appropriate technology transfer for rural areas	---	2,800	2,250	+2,250
Cooperative research agreement	---	300	---	---
Value-added agricultural product market development	18,829	20,367	14,000	-4,829
Grants to assist minority producers	3,456	3,463	3,000	-456
Total, Rural Cooperative development grants	30,193	35,854	25,050	-5,143
Rural Microenterprise Investment Program Account:				
(Loan authorization)	---	(8,700)	---	---
Loan subsidy	---	2,850	---	---
Grants	---	2,850	---	---
Total, Rural Microenterprise Investment	---	5,700	---	---

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Rural Energy for America Program				
(Loan authorization)	(10,785)	(10,645)	(6,491)	(-4,294)
Loan subsidy	2,495	2,788	1,700	-795
Grants	2,495	34,000	1,700	-795
Total, Rural Energy for America Program	4,990	36,788	3,400	-1,590
Total, Rural Business-Cooperative Service	-74,221	-56,330	-41,057	+33,164
(Loan authorization)	(952,154)	(911,698)	(880,164)	(-71,990)
Rural Utilities Service:				
Rural water and waste disposal program account:				
Loan authorizations:				
Direct	(898,263)	(770,000)	(730,689)	(-167,574)
Guaranteed	(75,000)	(12,000)	(62,893)	(-12,107)
Total, Loan authorization	973,263	782,000	793,582	-179,681
Loan subsidies and grants:				
Direct subsidy	76,917	73,788	70,000	-6,917
Guaranteed subsidy	---	190	1,000	+1,000
Water and waste revolving fund	497	497	497	---
Water well system grants	993	993	993	---
Colonias and AK/HI grants	68,600	65,000	66,500	-2,100
Water and waste technical assistance	19,110	19,000	19,000	-110
Circuit rider program	14,700	14,000	15,000	+300
Solid waste management grants	3,434	4,000	3,400	-34
High energy cost grants	11,976	---	9,500	-2,476
Water and waste disposal grants	331,717	311,510	327,110	-4,607
Total, Loan subsidies and grants	527,944	488,978	513,000	-14,944
Rural Electrification and Telecommunications Loans Program Account:				
Loan authorizations:				
Electric:				
Direct, 5%	(100,000)	(100,000)	(100,000)	---
Direct, FFB	(6,500,000)	(6,000,000)	(6,500,000)	---
Guaranteed underwriting	(500,000)	---	(424,286)	(-75,714)
Subtotal, Electric	(7,100,000)	(6,100,000)	(7,024,286)	(-75,714)
Telecommunications:				
Direct, 5%	(145,000)	(145,000)	(145,000)	---
Direct, Treasury rate	(250,000)	(250,000)	(250,000)	---
Direct, FFB	(295,000)	(295,000)	(295,000)	---
Subtotal, Telecommunications	(690,000)	(690,000)	(690,000)	---
Total, Loan authorizations	(7,790,000)	(6,790,000)	(7,714,286)	(-75,714)
Loan subsidies:				
Electric:				
Guaranteed underwriting	699	---	594	-105
RETLP administrative expenses (transfer to RD)	38,297	39,959	36,382	-1,915
Total, Rural Electrification and Telecommunications Loans Program Account	38,996	39,959	36,976	-2,020
(Loan authorization)	(7,790,000)	(6,790,000)	(7,714,286)	(-75,714)

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Distance learning, telemedicine, and broadband program:				
Loan authorizations:				
Broadband telecommunications	(400,000)	---	(212,014)	(-187,986)
Total, Loan authorizations	(400,000)	---	(212,014)	(-187,986)
Loan subsidies and grants:				
Distance learning and telemedicine:				
Grants	32,435	30,000	21,000	-11,435
Broadband telecommunications:				
Direct	22,276	---	6,000	-16,276
Grants	13,379	17,976	10,372	-3,007
Total, Loan subsidies and grants	68,090	47,976	37,372	-30,718
Total, Rural Utilities Service	635,030	576,913	587,348	-47,682
(Loan authorization)	(9,163,263)	(7,572,000)	(8,719,882)	(-443,381)
Total, Title III, Rural Development Programs	2,430,776	2,201,834	2,250,233	-180,543
(By transfer)	(496,702)	(456,679)	(471,866)	(-24,836)
(Loan authorization)	(35,866,118)	(33,817,638)	(36,146,023)	(+279,905)
TITLE IV - DOMESTIC FOOD PROGRAMS				
Office of the Under Secretary for Food, Nutrition and Consumer Services	811	828	770	-41
Food and Nutrition Service:				
Child nutrition programs	12,042,407	18,770,571	18,150,176	+6,107,769 M
Competitive grants	---	5,000	---	---
School breakfast program grants	---	10,000	1,000	+1,000
Childhood Hunger challenge grants	---	25,000	---	---
Transfer from section 32	5,277,574	---	---	-5,277,574 M
.2 Percent (rescission) (discretionary)	-48	---	---	+48
Total, Child nutrition programs	17,319,933	18,810,571	18,151,176	+831,243
Special supplemental nutrition program for women, infants, and children (WIC)	6,734,027	7,390,100	6,618,497	-115,530
Supplemental nutrition assistance program:				
(Food stamp program)	65,206,790	68,173,308	77,401,722	+12,194,932 M
Reserve	---	5,000,000	3,000,000	+3,000,000 M
Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion	---	1,500	---	---
Grants to States and technical assistance	---	9,000	---	---
.2 Percent (rescission) (discretionary)	-97	---	---	+97
Total, Food stamp program	65,206,693	73,183,808	80,401,722	+15,195,029
Commodity assistance program:				
Commodity supplemental food program	175,697	176,788	176,788	+1,091
Farmers market nutrition program	19,960	20,000	16,548	-3,412
Emergency food assistance program	49,401	50,000	48,000	-1,401
Pacific island and disaster assistance	1,068	1,081	1,000	-68
IT modernization and support	---	1,750	---	---
Total, Commodity assistance program	246,126	249,619	242,336	-3,790
Nutrition programs administration	147,505	170,471	138,500	-9,005
Total, Food and Nutrition Service	89,654,284	99,804,569	105,552,231	+15,897,947
Total, Title IV, Domestic Food Programs	89,655,095	99,805,397	105,553,001	+15,897,906

DIVISION A: AGRICULTURE-RURAL DEVELOPMENT-FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION-AND RELATED AGENCIES - FY 2012
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	FY 2011 Enacted	FY 2012 Request	Conference	Conference vs. Enacted
TITLE V - FOREIGN ASSISTANCE AND RELATED PROGRAMS				
Foreign Agricultural Service				
Salaries and expenses	185,628	229,730	176,347	-9,281
(Transfer from export loans)	(6,452)	(6,465)	(6,465)	(+13)
Total, Salaries and expenses	192,080	236,195	182,812	-9,268
Food for Peace Title I Direct Credit and Food for Progress Program Account, Administrative Expenses				
Farm Service Agency, Salaries and expenses (transfer to FSA)	2,806	2,812	2,500	-306
Food for Peace Title II Grants:				
Expenses	1,497,000	1,690,000	1,466,000	-31,000 150
Commodity Credit Corporation Export Loans Program Account (administrative expenses):				
Salaries and expenses (Export Loans):				
General Sales Manager (transfer to FAS)	6,452	6,465	6,465	+13
Farm Service Agency S&E (transfer to FSA)	354	355	355	+1
Total, CCC Export Loans Program Account	6,806	6,820	6,820	+14
McGovern-Dole international food for education and child nutrition program grants	199,101	200,500	184,000	-15,101 150
Total, Title V, Foreign Assistance and Related Programs	1,891,341	2,129,862	1,835,667	-55,674
(By transfer)	(6,452)	(6,465)	(6,465)	(+13)
TITLE VI - RELATED AGENCIES AND FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION				
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES				
Food and Drug Administration				
Salaries and expenses, direct appropriation	2,447,021	2,730,910	2,497,021	+50,000
Prescription drug user fees	(667,057)	(856,041)	(702,172)	(+35,115)
Medical device user fees	(61,860)	(67,118)	(57,605)	(-4,255)
Animal drug user fees	(19,448)	(21,768)	(21,768)	(+2,320)
Generic animal drug user fees	(5,397)	(5,706)	(5,706)	(+309)
Tobacco product user fees	(450,000)	(477,000)	(477,000)	(+27,000)
Food and Feed Export Certification user fees	---	(12,364)	(12,364)	(+12,364)
Food Reinspection fees	---	(14,700)	(14,700)	(+14,700)
Voluntary qualified importer program fees	---	(36,000)	---	---
Subtotal (including user fees)	(3,650,783)	(4,221,607)	(3,788,336)	(+137,553)
Mammography user fees	(19,318)	(19,318)	(19,318)	---
Export certification user fees	(10,400)	(10,400)	(11,667)	(+1,267)
Voluntary qualified importer program fees	---	---	(71,066)	(+71,066)
Subtotal, FDA (with user fees)	(3,680,501)	(4,251,325)	(3,890,387)	(+209,886)
FDA New User Fees (Leg. proposals):				
Generic drug review user fees	---	(40,122)	---	---
Reinspection fees	---	(14,108)	---	---
International express courier import fees	---	(5,338)	---	---
Subtotal, FDA new user fees (Leg Proposals)	---	(59,568)	---	---
Buildings and facilities	9,980	13,055	8,788	-1,192
Total, FDA (w/user fees, including proposals)	(3,690,481)	(4,323,948)	(3,899,175)	(+208,694)
Total, FDA (w/enacted user fees only)	(3,690,481)	(4,264,380)	(3,899,175)	(+208,694)
Total, FDA (excluding user fees)	2,457,001	2,743,965	2,505,809	+48,808

DIVISION A: AGRICULTURE-RURAL DEVELOPMENT-FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION-AND RELATED AGENCIES - FY 2012
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	FY 2011 Enacted	FY 2012 Request	Conference	Conference vs. Enacted
INDEPENDENT AGENCIES				
Commodity Futures Trading Commission 1/	202,270	308,000	205,294	+3,024
Financial regulation user fees (leg proposal)	---	(117,000)	---	---
Farm Credit Administration (limitation on administrative expenses)	(59,400)	(62,000)	(61,000)	(+1,600)
Total, Title VI, Related Agencies and Food and Drug Administration	2,659,271	3,051,965	2,711,103	+51,832
TITLE VII - GENERAL PROVISIONS				
Limit fruit and vegetable program (Sec.726(15))	-117,000	-114,478	-133,000	-16,000
Section 32 (rescission) (Sec.726(15))	---	---	-150,000	-150,000
Forestry Incentives program (Sec.722) (rescission)	---	---	-6,017	-6,017
Great Plains Conservation (Sec.722) (rescission)	---	---	-547	-547
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training (rescission) (Sec.723)	-15,000	---	-11,000	+4,000
Limit Conservation stewardship (Sec.726(1))	-39,000	-2,000	-76,516	-37,516
Limit Dam Rehab (Sec.726(2))	-165,000	-165,000	-165,000	---
Limit Environmental Quality Incentives program (Sec.726(3))	-350,000	-342,000	-350,000	---
Limit Farmland Protection program (Sec.726(4))	---	---	-50,000	-50,000
Limit Grasslands reserve (Sec.726(5))	---	-50,000	-30,000	-30,000
Limit Wetlands reserve (Sec.726(6))	-119,000	-9,000	-200,000	-81,000
Limit Wildlife habitat incentives (Sec.726(7))	---	-12,000	-35,000	-35,000
Limit Voluntary Public Access program (Sec.726(8))	---	---	-17,000	-17,000
Limit Biomass Crop Assistance program (Sec.726(14))	-134,000	---	-28,000	+106,000
Limit Bioenergy Program for Advanced Biofuels (Sec.726(9))	---	---	-40,000	-40,000
Limit Rural Energy for America (Sec.726(10))	---	---	-48,000	-48,000
Limit Microenterprise investment program (Sec.726(11))	---	---	-3,000	-3,000
Limit Crop Insurance Good Performance (Sec.726(12))	-25,000	---	-25,000	---
Limit Agriculture management assistance (section 1524) (Sec.726(13))	---	-5,000	-5,000	-5,000
Hardwood Trees (Reforestation Pilot Program)(Sec.727)	639	---	600	-39
Geographic Disadvantaged farmers (Sec. 724)	1,996	---	1,996	---
Agricultural Research Service, Buildings and and facilities (rescission)	-229,582	-223,749	---	+229,582
Broadband loan balances (rescission)	-39,000	---	---	+39,000
NIFA, Buildings and Facilities (rescission) (Sec.722)	-1,037	-1,037	-2,490	-1,453
Wildlife Habitat Incentives unobligated (rescission)	---	-10,188	---	---
Water Bank Act unobligated (rescission)	---	-745	---	---
NRCS expired accounts (rescission)	-13,937	---	---	+13,937
Outreach for socially disadvantaged farmers (rescission)	-2,137	---	---	+2,137
Rural community advancement program (rescission)	-993	---	---	+993
Agriculture Marketing Services (rescission)	-717	---	---	+717
Common Computing Environment (rescission)	-3,111	---	---	+3,111
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) Buildings and Facilities (rescission)	-629	---	---	+629
Agriculture Buildings and Facilities (rescission)	-45,000	---	---	+45,000
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) (rescission)	-10,887	---	---	+10,887
Broadband grants (rescission)	-25,000	---	---	+25,000
Export credit (rescission)	-331,000	---	---	+331,000
Trade Adjustment Assistance for for Farmers (Sec.729) (rescission)	---	---	-90,000	-90,000
OAO (rescission) (Sec.722)	---	---	-4,000	-4,000

DIVISION A: AGRICULTURE-RURAL DEVELOPMENT-FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION-AND RELATED AGENCIES - FY 2012
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	FY 2011 Enacted	FY 2012 Request	Conference	Conference vs. Enacted
Ocean freight (rescission) (Sec.722)	---	---	-3,235	-3,235
P.L. 480 Title I (rescission) (Sec.722)	---	---	-2,336	-2,336
Foreign Currency Program (rescission) (Sec.722)	---	---	-273	-273
Export credit (rescission) (Sec.722)	---	---	-20,237	-20,237
Water Bank (Sec.748)	---	---	7,500	+7,500
Sec.735:				
Emergency Conservation Program (Disaster Relief)	---	---	122,700	+122,700
Emergency Forest Restoration (Disaster Relief)	---	---	28,400	+28,400
Emergency Watershed Protection (Disaster Relief)	---	---	215,900	+215,900
Total, Title VII, General provisions	-1,664,395	-935,197	-1,118,555	+545,840
Grand total 1/	125,351,558	132,586,780	137,045,667	+11,694,109
Appropriations	(126,276,588)	(133,064,293)	(137,123,802)	(+10,847,214)
Rescissions	(-925,030)	(-477,513)	(-445,135)	(+479,895)
Disaster relief 2/	---	---	(367,000)	(+367,000)
(By transfer)	(831,347)	(799,540)	(790,970)	(-40,377)
(Loan authorization)	(40,517,401)	(38,564,728)	(40,933,113)	(+415,712)
(Limitation on administrative expenses)	(172,847)	(179,101)	(177,101)	(+4,254)

1/ Includes CFTC funding for FY2011 provided in Financial Services and General Government Appropriations Act
2/ Budget Control Act 2011 (Sec.251(b)(2)(D)/PL112-25)

RECAPITULATION

Title I - Agricultural programs	29,490,110	25,433,361	24,970,211	-4,519,899
Mandatory	(22,604,683)	(18,293,475)	(18,293,475)	(-4,311,208)
Discretionary	(6,885,427)	(7,139,886)	(6,676,736)	(-208,691)
Title II - Conservation programs (discretionary)	889,360	899,558	844,007	-45,353
Title III - Rural development (discretionary)	2,430,776	2,201,834	2,250,233	-180,543
Title IV - Domestic food programs	89,655,095	99,805,397	105,553,001	+15,897,906
Mandatory	(82,526,771)	(91,943,879)	(98,551,898)	(+16,025,127)
Discretionary	(7,128,324)	(7,861,518)	(7,001,103)	(-127,221)
Title V - Foreign assistance and related programs (discretionary)	1,891,341	2,129,862	1,835,667	-55,674
Title VI - Related agencies and Food and Drug Administration (discretionary)	2,659,271	3,051,965	2,711,103	+51,832
Title VII - General provisions (discretionary)	-1,664,395	-935,197	-1,118,555	+545,840
Total 1/	125,351,558	132,586,780	137,045,667	+11,694,109

1/ Includes CFTC funding for FY2011 provided in Financial Services and General Government Appropriations Act

DIVISION B - DEPARTMENTS OF COMMERCE AND JUSTICE, AND SCIENCE, AND RELATED AGENCIES, FY 2012 (H.R. 2112)
(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 2011 Enacted	FY 2012 Request	Conference	Conference vs. Enacted
TITLE I - DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE				
International Trade Administration				
Operations and administration	450,106	526,091	465,000	+14,894
Offsetting fee collections	-9,439	-9,439	-9,439	---
Direct appropriation	440,667	516,652	455,561	+14,894
Bureau of Industry and Security				
Operations and administration	68,862	79,845	69,721	+859
Defense function	31,279	31,342	31,279	---
Total, Bureau of Industry and Security	100,141	111,187	101,000	+859
Economic Development Administration				
Economic Development Assistance Programs	245,508	284,300	220,000	-25,508
Disaster relief category	---	---	200,000	+200,000
Subtotal	245,508	284,300	420,000	+174,492
Salaries and expenses	37,924	40,631	37,500	-424
Total, Economic Development Administration	283,432	324,931	457,500	+174,068
Minority Business Development Agency				
Minority Business Development	30,339	32,322	30,339	---
Economic and Statistical Analysis				
Salaries and expenses	97,060	112,937	96,000	-1,060
Bureau of the Census				
Salaries and expenses	258,506	272,054	253,336	-5,170
Periodic censuses and programs	891,214	752,711	635,000	-256,214
Total, Bureau of the Census	1,149,720	1,024,765	888,336	-261,384
National Telecommunications and Information Administration				
Salaries and expenses	40,568	55,827	45,568	+5,000
Public Telecommunications Facilities, Planning and Construction	1,000	---	---	-1,000
Total, National Telecommunications and Information Administration	41,568	55,827	45,568	+4,000
United States Patent and Trademark Office				
Salaries and expenses, current year fee funding	2,090,000	2,678,000	2,678,000	+588,000
Offsetting fee collections	-2,090,000	-2,678,000	-2,678,000	-588,000
Total, United States Patent and Trademark Office	---	---	---	---
National Institute of Standards and Technology				
Scientific and Technical Research and Services	506,984	678,943	567,000	+60,016
(transfer out)	(-9,000)	(-9,000)	(-9,000)	---
Industrial Technology Services	173,253	237,622	128,443	-44,810
Manufacturing extension partnerships	(128,443)	(142,616)	(128,443)	---
Technology innovation program	(44,810)	(74,973)	---	(-44,810)
Baldrige performance excellence program	---	(7,727)	---	---
Advanced manufacturing technology consortia	---	(12,306)	---	---
Construction of research facilities	69,860	84,565	55,381	-14,479
Working Capital Fund (by transfer)	(9,000)	(9,000)	(9,000)	---
Total, National Institute of Standards and Technology	750,097	1,001,130	750,824	+727

DIVISION B - DEPARTMENTS OF COMMERCE AND JUSTICE, AND SCIENCE, AND RELATED AGENCIES, FY 2012 (H.R. 2112)
(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 2011 Enacted	FY 2012 Request	Conference	Conference vs. Enacted
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration				
Operations, Research, and Facilities	3,179,511	3,377,607	3,022,231	-157,280
(by transfer)	(90,239)	(66,200)	(109,098)	(+18,859)
Promote and Develop Fund (transfer out)	(-90,239)	(-66,200)	(-109,098)	(-18,859)
Coastal zone management transfer	3,000	---	---	-3,000
Subtotal	3,182,511	3,377,607	3,022,231	-160,280
Procurement, Acquisition and Construction	1,332,682	2,052,777	1,817,094	+484,412
Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery	79,840	65,000	65,000	-14,840
Fishermen's Contingency Fund	---	350	350	+350
Coastal Zone Management Fund	-1,000	---	---	+1,000
Fisheries Finance Program Account	-6,000	-10,000	-11,000	-5,000
Fisheries Enforcement Asset Forfeiture Fund	---	8,000	8,000	+8,000
Offsetting receipts	---	-8,000	-8,000	-8,000
Sanctuaries Enforcement Asset Forfeiture Fund	---	1,000	1,000	+1,000
Offsetting receipts	---	-1,000	-1,000	-1,000
Total, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration	4,588,033	5,485,734	4,893,675	+305,642
Departmental Management				
Salaries and expenses	57,884	64,871	57,000	-884
Renovation and Modernization	14,970	16,150	5,000	-9,970
Office of Inspector General	26,946	33,520	26,946	---
Enterprise cybersecurity monitoring and operations	---	22,612	---	---
Total, Departmental Management	99,800	137,153	88,946	-10,854
Total, title I, Department of Commerce	7,580,857	8,802,638	7,807,749	+226,892
Appropriations	(7,580,857)	(8,802,638)	(7,607,749)	(+26,892)
Disaster relief category	---	---	(200,000)	(+200,000)
(by transfer)	99,239	75,200	118,098	+18,859
(transfer out)	-99,239	-75,200	-118,098	-18,859
TITLE II - DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE				
General Administration				
Salaries and expenses	118,251	134,225	110,822	-7,429
National Drug Intelligence Center	33,955	25,000	20,000	-13,955
Justice Information Sharing Technology	60,164	54,307	44,307	-15,857
Tactical Law Enforcement Wireless Communications	99,800	102,751	87,000	-12,800
Total, General Administration	312,170	316,283	262,129	-50,041
Administrative review and appeals	300,084	332,583	305,000	+4,916
Transfer from immigration examinations fee account	-4,000	-4,000	-4,000	---
Direct appropriation	296,084	328,583	301,000	+4,916
Detention Trustee	1,515,626	1,595,360	1,580,595	+64,969
Office of Inspector General	84,199	85,057	84,199	---
United States Parole Commission				
Salaries and expenses	12,833	13,213	12,833	---
Legal Activities				
Salaries and expenses, general legal activities	863,367	955,391	863,367	---
Vaccine Injury Compensation Trust Fund	7,833	7,833	7,833	---
Salaries and expenses, Antitrust Division	162,844	166,221	159,587	-3,257
Offsetting fee collections - current year	-96,000	-108,000	-108,000	-12,000
Direct appropriation	66,844	58,221	51,587	-15,257
Salaries and expenses, United States Attorneys	1,930,135	1,995,149	1,960,000	+29,865
United States Trustee System Fund	218,811	234,115	223,258	+4,447
Offsetting fee collections	-214,250	-234,115	-223,258	-9,008
Direct appropriation	4,561	---	---	-4,561

DIVISION B - DEPARTMENTS OF COMMERCE AND JUSTICE, AND SCIENCE, AND RELATED AGENCIES, FY 2012 (H.R. 2112)
(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 2011 Enacted	FY 2012 Request	Conference	Conference vs. Enacted
Salaries and expenses, Foreign Claims Settlement Commission	2,113	2,124	2,000	-113
Fees and expenses of witnesses	270,000	270,000	270,000	---
Salaries and expenses, Community Relations Service	11,456	12,967	11,456	---
Assets Forfeiture Fund	20,948	20,990	20,948	---
Total, Legal Activities	3,177,257	3,322,675	3,187,191	+9,934
United States Marshals Service				
Salaries and expenses	1,123,511	1,243,570	1,174,000	+50,489
Construction	16,592	15,625	15,000	-1,592
Total, United States Marshals Service	1,140,103	1,259,195	1,189,000	+48,897
National Security Division				
Salaries and expenses	87,762	87,882	87,000	-762
Interagency Law Enforcement				
Interagency Crime and Drug Enforcement	527,512	540,966	527,512	---
Federal Bureau of Investigation				
Salaries and expenses	3,385,216	3,358,000	3,376,000	-9,216
Overseas contingency operations (emergency)	101,066	---	---	-101,066
Counterintelligence and national security	4,332,873	4,636,991	4,660,991	+328,118
Subtotal	7,819,155	7,994,991	8,036,991	+217,836
Construction	107,095	80,982	80,982	-26,113
Total, Federal Bureau of Investigation	7,926,250	8,075,973	8,117,973	+191,723
Drug Enforcement Administration				
Salaries and expenses	2,305,947	2,354,114	2,347,000	+41,053
Diversion control fund	-290,304	-322,000	-322,000	-31,696
Subtotal	2,015,643	2,032,114	2,025,000	+9,357
Construction	---	10,000	10,000	+10,000
Total, Drug Enforcement Administration	2,015,643	2,042,114	2,035,000	+19,357
Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives				
Salaries and expenses	1,112,542	1,147,295	1,152,000	+39,458
Federal Prison System				
Salaries and expenses	6,282,410	6,724,266	6,551,281	+268,871
Buildings and facilities	98,957	99,394	90,000	-8,957
Limitation on administrative expenses, Federal Prison Industries, Incorporated	2,700	2,700	2,700	---
Total, Federal Prison System	6,384,067	6,826,360	6,643,981	+259,914
State and Local Law Enforcement Activities				
Office on Violence Against Women:				
Prevention and prosecution programs	417,663	431,750	412,500	-5,163
Salaries and expenses (by transfer)	---	(23,148)	---	---
Subtotal	417,663	454,898	412,500	-5,163
Office of Justice Programs:				
Research, evaluation and statistics	234,530	178,500	113,000	-121,530
State and local law enforcement assistance	1,117,845	1,173,500	1,162,500	+44,655
Juvenile justice programs	275,423	280,000	262,500	-12,923
Salaries and expenses	---	271,833	---	---
(transfer out)	---	(-63,478)	---	---
Subtotal	---	208,355	---	---

DIVISION B - DEPARTMENTS OF COMMERCE AND JUSTICE, AND SCIENCE, AND RELATED AGENCIES, FY 2012 (H.R. 2112)
(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 2011 Enacted	FY 2012 Request	Conference	Conference vs. Enacted
Public safety officer benefits:				
Death benefits	61,000	62,000	62,000	+1,000
Disability and education benefits	9,082	16,300	16,300	+7,218
Subtotal	70,082	78,300	78,300	+8,218
Total, Office of Justice Programs	1,697,880	1,918,655	1,616,300	-81,580
Community Oriented Policing Services:				
COPS programs	494,933	669,500	198,500	-296,433
Salaries and expenses (by transfer)	---	(40,330)	---	---
Subtotal	494,933	709,830	198,500	-296,433
OJP, OVW, COPS Salaries and expenses	186,626	---	---	-186,626
Total, State and Local Law Enforcement Activities	2,797,102	3,083,383	2,227,300	-569,802
Total, title II, Department of Justice	27,389,150	28,724,339	27,407,713	+18,563
Appropriations	(27,288,084)	(28,724,339)	(27,407,713)	(+119,629)
Emergency appropriations	(101,066)	---	---	(-101,066)
(by transfer)	---	63,478	---	---
(transfer out)	---	-63,478	---	---
TITLE III - SCIENCE				
Office of Science and Technology Policy	6,647	6,650	4,500	-2,147
National Aeronautics and Space Administration				
Science	4,935,409	5,016,800	5,090,000	+154,591
Aeronautics	533,930	569,400	569,900	+35,970
Space Technology	---	1,024,200	575,000	+575,000
Exploration	3,800,683	3,948,700	3,770,800	-29,883
Space Operations	5,497,483	4,346,900	4,233,600	-1,263,883
Education	145,508	138,400	138,400	-7,108
Cross-agency Support	3,105,177	3,192,000	2,995,000	-110,177
Construction and environmental compliance and restoration	393,511	450,400	390,000	-3,511
Office of Inspector General	36,327	37,500	37,300	+973
Total, National Aeronautics and Space Administration	18,448,028	18,724,300	17,800,000	-648,028
National Science Foundation				
Research and related activities	5,496,011	6,185,540	5,651,000	+154,989
Defense function	67,864	68,000	68,000	+136
Subtotal	5,563,875	6,253,540	5,719,000	+155,125
Major Research Equipment and Facilities Construction	117,055	224,680	167,055	+50,000
Education and Human Resources	861,034	911,200	829,000	-32,034
Agency Operations and Award Management	299,400	357,740	299,400	---
Office of the National Science Board	4,531	4,840	4,440	-91
Office of Inspector General	13,972	15,000	14,200	+228
Total, National Science Foundation	6,859,867	7,767,000	7,033,095	+173,228
Total, title III, Science	25,314,542	26,497,950	24,837,595	-476,947
TITLE IV - RELATED AGENCIES				
Commission on Civil Rights				
Salaries and expenses	9,381	9,429	9,193	-188
Equal Employment Opportunity Commission				
Salaries and expenses	366,568	385,520	360,000	-6,568
State and local assistance	---	---	---	---
Total, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission	366,568	385,520	360,000	-6,568

DIVISION B - DEPARTMENTS OF COMMERCE AND JUSTICE, AND SCIENCE, AND RELATED AGENCIES, FY 2012 (H.R. 2112)
(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 2011 Enacted	FY 2012 Request	Conference	Conference vs. Enacted
International Trade Commission				
Salaries and expenses	81,696	87,000	80,000	-1,696
Payment to the Legal Services Corporation				
Salaries and expenses	404,190	450,000	348,000	-56,190
Marine Mammal Commission				
Salaries and expenses	3,243	3,025	3,025	-218
Office of the U.S. Trade Representative				
Salaries and expenses	47,730	51,251	51,251	+3,521
State Justice Institute				
Salaries and expenses	5,121	5,131	5,121	---
Total, title IV, Related Agencies	917,929	991,356	856,590	-61,339
TITLE V - RESCISSIONS				
Emergency steel, oil gas guarantees prgm (rescission)	-48,000	-43,064	-700	+47,300
NTIA, Information Infrastructure grants (rescission)	---	-2,000	-2,000	-2,000
NTIA, Public Telecommunications Facilities, Planning and Construction	---	---	-2,750	-2,750
NTIA, Spectrum Fund (rescission)	-4,800	---	---	+4,800
Bureau of the Census (rescission)	-1,740,000	---	---	+1,740,000
Census, Working capital fund (rescission)	-50,000	---	---	+50,000
Foreign Fishing Observer Fund (rescission)	---	-350	-350	-350
Digital TV Transition Public Safety Fund (rescission)	---	-4,300	-4,300	-4,300
DOJ, Working Capital Fund (rescission)	-26,000	-40,000	-40,000	-14,000
DOJ, Assets Forfeiture Fund (rescission)	-495,000	-620,000	-675,000	-180,000
US Marshals Service,salaries and expenses (rescission)	---	-7,200	-2,200	-2,200
DEA, Salaries and expenses (rescission)	---	-30,000	-10,000	-10,000
FPS, Buildings and facilities (rescission)	---	-35,000	-45,000	-45,000
Office of Justice programs (rescission)	-42,000	-42,600	-55,000	-13,000
Community oriented policing services (rescission)	-10,200	-10,200	-23,605	-13,405
Violence against women prevention and prosecution programs (rescission)	---	-5,000	-15,000	-15,000
NASA (rescission)	---	---	-30,000	-30,000
Total, title V, Rescissions	-2,416,000	-839,714	-905,905	+1,510,095
Grand total	58,786,478	64,176,569	60,003,742	+1,217,264
Appropriations	(61,101,412)	(65,016,283)	(60,709,647)	(-391,765)
Rescissions	(-2,416,000)	(-839,714)	(-905,905)	(+1,510,095)
Emergency appropriations	(101,066)	---	---	(-101,066)
Disaster relief category	---	---	(200,000)	(+200,000)
(by transfer)	99,239	138,678	118,098	+18,859
(transfer out)	-99,239	-138,678	-118,098	-18,859

DIVISION C - DEPARTMENTS OF TRANSPORTATION AND HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT
AND RELATED AGENCIES, FY 2012 (H.R. 2112)
(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 2011 Enacted	FY 2012 Request	Conference	Conference vs. Enacted
TITLE I - DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION				
Office of the Secretary				
Salaries and expenses	102,481	118,842	102,481	---
Immediate Office of the Secretary	(2,626)	---	(2,618)	(-8)
Immediate Office of the Deputy Secretary	(984)	---	(984)	---
Office of the General Counsel	(20,318)	---	(19,515)	(-803)
Office of the Under Secretary of Transportation for Policy	(11,078)	---	(10,107)	(-971)
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Budget and Programs	(10,538)	---	(10,538)	---
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Governmental Affairs	(2,499)	---	(2,500)	(+1)
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Administration	(25,469)	---	(25,469)	---
Office of Public Affairs	(2,051)	---	(2,020)	(-31)
Office of the Executive Secretariat	(1,655)	---	(1,595)	(-60)
Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization	(1,496)	---	(1,369)	(-127)
Office of Intelligence, Security, and Emergency Response	(10,579)	---	(10,778)	(+199)
Office of the Chief Information Officer	(13,189)	---	(14,988)	(+1,799)
Subtotal	102,481	118,842	102,481	---
National infrastructure investments	526,944	---	500,000	-26,944
Multi-year investment initiative	---	2,000,000	---	---
Livable communities initiative	---	10,000	---	---
Financial management capital	4,990	17,000	4,990	---
Cyber security initiatives	---	---	10,000	+10,000
Office of Civil Rights	9,648	9,661	9,384	-264
Transportation planning, research, and development	9,799	9,824	9,000	-799
Working capital fund	(147,301)	(192,000)	(172,000)	(+24,699)
Minority business resource center program	921	922	922	+1
(Limitation on guaranteed loans)	(18,330)	(18,367)	(18,367)	(+37)
Minority business outreach	3,068	3,100	3,068	---
Payments to air carriers (Airport & Airway Trust Fund)	149,700	123,254	143,000	-6,700
Rescission of excess compensation for general aviation operations (Sec. 106)	---	-3,000	-3,254	-3,254
Total, Office of the Secretary	807,551	2,289,603	779,591	-27,960
National infrastructure bank (investment initiative)	---	5,000,000	---	---
Federal Aviation Administration				
Operations	9,513,962	9,823,000	9,653,395	+139,433
Air traffic organization	(7,473,299)	---	(7,442,738)	(-30,561)
Aviation safety	(1,253,020)	---	(1,252,991)	(-29)
Commercial space transportation	---	---	(16,271)	(+16,271)
Finance and management	---	---	(582,117)	(+582,117)
Human resources programs	---	---	(98,858)	(+98,858)
Staff offices	---	---	(200,286)	(+200,286)
NextGen	---	---	(60,134)	(+60,134)
Facilities & equipment (Airport & Airway Trust Fund)	2,730,731	2,870,000	2,730,731	---
Multi-year investment initiative	---	250,000	---	---
Research, engineering, and development (Airport & Airway Trust Fund	169,660	190,000	167,556	-2,104
Grants-in-aid for airports (Airport and Airway Trust Fund)(Liquidation of contract authorization)	(3,550,000)	(3,600,000)	(3,435,000)	(-115,000)
(Limitation on obligations)	(3,515,000)	(3,515,000)	(3,350,000)	(-165,000)
Administration	(93,422)	(101,000)	(101,000)	(+7,578)
Airport Cooperative Research Program	(15,000)	(15,000)	(15,000)	---
Airport technology research	(22,472)	(29,250)	(29,250)	(+6,778)
Small community air service development program	(6,000)	---	(6,000)	---
Multi-year investment initiative	---	(3,100,000)	---	---

DIVISION C - DEPARTMENTS OF TRANSPORTATION AND HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT
AND RELATED AGENCIES, FY 2012 (H.R. 2112)
(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 2011 Enacted	FY 2012 Request	Conference	Conference vs. Enacted
Aviation insurance revolving fund (Sec. 115)	---	-1,000	---	---
Total, Federal Aviation Administration	12,414,353	13,132,000	12,551,682	+137,329
(Limitations on obligations)	(3,515,000)	(3,515,000)	(3,350,000)	(-165,000)
Total budgetary resources	(15,929,353)	(16,647,000)	(15,901,682)	(-27,671)
Federal Highway Administration				
Limitation on administrative expenses	(413,533)	(437,172)	(412,000)	(-1,533)
Federal-aid highways (Highway Trust Fund):				
(Liquidation of contract authorization)	(41,846,000)	(70,414,000)	(39,882,583)	(-1,963,417)
(Limitation on obligations)	(41,107,000)	(42,025,000)	(39,143,583)	(-1,963,417)
(Exempt contract authority)	(739,000)	(739,000)	(739,000)	---
Multi-year investment initiative	---	(27,650,000)	---	---
Emergency relief (disaster relief category)	---	---	1,662,000	+1,662,000
Rescission of contract authority (Highway Trust Fund)	-2,500,000	---	---	+2,500,000
Rescission of old demos	-630,000	-630,000	---	+630,000
Total, Federal Highway Administration	-3,130,000	-630,000	1,662,000	+4,792,000
Appropriations	---	---	---	---
Rescissions of contract authority	(-3,130,000)	(-630,000)	---	(+3,130,000)
(Limitations on obligations)	(41,107,000)	(69,675,000)	(39,143,583)	(-1,963,417)
(Exempt contract authority)	(739,000)	(739,000)	(739,000)	---
Total budgetary resources	(38,716,000)	(69,784,000)	(41,544,583)	(+2,828,583)
Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration				
Motor carrier safety operations and programs (Highway Trust Fund)(Liquidation of contract authorization)	(245,000)	(276,000)	(247,724)	(+2,724)
(Limitation on obligations)	(245,000)	(276,000)	(247,724)	(+2,724)
Motor carrier safety grants (Highway Trust Fund)				
(Liquidation of contract authorization)	(310,070)	(330,000)	(307,000)	(-3,070)
(Limitation on obligations)	(310,070)	(330,000)	(307,000)	(-3,070)
CVISN contract authority (Sec. 131)	---	---	1,000	+1,000
Rescission of contract authority	---	---	-1,000	-1,000
Total, Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration	---	---	---	---
(Limitations on obligations)	(555,070)	(606,000)	(554,724)	(-346)
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration				
Operations and research (general fund)	140,146	---	140,146	---
Vehicle safety	---	170,709	---	---
Operations and research (Highway Trust Fund)				
(Liquidation of contract authorization)	(105,500)	(133,191)	(109,500)	(+4,000)
(Limitation on obligations)	(105,500)	(133,191)	(109,500)	(+4,000)
National driver register (Highway Trust Fund)				
(Liquidation of contract authorization)	(4,000)	---	---	(-4,000)
(Limitation on obligations)	(4,000)	---	---	(-4,000)
National driver register modernization	3,343	---	---	-3,343
Highway traffic safety grants (Highway Trust Fund)				
(Liquidation of contract authorization)	(619,500)	(556,100)	(550,328)	(-69,172)
(Limitation on obligations)	(619,500)	(556,100)	(550,328)	(-69,172)
Highway safety programs (23 USC 402)	(235,000)	(235,000)	(235,000)	---
Occupant protection incentive grants(23 USC 405)	(25,000)	(35,000)	(25,000)	---
Safety belt performance grants (23 USC 406)	(124,500)	---	(48,500)	(-76,000)
Distracted driving prevention	---	(50,000)	---	---
State traffic safety information system improvement(23 USC 408)	(34,500)	(34,500)	(34,500)	---
Impaired driving countermeasures (23 USC 410)	(139,000)	(139,000)	(139,000)	---
Grant administration	(18,500)	(18,600)	(25,328)	(+6,828)
High visibility enforcement	(29,000)	(37,000)	(29,000)	---
Child safety and booster seat grants	(7,000)	---	(7,000)	---
Motorcyclist safety	(7,000)	(7,000)	(7,000)	---

DIVISION C - DEPARTMENTS OF TRANSPORTATION AND HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT
AND RELATED AGENCIES, FY 2012 (H.R. 2112)
(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 2011 Enacted	FY 2012 Request	Conference	Conference vs. Enacted
Rescission of contract authority	-76,000	---	---	+76,000
Total, National Highway Traffic Safety Admin.	67,489	170,709	140,146	+72,657
Appropriations	(143,489)	---	(140,146)	(-3,343)
Rescissions of contract authority	(-76,000)	---	---	(+76,000)
(Limitations on obligations)	(729,000)	(689,291)	(659,828)	(-69,172)
Total budgetary resources	(796,489)	(860,000)	(799,974)	(+3,485)
Federal Railroad Administration				
Safety and operations	176,596	223,034	178,596	+2,000
Offsetting fee collections	---	-40,000	---	---
Subtotal	176,596	183,034	178,596	+2,000
Railroad research and development	35,030	40,000	35,000	-30
Rail line relocation and improvement program	10,511	---	---	-10,511
System preservation	---	1,546,000	---	---
Multi-year investment initiative	---	2,500,000	---	---
Subtotal	---	4,046,000	---	---
Network Development	---	1,000,000	---	---
Multi-year investment initiative	---	3,000,000	---	---
Subtotal	---	4,000,000	---	---
Capital assistance for high speed rail corridors and intercity passenger rail service	---	---	---	---
Rescission	-400,000	---	---	+400,000
National Railroad Passenger Corporation:				
Operating grants to the National Railroad Passenger Corporation	561,874	---	466,000	-95,874
Capital and debt service grants to the National Railroad Passenger Corporation	921,778	---	952,000	+30,222
Subtotal	1,483,652	---	1,418,000	-65,652
Total, Federal Railroad Administration	1,305,789	8,269,034	1,631,596	+325,807
Federal Transit Administration				
Administrative expenses	98,713	---	98,713	---
Formula and Bus Grants (Hwy Trust Fund, Mass Transit Account (Liquidation of contract authorization)	(9,400,000)	---	(9,400,000)	---
(Limitation on obligations)	(8,343,171)	---	(8,360,565)	(+17,394)
Research and technology deployment	---	166,472	---	---
Transit Formula Grants (Hwy Trust Fund, Mass Transit Account (Liquidation of contract authorization)	---	(10,000,000)	---	---
(Limitation on obligations)	---	(4,691,986)	---	---
Multi-year investment initiative	---	(3,000,000)	---	---
Transit expansion and livable communities (liquidation of contract authorization)	---	(600,000)	---	---
(limitation on obligations)	---	(233,514)	---	---
Capital investment grants	---	2,235,556	---	---
Multi-year investment initiative	---	1,000,000	---	---
Subtotal	---	3,235,556	---	---
Operations and safety	---	166,294	---	---
Administrative programs	---	(129,700)	---	---
Rail transit safety programs	---	(36,594)	---	---
Research and University Research Centers	58,882	---	44,000	-14,882
Bus and rail state of good repair (liquidation of contract authorization)	---	(3,000,000)	---	---
(limitation on obligations)	---	(3,207,178)	---	---
Multi-year investment initiative	---	(7,500,000)	---	---
Capital investment grants	1,596,800	---	1,955,000	+358,200

DIVISION C - DEPARTMENTS OF TRANSPORTATION AND HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT
AND RELATED AGENCIES, FY 2012 (H.R. 2112)
(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 2011 Enacted	FY 2012 Request	Conference	Conference vs. Enacted
Energy efficiency and greenhouse gas reduction grants.	49,900	---	---	-49,900
Rescission	-280,000	---	-58,500	+221,500
Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority capital and preventive maintenance	149,700	150,000	150,000	+300
Total, Federal Transit Administration	1,673,995	3,718,322	2,189,213	+515,218
(Limitations on obligations)	(8,343,171)	(18,632,678)	(8,360,565)	(+17,394)
Total budgetary resources	(10,017,166)	(22,351,000)	(10,549,778)	(+532,612)
Saint Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation				
Operations and maintenance (Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund)	32,259	33,996	32,259	---
Maritime Administration				
Maritime security program	173,652	174,000	174,000	+348
Operations and training	151,446	161,539	156,258	+4,812
Rescission	---	---	-980	-980
Ship disposal	14,970	18,500	5,500	-9,470
Assistance to small shipyards	9,980	---	9,980	---
Maritime Guaranteed Loan (Title XI) Program Account:				
Administrative expenses	3,992	3,740	3,740	-252
Rescission	---	-54,100	-35,000	-35,000
Guaranteed loans subsidy	4,990	---	---	-4,990
Subtotal	8,982	-50,360	-31,260	-40,242
Total, Maritime Administration	359,030	303,679	313,498	-45,532
Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration				
Administrative expenses:				
General Fund	21,454	21,519	20,721	-733
Pipeline Safety Fund	638	639	639	+1
Pipeline Safety information grants to communities.	(998)	(1,000)	(1,000)	(+2)
Subtotal	22,092	22,158	21,360	-732
Hazardous materials safety	39,020	50,089	42,338	+3,318
Offsetting collections (legislative proposal)	---	-12,000	---	---
Subtotal	39,020	38,089	42,338	+3,318
Pipeline safety:				
Pipeline Safety Fund	87,838	93,854	90,679	+2,841
Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund	18,867	21,510	18,573	-294
Pipeline Safety Design Review Fund (leg proposal).	---	4,000	---	---
Pipeline Safety Special Permit Fund (leg proposal)	---	500	---	---
Pipeline safety user fees	-88,014	-94,493	-91,318	-3,304
Additional Pipeline user fees (leg proposal)	---	-6,000	---	---
Subtotal	18,691	19,371	17,934	-757
Emergency preparedness grants:				
Limitation on emergency preparedness fund	(28,318)	(28,318)	(28,318)	---
(Emergency preparedness fund)	(188)	(188)	(188)	---
Total, Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration	79,803	79,618	81,632	+1,829
Research and Innovative Technology Administration				
Research and development	12,981	17,600	15,981	+3,000
Office of Inspector General				
Salaries and expenses	74,964	89,185	79,624	+4,660

DIVISION C - DEPARTMENTS OF TRANSPORTATION AND HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT
AND RELATED AGENCIES, FY 2012 (H.R. 2112)
(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 2011 Enacted	FY 2012 Request	Conference	Conference vs. Enacted
Surface Transportation Board				
Salaries and expenses	29,010	31,250	29,310	+300
Offsetting collections	-1,250	-1,250	-1,250	---
Total, Surface Transportation Board	27,760	30,000	28,060	+300
Total, title I, Department of Transportation	13,725,974	32,503,746	19,505,282	+5,779,308
Appropriations	(17,611,974)	(33,190,846)	(17,942,016)	(+330,042)
Rescissions	(-680,000)	(-57,100)	(-97,734)	(+582,266)
Disaster relief category	---	---	(1,662,000)	(+1,662,000)
Rescissions of contract authority	(-3,206,000)	(-630,000)	(-1,000)	(+3,205,000)
(Limitations on obligations)	(54,249,241)	(96,217,969)	(52,068,700)	(-2,180,541)
Total budgetary resources	(67,975,215)	(128,721,715)	(71,573,982)	(+3,598,767)
TITLE II - DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT				
Management and Administration				
Executive direction	26,801	30,408	---	-26,801
Administration, operations and management	523,990	530,117	537,789	+13,799
Program Office Salaries and Expenses:				
Public and Indian Housing	188,696	189,610	200,000	+11,304
Community Planning and Development	96,795	99,815	100,000	+3,205
Housing	381,123	397,660	391,500	+10,377
Policy Development and Research	19,100	21,390	22,211	+3,111
Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity	71,656	70,733	72,600	+944
Office of Healthy Homes and Lead Hazard Control	7,137	7,167	7,400	+263
Office of Sustainable Housing and Communities	---	3,100	---	---
Subtotal	764,507	789,475	793,711	+29,204
Total, Management and Administration	1,315,298	1,350,000	1,331,500	+16,202
Public and Indian Housing				
Tenant-based rental assistance:				
Renewals	16,669,283	17,143,837	17,242,351	+573,068
Tenant protection vouchers	109,780	75,000	75,000	-34,780
Administrative fees	1,447,100	1,647,780	1,350,000	-97,100
Family self-sufficiency coordinators	59,880	60,000	60,000	+120
Veterans affairs supportive housing	49,900	75,000	75,000	+25,100
Sec. 811 Mainstream voucher renewals	34,930	114,046	112,018	+77,088
Disaster housing assistance program	---	50,000	---	---
Homeless vouchers demonstration program	---	56,906	---	---
Subtotal (available this fiscal year)	18,370,873	19,222,569	18,914,369	+543,496
Advance appropriations	4,000,000	4,000,000	4,000,000	---
Less appropriations from prior year advances	-3,992,000	-4,000,000	-4,000,000	-8,000
Total, Tenant-based rental assistance appropriated in this bill	18,378,873	19,222,569	18,914,369	+535,496
Transforming rental assistance demonstration program	---	200,000	---	---
Public Housing Capital Fund	2,040,112	2,405,345	1,875,000	-165,112
Public Housing Operating Fund	4,616,748	3,961,850	3,961,850	-654,898
Revitalization of severely distressed public housing	99,800	---	---	-99,800
Choice neighborhoods	---	250,000	120,000	+120,000
Native American housing block grants	648,700	700,000	650,000	+1,300
Native Hawaiian housing block grant	12,974	10,000	13,000	+26
Indian housing loan guarantee fund program account	6,986	7,000	6,000	-986
(Limitation on guaranteed loans)	(919,000)	(428,000)	(360,000)	(-559,000)
Native Hawaiian loan guarantee fund program account	1,042	---	386	-656
(Limitation on guaranteed loans)	(41,504)	---	(41,504)	---
Housing Certificate Fund	---	50,000	---	---
Rescission	---	-50,000	-200,000	-200,000
Total, Public and Indian Housing	25,805,235	26,756,764	25,340,605	-464,630

DIVISION C - DEPARTMENTS OF TRANSPORTATION AND HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT
AND RELATED AGENCIES, FY 2012 (H.R. 2112)
(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 2011 Enacted	FY 2012 Request	Conference	Conference vs. Enacted
Community Planning and Development				
Housing opportunities for persons with AIDS	334,330	335,000	332,000	-2,330
Community development fund	3,500,984	3,781,368	2,948,090	-552,894
Indian CDBG	---	---	60,000	+60,000
Disaster relief	---	---	300,000	+300,000
(Disaster relief category)	---	---	100,000	+100,000
Subtotal	3,500,984	3,781,368	3,408,090	-92,894
Community development loan guarantees (Section 108):				
(Limitation on guaranteed loans)	(275,000)	(500,000)	(240,000)	(-35,000)
Credit subsidy	5,988	---	5,952	-36
HOME investment partnerships program	1,606,780	1,650,000	1,000,000	-606,780
Self-help and assisted homeownership opportunity program	81,836	---	53,500	-28,336
Capacity building	---	50,000	---	---
Homeless assistance grants	1,901,190	2,372,000	1,901,190	---
Total, Community Planning and Development	7,431,108	8,188,368	6,700,732	-730,376
Housing Programs				
Project-based rental assistance:				
Renewals	8,932,100	9,139,672	9,050,672	+118,572
Contract administrators	325,348	289,000	289,000	-36,348
Subtotal (available this fiscal year)	9,257,448	9,428,672	9,339,672	+82,224
Advance appropriations	400,000	400,000	400,000	---
Less appropriations from prior year advances	-392,885	-400,000	-400,000	-7,115
Total, Project-based rental assistance appropriated in this bill	9,264,563	9,428,672	9,339,672	+75,109
Housing for the elderly	399,200	757,000	374,627	-24,573
Housing for persons with disabilities	149,700	196,000	165,000	+15,300
Housing counseling assistance	---	88,000	45,000	+45,000
Rental housing assistance	39,920	15,733	1,300	-38,620
Rent supplement (rescission)	-40,600	-6,600	-231,600	-191,000
Manufactured housing fees trust fund	15,982	14,000	6,500	-9,482
Offsetting collections	-7,000	-7,000	-4,000	+3,000
Subtotal	8,982	7,000	2,500	-6,482
Total, Housing Programs	9,821,765	10,485,805	9,696,499	-125,266
Appropriations	(9,869,365)	(10,499,405)	(9,932,099)	(+62,734)
Rescissions	(-40,600)	(-6,600)	(-231,600)	(-191,000)
Offsetting collections	(-7,000)	(-7,000)	(-4,000)	(+3,000)
Federal Housing Administration				
FHA - Mutual mortgage insurance program account:				
(Limitation on guaranteed loans)	(399,200,000)	(400,000,000)	(400,000,000)	(+800,000)
(Limitation on direct loans)	(50,000)	(50,000)	(50,000)	---
Offsetting receipts	-960,000	-4,427,000	-4,427,000	-3,467,000
Proposed offsetting receipts (HECM)(Sec. 210)	---	-286,000	-286,000	-286,000
Additional offsetting receipts	-2,076,000	---	---	+2,076,000
Additional offsetting receipts (Sec. 145)	-35,000	---	---	+35,000
Additional offsetting receipts (Sec. 238)	---	---	-59,000	-59,000
Administrative contract expenses	206,586	230,000	207,000	+414
Working capital fund (transfer out)	---	(-72,000)	(-71,500)	(-71,500)
FHA - General and special risk program account:				
(Limitation on guaranteed loans)	(20,000,000)	(25,000,000)	(25,000,000)	(+5,000,000)
(Limitation on direct loans)	(20,000)	(20,000)	(20,000)	---
Offsetting receipts	-315,000	-400,000	-400,000	-85,000
Credit subsidy	8,583	8,600	---	-8,583
Total, Federal Housing Administration	-3,170,831	-4,874,400	-4,965,000	-1,794,169

DIVISION C - DEPARTMENTS OF TRANSPORTATION AND HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT
AND RELATED AGENCIES, FY 2012 (H.R. 2112)
(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 2011 Enacted	FY 2012 Request	Conference	Conference vs. Enacted
Government National Mortgage Association (GNMA)				
Guarantees of mortgage-backed securities loan guarantee program account:				
(Limitation on guaranteed loans)	(500,000,000)	(500,000,000)	(500,000,000)	---
Administrative expenses (legislative proposal)	11,073	30,000	19,500	+8,427
Offsetting receipts (legislative proposal)	---	-100,000	-100,000	-100,000
Offsetting receipts	-720,000	-521,000	-521,000	+199,000
Offsetting receipts (Sec. 145)	-9,000	---	---	+9,000
Offsetting receipts (Sec. 238)	---	---	-5,000	-5,000
Proposed offsetting receipts (HECM) (Sec. 210)	---	-24,000	-24,000	-24,000
Total, Gov't National Mortgage Association	-717,927	-615,000	-630,500	+87,427
Policy Development and Research				
Research and technology	47,904	57,000	46,000	-1,904
Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity				
Fair housing activities	71,856	72,000	70,847	-1,009
Office of Lead Hazard Control and Healthy Homes				
Lead hazard reduction	119,760	140,000	120,000	+240
Office of Sustainable Housing and Communities				
Sustainable Housing Initiative	---	150,000	---	---
Management and Administration				
Working capital fund	199,600	243,000	199,035	-565
(By transfer)	---	(72,000)	(71,500)	(+71,500)
Office of Inspector General	124,750	126,455	124,000	-750
Transformation initiative	70,858	---	50,000	-20,858
Total, Management and Administration	395,208	369,455	373,035	-22,173
(Grand total, Management and Administration)	(1,710,506)	(1,719,455)	(1,704,535)	(-5,971)
General Provisions				
Rescission of prior year advance (Sec. 236)	---	---	-650,000	-650,000
Total, title II, Department of Housing and Urban Development	41,119,376	42,079,992	37,433,718	-3,685,658
Appropriations	(40,881,976)	(43,501,592)	(39,841,318)	(-1,040,658)
Rescissions	(-40,600)	(-56,600)	(-431,600)	(-391,000)
Advance appropriations	(4,400,000)	(4,400,000)	(4,400,000)	---
Rescissions of prior year advances	---	---	(-650,000)	(-650,000)
Offsetting receipts	(-4,115,000)	(-5,758,000)	(-5,822,000)	(-1,707,000)
Offsetting collections	(-7,000)	(-7,000)	(-4,000)	(+3,000)
(by transfer)	---	72,000	71,500	+71,500
(transfer out)	---	-72,000	-71,500	-71,500
(Limitation on direct loans)	(70,000)	(70,000)	(70,000)	---
(Limitation on guaranteed loans)	(920,435,504)	(925,928,000)	(925,641,504)	(+5,206,000)
TITLE III - OTHER INDEPENDENT AGENCIES				
Access Board	7,285	7,400	7,400	+115
Federal Maritime Commission	24,087	26,265	24,100	+13
Amtrak Office of Inspector General	19,311	22,000	20,500	+1,189
National Transportation Safety Board				
Salaries and expenses	97,854	102,400	102,400	+4,546
Neighborhood Reinvestment Corporation	232,734	215,300	215,300	-17,434
United States Interagency Council on Homelessness	2,675	3,880	3,300	+625
Fannie Mae/Freddie Mac (Sec. 146)	155,000	---	---	-155,000
Total, title III, Other Independent Agencies	538,946	377,245	373,000	-165,946

DIVISION C - DEPARTMENTS OF TRANSPORTATION AND HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT
AND RELATED AGENCIES, FY 2012 (H.R. 2112)
(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 2011 Enacted	FY 2012 Request	Conference	Conference vs. Enacted
Grand total (net)	55,384,296	74,960,983	57,312,000	+1,927,704
Appropriations	(59,032,896)	(77,069,683)	(58,156,334)	(-876,562)
Rescissions	(-720,600)	(-113,700)	(-529,334)	(+191,266)
Disaster relief category	---	---	(1,762,000)	(+1,762,000)
Rescissions of contract authority	(-3,206,000)	(-630,000)	(-1,000)	(+3,205,000)
Advance appropriations	(4,400,000)	(4,400,000)	(4,400,000)	---
Rescissions of prior year advances	---	---	(-650,000)	(-650,000)
Negative subsidy receipts	(-4,115,000)	(-5,758,000)	(-5,822,000)	(-1,707,000)
Offsetting collections	(-7,000)	(-7,000)	(-4,000)	(+3,000)
(Limitation on obligations)	(54,249,241)	(96,217,969)	(52,068,700)	(-2,180,541)
(by transfer)	---	72,000	71,500	+71,500
(transfer out)	---	-72,000	-71,500	-71,500
Total budgetary resources	(109,633,537)	(171,178,952)	(109,380,700)	(-252,837)
Discretionary total	(55,367,000)	(74,960,983)	(55,550,000)	(+183,000)

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DICKS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

The appropriations bill we will consider today includes within it three bills: Agriculture; Commerce-Justice-Science; and Transportation-HUD, along with a clean continuing resolution covering the remaining nine bills. The CR prevents a government shutdown. It is a simple date change to December 16. No anomalies are added; everything but the date is carried forward from the last CR.

The agreement provides disaster relief of $2.3 billion, including the full amount needed to address the backlog of eligible disaster repairs for highways, roads, and bridges, and funds to address agricultural disasters.

The conference report also drops controversial riders on Dodd-Frank financial reform, women's health, and climate change.

The minibus restores funding that was cut in the initial House bill to nutrition and food safety programs.

The conference agreement provides $6.6 billion for the Women, Infants, and Children program, WIC, an increase of $570 million over the level in the House-passed bill and $36 million above the Senate level. At this level, WIC can provide for the estimated 700,000 women, children, and infants that would have been turned away under the previous bill. The impact of food prices will still need to be monitored to ensure the program has sufficient funding.

The conference report provides $177 million for the Commodity Supplemental Food Program, which provides food assistance to particularly vulnerable low-income elderly, as well as mothers and young children. At this level, the program will avoid dropping the 100,000 applicants, as would have been required in the House bill.

The conference agreement restores funding to FDA, $334 million over the House-passed bill, to allow implementation of the Food Safety Modernization Act, and provides $1 billion for the Food Safety and Inspection Service, $32 million over the House level, to maintain the current workforce of meat inspectors.

The agreement restores funding for the COPS programs that were zeroed out in the House-reported bill. COPS grants enable State and local law enforcement agencies to hire and retain police officers, provide equipment to tribal law enforcement agencies, and provide training on community-oriented policing.

The agreement restores much-needed funding for science and innovation. The conference agreement provides $7 billion for the National Science Foundation, an increase of $173 million above the FY11 level and the House-reported bill. While we need to be investing much more in basic research at NSF, the additional funding in the conference agreement is an important step in the right direction.

The conference agreement provides $924 million for NOAA's Joint Polar Satellite System. While still below the request, the conference level will go farther than either the House or Senate levels in helping to minimize the anticipated satellite data gaps.

The agreement provides funding for NASA's James Webb Space Telescope, which the House had zeroed out. The new telescope will be 100 times more powerful than the Hubble Space Telescope, allowing us to see images of the first glows after the Big Bang and greatly enhancing our scientific understanding of the universe.

Finally, the minibus restores funding for transportation and housing programs. The minibus includes $12 billion more than the House subcommittee bill for the Federal-aid highway program, consistent with the annual funding levels assumed in the Surface Transportation Extension Act. The bill includes $10.5 billion for transit programs, $2.5 billion more than the earlier bill.

The agreement also includes $1.4 billion for Amtrak capital and operating grants and deletes onerous language from the House subcommittee-passed bill that would have eliminated service on 26 short-distance routes, affecting 15 States and more than 9 million passengers.

The bill includes funding for the TIGER grant program, which will help advance national and regional transportation projects that will benefit both passenger and freight mobility as well as create jobs. This bill will create a lot of jobs.

The conference agreement provides $45 million in funding for housing counseling assistance. This program provides grant funds to local nonprofit agencies for reverse mortgage, rental, home pre-purchase and foreclosure prevention counseling. This program had been eliminated in 2011.

The Choice Neighborhoods Initiative is funded at $120 million in the conference agreement. Choice is a grant program to revitalize public housing and blighted private housing in mixed-income neighborhoods. This program provides quality low-income housing, while the vast majority of these funds create needed construction jobs. The House subcommittee bill proposed eliminating the program.

The Interagency Council on Homelessness is funded at $3.3 million in the conference agreement. The agency was also eliminated in the House subcommittee bill. The Council enhances the Federal response to homelessness by coordination between agencies, addressing duplicative programs, and identifying best practices.

The conference agreement provides $75 million for the Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing program, equal to the President's budget request. VASH provides long-term housing to homeless veterans. This is an increase of $25 million over the FY11 level.

□ 1500

I'm not happy with every single element of this, but I haven't seen a bill around here yet that is perfect. I also want to say that we did not get as good a compromise as we hoped on the Legal Services Corporation. I wish we could do more because there certainly is a justice gap in this country.

I want to commend the chairman and his staff, both the majority staff and the minority staff, who I think worked very well together with the other body in reaching resolutions in a very timely way on these three bills. And I want to commend the chairman for bringing six bills to the floor.

Now, I could make the case that we actually did 18 bills because we had 12 bills in the '11 omnibus, H.R. 1, that took us a whole week, if you remember, to go through 12 separate bills. So 12 and 6 is 18. That's a pretty good day for the Appropriations Committee.

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. DICKS. I yield to the chairman.

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. And in that H.R. 1, the fiscal year '11 omnibus bill, as you recollect, we had some 500 amendments.

Mr. DICKS. Everybody got a shot.

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Everybody.

Mr. DICKS. I want to commend the chairman for his commitment to regular order and openness, and I hope that next year we can really do all 12 bills. If we can get them done this year in December, then we can focus on the 12 bills for next year and hopefully bring them all to the floor so that Members have a chance to vote. It's important, I think. And I think the fact that so many people wanted to offer an amendment indicates that the membership of the House wants to see an open process. And it's certainly important for the minority, too, to have an opportunity to offer amendments.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the chairman of the Commerce, Justice, Science Subcommittee, a very hardworking chairman who also happens to be a colleague of mine in the class of 1980, the so-called Reaganauts, Chairman FRANK WOLF.

Mr. WOLF. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of this conference report, which includes the fiscal year 2012 Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies Appropriations Act.

I want to thank my colleague and ranking member, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. FATTAH), for his support throughout this process. I also want to thank Senate counterparts, Senators MIKULSKI and HUTCHISON, and I also want to particularly thank Chairman ROGERS of the full committee and Ranking Member Mr. DICKS. This was a very, very open process. Also I want to thank the CJS subcommittee staff, including Mike Ringler, Leslie Albright, Stephanie Meyers, Diana Simpson, Colin Samples and Scott Sammis, as well as Todd

Culligan in my office, and Darek Newby and Bob Bonner on the minority staff.

Working together, we were able to produce a conference report that reduces discretionary spending in line with the Budget Control Act, while the supercommittee works to control entitlement spending which is the primary driver of our unsustainable debt and reform the Tax Code.

The final CJS bill before the House is $583 million below—below—fiscal year 2011 and $4.9 billion, 8.5 percent, below the President's request.

Since Republicans assumed the majority, we have reduced spending by more than $11 billion for agencies funded in the CJS appropriations bill.

At the same time, the bill also provides funding for a variety of critical national priorities. The conference report fully funds the FBI at $8.1 billion to protect the Nation from further terrorist attacks. The bill includes important increases for FBI national security programs and the investigation of cyberintrusions.

The bill also makes important progress in the fight against the horrible and pervasive crime of human trafficking. Human trafficking is spreading through this Nation, and this funding bill will also support State and local human trafficking task force activities and victim assistance services. The conference agreement will require—will require—each U.S. Attorney to establish a human trafficking task force.

In the Department of Commerce, the conference agreement includes new initiatives to bring jobs back to America, including a job repatriation task force and a new grant program to enable U.S. companies to bring off-shored activities back to economically distressed regions of this Nation. It is time for these American companies who have gone to China and Mexico to return home, particularly, I may say, GE, who just moved their health care facilities from Wisconsin to Beijing. They should come back to Wisconsin.

The bill also includes important increases for fundamental scientific research. $7 billion is included for the NSF, an increase of $173 million. NIST research activities receive an increase of over 10 percent—math, science, physics, chemistry and biology, doing the things that make a difference to create jobs.

Research is a primary driver of innovation, growth and job creation, and these investments must be preserved, even in times of budgetary austerity.

The conference agreement includes $17.8 billion for NASA, including funding above the request for America's next generation space exploration system and for cutting-edge technology.

In closing, as other countries are challenging U.S. leadership in space, this conference report includes funding for a comprehensive independent assessment of NASA's strategic direction and agency management to chart a future course that is bold and achievable.

I urge support for the bill.

Mr. DICKS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania, the ranking member of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice and Science, Mr. FATTAH.

Mr. FATTAH. I thank the ranking member, I thank the chairman of the full committee, and, most importantly, I thank my colleague, Chairman FRANK WOLF. We've had an opportunity to work through the issues on this bill, and he has afforded every courtesy to the minority as we have worked through this. It's been truly a bipartisan effort; and even though there are things that we would make different final calculations on, I think that there's nothing else to be said other than that truly this is a product that reflects both input from the majority and the minority, and I thank Chairman WOLF and Chairman ROGERS for the courtesies extended.

This is a bill that I believe funds the most important agencies of our government in terms of securing our citizens, in terms of innovation and advancement in technology and science, in terms of dealing with the challenges of severe weather, and dealing with our oceans and the navigation of crafts throughout our waterways.

This is a bill that is critically important, and I'm happy to join with others to urge that the House would favorably consider it.

There are a number of things I would want to point out. One is that the conferees, all of us working together, were able to agree with an initiative focused on brain research, on neuroscience; and we've been able to put together a collaborative effort that I think portends a great deal of progress in terms of addressing brain diseases like Alzheimer's and Parkinson's, dementia, and also dealing with the question of wounded warriors. I had a chance to visit the brain research and repair center over at Bethesda. There's much more work to be done.

And also for those interested in education, the whole cognitive development, this is the first-of-its-kind initiative bringing together all of the important agencies of the Federal Government. I thank Chairman WOLF and our colleagues and counterparts in the Senate for their cooperation around this.

Also, we were able to increase our efforts in terms of manufacturing and advanced manufacturing, creating a new grant program to help companies bring technology onto the plant floor. Manufacturing has to be the basis for long-term prosperity and national security for our country.

The investments in science, the National Science Foundation, there is no more important agency anywhere in the world; and we were able to work to fund it at a level that's appropriate, $7 billion. The investment in NASA, even though $638 million off of last year's number, when you take out the shuttle costs, it really is a significant statement around a new set of priorities for NASA, and investing in particularly space technology at $575 million and the investment in the Commercial Crew Program, knowing with a certainty that American private enterprise can help us deal with the ongoing need in terms of lower orbit travel.

We have a lot to be thankful for in the bill. Most important to me, even though it's a very small number, are the efforts around youth mentoring. Our support for the 4,000 Boys and Girls Clubs and the Big Brothers and Big Sisters and other youth mentoring agencies that are funded in the Justice Department is a way to divert young people from ever getting engaged in our criminal justice system, and the funding for the Second Chance Program, which was renewed in this year's appropriations.

□ 1510

There's a lot more that I could say, but I think, needless to say, what is important now is that we move this process forward. And there are disappointments—legal services, there will be another day. As my ranking member said, we're disappointed in the final outcome, but we remain committed to trying to find ways as we go forward to make sure people have access to our court system on civil matters.

I want to thank the ranking member, Chairman ROGERS, and my colleague FRANK WOLF for his great work on this bill, and all of the staff, both on the majority and minority side.

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Iowa, chairman of the Transportation and HUD portion of this bill, a very vital part of the bill—the chairman has handled it very, very well—Chairman TOM LATHAM.

Mr. LATHAM. I thank the chairman for yielding time. And I, first of all, want to thank him for the great work, but also Ranking Member DICKS on the full committee; and then a special thank-you to the ranking member on the subcommittee, Mr. OLVER, for all of his hard work. We've worked together as a team on this bill. And I thank the staff on the minority and certainly the majority staff for all their hard work that they put into this.

This is a great day for two different reasons: one, we're going to get this bill done today; and, number two, it's on the Speaker's birthday, so this will be his present anyway. But I do rise in support of the conference report that's before us today, and I urge my colleagues to support it also. I know it doesn't make everyone happy, but it represents a compromise, and that's what a conference report really is all about.

Overall, the THUD division of the agreement contains $55.6 billion in discretionary, a number that is $19.4 billion below the President's request—and

again, $19.4 billion below the President's request.

The agreement provides $39.9 billion for the annual spending for highways, the number that is contained in the latest extension of the Surface Transportation Act. This level will provide adequate resources for our State highway departments to address their needs.

The THUD division contains various commonsense agreements that are universally important to the Nation. For example, there are increased funds for FAA certification personnel, the individuals who inspect and certify new aircraft to ensure safety and airworthiness.

The HUD portion of the THUD agreement contains $37.3 billion—about $4.7 billion below the President's request. There is sufficient funding to renew vouchers for those individuals and families who were in the program last year. The agreement has sufficient funding to keep veterans' housing on a sound footing, and it also has directive language that requires HUD to review veterans' housing utilization rates in Iowa and other rural States and the housing challenges facing veterans in those areas.

Also, under the HUD title, there are funds set aside for homeownership programs that help add housing capacity in rural States. The subject of rural housing capacity has long been a concern in States like Iowa and a concern to an awful lot of Members here in this Congress.

Finally, under HUD Community Development, there is $400 million that can be used for eligible disaster recovery activities in those areas most impacted by the various disasters of this year. These are funds that can be used for repair and rebuilding activities.

To me, at this point, one of the most important elements of this agreement is the funding for highway and community development disaster repairs. These monies are vitally important for my State and others along the Missouri River, States that suffered enormous damage when the Missouri River flood came this past year.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. I yield the gentleman an additional minute.

Mr. LATHAM. The conference agreement contains almost $1.7 billion in emergency disaster money to repair roads and bridges. These funds will supplement existing Federal, State, and local monies and will be used for repairs and reconstruction.

There are areas where State roads are still under water; thus the emergency repair funding for highways in this agreement is vital to ensuring that Iowa roads and the roads in other States are restored to good working condition.

Important to the emergency highway repair category and contained in the agreement is an important waiver that waives the time line of 180 days from the disaster declaration date so that States can receive 100 percent reimbursement.

All in all, this agreement represents the best we could do under the present circumstances. In the end, we've had to come to make some compromises, but we also have a number of important victories in this agreement.

I would urge all Members to support this conference report.

Mr. DICKS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts, the ranking member of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, Mr. OLVER.

Mr. OLVER. I thank the ranking member for yielding time.

I rise in support of this conference report. As ranking member on the Transportation and Housing Subcommittee, I first would like to thank Chairman TOM LATHAM for working openly with me throughout the process, and I congratulate him on bringing his first conference report to the floor. Also, I would like to thank staff—for the majority, the subcommittee clerk, Dena Baron, and her excellent staff; and for the minority, Kate Hallahan, Joe Carlile, and Blair Anderson—all for their diligence and hard work in making this a better bill.

Mr. Speaker, this bill contains elements with which I disagree. In particular, I wish CDBG funding was closer to last year's level, and I am disappointed that the bill does not provide funding for the High-Speed and Intercity Passenger Rail Program. Both of these programs are in high demand and would contribute significant value to our communities if funded properly. However, this bill is a reasonable compromise that has improved significantly the Transportation-HUD portion that was marked up in subcommittee.

The agreement ensures that funding for our transportation infrastructure programs is kept stable, allowing the Federal Aviation Administration to continue modernization of our air traffic control system, providing the Federal Highway Administration with funds needed to maintain our highway network, and providing the Federal Transit Administration with sufficient funding to continue investments to expand our regional transit systems.

I am particularly pleased that the bill provides $1.4 billion for Amtrak and removes destructive language that would have halted service along 26 routes in 19 States. Annual ridership on those routes has increased, and a congressionally authorized process is already under way to reduce the operating costs of these services.

In addition, the bill provides $1.66 billion for the Highway Administration's Emergency Relief Program in order to eliminate the of repairs needed as a result of hurricanes, floods, and other natural disasters, as well as $400 million for emergency CDBG funds. I believe we have a responsibility to provide assistance to States that have endured unanticipated natural disasters without conditioning that assistance on cuts to other programs.

Lastly, I am pleased that this bill reinstates HUD's Housing Counseling Program by providing $45 million. With foreclosure rates remaining high, the counseling services provided by this program continue to be vital for families who are struggling in the current economy.

Mr. Speaker, this bill is a good product of a bipartisan process, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia, the chairman of the Agriculture Subcommittee, a very important part of this bill, Mr. KINGSTON.

Mr. KINGSTON. I thank Chairman ROGERS for the time. I've enjoyed working with him and Ranking Member DICKS, and also the ranking member of our Subcommittee on Agriculture, FDA, and Commodity Futures Trading Commission, the gentleman from California, Mr. SAM FARR. We've held 11 hearings, and we've had probably about 25 hours worth of debate on the floor in which over 50 amendments were offered. This bill is a prime example of what can happen when we get back to regular order.

□ 1520

It was an open process, passed by the subcommittee, full committee, and then finally by the House floor. The bill is $350 million below FY11 in the discretionary portion, and $2.5 billion lower than the President's request for FY12. It is compliant with the Budget Control Act, and a step to show both regular order, compromise and moving us towards a balanced budget.

I also wanted to point out something, Mr. Speaker, that the mandatory portion of this bill is tremendous. Our discretionary total on agriculture is $19.77 billion, but the mandatory is $116.9 billion. School lunch and breakfast and the SNAP program are $98.5 billion alone. If we do not get control of the mandatory spending, we will never be able to balance the budget.

So I urge all Members of Congress to be cognizant of that and work in the important authorizing committees to do some of the reform.

This bill was successful in eliminating a Federal program that goes back to World War I, the mohair subsidy; and that actually was a program designed to get more wool for the World War I soldiers' uniforms. And Ronald Reagan famously said, if you don't believe in resurrection, try killing a government program. And yet, today, the mohair program does get eliminated.

We also reduced the BCAP program, which was something that our committee has been very concerned about the out-of-control spending on it. We've restrained the CFTC with some important bipartisan language regarding user exemptions and cost-benefit

analysis. And we have urged the FDA to stay on its core missions, and we hope that the authorizing committees will look at medical device and drug approval time and transparency so that the FDA can work closer with the providers and the manufacturers rather than in an antagonistic point of view.

We've balanced school safety, inspection, ag research with the many demands that are out there. We have worked with Secretary Vilsack, Dr. Hamburg at FDA, and Mr. Gensler at the CFTC; and we've had an open process throughout the year.

So I urge my colleagues to vote for this and pass this bill. But I also wanted to say thank you to the great staff on both sides. Martin Delgado, head clerk on the majority side; along with Tom O'Brien, Betsy Bina, Andrew Cooper and Allie Thigpen and Mike Donal; and then on the minority side, working for Mr. FARR, Martha Foley, Matt Smith, Troy Phillips and Rochelle Dornatt.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
Washington, DC, October 4, 2011.

Hon. GARY GENSLER,
Chairman, U.S. Commodity Futures Trading Commission, Washington, DC.

Hon. BEN S. BERNANKE,
Chairman of the Board of Governors, Federal Reserve System, Washington, DC.

Hon. MARY L. SCHAPIRO,
Chairman, U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission, Washington, DC.

Hon. MARTIN J. GRUENBERG,
Acting Chairman, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMEN GENSLER, SCHAPIRO, BERNANKE AND ACTING CHAIRMAN GRUENBERG: As authors of the Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act (P.L. 111–203) (Wall Street Reform Act), we commend your work implementing Title VII of this important new law. We have an enormous opportunity to set a new global standard for the operation of an efficient, transparent and well-regulated derivatives market. It is in a spirit of support for your efforts that we write with suggestions for how to avoid some unintended consequences that could undermine this objective.

As you know, the existing $600 trillion derivatives market operates as an integrated global market, despite the jurisdictional determinations made in Title VII between the Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC) and the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC). It is our hope that the two agencies will work closely and collaboratively together and that the new swap regulations can be sequenced and implemented in a logical, coordinated manner that encourages compliance and market competition.

Given the global nature of this market, U.S. regulators should avoid creating opportunities for international regulatory arbitrage that could increase systemic risk and reduce the competitiveness of U.S. firms abroad. Congress generally limited the territorial scope of Title VII to activities within the United States. This general rule should not be swallowed by the law's exceptions, which call for extraterritorial application only when particular international activities of U.S. firms have a direct and significant connection with or effect on U.S. commerce, or are designed to evade U.S. rules. We are concerned that the proposed imposition of margin requirements, in addition to provisions related to clearing, trading, registration, and the treatment of foreign subsidiaries of U.S. institutions, all raise questions consistent with Congressional intent regarding Title VII.

Moreover, U.S. regulators should work with other international regulators to seek broad harmonization of appropriately tough and effective standards. This can be accomplished by an appropriate staging of the adoption or implementation of our rules abroad. Should current harmonization efforts ultimately fail or prove a race to the bottom that would undermine effective regulation, the U.S. would of course reserve the right to proceed to extend the application of its standards to overseas operations.

In addition, as you proceed through the rule-making process, we urge you to respect Congress' intent to protect the ability of end users and pension plans to use swaps in a cost-effective manner. In particular, Congress recognized the need to allow pension funds, states, municipalities and other ''special entities'' to continue to use swaps by expressly rejecting the imposition of a fiduciary duty for swap dealers that is legally incompatible with their legitimate role as market-makers. The withdrawal of the Department of Labor's rules on a fiduciary duty under ERISA gives the agencies an opportunity to work together to prevent such adverse results. We urge you to work to revise the proposed rules in a way that avoids unintended consequences.

As one of the first countries to propose new financial rules following the 2008 crisis, the world is closely watching what we do. As you revise and finalize the proposed rules, we look forward to working together to support your important work in a way that keeps our financial markets the envy of the world.

Sincerely,

SENATOR TIM JOHNSON,
Chairman, U.S. Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

CONGRESSMAN BARNEY FRANK,
Ranking Member, U.S. House Committee on Financial Services.

DOVER/SHERBORN PUBLIC SCHOOLS,
Dover, MA, April 13, 2011.

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN: As a School Food & Nutrition I support the thrust of the proposed rule. We do need to reduce sodium and fat levels and provide more fruits and vegetables to our students and provide minimum and maximum calorie levels in meals.

At the same time I have concerns regarding their ability to meet the requirements of the proposed rule, especially as the impacts of the regulations are theoretical at this point, having never been piloted or studied in ''real world'' School Food Authorities (SFAs). I am concerned that the timeframes within the rule are ambitious given the significant changes which will have to be made to school menus that will, at the same time, meet the rule's requirements, while also retaining student participation.

We all share the goal of having all students participate in school lunch programs, and that nothing is done to overtly identify those students who are receiving free or reduced price meals. I have concerns that, while well intended, the revised meal standards themselves run the risk of unintentionally identifying free and reduced price recipients if paid students are inclined to opt for a la carte choices if the revised paid meal is not acceptable. I am also concerned that there may be unintended consequences of these revisions, including children going off campus for less nutritious foods, or bringing brown bag lunches from home that research has shown are less nutritious than school meals.

My Districts been working to increase the use of lower sodium and lower fat foods, as well as working to increase whole grain products in school lunches. Our experience has taught us that making these changes takes time. Revising meal standards often means that new food products have to be developed, and this development takes time. When new food products are introduced at a gradual rate, the likelihood of student and parent acceptance is enhanced. This also provides time for operational adjustments and staff retraining. If new food products and food preparations are introduced at a too rapid rate, our ability to work with and educate students regarding the changes, and to make them part of the process is more difficult. Rapid change can cause participation rates to drop, complaints from students and parents regarding the changing nature of meals to increase, costs to rise more rapidly than can be prudently managed, and the integrity and acceptability of the school food program may be called into question. Recent record high food price increases exceed the cost projections in the proposed rule and is of great concern in a schools attempt to implement these proposed meal pattern revisions. These price increases are also likely to reduce the volume of USDA Foods received by schools, further complicating the management of school meal programs.

It is worth noting that a substantial lead time was provided when the Department updated the WIC Food Package. The WIC Food Package is far more limited than the school meal package, and all of the items contained in the WIC package were commercially available twenty months prior to the mandatory implication of the changed package. The Department received 46,502 comment letters regarding the WIC Food Package modification, and gave twenty months to implement the rule. We understand that substantially more comments are anticipated to be received regarding the proposed school meal pattern rule. Yet the Department currently plans less time before implementing the rule, with less time for school food program operators to prepare for what will be significant changes. The revision of school meal patterns is certainly a worthwhile and necessary undertaking, but it is far more complex, impacting more operators and recipients. Menus, recipes and products will have to be reformulated. New products will have to be developed and tested for student acceptability. Procurement specifications and related documents will have to be changed. Staff will need to be retrained. Logistical changes will have to be made within front of the house and back of the house operations. This level of change was not the case with the revisions in the WIC package.

For these reasons, I believe it would be prudent to consider delaying the mandatory implementation of the rule until school year 2013–14. The Department could encourage that the revised meal patterns be implemented voluntarily prior to that date, and incentivize the early implementation with the additional reimbursement provided by the Act, just as the Department urged earlier voluntary compliance with the revised WIC food package. SNA also recommends that offer vs. serve be mandated, not discretionary, as part of the final rule when implemented. Mandating the taking of food items will result in plate waste, unnecessary costs creating a perception of wasteful spending in the program, and compromise program integrity.

I think it would prove valuable to our programs that, as was the case with the WIC Meal Package Revision, the rule should be issued as an interim final rule with a comment period following its implementation.

An interim final rule would allow the monitoring of the practical consequences and benefits of the revised meal pattern and afford an opportunity to make appropriate modifications should any be warranted.

I do not support states imposing more restrictive meal components and nutritional requirements, and strongly urge the Department to assist us in ensuring consistent national meal standards. State standards that exceed federal standards are often not based on science, increase school meal costs without compensation, complicate administration of this national program, and make it more difficult for industry to provide acceptable products at reasonable prices.

We will expand upon these points throughout the specific comments that follow.

FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

I consistently supported the increased consumption of a variety of fruits and vegetables by children in the school lunch and school breakfast programs. I also support those requirements outlined in the proposed regulation recognizing the availability and utilization of fruits and vegetables in all forms (i.e. fresh, frozen without sugar, dried or canned in fruit juice, water or light syrups). I am skeptical that children will have sufficient time to consume the higher volumes of fruit and vegetables required by the proposed rule. SFAs are concerned that the consequence will be higher food costs for food items that may not be consumed. Requiring children to take a fruit or vegetable serving rather than providing a true offer vs. serve option has the potential to increase plate waste, and convey the wrong impression regarding the acceptability and quality of school meals.

FRUITS AND VEGETABLES AT LUNCH

I support the requirement for vegetables to come from a variety of sources such as dark green, orange and legumes and support all fruits and vegetables as recognized components of the reimbursable meal. However, I believe that consumption of an array of fruits and vegetables should be encouraged, not prescribed. Instead, the proposed rule should be amended to encourage SFAs to vary vegetable selections for healthier school meals, as is currently done in the HealthierUS School Challenge. In addition I support the following requirements as set forth in the proposed regulation:

Disallowing snack-type fruit or vegetables, such as fruit leathers, fruit strips and fruit drops;

Dried fruit counting as two times the volume;

''Fresh'' leafy greens counted at ½ volume (1 cup = ½ cup).

Specific Recommendations and Concerns:

Crediting of Fruit and Grain Components—SFAs support the recognition of fruit and grain components in items such as crisps and cobblers using volume as the measure.

Crediting Salad Bars and Self-Serve Foods— The final rule needs to provide direction for the Crediting of food served at Salad Bars and Self-Serve areas. While FNS has issued policy memos regarding Salad Bars in the National School Lunch Program (including SP 02–2010—Revised, January 21, 2011), the crediting of foods served at Salad Bars and Self-Serve areas is not expressly addressed within the proposed rule.

Crediting of Tomato Paste—SFAs support continuing current tomato paste crediting as outlined in the Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs at pages 2–3: ''Vegetable and fruit concentrates are allowed to be credited on an ''as if single-strength reconstituted basis'' rather than on the actual volume as served:'' SNA does not support basing the crediting of tomato paste based on volume served.

Mr. DICKS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from California, the ranking member of the Agriculture Appropriations Subcommittee, Mr. FARR.

Mr. FARR. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I want to thank my co-chair, the chair of the committee who we just heard from, Mr. KINGSTON. We get along very well, and it's wonderful to work with him.

But I'd also like to thank the chair of the committee, Mr. ROGERS, and the ranking member, Mr. DICKS, for letting us do our work in a professional manner, a professional and intellectual manner, which I think is the way we want to have political compromise. You allowed us to do that work, and I think that this report is a good report, and that's why I'm asking my colleagues to support it.

I didn't vote for the original bill; but this conference report is much better, and that's why I urge its support. There are many good things about this bill, especially in comparison to the version that originally passed the House last summer.

I was very pleased that we were able to go to the Senate level for the Food and Drug Administration, which is an increase of about $334 million over the House bill because to increase the funding of FDA's important work on medical countermeasures, that is very important. Medical countermeasures is critical to America's ability to face down biological, radiological, and other similar widespread public health threats. Without it, we'd be vulnerable to germ warfare. That's why I advocate its robust funding.

I might add, this isn't just science fiction that we see in movies. This is real, and this program is really vital to our future security.

In the USDA, the Department of Agriculture, particularly in the domestic food programs, remember, this is the biggest program in America that deals with the War on Poverty. And it's very good what we've done in here. This prevents hunger, improves nutrition, and grows healthier people in this country.

This conference report actually provides $36 million more than the Senate level for the WIC, the Women, Infants and Children program. It increases $570 million over the House bill for low-weight babies and for those kinds of programs that will grow healthier babies, healthier people in this country.

Then there's the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, which we used to call food stamps. Many people may not realize it, but the SNAP program serves 15 percent of our fellow Americans during these difficult times. Fifteen percent of Americans. Over 40 million Americans are now depending on food stamps. That number is up by 7 million people over the last year. Why? Because the economy's downturn has created a lot of hardship for families. That's why the funding level of the SNAP program is so very, very important and why I'm happy that the funding level is a lot more than it was in the original House bill. This is also good news for the working class and distressed families of the United States.

Then we have a program in the Commodities Supplemental Food Program, which is also the Temporary Emergency Food Assistance Program. We've also funded that at a higher level. This is good news because it helps particularly the elderly who have suffered a debilitating life event like a tornado or flood or disaster and they need access to food and nutrition outside of the regular system. I'm so glad we're able to beef up these domestic programs for food assistance.

Then we have the international programs that help our international allies who need food assistance in the Food for Peace program. There's the well-known McGovern-Dole program, which provides donations of agricultural commodities and financial technical assistance for feeding and nutrition projects in low-income countries, countries that suffer from the culture of poverty, which could lead to all kinds of distressed, and certainly even to where we have to send in troops to bail out these countries. So this is a good prevention.

The conference report gave a lot more than what was in the original House level. There's a lot of good in this conference report. But, frankly, I have to say that there's one part that I'm really disappointed with. Under the Dodd-Frank program, we tasked to construct regulations to protect consumers. The President asked for enough money to get the new review process up and running.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. DICKS. I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. FARR. Thank you very much for yielding.

And we didn't give it enough money to do that. And then in the last thing, we dropped some crazy part into this program, which I think has gotten a lot of negative attention this week and deserves it, and that is that we, without any discussion or going to the rule, it pre-determines that the new regulations on tomato paste and tomato puree and sodium can be part of the school nutrition program. They didn't consult with us. That's wrong, and that shouldn't be done.

But it's a good compromise bill. It's good. It means food for Americans; it means certainty for our farmers. It means help for the hungry around the world. I ask my colleagues to support it.

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to a very distinguished member of our committee, Oklahoma's Mr. COLE.

Mr. COLE. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

There are certainly Members on this floor that are a lot more knowledgeable about this particular piece of legislation than I am. I don't serve on any

of the relevant subcommittees on appropriations. And so they're going to talk about it in more depth and detail than I ever could.

But I tell you what—and certainly I would be the first to say that we do not have a perfect process. I would have preferred individual bills. I think most of us on the Appropriations Committee would. And we didn't cut as much money as I would have liked to have cut.

Having said those things, I want to really congratulate our chairman and our ranking member for beginning the process of restoring us to regular order. And I want to commend them for bringing in a bill that spent less money than we spent last year, that has important elements in it that protect gun rights and gun ownership; and that, frankly, is a very serious effort to deal in a very responsible way with a large portion of our government and, at the same time, attack our larger physical problems.

Now, we're going to hear a lot of Members over the course of the debate that think that the bill spent too much money, and others that think that it spent too little money, and others that tell us that it's not perfect in every detail. I would just remind those individuals on both sides of the aisle, we are the House of Representatives. We're not the House of Commons.

□ 1530

Some of our Members sometimes seem to think that all legislative and all executive authority resides here. It doesn't. Our Framers set up a very different system, and we deal with a United States Senate that's controlled by a different political party. And we obviously have a President, our President, but a President of a different political persuasion than the majority of this House, and that necessitates compromise. That necessitates some give-and-take.

I think the process that has been worked, if you will, by the chairman and by the ranking member and by the various subcommittee chairmen and their ranking member counterparts has been a good and productive effort at compromise. And it's achieved real results, and it deserves real, and will have, real and genuine bipartisan support.

So I urge the passage of this important piece of legislation. I thank the chairman. I thank the committees for their hard work. And let's get back to the business of governing the greatest country on the planet. We made a good step here today.

Mr. DICKS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Massachusetts, the ranking member of the Financial Services Committee, Mr. FRANK.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. I thank the gentleman from Washington.

I urge Members to vote for this bill, although my enthusiasm is tempered. As I contemplate this bill, I think of the words of a former great Member of this body, a former Speaker of the House from my home State, the late John McCormack, who, not wanting to offend House rules, referred to one of his colleagues as someone whom he held in ''minimum high regard.'' That's essentially what I think about this bill.

I thank my colleague from Massachusetts (Mr. OLVER) for the good work he did on an important provision that means a lot to public housing in Massachusetts involving federalization. I appreciate the increase in the FHA being maintained so the people who live in the areas I represent and in California and elsewhere are not discriminated against. So, for that, I am grateful.

But there is a serious flaw in the bill in two areas, or there are two serious flaws in one area each.

The HUD budget is good in that federalization but severely lacking. I regret the fact that we will be spending more on community development and building important institutions in Afghanistan than we are in America.

And even more important is the issue that the gentleman from California (Mr. FARR) mentioned. It is incredible to me that my Republican colleagues brought out of their subcommittee a bill that would give the Commodity Futures Trading Commission less money this year in the coming year than it got this year. Now, the Senate was able to bring it back up to level funding.

Understand, we are talking about derivative regulation. We're talking about AIG. We are talking about a dangerously unregulated operation. We are talking about the thing that has us concerned now about the extent to which there may be a contagion from Europe to America because of derivatives, credit default drops issued by American banks. I think we have a handle on this, but we would do better if we had the bill fully implemented. You can read today in The New York Times about the role of the CFTC trying to straighten out the MF problem.

It is extraordinary that we give the Commodity Futures Trading Commission a new responsibility. Because of prior foolish moves by this Congress and a President, we had not regulated swaps, a very important new form of derivative. They are a dangerous instrument, and they need to be regulated. And this is a wholly new responsibility for the CFTC. And the members of the Appropriations Committee on the Republican side would have given it, if they had their way, less by a significant amount for the next year than this year. We got it up to even.

But let's be very clear: People who do not want to give the CFTC any additional money are basically telling the American people that they think it was just fine what AIG did. It was just fine that we have these unregulated derivatives, that people were able to accumulate debts far beyond what they could pay.

The CFTC was also given, under our legislation, a specific mandate to deal with speculation. I know there were some on the Republican side who think speculation has nothing to do with oil prices and it has nothing to do with food prices, and I think the evidence is clearly to the contrary. People who can tell me that these ups and downs in the oil market are purely because of supply and demand, I await for them to describe to me when Santa Claus arrives.

The fact is that regulating derivatives is an essential part of preventing the problems that we ran into a few years ago and we are now trying to prevent. And level funding the CFTC—and level funding only because our Senate colleagues insisted on overcoming a Republican effort here to give it less money in the current coming year than in the current year—is a terrible act of irresponsibility.

I hope that we will be able soon to remedy this. But I fear that what you do with this, Mr. Speaker, in this legislation is to open us up to the kind of irresponsible, unregulated financial behavior that led to the greatest crisis we have had in so many years.

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas, a member of the conference committee, Mr. CARTER.

Mr. CARTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise as a proud member of this conference committee and of this committee.

The Constitution of the United States gives us instructions that we are to watch our treasury and protect it and make sure that the money that we spend out of that treasury is appropriate for the operation of this country. Chairman ROGERS and the three ranking members who have operated in this particular mini-bus have been very noble in that effort.

A commitment was made under the Budget Control Act that we would stay within $1.043 trillion, and this first start of finishing this appropriations process will see to it that we meet that commitment. Chairman ROGERS has been very, very distinct and positive that he will meet that commitment, and this is the first step to meeting that commitment.

It is important that although this is a noble effort, we have funded what is needed, and we have given an open process both in subcommittee, committee, and on this floor. And by that, we have shown the American people that we are making our promises known, that we are on the route to turning this country around and setting it back on a fiscal track that we can sustain.

I want to commend all who have been involved in this process, both the ranking members and the chairmen, for they have done noble work to come up with this product. And this product is deserving of being supported by every member of this conference and of this entire Congress, and I urge them to support this noble product that has been a tough fight, but we have accomplished it.

Mr. DICKS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Maine

(Mr. MICHAUD), whom I've enjoyed working with on these important issues before our committee.

Mr. MICHAUD. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I rise today in support of a provision in the underlying bill that will move the heaviest trucks traveling in Maine off secondary roads and onto the interstate.

People in the State of Maine already know the benefits of this commonsense provision. That's why it has the support of organizations throughout the State of Maine, such as the Maine Department of Transportation, the Maine Department of Public Safety, the Maine State Police, because they know it's safer to have these trucks on the interstate.

Additionally, letting heavier trucks use the interstate reduces fuel consumption, cuts emissions, reduces travel time, and reduces the competitive disadvantage between Maine and the surrounding States that already have a higher truck weight limit on their interstate.

So I would like to thank my colleagues that supported my efforts to ensure that this provision was included in the final bill, and I would encourage my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support this bill. I want to thank the chairman and the ranking member for their efforts as well.

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, could I ask the remaining time?

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GRIMM). The gentleman from Kentucky has 11 minutes remaining. The gentleman from Washington has 5½ minutes remaining.

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio, a member of the conference committee, Mr. LATOURETTE.

□ 1540

Mr. LATOURETTE. I thank both chairmen for yielding and also for the recognition.

Mr. Speaker, it's like a breath of fresh air has blown through this Chamber. I will tell you what a relief it is.

Congratulations goes to Chairman ROGERS and Ranking Member DICKS and to the subcommittee chairs and the ranking members for getting us to a point that was normal practice for the first 12 years that I was here, which is to do things like have a subcommittee markup. It's where people get to offer amendments—good amendments, bad amendments, in-between amendments—but they were thoughts that they had. We'd debate them; we'd discuss them; and we'd vote on them. The same thing happened in the full committee; the same thing happened on the floor; and we actually had a conference between the House and the Senate. Some people had never been to a conference before because they hadn't been here that long. I had Members come up to me who were new—we have 87, 88 new Republican freshmen, and we even have some sophomores and juniors—who didn't even know what the 5-minute rule was for the discussion of an amendment on the floor.

So everybody in this Chamber understands that sometimes you win and sometimes you lose, but at the end of the day, if you've had a chance to express yourself and to articulate why your position is correct and then it's either accepted or rejected by your colleagues, you can go home and put your head on the pillow and feel pretty good about it.

This product is a result of that.

I'm particularly proud of the piece from the subcommittee that I'm involved in with Mr. LATHAM as the chair and Mr. OLVER as the ranking member. What is remarkable to me is that this wasn't a ''my way or the highway'' negotiation. There were numbers that were important to some of us and not important to others but that were improved between the House version and the conference report. I would cite, for instance, the highway level.

Now, because no one is willing to make the adult decision about what to do with the income stream at the highway trust fund, it was proposed to be a paltry $27 billion. However, through negotiation between the House and the Senate, it's now restored to the authorized level in the extension at $39 billion.

The Community Development Block Grant program as well is recognized in this conference report as being a valuable source of seed money for local communities to add other money and to do good works. Something that is popular and unpopular in certain segments on both sides of the aisle is Amtrak, which is now receiving the money necessary to do its mission.

They've done a good job, and I urge its passage.

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to a member of the conference committee, the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. BONNER).

Mr. BONNER. I thank the chairman for yielding me time.

Back home, the American people listen to Members of Congress talk about things that are historic, about things that are important. Today, we're talking about something that's very important. Tomorrow, we'll actually be talking about voting on something that truly is historic. But for the moment, let's focus on, as my friend from Ohio just mentioned, something that this Congress has not seen since 2009, which is a conference report.

That's the American legislative system working. It's where Democrats and Republicans, Senators and Members of the House of Representatives, have come together—to produce a perfect document? Of course not. Conservatives would like to cut more. Liberals would like to spend more.

The fact is that, in this conference report, we cut and terminate 20 programs, saving $456 million. It responsibly addresses disaster spending, and many States and even more counties and cities had been affected by disasters earlier this year. It also contains a CR that will run until December 16 at fiscal year 2011 levels to allow our committee to complete its work.

It also represents an effort, I would argue, Mr. Speaker, that both House and Senate appropriators, Democrats and Republicans alike, are doing something that is responsible in order to avoid the plague of a government shutdown by reaching agreement that will put our Nation on a more fiscally sustainable path.

Tomorrow, it will be more historic in nature. Yesterday, the debt clock ticked over $15 trillion. We cannot ignore that threat. Tomorrow, we will bring to the House floor an opportunity for something that Presidents Jefferson and Reagan both envisioned: a balanced budget amendment.

Today's CR, today's minibus appropriations bill, is an important step for the future of this fiscal year and this country that we love and serve. Tomorrow will be an opportunity, for the legacy of future generations not yet born, to do something even more bold.

I thank the chairman for giving me a chance to serve on the committee, and I urge my colleagues to support the report.

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Florida, a member of our committee, Mr. DIAZ-BALART.

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. I thank the chairman for this opportunity, and I really congratulate him. This is the first time in many years, since 2009, that we've actually come to the floor with a conference report.

Think about that.

Before, things just kind of came out of the blue, and we were forced to deal with them without having an opportunity to see them and without going through regular order. But this would have not happened without the leadership of our chairman, Chairman ROGERS.

I cannot thank you enough, sir, for, once again, making the people's House do its work and do it in a responsible way.

I also want to commend the ranking member for working hand-in-hand with the chairman.

Look, there is no denying that we are on an unsustainable path of borrowing too much and spending too much. In past appropriations bills, they were judged to be successful by how much more taxpayer money we were spending. I guess Congress felt good because we were spending more money. Well, that has changed dramatically. This bill actually cuts funding. It actually spends less than the previous year's level.

So, again, it is a huge step in the right direction, but it also funds the essential services that the American people depend on.

I want to recognize the work of Chairmen KINGSTON and WOLF, who

have balanced the funding for necessary food safety and for, as an example, law enforcement. They also made some very difficult choices—but necessary choices—to reduce spending.

I had the privilege of serving on the Transportation and Housing Subcommittee, and I want to commend Chairman LATHAM for the work that he has devoted to this bill.

On the transportation side, this bill prioritizes rail and transit projects that improve and expand existing systems. It funds NextGen to help reduce traffic delays, and it funds the Federal highway program. It provides sufficient funding to renew every individual and family voucher, for example, and it includes new oversight reforms at HUD to root out waste, fraud, and abuse, which is such a huge issue.

This conference report prioritizes government spending for vital programs, but it also reduces waste and, again, puts us on a path where we will not bankrupt the United States of America.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this fine piece of legislation. Is it perfect? No. But it's the best piece of legislation and the only one in many, many years that has actually come to the floor through regular process after an amendatory process.

I commend the chairman, and I support the legislation wholeheartedly.

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Mississippi, a member of our committee and a very valued member, Mr. NUNNELEE.

Mr. NUNNELEE. I thank the chairman for yielding.

As a member of this historic freshman class, we came here committed to cutting government spending because we know that cutting government spending is tied directly to increasing job opportunities in this Nation.

This bill does something that has not happened since World War II. For the second year in a row, we are now on the path to cutting government spending, not by the definition traditionally used by Washington, which is cutting the rate of growth, but by the definition of the people of America: actually cutting spending.

We also came here to change the way Washington does business. President Reagan observed that government programs, once launched, never disappear. Actually, a government bureau is the nearest thing to eternal life we'll ever see on Earth.

This conference report terminates a total of 20 programs from the Federal budget. Now, I wish it would have cut more spending, but when I look at the opportunity to cut 20 programs from our Federal budget—something that rarely happens in this town—I gladly support this conference report.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for your work.

Thank you to the ranking member and the minority for working with us to eliminate those 20 programs.

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from New Hampshire (Mr. BASS).

Mr. BASS of New Hampshire. I thank the chairman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the conference report, which includes the CJS approps bill for fiscal year 2012, and I want to pay a special thanks to Chairman WOLF for his help in working out a very difficult problem.

In 2010, a Federal prison was built in Berlin, New Hampshire, which is in my district. However, due to the lack of funding, the facility has been sitting idle now for a year and a half at a significant cost to taxpayers. So I applaud the inclusion of report language that urges the Bureau of Prisons to begin the activation phase of this prison in Berlin, New Hampshire, and others where construction has been completed but where the facilities currently sit idle.

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Additionally, I would like to thank Mayor Grenier in Berlin for his dogged determination and my colleagues on the Appropriations Committee for their special attention to this very serious problem.

Once opened, this prison will house over 1,000 minimum-security and medium-security adult male offenders. It will produce over 300 jobs for the region and bring $40 million to the local economy. It is a very worthwhile program. I thank you for being attentive to this issue with me. I urge final passage of the bill.

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. May I inquire of the time remaining.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Kentucky has 2½ minutes, and the gentleman from Washington has 5½ minutes remaining.

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, I am the last remaining speaker on my side, so I will yield to the gentleman.

Mr. DICKS. I yield myself as much time as I may use.

I just want to say that I think that this is a bill that we've worked hard on, we've worked with the other body; and I hope that the Members will support this bill. And I want to remind everybody, this has got the CR in it. We've got to keep the government open. It's clean, as clean as any one that I have seen. So I hope that we can pass this bill with a very strong bipartisan vote. I'm urging my colleagues on the Democratic side to support this bill.

I want to, again, congratulate the chairman and all of our staff for the work that they've done on this bill. It's a good bill. It's not perfect, but it's a lot better than the alternative. And we need to keep moving on these appropriations bills. I hope we can pass the other nine in December, and we have to do that.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

I want to say a special thanks to my friend from Washington, NORM DICKS, for being a hardworking, cooperative ranking member. We worked together on this bill, and we will continue to do that. And I also want to thank the staff. You know, they don't get enough thanks. These are the people that do practically all the work, day and night, weekends included, holidays included. So thank you to all of the staff, majority and minority, for producing this work.

Let me close, Mr. Speaker, by emphasizing that this conference report is only the first step toward finishing fiscal '12, and I urge my colleagues to support this conference report.

Let me also remind our colleagues that there are no earmarks in this bill. A lot of people said, you cannot pass a bill without earmarks. Well, this bill has no earmarks, not one, not a single one. It also reduces dramatically Federal spending. And when we finish—and I want my colleagues to hear this plainly and clearly—when we finish all 12 bills, we will be at $1.043 trillion, not a penny more. We will be at $1.043 trillion, as provided by the cap under the Budget Control Act. I guarantee that number. I guarantee that number, hear me. So I urge an ''aye'' vote on this first step towards fiscal sanity.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I strongly support a number of provisions in H.R. 2112, the Fiscal Year (FY) 2012 Agriculture, Rural Development, Food & Drug Administration and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, such as the vital funding for low-income food assistance programs. I must voice my outrage at language included in this legislation which blatantly ignores and imperils the health of this country's school children.

Just days ago, language was inserted into H.R. 2112 which prevents the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) from implementing important new school lunch standards that are scheduled to go into effect next year. The language also allows pizza, if it has at least two tablespoons of tomato paste, to be defined as a vegetable.

Childhood obesity is a disease effecting 17% children throughout the country. According the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, childhood obesity has more than tripled in the past 30 years and in 2008, more than one third of children and adolescents were overweight or obese. Nationally subsidized meals at schools have a responsibility to feed our children healthy and nutritious food. The USDA has developed new school nutrition standards and is ready to implement them. Instead, we are allowing these industries to make and keep our children sick, to put them at risk for serious cardiovascular diseases, type 2 diabetes, stroke, osteoarthritis and several types of cancer.

The needs of special interest groups are being put ahead of the health needs of children across the country. By including these provisions, we are allowing the salt, potato growers and frozen food industries to continue feeding the childhood obesity epidemic. According to the Institute of Medicine, a typical high school lunch contains around 1,600 milligrams of sodium; this is more than half of the daily recommended amount.

One of the largest barriers school nutrition programs face is cost. This is why I have authored a bill that would eliminate the tax deductibility of advertising and marketing of fast food and junk food that targets children. Despite the fact that research shows that marketing and advertising is a primary factor in increasing obesity rates in children, the tax code allows companies to deduct their advertising and marketing costs from tax returns. The government essentially subsidizes childhood obesity. My legislation has the potential to raise billions of dollars to pay for student nutrition programs.

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. Speaker, though the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, NOAA, may not be a household name, Americans rely on this agency every day to provide critical weather information and to support ecologically sustainable and economically vibrant coastal communities. 2011 has been a record year for extreme weather disasters, including floods in the Midwest, extensive drought in Texas, a hurricane in Vermont and a debilitating October snowstorm in New England. The latest insurance analysis finds that the United States has experienced 15 billion-dollar weather disasters thus far in 2011. Despite these substantial costs, the ability to accurately predict and therefore prepare for such events not only prevented additional economic losses, but also saved lives. The funding levels in this bill will support the Joint Polar Satellite System, which provides NOAA with the technology to continue to make timely and accurate weather predictions.

Unfortunately, this bill prevents NOAA from undertaking a budget neutral reorganization to create a Climate Service, which was first proposed by President Bush's administration. Increasingly businesses, communities, and individuals are asking NOAA for climate information so they can make informed long-term decisions that impact the economy, public health, and safety. By continuing to oppose all things 'climate', Republicans have denied NOAA the ability to provide these critical products and services.

This bill also unfortunately reduces funding levels for NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service to 2005 levels. NOAA is responsible for the conservation and management of fisheries in the United States and adequate funding is needed to protect our iconic American fishing industry. Our fishing industry is a critical component of our national economy. In 2010, the United States landed 8.2 billion pounds of fish valued at $4.5 billion dollars. We know improved data collection and stock assessments allow NOAA to make better and more timely fishery management decisions. We must continue to push for adequate fisheries science funding, which is critical to supporting our fishermen and coastal communities.

I remain concerned that NOAA's role in climate and fisheries science will be hindered by these funding levels, but will support this bill.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday, the national debt surpassed the $15 trillion mark. We cannot borrow and spend our way to prosperity. We must get control of spending. While the Appropriations Committee deserves credit for getting an agreement on the three appropriations bills in this measure, I'm concerned where we are headed on spending based on the use of ''disaster'' funding and the potential use of temporary mandatory savings to permanently increase the base of discretionary spending. The bill also includes damaging housing policies that contributed, along with many government policies, to recent financial crises and increases the financial exposure of the federal government.

Instead of advancing solutions in the face of this crisis, the President has not put forward a credible budget and the Senate under Democratic leadership has failed to pass a budget in over 930 days. Despite their failure to produce a budget, they are working hard to increase deficit spending.

The House of Representatives actually passed a budget, ''The Path to Prosperity,'' which would put us on a path to balancing the budget and saving and strengthening critical programs such as Medicare—without resorting to trillion dollar tax hikes that will damage our economy and hinder job growth. We passed the Budget Control Act, BCA, to cut nearly one trillion of dollars in spending and impose statutory caps on future appropriations. Under Chairman ROGER's leadership, we also cut fiscal year 2011 spending to begin to bring spending under control. Today, we consider H.R. 2112, the conference report on three appropriations bills: Agriculture; Commerce, Justice, and Science; and Transportation, Housing and Urban Development.

Republicans control the House, but with the Senate and the White House controlled by leaders who want to increase spending, and not reduce it, our ability to address this problem is limited. I know our Appropriations Committee has worked hard to try to hold the line on spending. Despite the challenges our Appropriations Committee faced, I have serious concerns regarding the precedent it sets for future spending. H.R. 2112 provides a total of $130.4 billion in new spending, including $2.3 billion of ''disaster relief'' funding. Excluding the disaster funding the bills are $757 million below the levels funded in 2011. Including the disaster relief funding the bills are $1.6 billion above the 2011 levels. In addition, this bill uses changes in mandatory spending, CHIMPS, which are temporary savings, to offset what I fear will be a permanent increase in the base of non-defense spending.

In the House-passed budget, we set a total limit on appropriations of $1.019 trillion for FY 2012. In the Budget Control Act, we increased that limit to $1.043 trillion and got statutory limits on spending for 10 years producing nearly $1 trillion in spending reductions over 10 years. This bill puts us potentially on a very troubling path. The BCA established a new exception to allow funds Congress designates as being for disaster relief to be added on top of the discretionary caps. There is no mandate to increase spending above $1.043 trillion. It is entirely in our control. And, there are conceivably circumstances in which a disaster could be of such severity or immediacy that Congress could choose to provide relief funding above and beyond the discretionary caps. But given the seriousness of the Nation's fiscal problems, such funding should be limited to only the most exigent circumstances. Instead, the Administration and Senate Democrats have insisted on using this disaster relief loophole in a way that, if not closely monitored, will undo the hard-won savings contained in the BCA.

The Budget Control Act language allows for the discretionary cap to be raised by as much as the historical average of past disaster spending, which for fiscal year 2012 would amount to a maximum adjustment of $11.3 billion. But rather than reserving this breathing space for truly dire emergencies, the Senate took this as an opportunity to stretch this exception to cover a number of programs that are not considered our primary disaster relief programs. The primary means for providing immediate disaster relief is through FEMA's Disaster Relief Fund, DRF, which will be included in a future appropriations bill and for which the Administration requests another $7 billion. But Senate Democrats have expanded disaster relief to programs such as funding for the Economic Development Administration, Community Development Block Grants, and agricultural grants. This is funding in this one bill alone. My concern is that the Senate and Administration will push the disaster relief exception to add even more funding in future bills, as a means of spending above the caps we agreed to as part of the debt limit.

The bill also includes $9.1 billion in Changes in Mandatory Program Spending, CHIMPS, that score as savings in the budget year, but that may not actually reduce costs for taxpayers. One provision in this bill related to the Crime Victims Fund creates nominal savings of $6.6 billion this year, essentially offsetting $6.6 billion of other spending in the bill. But all of these savings are reversed in 2013. To the Appropriations Committee's credit, this bill makes some progress in reducing the use of these savings gimmicks—reducing the use of these CHIMPS by about $1 billion compared to last year's bills. But, further vigilance is warranted in the use of such budgetary maneuvers.

Lastly, this bill includes a housing rider increasing conforming loan limits for the Federal Housing Administration. Increasing the federal role in housing markets, in this case by increasing housing subsidies, is bad policy. It increases risk and exposure to the taxpayer, who will have to pay for non-performing loans. Bailouts of Fannie and Freddie have cost taxpayers to date about $170 billion due to risky loans in their portfolios.

We have to offer real leadership in budgeting if we are to successfully resolve our fiscal challenges. This bill reflects the compromises inherent in divided government and we should recognize it both for the progress it makes and for how much further we have to go.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the conference report containing fiscal year 2012 appropriations for Agriculture, Commerce, Justice, Science, Transportation, Housing, and Urban Development. My support is somewhat tempered, as I find several items to cheer in this agreement and several that are of great concern to me. But recognizing the constraints within which the appropriators were working, I thank and applaud them for their hard work to achieve agreement and bring this bill before us today. In particular, I want to thank Chairman WOLF and Ranking Member FATTAH for their long-time support for research and development and STEM education.

As Ranking Member of the Committee on Space, Science, and Technology, today I limit my remarks to those agencies in this conference report that are within my committee's jurisdiction: NIST, EDA, NOAA, OSTP, NASA, NSF, and certain of FAA's activities.

Let me begin with what I think is one of the bright spots in this conference agreement, and

that is the budget for the National Science Foundation. NSF is the only federal agency that supports basic research across the entire range of science and engineering disciplines, continuingly refreshing both our intellectual capital and the new ideas and technologies that combined serve as the backbone for the creation of new industries and jobs in our nation. The Foundation also plays a critical leadership role in the nation in improving the quality of STEM education at all levels and for all students. Therefore I am quite pleased with the 2.5 percent increase proposed for the Foundation. This is exactly what setting priorities during tough budget times should look like.

Likewise, I am pleased that the Scientific and Technical Research Budget at the National Institute of Standards and Technology is increased by 11 percent. I am also pleased that the agreement maintains funding for the Manufacturing Extension Partnership, MEP, program, but I am very disappointed that the agreement eliminates all funding for the Technology Innovation Program and the Baldrige National Quality Award, and fails to provide any funding for the promising AMTech program.

While I am pleased that the agreement proposes $17.8 billion for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, NASA, a strong sign of support within these challenging fiscal times, we must be mindful that the overall program that NASA is being asked to accomplish with these funds has not changed significantly despite yearly reductions in the agency's appropriations. That said, I am pleased that the bill provides funding to maintain the James Webb Space Telescope program on a schedule for launch in 2018 and that the bill provides funding and direction for NASA to pursue a flagship planetary science mission, if it can be scoped so that NASA's costs can be accommodated within appropriated funding levels. While funding for the Space Launch System, SLS, and Multi-purpose Crew Vehicle, MPCV, proposed in this bill is more than requested by the Administration, it is significantly below authorized levels. This downward trend cannot continue. It is vital that the SLS and MPCV stay on track so that we reinstate a U.S. government capability to launch American crews into orbit, provide a back-up crew and cargo transfer capability for the International Space Station, and return the United States to the forefront of the human exploration of outer space beyond low-Earth orbit.

I am pleased that the conference report provides the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, NOAA, with a $306 million increase above this fiscal year's level. However this increase is insufficient for the many missions that this important agency is being asked to undertake at this time. America has already experienced in this year alone ten extreme weather events with economic costs to date approaching $50 billion. The National Weather Service provides weather and climate forecasts and warnings for the United States and maintains the national infrastructure of observing systems that gather and process data worldwide from the land, sea, and air. The Joint Polar Satellite System weather satellite program, a vital component of this mission, must have consistent and sufficient levels of funding in order to provide these much needed products and services. Further, I am disappointed but not surprised that this bill does not support the Administration's efforts to better align the agency to provide reliable weather and climate products and services now and into the future. If left uncorrected, current political efforts to undermine these services will have significant negative economic consequences down the road.

With respect to the Economic Development Administration, EDA, I am pleased that the agreement provides $5 million in funds for loan guarantees for small- and medium-sized manufacturers, as authorized last year in the America COMPETES Reauthorization Act. And while I am disappointed that the bill does not include a separate line item of funding for the Regional Innovation Strategies program, as also authorized in the America COMPETES Reauthorization Act, I am pleased that the agreement recognizes the importance of EDA's work in regional innovation and encourages it to continue.

However, I am concerned about the budget for the Office of Science and Technology Policy. I fear that the 32 percent cut to OSTP will do significant collateral damage to the formal infrastructure that helps ensure that billions of dollars in federal R&D initiatives are coordinated across the agencies efficiently and effectively. I wish the appropriators would have found another path forward to deal with the disagreements that motivated this cut, and I certainly hope that in the next fiscal year we can see this matter resolved and OSTP made whole again.

Finally, with respect to the FAA, I am encouraged by the conferees' recognition that arbitrary funding reductions imposed earlier by the House Majority were unwise as such cuts negatively affect aviation safety and halt job creation. Furthermore, I appreciate the conferees' support of NextGen air traffic modernization activities because of the importance of NextGen in preventing future gridlock in our skies, while allowing FAA to manage air traffic in a safe and environmentally responsible manner. I agree with the funding level provided to FAA's commercial space regulatory activities, since hearings conducted by the Science, Space, and Technology Committee and its Space and Aeronautics Subcommittee during this session confirmed that commercializing space transportation has not progressed as quickly as expected and thus the need for the additional funding sought in the original FAA budget request was not supportable.

In closing, I once again would like to thank Chairman WOLF, Ranking Member FATTAH, and their colleagues in the House and Senate for all of their work on this agreement, and for their implicit recognition of the critical role that federal investments in R&D and STEM education play in ensuring our nation's long-term health and prosperity.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to debate the conference report on H.R. 2112, containing FY 2012 appropriations. This bill will fund the departments of Agriculture, Commerce, Justice, Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, as well as NASA Additionally, the bill funds the government through December 16, 2011.

I am pleased to see the conferees were able to restore essential funding for jobs, innovation, food safety, and vital investments in infrastructure. Moreover, the bill has come back from conference free of controversial policy riders that put special interest above the interests of the American people.

The conference report contains key investments in infrastructure that will put Americans back to work. Funding for high ay and transit programs has been set at $39.8 billion for the federal aid highway program, and $10.5 billion for transit programs, allowing for 400,000 more jobs than the House version of the bill.

I am extremely pleased that the conference agreement includes funding for METRO rail in the Houston, Texas North Corridor ($94,616,000) and Southeast Corridor ($94,616,000) for a total of $189,232. This funding is critical for the regional mobility of the citizens in and around the 18th Congressional District. At a time when cities around the country are struggling with a backlog of transportation projects amidst high unemployment, this funding is critical to improving transportation infrastructure while creating jobs.

Houston, in particular, needs this infrastructure to relieve congestion and provide adequate public transportation. Furthermore, this investment in the city's New Start Transit Project will create jobs for Houstonians who want to work to support their families and improve their communities.

As the Ranking Member of the House Homeland Security Subcommittee on Transportation Security, I understand the vital importance of ensuring the nation has a developed transit system. Houston has been working for over 20 years to bring these New Start Projects to fruition. I have worked tirelessly to secure the necessary funding to complete the METRO RAIL New Start Projects, and I am very pleased this project was included in the conference report.

This legislation also contains $2.3 billion dollars in funding for disaster relief. Adequate funding for disaster relief is imperative to our nation's emergency preparedness. As a Representative from Texas, I have seen firsthand the necessity for disaster relief funding. During Hurricane Katrina, there were insufficient quantities of generators forced hospitals to evacuate patients. Local governments waited days for commodities like ice, water, MREs, and blue tarps. Evacuees from Texas arrived in Shreveport and Bastrop shelters that were grossly unfit for occupancy, and 2,500 people were forced to use the same shower facility.

Emergency preparedness is only one part of keeping our communities safe. We also need to ensure that our law enforcement agencies have the resources they need to uphold law and order at all times. The Community Oriented Policing Services, COPS, Program for state and local law enforcement will receive $198.5 million dollars in this legislation, including $166 million dollars for COPS hiring to put more police officers on the streets, keeping our citizens safe. As a senior Member of the Homeland Security, I know that strong state and local law enforcement agencies are vital to our national security.

I am also pleased to see funding for the Office of Violence Against Women. The conference agreement includes $412.5 million dollars for programs to prevent violence against women, and assist victims of violent crime. Across the country there are non profits, community based organizations, and religious groups that are diligently working to address all the issues that arise from domestic violence. One such organization is in my hometown of Houston, TX, the Houston Area Women's Center. Programs such as the Houston

Area Women's Center will benefit from the grants made available through this funding.

Throughout the budget and appropriations process, I have been concerned about the adverse effects of spending cuts on minority and underserved populations. I am extremely pleased to see that the Minority Business Resource Center program received $922,000 dollars in funding to provide loans and capital to invest in minority owned businesses. The conference report also allocates $3.06 million dollars for minority business outreach. These efforts show a commitment to revitalizing small business and giving everyone the opportunity to make it in America.

This bill represents an investment in America's future by allocating $4.5 million dollars for the Office of Science and Technology Policy. In the report, the conferees state their support for improvements to the federal Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics, STEM, education. STEM education is absolutely imperative for Americans to compete in the increasingly globalized economy. A commitment to improving STEM education is a commitment to our children and our students.

H.R. 2112 also takes steps to further our economic recovery after the 2008 financial crisis. In the wake of the housing crisis, many responsible, hard working Americans lost their homes, not because they neglected to pay their mortgage, but because their rates went up unexpectedly, or because they lost their jobs. In an effort to prevent more families from losing their homes, this bill provides $45 million dollars for non-profits to advise families on foreclosure prevention.

While I support this measure, I also have some reservations. While I am glad to see the Women, Infants, and Children, WIC, nutrition program funded at $6.6 billion, $570 million above the House level, and $36 million above the Senate level, I am concerned that the Supplemental Nutrition Access Program, SNAP, and child nutrition have been funded at $98.6 billion, $2 billion below President Obama's request. Moreover, the decision to render tomato paste and tomato sauce as adequate servings of vegetables undermines efforts to teach children healthy eating habits at a young age.

While the funding levels for SNAP allow all individuals and families that meet the program's criteria for aid to receive benefits, there is nothing in the conference report that addresses the very serious problem of urban food deserts, communities in which residents do not have access to affordable and healthy food options. Food deserts disproportionally affect African American and Hispanic communities. Fast food restaurants and convenience stores line the blocks of low income neighborhoods, offering few, if any healthy options.

Food deserts have greatly impacted my constituents in the 18th Congressional District, and citizens throughout the state of Texas. Texas has fewer grocery stores per capita than any other state. The U.S. Department of Agriculture, USDA, identified 92 food desert census tracts in Harris County alone. These areas are subdivisions of the county with between 1,000 to 8,000 low income residents, with 33 percent of people living more than a mile from a grocery store.

I am also concerned about the decrease in funding for NASA found in this report. While I am very pleased that NASA's budget does include $138 million dollars for education, including the Minority University Research and Education Program, I wholeheartedly believe we need to further the space program. The Johnson Space Center in Houston attracts the best and brightest minds in the nation, and we must give them the resources they need. There is no blueprint for great achievement, but allowing for continued exploration of the universe can lead to great discovery.

Despite these reservations, I am pleased to support this measure, and urge my colleagues to do the same.

Mr. CAMPBELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 2112, the Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, but want to express serious concern over a provision that would only extend some loan limits, and not others, that are guaranteed, in one form or another, by the United States government.

For several months, I have been advocating for a temporary extension, and now a restoration and temporary extension, of the Government Sponsored Enterprise, GSE, conforming and Federal Housing Administration, FHA, loan limits. GSE conforming and FHA loan limits were increased in 2008 to stabilize the housing market during the economic crisis, and fill a gaping void left by retreating private financial institutions. Unfortunately, the housing market remains troubled and the painful cycle of defaults, distressed sales, foreclosures, and price declines has caused a severe delay in our economic recovery. Even now, private lenders remain incredibly risk-averse, hesitating to provide long-term, fixed-rate mortgages to the vast majority of the market. Until Congress decides how to move forward with broad reform to fix our broken housing finance system, we should not dismantle the few remaining support systems that are preventing the housing industry from collapsing further.

For these very reasons, I introduced H.R. 2508, a bill that would have extended both sets of loan limits for two fiscal years after their expiration on October 1, 2011. Doing so would have given certainty to housing and financial market participants and allowed enough time for Congress to thoughtfully consider broad reform legislation. Unfortunately, Congress chose not to act on my legislation, nor implement any other legislation that would have extended the loan limits out.

Since then, I and many of my colleagues in Congress have received countless calls from frustrated constituents in our districts who are now unable to transact in the housing markets due to the inability to find a private lender willing to finance them. Just yesterday, new data was released on housing market activity in October showing that home sales are down an average of 20 percent in some markets from a year earlier in the segment of the market that was relying on these higher loan limits. In my home district, sales of homes in this market segment fell by 71 percent since September.

As amended by the Senate, H.R. 2112 would have extended both sets of loan limits and mitigated costs to the taxpayer by increasing the guarantee fees assessed on larger loans. However, the compromise made by the Conference Committee to only restore the loan limits for mortgages guaranteed by FHA is a half-measure and one that ignores the tremendous need for restoration of the conforming loan limits. While this is better than no extension of either loan limit, it is not the compromise we should have made. The nature of FHA's guarantee is inherently different than that of the GSEs, the former being more expensive to the taxpayer. Historically, FHA-guaranteed loans have been a narrowly targeted subsidy, a state to which I would like to see FHA eventually return. However, by extending only the FHA loan limits now, we are essentially granting FHA a complete monopoly in this market segment at a time when the FHA is under considerable stress. Independent actuaries have estimated a 50 percent chance that the agency will need a federal bailout of its own in the coming year as it continues to draw down its reserves in a deflating housing market.

It's with this in mind that I will cast my vote in favor of H.R. 2112, but do so with significant reservations.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I rise to reluctantly support the Fiscal Year 2012 Appropriations Minibus.

Given current budgetary constraints primarily caused by unnecessary tax cuts for the rich, this bill generally reduces spending but provides additional resources for certain programs that will help create jobs.

For example, the Federal Highway Administration estimates that a $1 Billion expenditure on highway construction supports 30,000 jobs. The underlying bill provides nearly $40 Billion for highway construction.

However, the legislation also includes unnecessary riders that will allow corporate packers and processors to continue to manipulate the livestock market to the detriment of our farmers and ranchers.

Funding is withheld from USDA in this bill from implementing a set of Rules that would restore balance and fairness to the livestock marketplace.

Is it fair that the average chicken grower makes 34 cents per bird while the processing corporation makes $3.23 per bird and this Congress prevents the agency tasked with protecting farmers from doing its job?

It is my sincere hope that USDA implements what remains of the fairness Rule as soon as possible and enforces existing laws to protect farmers and ranchers from corporate abuses.

I urge my colleagues to support the Appropriations Minibus.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, the legislation before us would increase taxpayer exposure to the housing market by raising conforming loan limits at the Federal Housing Administration (FHA).

Hardworking taxpayers, struggling to make their own mortgage payments, should not be forced to subsidize the purchase of $729,750 homes. Taxpayers have already spent almost $200 billion dollars bailing out the Government Sponsored Enterprises (GSEs), Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac—why should they also be forced to subsidize the purchase of costly homes for affluent borrowers through FHA?

If the GSEs with their implicit guarantee were a problem, then expanding FHA with its explicit 100 percent taxpayer-backed guarantee is a larger problem. I fear that raising conforming loan limits at FHA while allowing the GSE limits to remain at current levels will push all new mortgage originations between $625,500 and $729,750 into full taxpayer backing through FHA.

To make matters worse, FHA's present financial state is precarious. For the past two years, its single family Mutual Mortgage Insurance Fund (MMIF) has been undercapitalized.

This fund, which is supposed to hold sufficient reserves against unexpected future losses on its existing insurance, is statutorily required to maintain a 2% capital cushion. As of FHA's most recent actuarial report, the Agency is currently 88% below their statutorily required minimum capital ratio. To put that number in perspective, FHA is currently more than ten times more leveraged than Lehman Brothers was when it filed for bankruptcy.

Last week, Dr. Joseph Gyourko, an American Enterprise Insitute (AEI) scholar and real estate and finance professor at the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School, released a report suggesting that FHA is underestimating future losses by many tens of billions of dollars. Dr. Gyourko estimated that the recapitalization required will be at least $50 billion, and likely much more, even if housing markets do not deteriorate unexpectedly.

Dr. Gyourko is not the only one who thinks FHA will need a bailout. In FHA's November 15, 2011, annual report to Congress on the financial status of the MMIF, their independent actuary acknowledged there is a nearly 50% chance they will need a bailout: "With economic net worth being very close to zero under the base-case forecast, the chance that future net losses on the current, outstanding portfolio could exceed current capital resources is close to 50 percent."

Even the Obama Administration has acknowledged a need to scale back taxpayer support for the housing finance system. In its February 2011 report to Congress on options for the future of housing finance, the Administration encouraged Congress to let the elevated loan limits expire. I do not often find myself in agreement with the Obama Administration, but in this instance, we agree that the private sector simply cannot compete with government guarantees. The best way to get private capital in the game is to get the government out.

It is imperative that we work toward comprehensive housing finance reform that will end bailouts and get taxpayers off the hook for bad housing bets. Unfortunately, the underlying legislation works against this goal and for that reason, I must oppose the bill.

Mr. RICHMOND. Mr. Speaker, I missed rollcall vote number 857. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes" on rollcall vote number 857, adoption of the Conference Report on H.R. 2112—the Agriculture, Rural Development, Food & Drug Administration and Related Agencies Appropriations Act.

Mr. Speaker, the conference report is not perfect. I am pleased that it would avert a government shut-down and that the Federal Government can continue to provide services to the American people. Additionally, I am pleased that the conference report provides over $2 billion for emergency disaster relief. That being said, there are many items contained in the legislation that are troubling. At a time of severe economic challenge in many parts of the country, this bill reduces investments in infrastructure, community policing and federal housing programs. I am hopeful that my colleagues can craft the next slate of appropriations bills with a fundamental understanding that we are experiencing an economic emergency in many parts of the country. I look forward to working with them on the remaining appropriations bills for the current fiscal year and to continuing to work to put our economy back on the right track.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 467, the previous question is ordered.

The question is on the conference report.

Pursuant to clause 10 of rule XX, the yeas and nays are ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 298, nays 121, not voting 14, as follows:

[Roll No. 857]

YEAS—298

Ackerman
Aderholt
Alexander
Altmire
Andrews
Baca
Bachus
Baldwin
Barletta
Barrow
Bass (CA)
Bass (NH)
Becerra
Benishek
Berg
Berkley
Berman
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bishop (NY)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blumenauer
Bonner
Bono Mack
Boren
Boswell
Brady (PA)
Braley (IA)
Buchanan
Butterfield
Calvert
Camp
Campbell
Cantor
Capito
Capps
Capuano
Cardoza
Carnahan
Carney
Carson (IN)
Carter
Cassidy
Castor (FL)
Chandler
Chu
Cicilline
Clarke (MI)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coble
Cohen
Cole
Conaway
Connolly (VA)
Cooper
Costa
Costello
Cravaack
Crawford
Crenshaw
Critz
Crowley
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
Davis (KY)
DeFazio
DeGette
DeLauro
Denham
Dent
Deutch
Diaz-Balart
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Dold
Donnelly (IN)
Doyle
Dreier
Edwards
Ellmers
Emerson
Engel
Eshoo
Farr
Fattah
Fitzpatrick
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Frank (MA)
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
Garamendi
Gerlach
Gibbs
Gibson
Gonzalez
Goodlatte
Gosar
Granger
Graves (MO)
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Griffin (AR)
Grimm
Guthrie
Gutierrez
Hahn
Hall
Hanabusa
Hanna
Harper
Hartzler
Hastings (WA)
Hayworth
Heck
Heinrich
Higgins
Himes
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hirono
Hochul
Holt
Honda
Hoyer
Hunter
Inslee
Israel
Issa
Jackson (IL)
Jackson Lee (TX)
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly
Kildee
Kind
King (NY)
Kingston
Kissell
Kline
Lance
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latham
LaTourette
Latta
Levin
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (GA)
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren, Zoe
Long
Lowey
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Luján
Lungren, Daniel E.
Lynch
Maloney
Marino
Markey
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (CA)
McCarthy (NY)
McCaul
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McIntyre
McKeon
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McNerney
Meehan
Mica
Michaud
Miller (NC)
Miller, Gary
Miller, George
Moore
Moran
Murphy (CT)
Nadler
Neal
Nunes
Nunnelee
Olson
Olver
Owens
Palazzo
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor (AZ)
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Peterson
Pingree (ME)
Pitts
Platts
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rahall
Rangel
Rehberg
Reichert
Renacci
Richardson
Rivera
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney
Ros-Lehtinen
Ross (AR)
Rothman (NJ)
Roybal-Allard
Runyan
Ruppersberger
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Scalise
Schiff
Schilling
Schock
Schrader
Schwartz
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sessions
Sewell
Sherman
Shuler
Shuster
Simpson
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Speier
Stivers
Sutton
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tierney
Tonko
Tsongas
Turner (NY)
Turner (OH)
Upton
Van Hollen
Visclosky
Walden
Walz (MN)
Wasserman Schultz
Watt
Waxman
Webster
Welch
West
Whitfield
Wilson (FL)
Wittman
Wolf
Womack
Woodall
Yarmuth
Yoder
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NAYS—121

Adams
Akin
Amash
Amodei
Austria
Bartlett
Barton (TX)
Blackburn
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brooks
Broun (GA)
Bucshon
Buerkle
Burgess
Burton (IN)
Canseco
Chabot
Chaffetz
Clarke (NY)
Coffman (CO)
Conyers
DesJarlais
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellison
Farenthold
Fincher
Flake
Fleischmann
Fleming
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Fudge
Garrett
Gingrey (GA)
Gohmert
Gowdy
Graves (GA)
Griffith (VA)
Grijalva
Guinta
Harris
Hastings (FL)
Hensarling
Herger
Herrera Beutler
Holden
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hurt
Jenkins
Johnson (IL)
Jones
Jordan
King (IA)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kucinich
Labrador
Lamborn
Landry
Lankford
Lee (CA)
Lummis
Mack
Marchant
McClintock
McCotter
McHenry
Meeks
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Myrick
Neugebauer
Noem
Nugent
Paulsen
Pearce
Pence
Petri
Poe (TX)
Polis
Pompeo
Posey
Price (GA)
Quayle
Reed
Reyes
Ribble
Rigell
Ross (FL)
Royce
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Ryan (WI)
Schakowsky
Schmidt
Schweikert
Scott (SC)
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Southerland
Stark
Stearns
Stutzman
Sullivan
Terry
Tipton
Towns
Velázquez
Walberg
Walsh (IL)
Waters
Westmoreland
Wilson (SC)
Woolsey
Young (IN)

NOT VOTING—14

Bachmann
Biggert
Bishop (GA)
Brown (FL)
Courtney
Filner
Gardner
Giffords
Manzullo
Napolitano
Paul
Richmond
Roskam
Shimkus

□ 1619

Messrs. TERRY, POE of Texas, SULLIVAN, YOUNG of Indiana, FLEISCHMANN, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Ms. BUERKLE, and Mr. MILLER of Florida changed their vote from "yea" to "nay."

Mr. SESSIONS changed his vote from "nay" to "yea."

So the conference report was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall 857, I was away from the Capitol due to prior commitments to my constituents. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I was absent during rollcall vote No. 857 in order to attend an important event in my district. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on

Adoption of the Conference Report on H.R. 2112—Agriculture, Rural Development, Food & Drug Administration and Related Agencies Appropriations Act.

Stated against:

Mr. MANZULLO. Mr. Speaker, I missed rollcall No. 857. Had I been present, I would have voted "nay."

PROPOSING A BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 466, I move to suspend the rules and pass the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 2) proposing a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution of the United States, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the joint resolution.

The text of the joint resolution is as follows:

H.J. RES. 2

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled (two-thirds of each House concurring therein), That the following article is proposed as an amendment to the Constitution of the United States, which shall be valid to all intents and purposes as part of the Constitution when ratified by the legislatures of three-fourths of the several States within seven years after the date of its submission for ratification:

"ARTICLE—

"SECTION 1. Total outlays for any fiscal year shall not exceed total receipts for that fiscal year, unless three-fifths of the whole number of each House of Congress shall provide by law for a specific excess of outlays over receipts by a rollcall vote.

"SECTION 2. The limit on the debt of the United States held by the public shall not be increased, unless three-fifths of the whole number of each House shall provide by law for such an increase by a rollcall vote.

"SECTION 3. Prior to each fiscal year, the President shall transmit to the Congress a proposed budget for the United States Government for that fiscal year in which total outlays do not exceed total receipts.

"SECTION 4. No bill to increase revenue shall become law unless approved by a majority of the whole number of each House by a rollcall vote.

"SECTION 5. The Congress may waive the provisions of this article for any fiscal year in which a declaration of war is in effect. The provisions of this article may be waived for any fiscal year in which the United States is engaged in military conflict which causes an imminent and serious military threat to national security and is so declared by a joint resolution, adopted by a majority of the whole number of each House, which becomes law. Any such waiver must identify and be limited to the specific excess or increase for that fiscal year made necessary by the identified military conflict.

"SECTION 6. The Congress shall enforce and implement this article by appropriate legislation, which may rely on estimates of outlays and receipts.

"SECTION 7. Total receipts shall include all receipts of the United States Government except those derived from borrowing. Total outlays shall include all outlays of the United States Government except for those for repayment of debt principal.

"SECTION 8. This article shall take effect beginning with the fifth fiscal year beginning after its ratification.".

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HASTINGS of Washington). Pursuant to House Resolution 466, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SMITH) and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) each will control 2 hours and 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on House Joint Resolution 2, as amended, currently under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Americans want the Federal Government to stop excessive government spending and reduce the Federal deficit. The last time the budget was balanced was during the Clinton administration, when Republicans in Congress passed the first balanced budget in over 25 years. Meanwhile, the Federal debt has climbed from less than $400 billion in 1970 to over $15 trillion today.

Mr. Speaker, President Obama has set the wrong kind of new record. The national debt has increased faster under his administration than under any other President in history. America cannot continue to run huge Federal budget deficits. Financing Federal overspending through continued borrowing threatens to drown Americans in high taxes and heavy debt, and it puts a drag on the economy.

The Federal Government now borrows 42 cents for every dollar it spends. No family, no community, no business, no country can sustain that kind of excessive spending. That is the road to insolvency. Unfortunately, this kind of bad behavior has gone unchecked for so long that it has become the norm. The Federal Government has been on a decades-long shopping spree, racking up the bills and leaving them for future generations.

We need a Constitutional mandate to force both the President and Congress to adopt annual budgets that spend no more than the government takes in. Only a balanced budget constitutional amendment will save us from unending Federal deficits.

Just as both parties have joint responsibility for the deficit, we must jointly take responsibility for controlling the deficit by passing the balanced budget amendment. We came very close to passing this balanced budget amendment in 1995, falling just one vote short in the Senate of the required two-thirds majority. In that Congress, the amendment was supported by Congressman HOYER, now minority whip, Congressman CLYBURN, now Assistant Democratic leader, and Senator JOSEPH BIDEN, now Vice President.

As then-Senator BIDEN stated in support of the balanced budget amendment, "In recent decades we have faced a problem that we do not seem to be able to solve. We cannot balance our budget—or more correctly, we will not. The decision to encumber future generations with financial obligations is one that can rightly be considered among the fundamental choices addressed in the Constitution."

Congress is way overdue to pass a balanced budget amendment, and the American people want it. Polls show that 74 percent are in favor of a balanced budget amendment. It took less than a generation for us to get into this mess, we need a fiscal fix that will now last for generations.

If we want to make lasting cuts to Federal spending, a constitutional amendment is the only solution. It is our last line of defense against Congress' unending desire to overspend and overtax.

Thomas Jefferson believed that "the public debt is the greatest of dangers to be feared." Jefferson wished "it were possible to obtain a single amendment to our Constitution taking from the Federal Government the power of borrowing." It is time that we listened to Thomas Jefferson and passed a constitutional amendment to end the Federal Government's continuous deficit spending. We must solve our debt crisis to save the future.

I want to thank Mr. GOODLATTE, the gentleman from Virginia, for introducing the version of the balanced budget amendment we are considering today and for his tireless work in support of the amendment.

Since the 1930s, dozens of proposals offered by both Democrats and Republicans have called for constitutional amendments to address Federal budget deficits. We have the opportunity today to take the first step toward making a balanced budget a reality by passing this legislation.

□ 1630

The American people have not given Congress a blank check. Let's demonstrate to the American people that Congress can be fiscally responsible and get our economic house in order. Borrowing 42 cents for every dollar the government spends and setting a new deficit record is not the road to prosperity. Let's put our country first and pass this amendment.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Ladies and gentlemen, this balanced budget constitutional amendment is one that surprises me, and very little surprises me anymore. But for us to be seriously, on this day and this time, considering an amendment to the Constitution of the United States that would destroy jobs, that would drastically cut Medicare and Social Security and give members of the Federal judiciary the right to raise taxes and

make spending decisions for us is relatively shocking to me, and I am very much opposed to it.

I want to engage my dear friend, the chairman of the committee, in an exchange of views on this, but let's start off the discussion with this reality. This is not 1995, and that's why so many people that supported the amendment then have changed their minds now, and they will explain this as they go along.

I would like now, Mr. Speaker, to yield to the gentleman from New York, former chairman of the Constitution Subcommittee, JERRY NADLER, for as much time as he may consume.

Mr. NADLER. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to this misguided attempt to amend our constitution. It is both bad economic policy and bad constitutional policy.

Let's start with the basics. While balancing your budget and paying down your debts is important—and we did that under President Clinton—a balanced budget every year, regardless of the circumstances, even when facing economic crisis, a natural disaster or a terrorist threat, is economically dangerous. We would be risking economic ruin if we enshrined this unyielding rule in the Constitution and shackled future generations to one particular economic policy preference that does not work at all times and in all situations.

In general, the economists tell us, in good times, you should have a balanced budget and pay down the debt. In bad times, when a recession increases demands on government and tax revenues fall, or in emergencies, you need to be able to run a deficit.

The nonpartisan economists at Macroeconomics Advisers, for example, tell us that if this amendment were in effect next year, in fiscal year 2012, it would eliminate 15 million jobs and double the unemployment rate. And this amendment would shackle future generations in such situations.

One thing we can be sure of, this amendment will devastate the economy; destroy Medicaid, Medicare, and Social Security; cripple our government's ability to deal with national emergencies, maintain our vital infrastructure, or deal with new challenges as they emerge.

Let's be clear on what this amendment does not do. It does not require us to balance the budget the way States or businesses or families do. They're not required to spend no more than that year's income. Families borrow money. If they were told you must pay cash—you want to buy a house, pay cash; you want to buy a car, pay cash—they wouldn't have the house, they wouldn't have the car, the standard of living would be much lower.

States borrow money. States have balanced budget amendments generally, but those amendments refer to their operating budgets. They borrow money for their capital budgets to build bridges and roads and highways. The budget of the United States does not make such a distinction, and this balanced budget amendment would say you can never borrow money. You cannot borrow money to build highways, to make investments, to deal with the economy in a recession. It doesn't make sense.

Similarly, we collect payroll taxes to pay for Social Security benefits. We collect gasoline taxes to pay for transportation infrastructure, and we carry over unexpended funds in those trust funds from prior years. Because they were paid in prior years, those revenues would not count, only the expenditures. If you paid $100 in Social Security taxes in 1960 and drew $100 of benefits in 2011, the budget would show a deficit of $100 because the tax was paid in a different year, even though it's the same money. No matter how much money we had put away for a rainy day, we would still be limited to spending no more than that year's tax revenues. No one in this room balances their budget that way.

What happens when you retire and your income drops? Do you not touch your savings because it didn't come in during that year? Of course not. You're not running a deficit when your expenses equals that year's income plus savings.

I know we have a lot of millionaires here, but did anyone pay cash for their home?

But this amendment enshrines crazy bookkeeping and distorted policies into our Constitution. So all the chatter about States and businesses and families balancing their budgets is true, but it's irrelevant to what this amendment actually says.

Because this is a constitutional amendment, it would give Federal judges, those same unelected, lifetenured Federal judges my Republican friends always complain about, the power to cut spending and raise taxes. Anyone could bring a lawsuit if the budget doesn't balance, if the estimated receipts, in his opinion, didn't match the estimated tax revenues, and a judge would have to decide whose revenue and expenditure estimates were correct. And if they didn't match in the judge's opinion, the judge would have to decide to increase taxes or to cut expenditures and which expenditures it cut, an unelected judge.

How is that possible? It's possible because, as a constitutional amendment, the courts will have to have the power to enforce it, just as they do the rest of the Constitution.

The Constitution now gives the power to tax in the first instance to the House. All revenue measures must originate here. That's because we are closest to the people—the people's House. This would go as far away from that wise decision as you possibly can by giving that power ultimately to the only part of government that is not elected by the people and that is not accountable at the ballot box—the judiciary.

The courts could also order reduction in spending to enforce a balanced budget. They could slash military spending or Social Security or eliminate disaster relief. The voters and Congress would be powerless to stop such decisions.

Is this really someone's idea of constitutional conservatism?

This amendment isn't limited to a requirement that we balance the budget. It imposes a three-fifths supermajority requirement to raise the debt ceiling. When we considered that in 1995, it never occurred to anyone that any Member of Congress, much less a majority, would consider allowing the United States to default on its debt. It wasn't just considered crazy; it was considered impossible.

Today, unfortunately, we live in a different world. This year, for the first time in American history, we nearly defaulted on the full faith and credit of the United States and, for the first time in our history, saw our top credit rating downgraded, and that was for difficulty in getting a simple majority. A three-fifths majority would make it much more difficult.

Is this balanced budget amendment necessary?

We have been told it's the only way to impose the necessary discipline to force Congress to balance the budget. We know that's not true because we balanced the budget under President Clinton. We turned in four balanced budgets and ran a surplus. In fact, in 2001, Alan Greenspan, testifying in favor of President Bush's proposed tax cuts, said we had to reduce taxes because we were going to eliminate, pay down the entire national debt in 10 years, and that would be a bad thing, he thought, for various reasons. But that was the danger—we'd pay down and eliminate the national debt.

But President Bush and a Republican Congress succeeded in turning that record surplus into record deficits in record time. They did it with two huge tax cuts, two unfunded wars, a prescription drug benefit that wasn't paid for, and the rejection of the Democratic Congress' pay-as-you-go rule. It was all done off the books.

And I have heard the calumny that it was wild spending by the Obama administration that has brought about our $15 trillion national debt. Well, the truth of the matter is, if you look at non-defense discretionary spending, everything we do, other than defense and Social Security and Medicare and veterans benefits and interest on the debt, adjusted for population and for inflation, it hasn't gone up by a nickel since 2001.

The fault, dear colleagues, is not in our Constitution; it's in an irresponsible Republican President and an irresponsible Republican Congress. Many of those same Republican Members who saw nothing wrong with busting the budget, who sat quietly when Vice President Cheney said that deficits don't matter, now demand this assault

on our founding document instead of delivering the votes for sound fiscal policy.

We should do our jobs, not wreck the Constitution and the economy with snake oil cures like this. I urge a ''no'' vote.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 15 seconds.

I just want to say to the gentleman from Michigan who spoke earlier that I agree with him. Today is not 1995. In fact, the deficit is worse. Since 1995, the deficit has tripled. It's gone from $5 trillion to $15 trillion, which is all the more reason to support this balanced budget amendment to the Constitution.

□ 1640

Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to my friend and colleague from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE), the sponsor of this resolution.

Mr. GOODLATTE. I thank the chairman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, this chart tells the story. We have had a number of opportunities over the years to pass balanced budget amendments to the United States Constitution. It's not my idea; it's not a new idea. But as we've gone through time, we've managed debt. Now, as the chairman just noted, in the last 15 years the debt has tripled.

But looking ahead, this chart, which shows the ratio of our debt to our gross domestic product, and shows that by 2080 it will be nine times the total economic output of our country, indicates that what some on the other side have said simply is not the case.

Congress has not made the tough decisions. We have overpromised the American people, and the fact of the matter is, now we need to have something in the Constitution that the American people expect and demand of us. And that is a balanced budget amendment.

Now, we have lots of different balanced budget amendments that have been proposed in this Congress, I think 18 of them that I've seen thus far. And some ask for more stringent requirements—which I very much like—limiting the ability to balance this budget by putting a heavier burden on the American people through taxes. Capping the amount of money that we spend—certainly something that I also think we need to be cognizant of.

Others have said let's take certain things off the table, like Social Security or capital spending or disaster spending.

This balanced budget amendment, which passed this House with 300 votes, including 72 Democrats, strikes the right balance. It enshrines in our Constitution the principle that we should live within our means but gives future Congresses the flexibility to, in times of national emergency, have some years that are not balanced. That, I think, is a reality that we have to deal with.

But the fact of the matter is that in the last 50 years, since 1961, this Congress has balanced the budget of this Nation six times. It should be the other way around. There are certainly 6 years in those 50 that were crises in which you might say we should not balance the budget this year.

But when the gentleman from New York says that in good times we should pay down the debt, and in tough times we should borrow, that has not been what has happened because most of those 50 years have been good times.

Now, there's another important point to make here. Any amendment to the United States Constitution has to, by its very nature, be bipartisan. It requires a two-thirds majority. And many of my friends on the other side of the aisle have worked very hard to build support on their side of the aisle for this. I especially want to thank PETER DEFAZIO and JIM COOPER. Many Members, the Blue Dogs, have endorsed this balanced budget amendment. But it is necessary to have a bipartisan approach to this.

And you know what? This is a bipartisan problem. There have been Republican Presidents and Democratic Presidents, Republican Congresses and Democratic Congresses that have contributed to those 44 years when we've run deficits.

So now today we come and ask for a bipartisan solution to this problem, a solution that, depending upon the poll, 75 to 80 percent of the American people support.

Congress continues to prove it cannot make the tough decisions on its own. The budget has only been balanced six times in 50 years. The American people know what it means to balance their budgets. They are surprised that the Congress does not have this requirement. State governments do—49 out of 50 States, most of which have it in their constitutions. Local governments have to balance their budgets. Families and businesses have to live within their means, and they can't go more than a few years without living within their means.

But to run up a $15 trillion debt which, divided by the population of our country, means that the average person today owes more in debt based upon their share of the government's debt than they have in personal income, is a disgrace. This is not only an economic issue. This is not only something that we should be imposing upon future Congresses for economic reasons. This is also a moral issue.

This is wrong to borrow money year after year after year, over a trillion dollars in each of the last 3 years, so that today the average dollar spent by the Federal Government, 42 percent of it, by far the largest share, is borrowed against our children's and grandchildren's future.

And where does that lead us? It leads us to where Europe is.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. I yield the gentleman 1 additional minute.

Mr. GOODLATTE. This chart shows government debt as a percentage of GDP for the United States and five European countries—Spain, Portugal, Ireland, Italy, and Greece. When Greece first got into their problem last year, they were at 120 percent of GDP. That's what their debt totaled. Already just a little over a year later, it is 152 percent of GDP because their economy is shrinking because of irresponsibility on the part of their government.

The United States just this week crossed the 100 percent line. The United States owes as much in debt as we have in the total economic output of this Nation for 1 year.

It is time to put a halt to this, and the best way to do it is to enshrine in our Constitution a principle we all understand, we all live by, and that is you cannot live like this, you cannot live beyond your means year after year after year.

I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to join this bipartisan effort to enshrine in our Constitution a principle sought by the vast majority of the American people.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased at this time to recognize the minority leader of the House of Representatives who, ever since she has come to Congress, has worked drastically to save and build on Medicare, Social Security, and to create jobs, the gentlewoman from California, NANCY PELOSI.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The minority leader is recognized for 1 minute.

Ms. PELOSI. I thank the gentleman for yielding and for his kind words and his great leadership on all of the issues that are important to America's working families.

Mr. Speaker, I came to the floor to talk about the balanced budget constitutional amendment, but before I get into my comments specifically to the amendment, I want to acknowledge that the gentleman from Texas, the distinguished chairman of the committee, Mr. SMITH, has talked about what the deficit was in 1995 and how much bigger it is now and the distinguished maker of this resolution today, Mr. GOODLATTE, talked about the problem of having such a big national debt.

Recognizing those two facts, I want to speak up about them.

First of all, if this were just talking about how we can reduce the deficit, the best way to do that is job creation. We know that.

If we want to talk about what happened in the nineties, we have to reference the fact that under President Bill Clinton, the Reagan-Bush deficit that he inherited he turned around, and five of his last budgets, the Clinton budgets, were in balance or were in surplus. He put us on a trajectory, he and the growth of jobs in our country in the public, and largely in the private sector, took us to a path, a trajectory of $5.6 trillion in surplus.

Along comes President George W. Bush and in record time, he reversed that. It was the biggest fiscal turnaround in our Nation's history, taking us to a trajectory of over $5 trillion in deficit, an $11 trillion turnaround. Two unpaid-for wars said the CBO, the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office. That was because of two unpaid-for wars, the Bush tax cuts, particularly at the high end which did not create jobs, and a giveaway pharmaceutical bill to the pharmaceutical industry.

□ 1650

Those were the three main reasons for the big fiscal turnaround and how we got deeply in debt. I don't remember a lot of complaints coming from the Republican side of the aisle while President Bush was taking us down this path. Mr. GOODLATTE referenced two paths. Well, this is one path that President Bush took us down, so now we have to deal with that because the deficit is a concern to all of us.

We believe that the best way to deal with that is what President Clinton did, which was to have a great economic agenda to generate jobs. Yet here we are, nearly 320 days into the Republican majority, and they have taken no action on any serious job-creating bills. Here we go again: debating legislation that will not create jobs.

In fact, according to experts, the enactment of this proposed amendment to our Constitution would destroy 15 million jobs, double the unemployment rate, and cause the economy to shrink by 17 percent. As Bruce Bartlett said recently, former economic adviser to President Ronald Reagan and to President George Herbert Walker Bush:

''Even if we were not in an economic crisis and fighting two wars, a rapid cut in spending of that magnitude would unquestionably throw the economy into recession just as it did in 1937.''

This legislation is an attack on our economy, and it is an attack on our seniors. According to the nonpartisan Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, it could result in cuts over 10 years of $750 billion to Medicare and $1.2 trillion in cuts to Social Security. These cuts would be devastating to the 40 million seniors who rely on Medicare and Social Security every day. They are even more draconian than the cuts in the Republican budget, which would effectively repeal the Medicare guarantee. And just one week after our Nation celebrated Veterans Day, we are debating potentially cutting $85 billion over the next 10 years from veterans' benefits.

My colleagues on the other side of the aisle claim this is a clean balanced budget amendment. It is not. Because this proposed amendment to our Constitution will require a supermajority in both Chambers of Congress to raise the debt limit, it puts the full faith and credit of the United States of America in the hands of a minority—this after we went through all of the stress and strain and uncertainty and downgrading of our credit rating when we couldn't even get a majority, and now we're thinking of a supermajority vote for the debt limit increase. Again, that was never a requirement when President Bush was President that there would be a supermajority to raise the debt limit.

This amendment promotes further brinkmanship and uncertainty, enshrining extreme ideology into the Constitution at a time when Americans have been very clear that they expect us to set differences aside and to get to work.

It is our duty as Members of Congress—indeed, we take the oath of office—to be the elected guardians of our Constitution, to protect and defend it, and to do no harm to our founding documents. Yet, if this proposed amendment is adopted, it will have far-reaching and adverse consequences.

Mr. Speaker, I repeat that it was a Democratic President, President Clinton, who balanced the budget in the nineties. Five of his budgets were in balance or in surplus. We can do it again without harming our Constitution, our economy, our seniors, or our veterans. We must start by creating jobs and strengthening our economic growth—a key to reducing the deficit.

It was interesting to me to hear others on the other side of the aisle talk about our children and our responsibility to them. Yes, that's what we said when President Bush was amassing his deficit, but I didn't hear anyone on the other side of the aisle talking about that.

This is about our Constitution. We owe it to the vision of our Founders, to the sacrifice of our men and women in uniform, and to the aspirations of our children to get our economic and fiscal houses in order. This is the exact wrong way to do it. We must reignite the American Dream, and we have work to do on that. So let's get to work to create jobs so that many more people can achieve the American Dream.

I urge my colleagues to vote ''no.''

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. FRANKS), who is the chairman of the Constitution Subcommittee of the Judiciary Committee.

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, all financial budgets will eventually balance. The choice faced by those of us in Congress is whether we will balance this budget ourselves through the wise policy before us or whether national bankruptcy and financial ruin will do it for us.

From the very day that Barack Obama walked into the White House, he has, with breathtaking arrogance, absolutely ignored economic and financial reality. It took America the first 216 years of its existence to accumulate the debt that Barack Obama has accumulated in the first 3 years of his Presidency. He has in those short 3 years increased our Federal debt by over $4 trillion.

Just to put that into perspective, if all of a sudden a wave of responsibility swept through this Chamber and if we stopped all deficit spending today and began to pay installments of $1 million every day to pay down the over $4 trillion in new debt that Barack Obama has created in less than 3 years, it would take us more than 10,000 years to pay that off—and that's if we didn't pay one dime of interest in the process.

But you see, we are not paying Mr. Obama's debt down at $1 million per day; we are going deeper into debt, more than 4,000 times that much, every day under Mr. Obama's own submitted budget and deficit projections.

In an ominous prologue to the vote before us, the national debt surpassed $15 trillion yesterday.

Mr. Speaker, we have already tried Mr. Obama's way. We have thoroughly tested Democrat economics 101—the theory that we can tax and deficit spend ourselves into prosperity or, as Vice President BIDEN put it, ''We have to spend money to keep from going bankrupt.''

That theory has utterly failed. We cannot repeal the laws of mathematics.

But now the seminal moment approaches when each of us in this body will have the rare opportunity to cast a single vote that could pull this Nation back from the brink of economic cataclysm. For the sake of our children and our children's children, I pray that we do the right thing.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair must remind all Members that remarks in debate may not engage in personalities toward the President.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased now to yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Virginia, JIM MORAN.

Mr. MORAN. I thank the chairman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I have to rise in opposition to this balanced budget amendment. I did vote for a similar measure in 1995, but the events over the last 15 years have brought to mind the axiom ''fool me once, your fault; fool me twice, my fault.'' I could never have imagined back in 1995 the chaos we experienced this summer.

Despite the fact that we only needed to obtain a simple majority vote to raise the debt limit, which we'd raised 17 times during the Reagan administration, that would seem like child's play compared to what we would have to go through if this balanced budget amendment passed.

□ 1700

The events of these last 15 years have proved to us that this bill would have dramatic and dangerous consequences for our economic future. It would force the Federal Government to worsen economic recessions. Since Federal revenues fall while human needs rise in economic downturns, this bill would force spending cuts and tax increases at precisely the point when the economy is reeling, potentially turning a

manageable downturn into a depression. Essentially, this bill would forbid countercyclical spending.

Had this amendment been on the books in 2009, for example, we would not have passed the Economic Recovery Act, which proved to be a critical response to the economic catastrophe that followed the financial crisis. One of the reasons that the Recovery Act was necessary is that State balanced budget amendments forced States to rely on Federal funds in order to make up for budget shortfalls that would have prompted cuts right at the time when State economies could least afford them. The Federal Government was effectively borrowing on behalf of the States that were constitutionally prohibited from doing so; but they desperately needed to in order to maintain their law enforcement, their transportation, and their other responsibilities.

Even in Texas, where Republican Governor Perry and the legislature opposed the Recovery Act, Federal stimulus funds were used to close 97 percent of that State's budget gap. Now that those dollars are gone, many States face a very serious budget crisis.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. CONYERS. I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. MORAN. I thank the gentleman.

Furthermore, House Joint Resolution 2 would require a three-fifths majority to raise the debt ceiling. This would only increase the likelihood of a catastrophic debt default like the one we barely avoided this summer.

Given the polarization that we're currently experiencing, I have severe doubts that the required supermajority could be secured either to respond to crises or to raise the debt ceiling. This would give preference to military action over economic crises, requiring only a majority for deficit spending for a war—such as the Iraq war, which was never paid for—but a three-fifths majority to respond to a domestic economic crisis. If this were enacted in 2012, it would require drastic cuts that would have unintended, but dire, consequences for our struggling economy.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has again expired.

Mr. MORAN. It's the wrong medicine for today's ailing economy.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair reminds Members to heed the gavel.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. GOWDY), a distinguished member of the Judiciary Committee.

Mr. GOWDY. I thank the gentleman from Texas, Chairman SMITH, for his leadership on this issue and so many others on Judiciary.

Mr. Speaker, when Odysseus was returning from the Trojan War, he was passing the islands where the sirens sang. Many a sailor had succumbed to their sweet melodious sound and died. So Odysseus made his men put wax in their ears, and he made them tie him up to the mast. Against his will, he made them tie him up, and he did it because he lacked the will to restrain himself.

When people take our freedom, we recoil. But when we've proven ourselves to be wholly incapable of exercising that freedom, we should give it up. Congress has proven itself to be hopelessly incapable of balancing the budget. We need to be made to do so because we cannot bring ourselves to make the hard decisions required.

As my colleague and friend, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE), who's been a leader on this issue, mentioned in his remarks, six times in 50 years is laughable. You would do better than six out of 50 if you just guessed. Six out of 50 is laughable. We are incapable of balancing our own budget.

And when South Carolina, Mr. Speaker—which does have a balanced budget requirement—was facing tough economic times, we had to cut public safety money to prosecutors. I had to cut and furlough employees who were making $19,000 a year. I had to furlough prosecutors who had $100,000 in student loans for 7 days. That's a hard decision to make, but we had to do it for fiscal health.

We need to make hard decisions, even if they're career-ending decisions, in this body; but we have proven ourselves incapable of doing it, so we must bind ourselves, even against our will.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. GOWDY. Mr. Speaker, we are $15 trillion in debt. We need to tie ourselves up before we wreck this Republic.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey, a distinguished leader in the Congress, BILL PASCRELL.

Mr. PASCRELL. I thank the ranking member.

Mr. Speaker, this attempt to change the Constitution of the United States is a real disaster. We all want to make sure we balance the budgets, but to compare our household budget to the national budget is preposterous because we have different responsibilities as a Federal Government.

Alexander Hamilton, who wrote so many of the Federalist Papers—I thought we understand a great leader, a great American. I thought we understood what the responsibilities of government are.

But talking about disasters, what about natural disasters? How would a balanced budget amendment affect how the Congress looks at when there is a tornado in Joplin, a wipe-out and flooding of New Jersey, a hurricane in Florida, wildfires in Texas? The amendment requires this balanced budget amendment—which is a joke to begin with, how you named it. It doesn't balance the budget. And if the amendment ever got through, it would take 7 years to implement. We have people out of work now. But anyway, the amendment requires a supermajority for every emergency spending case of natural disasters.

Let's take my State of New Jersey. FEMA estimates that it will provide $400 million to help communities and individuals across the State recover and rebuild. Last September, we couldn't even get a majority, let alone a supermajority, to pass disaster aid unless it was offset with partisan budget cuts. Every State will have to go through that.

I want every State to know—you talk about the States. You talk about their budgets. Isn't it interesting that on January of this year, CBO Director Douglas Elmendorf wrote this: ''Amending the Constitution to require this sort of balance raises risks.'' Listen, my friends, brothers, and sisters: ''The fact that taxes fall when the economy weakens and spending and benefit programs increase''—by nature, they have to; people need help, unless we're no longer going to be a first-rate Republic—''when the economy weakens in an automatic way under existing law is an important stabilizing force for the aggregate economy.''

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. CONYERS. I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. PASCRELL. I thank the gentleman.

''The fact that State governments need to work against these effects in their own budgets—need to take action to raise taxes or cut spending in recessions—undoes the automatic stabilizers, essentially, at the State level. Taking those away at the Federal level risks making the economy less stable, risks exacerbating the swings in business cycles.''

We did it together, Democrats and Republican, '98, '99, 2000. We did it without an amendment to the Constitution, which will undermine this institution that we so revere right here today.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to my friend from California (Mr. HERGER), a member of the Ways and Means Committee.

□ 1710

Mr. HERGER. Mr. Speaker, the American people understand the basic principle that you can't spend money you don't have. They live that reality on a daily basis. Unfortunately, Congress has disregarded this idea, choosing instead to imagine that it could spend money endlessly without harming our economy or standard of living. The result is that we're now an unthinkable $15 trillion in debt. Some argue that we don't need to amend the Constitution for Washington to do its job.

I'm proud to say that I served on the Budget Committee in the late 1990s

when we produced four consecutive balanced budgets. But the sad truth is that this kind of fiscal responsibility has been all too rare in recent years. Ultimately, a balanced budget amendment will force Congress to be serious about addressing the core driver of our debt, which is the out-of-control growth of Federal entitlement spending.

As the President has acknowledged, no taxpayer would be willing to pay the amount required to sustain the exponential growth of entitlements, and no amount of budget gimmicks can hide this serious crisis. A balanced budget is a commonsense idea that governs our personal lives, and it should also be at the heart of how Congress operates. I strongly support the balanced budget amendment, and I urge the House to pass it.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from California, JUDY CHU, a member of the Judiciary Committee.

Ms. CHU. Proponents of this bill claim it is about fiscal responsibility, but it is the opposite. This bill makes it impossible, in fact unconstitutional, for the government to save for the future. Under this bill, programs like Social Security or long term Federal highway projects would have to be completely eliminated to comply with the Constitution.

Today, American workers put money into a Social Security trust fund built to pay and save for future benefits. But under this shortsighted constitutional amendment, money coming into the Federal Government must be paid out the same year. That means you can't have a Social Security trust fund, so good-bye Social Security. Good-bye saving for retirement.

Let me tell you how bad this idea is. Let's say for a moment that this was your family's budget. If this constitutional budget amendment applied to you, you would have to spend everything you earned in the same year. No college fund or IRA, no savings account to put a downpayment on a house or, God forbid, to pay for expensive medical treatment. Not only is that ludicrous, it is tragic.

If that weren't bad enough, if this constitutional amendment goes through and no revenues are raised, all government programs will suffer a 17.3 percent cut. That's a $1.2 trillion reduction in Social Security payments through 2021. That is nearly a 20 percent reduction that would directly hurt current and future retirees and senior citizens for the next decade.

This so-called balanced budget amendment balances overzealous budget slashing on the backs of our senior citizens and future retirees. Does Congress really want to send the message now, in the midst of the worst financial crisis since the Great Depression, that saving responsibly for the future is unconstitutional? Is Congress prepared to abandon millions of Americans now? I, for one, am not. And so I urge my colleagues to oppose this reckless constitutional amendment.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE).

Mr. GOODLATTE. I thank the chairman, and I just want to make it very clear that some inaccurate assertions have been made about the protection of Social Security and highway trust funds.

The funds can be spent each year, and then any excess funds that need to be retained can be put into a rainy day fund. And so the Social Security trust fund or another type of fund like that is perfectly permissible under this provision. What is not permissible is continuing to run up debt year after year after year, and that is what endangers Social Security and Medicare and important programs for our senior citizens, and that is why this amendment is needed.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. BARROW), a member of the Energy and Commerce Committee.

Mr. BARROW. I want to particularly thank the chairman for yielding me time to speak in support of the balanced budget amendment.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the balanced budget amendment, which I've supported since I first came to Congress. We all agree that our Nation's debt is unsustainable. Our economy is struggling, and folks everywhere are struggling to find work. But facts are stubborn things. And it's a fact that balancing the budget is essential if we're going to protect our future and the future of our children and grandchildren. Balancing the budget will also create the long-term stability our economy needs to fully recover.

Amending our Constitution is not something to take lightly. We shouldn't do it on a whim or because it is politically expedient. Amending the Constitution is something that we as a Nation should undertake only when it is truly needed. Unfortunately, Congress has demonstrated time and again that it cannot and will not balance the budget on its own. It is truly needed now.

Nearly every State in the Union has a balanced budget amendment. Families throughout America have to bring their income and outlays into balance, and so can the Federal Government.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation is bipartisan. It is responsible. It is the right thing to do. And I hope my colleagues on both sides of the aisle will join me and the Blue Dog Coalition in supporting the balanced budget amendment.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from New York, JERRY NADLER.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I have to correct what the distinguished gentleman from Virginia said a moment ago when he said that this amendment would not affect Social Security because Social Security would be paid for by the trust fund. This amendment says the total outlays cannot exceed receipts. Total outlays should include all outlays of the United States Government except for those for repayment of debt principle. That includes Social Security, which the courts have held is not a debt. Therefore, Social Security would have to be paid out of the same amounts, and they would be counted against the overall outlays when calculating whether the budget is in balance, something that's not the case today. It would throw the budget further out of balance and would require deeper cuts.

If this amendment were in effect today, Medicare would have to be cut by $750 billion, Social Security by $1.2 trillion, and veterans benefits by $85 billion through 2021. Despite anything anyone may say on this floor, that's the simple truth about this amendment.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlelady from Nevada, SHELLEY BERKLEY.

Ms. BERKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to this dangerous balanced budget constitutional amendment. We all agree that we must get America's fiscal house in order by cutting spending and balancing our budget. Nevada families know this. Families across Nevada are doing it by tightening their belts and making great sacrifices. The United States Government should be able to do the same.

However, this balanced budget amendment is wrong for Nevada and it's wrong for the rest of the country. It would force massive cuts to Social Security, Medicare, and veterans benefits, but big oil companies and corporations that ship jobs overseas aren't asked to sacrifice one penny under this balanced budget amendment. That's just not right. But this is what the American people have come to expect from this Congress.

Washington Republicans supported a radical budget proposal, the Ryan budget, that kills Medicare by turning it over to private insurance companies. Now they are supporting a plan that slashes Social Security and Medicare benefits that seniors rely on. It's a question of priorities.

I strongly believe that we need to get our deficit under control, and I believe that a version of the balanced budget amendment could be one way to achieve that. But I cannot and I will not support a balanced budget amendment that doesn't include ironclad protections for Social Security, Medicare, and veterans benefits. We should not be balancing our Nation's budget on the backs of our seniors and our vets.

This balanced budget amendment may be good politics for some, but it is not good policy for America. I urge my colleagues to join me in voting ''no'' on this attack on our seniors and our veterans.

□ 1720

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman

from Oklahoma (Mr. LANKFORD), a member of the Oversight and Government Reform Committee.

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. Speaker, 27 times the United States Constitution has been amended. It's something we do rarely, and it's something that we should think through in the process. We do it only because it is absolutely required and we have common agreement across the House, the Senate, and the American people. This is one of those moments.

If you ask most every American on the street, ''Should we balance our budget?'' they will nod their head. If you ask them again, ''Should we force Congress to balance the budget?'' again they will nod their head and say yes, this is something we should do.

There is common agreement across the American people because it's common sense. It's hard to explain to any family or any business why they have to balance their budget but Congress does not. It is the ultimate exemption for Members of Congress that they can spend as much as they want as often as they would like without any retribution.

I hear all the doomsday statements that if we balanced our budget, what would possibly happen if we had to live within our means? It makes me smile and say, just like every business and every family, we have to make hard choices, and we have to do it.

But it's not what doomsday prediction happens if we balance our budget. It is look up across the ocean at what is happening in Europe right now to nations that did not balance their budget, and for some reason, we think as Americans we can run up as much debt as we would like with no consequence. We are fooling ourselves.

The doomsday is coming. We must put a boundary around the United States Congress to be able to balance our budget. In 1995, when this failed by one vote, we will forever regret that if this occurs again. It's time for us to balance our budget once and for all.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentlelady from Ohio, MARCIA FUDGE.

Ms. FUDGE. I thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak in opposition to the balanced budget amendment, H.J. Res. 2. Despite its name, this amendment does not balance the budget. It would have little effect on our deficit but could seriously harm our economy. It would destroy jobs, drastically cut Medicare and Social Security, and unconstitutionally give Federal judges the power to make spending decisions.

And this amendment does not even require a balanced budget every year. What it does it make it easier to cut taxes and more difficult to raise taxes in order to allocate money to important programs that protect our veterans, our seniors, and our most vulnerable. It could also allow Federal judges to have the final say on taxing and spending decisions.

No one knows if amending the Constitution to require a balanced Federal budget will actually reduce the debt. No one knows if it could prevent the debt from growing in the future. What we do know is that when Democrats controlled Congress, PAYGO was effective in reining in spending. And what we do know is that this amendment is not the answer.

If a balanced budget requirement were to go into effect, it would destroy millions of jobs. If the budget were balanced through spending cuts, those cuts would come to about $1.5 trillion in 2012. This would throw 15 million more Americans out of work, double the unemployment rate to approximately 18 percent, and cause the economy to shrink by 17 percent.

Republicans, as part of their budget proposal, have made it clear they want to cut Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security. By requiring a balanced budget, these programs would be directly on the chopping block. According to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, this amendment could force Congress to cut all programs by an average of 17.3 percent by 2018. If revenues are not raised, Medicare could be cut by about $750 billion.

Democrats have balanced the budget before, and we will do it again without harming the economy. This amendment is nothing more than a Republican political diversion, and I urge my colleagues to vote ''no.''

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. FORTENBERRY).

Mr. FORTENBERRY. I thank the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. Speaker, I have long supported a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution, and I don't take the issue lightly of amending our Constitution, which has endured through strife and dramatic historical shifts with very few amendments. Constitutional amendments should be exceedingly rare, as they have the power to spur sweeping change. But I do believe it is necessary that the same process that guaranteed our hallmark freedoms of speech and religion and freedom from slavery be used to protect our children and future generations from economic collapse.

Most States, including Nebraska, have already enacted balanced budget requirements. My State has to live within its means. The Federal Government needs to do the same.

Mr. Speaker, we are standing at history's door. We can either lead and be bold, making the hard decisions necessary to correct this fiscal trajectory, or stay in our timeworn political lanes, continuing with the status quo that has given our Nation this unsustainable debt burden. We can do something big for this country and our future and make deficit spending a thing of the past.

This is a significant moment. I urge my colleagues that we pass this bill.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the indomitable gentlelady from Illinois, JAN SCHAKOWSKY.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. I rise in opposition to the balanced budget amendment. It was just a decade ago that President Clinton left office with not just a balanced budget but a surplus, and we got there by a one-vote margin. No Republican votes whatsoever.

And here we are today, after 8 years and two wars and two tax cuts that were paid for on the credit card and mainly benefiting the wealthy and a devastating recession that could have been prevented had financial regulators not turned a blind eye to Wall Street, and now we're debating an amendment to the Constitution that offers anything but balance.

This amendment would destroy the budget and, in the process, wipe out jobs and eviscerate Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, extended unemployment benefits, as well as education, cancer research, veterans, bridge repair, and food inspection. You name a program, and this amendment will put it at risk.

A balanced budget amendment could force Congress to cut all programs by an average of 17.3 percent by 2018. This amendment would limit the ability of the Federal Government to respond to national crises, including an economic or natural disaster. It would virtually guarantee that recessions turn into depressions.

This amendment will require a supermajority to raise the debt ceiling—a reckless requirement given how close we came to defaulting earlier this year when just a simple majority was required.

And I'm really tired of hearing Republicans say, well, if States and families must balance their budgets, so should the Federal Government. The States have to balance their operating budgets, but they can still borrow for capital projects. And families have to manage their budgets, but they can do so by incurring debt, home mortgages, student loans, car loans, and payments for medical bills. This amendment blocks the Federal Government from making investments in the same way.

And suppose in 2008, when the deficit seemed manageable, we had a balanced budget amendment. The effect on the economy would be catastrophic. If the 2012 balanced budget were balanced through spending cuts, those cuts, it is predicted by Macroeconomics Advisers——

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield the gentlelady an additional 15 seconds.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Macroeconomics, a nonpartisan forecasting firm, said that those cuts would throw about 15 million more people out of work, double the unemployment rate from 9 percent to about 18 percent, and cause the economy to shrink by about 17 percent instead of growing at an expected 17 percent. This amendment will only make the economy worse.

Vote ''no.''

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Washington (Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS), a member of the Republican leadership.

Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS. I appreciate the gentleman yielding.

James Madison said that the trickiest question the Constitutional Convention confronted was how to oblige a government to control itself. History records not a single nation that spent, borrowed, and taxed its way to prosperity, but it offers us many, many examples of nations that spent, borrowed, and taxed their way to economic ruin and bankruptcy.

And history is screaming to us a warning that nations that bankrupt themselves aren't around very long because before you can provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty, you have to be able to pay for it.

□ 1730

Today I rise in strong support of the balanced budget amendment. This past weekend, I re-read the 1995 House Judiciary Committee report that accompanied the resolution that passed at that time. Incredibly, the same justifications put forward against the balanced budget amendment in 1995 are the same ones that we hear today.

First, the report highlights a $4.7 trillion debt in 1995 and discusses the implications of a $200 billion interest payment. I only wish those were the debt levels that we are responding to today. What this comparison means is that we haven't corrected the government's spending problem on our own.

Our debt has more than tripled and interest payments more than doubled in the last two decades. All we have to show over that time is that we have a spending problem; in fact, we have an addiction. And I don't see that addiction going away unless we pass H.J. Res. 2.

Where would we be today if the balanced budget amendment had passed the Senate in 1997 and it had been sent to the States? I guarantee we would not be facing a total debt of $15 trillion or a $450 billion interest payment. And so we must ask ourselves where will we be 5 to 10 years from now without a balanced budget amendment.

I urge my colleagues to stop the cycle of overspending. Support this amendment.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the former chair of the Progressive Caucus, LYNN WOOLSEY, the gentlelady from California.

Ms. WOOLSEY. I thank the ranking member for this time.

Earlier this year, economist Bruce Bartlett, who served in the Reagan and Bush administrations, had this to say about an earlier Republican balanced budget amendment. He said: ''It looks like it was drafted by a couple of interns on the back of a napkin.'' Granted, he was talking about a different version, but I still say that was pretty unfair to interns, who I think could do a lot better than this amendment that we're debating today.

If the balanced budget were in place today, it would cripple the economy and decimate Social Security, Medicare and veterans programs, among many others. The austerity dogma of the Republican majority—their balanced budget fetish—is hurting America, not helping it. We need more Federal dollars pumped into this economy. We need it to stimulate demand and to create jobs. We don't need less.

If you get caught in a rainstorm—I mean, I wouldn't want to be caught in a rainstorm with anybody on the other side of the aisle because I'd be afraid that they'd propose a constitutional amendment banning umbrellas.

Call me old fashioned, Mr. Speaker, but I think amending the Constitution is a pretty big deal. It should be reserved for correcting gross injustices and expanding fundamental rights. For decades, I've been among those pushing for a constitutional amendment that enshrines the notion that women should be treated equally. Republicans want no part of that, but they're eager for a constitutional amendment that shreds the safety net and could cause another recession for our country. No thanks.

Vote ''no'' on this balanced budget amendment.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. NUNNELEE).

Mr. NUNNELEE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Before I came to this body, I chaired the appropriations committee in the Mississippi Senate. I worked with my counterpart in the other chamber, a Democrat, Chairman Johnny Stringer. We crafted three balanced budgets because Chairman Stringer and I shared a commitment to a principle that you can't spend more money than you take in.

One thing I learned is that there are always more needs and more requests than there are available resources, and that fact causes you to have to make some difficult decisions. We made those difficult decisions in the Mississippi State house. In fact, there are 49 States that require that around the Nation. Municipal, county governments are making those difficult decisions. More importantly, families are making those decisions sitting around the kitchen table, and small businesses are making those decisions tonight. And if they're willing to live within their means, they have every reason to expect their government in Washington to do the same thing.

This balanced budget amendment has been a dream of leaders in this body since Thomas Jefferson. Sixteen years ago we had bipartisan support and came within one vote of getting it adopted. I welcome the support of those Democrats that are stepping up and giving bipartisan support to this measure. We must have a balanced budget amendment to rein in spending so that we can create jobs.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, STENY HOYER has been working in leadership for many years. He is now our distinguished whip, and I recognize him for 5 minutes.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the chairman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, in 1995 I spoke on the floor in support of a balanced budget amendment. That was 16 years ago. There's a lot of water over the bridge since that time. I said then and I quote: ''I do so because I believe this country confronts a critical threat caused by the continuation of large annual deficits.'' I believed that then, and I believe it now. And I have voted against tax cuts that weren't paid for, I have voted against Social Security benefits that weren't paid for, and I have voted against other items that weren't paid for. I stand by my 1995 statement today. However, as I've said, events in the last 16 years lead me to oppose today's balanced budget amendment.

Only months after we had that debate, my Republican colleagues shut down the government. In 1997 we passed an amendment with bipartisan agreement reaffirming the 1990 agreement that we would have a PAYGO process in place. And without having passed a balanced budget amendment, we did in fact balance the budget 4 years in a row. Why? Because we paid for what we bought, we didn't cut revenues before we cut spending, and we restrained spending—4 years in a row. I tell my Republican friends, none of you in your lifetime has lived during the course of a President who had four balanced budgets. Were you partially responsible? Absolutely. Were we partially responsible? Absolutely. But what was the lesson? That we didn't need an amendment; we needed the will and the courage.

Without having passed that balanced budget amendment under President Clinton, not only were we able to balance the budget, but we also achieved the only President term in the lifetime of anybody in this Chamber or listening to me that had 4 years of balance and a net surplus—hear me—a net surplus at the end of 96 months as President of the United States. We made it happen not with a balanced budget amendment, but because we had the will to do so and by following PAYGO rules.

Sadly, I tell my colleagues and the American people, Mr. Speaker, under President Bush, Republicans exploded the deficit and abandoned PAYGO, along with the principle that we ought to pay for what we buy.

We do not have a spending problem or a revenue problem; we have a pay-for problem. The Republican Congress spent enormous sums on two wars, a prescription drug program, and tax cuts without paying for them. If you have the courage of your convictions, you pay for things.

Spending rose at a level nearly twice the inflation rate that Bill Clinton's rose in spending during the 8 years of the Bush administration when Republicans were in charge of everything for 6 years and had a President who could veto anything that we did.

When the financial crisis hit in 2008, President Bush told us that if we failed to act, there would be a high risk of depression.

□ 1740

What did the President's party do? You say you have a three-fifths vote if there's an emergency. President Bush told us that if we did not act there would be a depression and, in fact, we had a vote, and that vote was 205–228, with two-thirds of the President's party voting against the President in what he called a crisis.

That gives me, I tell my friends on the Republican side, no confidence that in time of danger and crisis, that we could summons three-fifths vote. I believed in 1995 we could summon those votes because, frankly, we were a much more bipartisan and, in my opinion, responsible body. But I do not have that confidence today, and I am not prepared to take that risk.

My party, of course, voted with President Bush because we thought there was a crisis. Now, a few days after that, we came back to vote, and we did pass it.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. CONYERS. I grant the gentleman 1 additional minute.

Mr. HOYER. I tell my friends that even on the second vote, when we did, in fact, pass that bill that President Bush asked us to pass because there was a crisis, he could not summon the majority of your party to support him. Barely three-fifths, notwithstanding the President's assertion of crisis, voted to meet that crisis, with 172 Democrats voting with President Bush in a bipartisan response to crisis.

Earlier this year, again, in control of the House, Republicans brought the government to the brink of shutdown. Over the summer we saw them hold the country hostage by pushing us to the brink of default, in the first time in my memory, the United States of America to the brink of default.

I have not changed my beliefs about balancing the budget, and I invite all of you to vote with me on paying for things that we buy, not passing those costs along to my children, my grandchildren, and my two great grandchildren. We have shown we can do it. We balanced the budget for 4 years.

Don't talk about it. Just do it. Don't refuse to pay for it. Don't cut taxes and increase spending.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has again expired.

Mr. CONYERS. I grant the gentleman 10 additional seconds.

Mr. HOYER. Don't just preach fiscal responsibility; practice it. It will take no courage to vote for this amendment. But it will take courage to balance our budget by paying for what we buy.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 15 seconds.

I just want to point out for the record that all of the balanced budgets enacted during the Clinton administration were, in fact, proposed by a Republican Congress. I happened to be a member of the Budget Committee at the time.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. MILLER).

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, our Constitution is certainly the greatest governing document ever created by man. It's the bedrock foundation for this, the United States of America, the greatest nation on Earth.

Mr. Speaker, our Founding Fathers, in their genius, provided us with a way to amend the Constitution to deal with a changing world. James Madison, who, of course, is widely seen as the Father of the Constitution, once said that ''A public debt is a public curse.''

In 1995, this House passed a very similar balanced budget amendment to the one that we are considering today. The amendment received 300 votes in this House, but fell just one vote short in the United States Senate.

Since that time, Mr. Speaker, our national debt has grown by over $9 trillion, yes, $9 trillion, including nearly $4 trillion in new debt in just the last 3 years, and today the debt is over $15 trillion. And the fact of the matter is that our public debt has become the public curse of which Madison warned us.

The American people understand that this level of debt is not sustainable, and that is why they overwhelmingly support this balanced budget amendment. Today we have a choice, Mr. Speaker. Do we answer the call of the American people and embrace fiscal responsibility, or do we continue the status quo of more spending and more borrowing and more debt?

It's time for this Congress to use the tools our Founding Fathers gave us, Mr. Speaker, to amend the Constitution to save further generations from the shackles of unsustainable debt. I would urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this commonsense amendment to balance our Federal budget.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from St. Louis, Missouri, LACY CLAY.

Mr. CLAY. I thank my friend from Michigan for yielding.

My Democratic colleagues have spoken, and will speak, eloquently on the numbers. They have, or will, correctly point to the millions of jobs the balanced budget amendment would certainly destroy.

However, I want to talk about the personal impact of this irresponsible legislation. For example, Social Security recipients should not be held responsible for Congress' reckless acts. Radically cutting Social Security hurts Americans. Drastically cutting Medicare hurts Americans. Enormous cuts to Defense and Homeland Security measures, to food stamps, to veterans' pensions and Supplemental Security Income for the elderly and disabled hurts Americans. It hurts America and makes us less safe and secure.

And make no mistake. This legislation requires these massive cuts. Some have claimed that these cuts will not be necessary under this legislation, or worse, that they are necessary and good. They claim that cutting benefits to the most vulnerable Americans is good, that destroying jobs, destroying lives is good.

Mr. Speaker, it is not. It is not good. It is not good to balance the budget on the backs of those who can least bear the burden. It is not good to balance the budget by taking away from those who have so little.

This is exactly what the balanced budget amendment would do, and it takes away from medical care for seniors. That means more of our elderly unable to afford their medication, unable to get needed tests and treatments, and more Americans hurting.

It destroys jobs. That means more Americans out of work, more Americans unable to pay their bills, and more American families hurting.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. CONYERS. I yield the gentleman an additional 15 seconds.

Mr. CLAY. You know, Hubert Humphrey said it best. He said, ''The moral test of government is how that government treats those who are in the dawn of their life, the children; those who are in the twilight of their life, the elderly; and those who are in the shadows of life, the sick, the needy and disabled.''

This reckless legislation fails all tests.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Washington (Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER).

Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER. Winston Churchill said that Americans can always be counted on to do the right thing after they've exhausted all other possibilities.

What's interesting about this quote is it actually applies to this institution. What have we tried? We've tried billion-dollar bailouts for auto companies. We've tried billion-dollar bailouts for Wall Street fat cats, not for Main Street. We've done bailouts for automakers. We've thrown money at everything, and we have added so much to our national debt in the last 4 years.

Republicans did it too. It doesn't make it right.

So, are we better off than we were 4 years ago? No. In southwest Washington State, we still have rampant unemployment and joblessness.

I'm no economist. I'm not the distinguished minority leader, whom I respect. I'm just an average American

that understands a very simple truth: You cannot spend more than you have.

That's all this amendment does. That's it. We're not cutting Social Security. We're not cutting Medicare. We would not. We're actually protecting those programs by saying, this Federal Government is going to live within the money that it takes from the taxpayers every year, no more, no less.

□ 1750

It's very, very simple. You don't have to be an economist to understand that if you spend more money than you have every year, you have a problem. Our problem is $15 trillion worth of backbreaking debt. We don't have to look much further than Europe to know that no country can exist under debt like this for too long. We're actually taking steps to protect our poor and vulnerable by putting sideboards around the reckless spending of this Congress.

With this amendment, we're cutting up the credit card that is going to break the backs of the American people and cost us more jobs.

I urge my colleagues to join us in solutions, and bipartisan solutions, that are going to bring an opportunity for America to prosper and succeed. A ''no'' vote is putting people under and putting politics above. We need to reverse that and put people before politics.

I urge a ''yes'' vote.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

The gentlelady from Washington, I listened to her very carefully, and she has promulgated one of the greatest misunderstandings in this debate, namely, that the Social Security and Highway Trust Fund are not jeopardized by House Joint Resolution 2 because section 7 excludes repayment of debt principle from the definition of total outlays.

Now, according to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, the balanced budget amendment could result in Medicare being cut by about $750 billion, Social Security almost $1.2 trillion, and the veterans' benefits $85 billion through 2021 if cuts were spread proportionately. So I hope that there will be fewer and fewer of my colleagues trying to assure us that this bill does not jeopardize those programs. This is from the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities.

I yield 3 minutes to the distinguished member of the committee, the gentlelady from Texas, SHEILA JACKSON LEE.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. I thank the ranking member of this committee.

Many of us could spend a lot of time on educating the public on just what is occurring. We cherish this little book that has lasted in this Nation for some—more than centuries that we can count. As this document was written, the question was going to ask—or was asked whether it could last. And today, we cite the United States as the longest democracy holding on to a Constitution that provides us with the opportunity to even be here.

But it is important to note that in order to amend the Constitution, the Founding Fathers were so serious about how important an action this would be that they indicated that there should be two-thirds votes from both the House and the Senate and three-quarters of our States. The people of the United States must likewise answer the call.

Frankly, let me make a pronouncement. The American people will not answer this foolish call. They will recognize that whether it's supercommittees or Tea Parties and others that want to detract away from the reasonable approach to budgeting, which is revenue enhancement and serious reform, they know that the way they do their budget is thoughtfulness and not rushing to judgement.

A headline on the markup of our bill in committee, though I know this is not, said: SHEILA JACKSON LEE Can't Slow Down Republican Balanced Budget Amendment Freight Train. That train keeps coming, and in the midst of it, there are bloody bodies left along the wayside.

Our Chairman of the Federal Reserve said we really don't want to just cut, cut, cut. Chairman Bernanke said you need to be a little bit cautious about sharp cuts in every near term because of the potential impact on the recovery. That doesn't at all preclude, in fact, I believe it's entirely consistent with a longer-term program that will bring our budget into a sustainable position.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mr. CONYERS. I yield the gentlelady an additional 30 seconds.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. I thank the gentleman.

So for us to go this route, it means that even in a war, it is a complicated process of a majority vote, even beside the declaration of war; even in an emergency when our soldiers are needing more resources, we have to come to this body and stop and wait for our soldiers to get what their resources are. We have to stop and wait for our veterans to get the resources that they need.

While veterans hospitals are closing, while centers for posttraumatic stress disorder are closing, we will be fiddling around and the freight train of the balanced budget amendment will drive over the veterans, the soldiers, the President who is trying to save this Nation, Homeland Security resources that are needed, because we wanted to be a political grandstanding for a balanced budget amendment.

We balanced a budget in 1993; some suffered politically. We got the budget balanced in 1997; some suffered politically. But the Democrats knew how to do it. Let's come together. Balance the budget and ignore a complicated, ludicrous process that the Founding Fathers said, stop, wait, do the right thing; do your job, not an amendment to the Constitution.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong opposition to the rule for H.J. Res. 2, a ''Proposing A Balanced Budget Amendment to the Constitution of the United States.'' While I support bipartisan efforts to increase the debt limit and to resolve our differences over budgetary revenue and spending issues, I cannot support a bill that unduly constrains the ability of Congress to deal effectively with America's economic, fiscal, and job creation troubles.

In my lifetime, I have never seen such a concerted effort to ransom the American economy in order to extort the American public. While I support bipartisan efforts to increase the debt limit and to resolve our differences over budgetary revenue and spending issues, I cannot support a bill that unduly robs average Americans of their economic security and ability to provide for their families while constraining the ability of Congress to deal effectively with America's economic, fiscal, and job creation troubles.

This bill would put our national security at risk. If our nation is under attack or needs to respond to an imminent threat, the last person I would consider contacting is an accountant. I would expect that this body would act swiftly and this mandate takes away that ability.

We need to change the tone here in Congress. Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke said it best when he stated recently before the House Committee on Financial Services. "We really don't want to just cut, cut, cut," Chairman Bernanke further stated "You need to be a little bit cautious about sharp cuts in the very near term because of the potential impact on the recovery. That doesn't at all preclude—in fact, I believe it's entirely consistent with—a longer-term program that will bring our budget into a sustainable position."

NATIONAL SECURITY—VETERANS AND MILITARY FAMILIES

I am outraged to find that revisions to this legislation include a provision that will hurt our veterans and military families and seriously compromise our ability to combat terrorism. As a senior member of the Homeland Security Committee, I am deeply concerned about any measure that undermines the men and women of the Armed Forces or the safety and security of the American people.

The Department of Defense, DOD, has already agreed to cut its budget by $450 billion over the next ten years. The Center for Strategic and International Studies predicts that further budget reductions, including those that would stem from a balanced budget amendment, will cause substantive modification to our defense strategy, capabilities and force structure.

Enacting a balanced budget requirement would severely limit the ability of the Armed Forces to procure the equipment necessary to keep our troops safe, and prepare them for potential combat. A balanced budget amendment would dramatically constrain discretionary budgets, so much so that procurement, research and development, and the acquisition of new technologies would have to be zeroed out of the DOD budget.

These deep cuts to research and development and procurement would threaten the safety of the men and women of the Armed Forces. For example, the constraints caused by a balanced budget amendment would seriously endanger the Marine Corps' V–22 Osprey program, as well as the intended order of

340 F–35B Joint Strike Fighters. The effects of a balanced budget amendment would hinder the Navy's planned expansion from 287 to 320 ships.

This bill will deeply impact the Defense Industrial Base, DIB, a group of companies and contractors that supply equipment and technology to the Armed Forces. The budget reductions caused by a balanced budget amendment would deeply impact modernization and procurement. In fact, Army Secretary John McHugh recently said that to facilitate any further budget cuts, ''you'd probably have to take some 50% out of modernization.''

The DIB has resulted in the development of the most advanced military force the world has ever seen. However, large cuts in procurement funding would seriously compromise our ability to develop some essential future capabilities. Moreover, the downsizing that a balanced budget requires would leave a large number of highly skilled and professional workers unemployed in an economy unlikely to absorb them for quite some time.

Passing this legislation will not, as many of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle believe, result in a more stable budget. An amendment requiring a balanced budget will render discretionary budgets, particularly the DOD and national security budgets, much less predictable. The Departments of State, Defense and Homeland Security will have to compete for their shares of the national security budget, and furthermore, a likely response to a balanced budget amendment will be an increased reliance on emergency, ad hoc appropriations.

A provision of H.J. Res. 2 requires legislation to spend money that will take the budget out of balance due to a military conflict or national security need. As it stands, this bill will require a Joint Resolution from both houses of Congress with the specific dollar amount being spent.

In order to spend more than has been appropriated, agencies tasked with defense and national security will need approval from Congress. This increased reliance on emergency appropriations will have detrimental effects on the sound functioning of our defense and national security institutions. The more these institutions are forced to rely on emergency funding, the more unpredictable their budgets will become.

This legislation would allow a military conflict or threat to national security to take the budget out of balance. However, in order to authorize additional funds for military engagement or threats to national security that require action, Congress would need to pass legislation citing a specific dollar amount.

As a senior member of the Homeland Security Committee, I know that the threats against the nation are constantly changing and ever present. We cannot ask those responsible for protecting this nation to ask Congress for a specific amount of money every time there is a threat to our national security that requires action. Should we ever experience another attack on American soil, we cannot expect out first responders to wait for authorization before intervening.

Mr. Speaker, I am incredibly disheartened to see my colleagues on the other side of the aisle champion this legislation, legislation that has so many negative impacts on our veterans and military families. The permanent budget cuts necessitated by a balance budget amendment would require the DOD to drastically curtail the number of active duty service members, retirement benefits, and health care benefits for veterans and military families.

There are currently 22.6 million veterans living in the United States, and all of them deserve the retirement and health care benefits that were promised to them. In my home State of Texas we have nearly 1.7 million veterans, and 18th District is home to 32,000 of them. Of the 200,000 veterans of military service who live and work in Houston; more than 13,000 are veterans from the Iraq and Afghanistan. We should not compromise the benefits for one of these patriotic Americans with this harmful legislation.

There has been a theme this Congress of focusing on cutting programs that benefit the public good and for the most at need, while ignoring the need to focus on job creation and economic recovery. Debate of this balanced budget amendment is wasting a tremendous amount of time when we should be focused on paying our nation's bills and resolving our differences.

As I mentioned, a balanced budget is not something that should be mandated in our Constitution, nor something that should be automatically be required every year. In particular, during economic downturns, the government can stimulate growth by cutting taxes and increasing spending. And in fact, the cost of many government benefit programs is designed to automatically increase when the economy is down—for example, costs for food stamps, SNAP, and Medicaid increase when more people need to rely upon them.

These countercyclical measures lessen the impact of job losses and economic hardship associated with economic downturns. The resulting temporary increases in spending could cause deficits that would trigger the balanced budget requirements at the worst possible moment.

A constitutional amendment requiring Congress to cut spending to match revenue every year would both limit Congress's ability to respond to changing fiscal conditions and would dramatically impede federal responses to high unemployment as well as federal guarantees for food and medical assistance.

H.J. Res. 2 would amend the Constitution to require Congress to balance the budget each year. It would also impose new procedural hurdles to raising the debt ceiling, and require the President to submit a balanced budget each year.

The thresholds proposed in H.J. Res. 2 are completely unrealistic. Even during Ronald Reagan's presidency—before the baby boomers had reached retirement age, swelling the population eligible for Social Security and Medicare, when health care costs were much lower—federal spending averaged 22 percent of GDP. This would impose arbitrary limits on government actions to respond to an economic slowdown or recession.

Cutting spending during a recession could make the recession worse by increasing the number of unemployed, decreasing business investment, and withholding services needed to jump-start the economy. As written, this bill would render Social Security unconstitutional in its current form. By capping future spending below Reagan-era levels would force devastating cuts to Medicaid, Medicare, Social Security, Head Start, child care, Pell grants, and many other critical programs.

Only five years in the last fifty has the Federal Government posted an annual budget surplus; all other years the government has been in deficit. Even the House-passed Republican budget resolution, which requires immediate and sustained drastic spending cuts, never reaches balance in the ten-year window required by H.J. Res. 2—indeed, it is not projected to be balanced for several decades, only reaching balance by 2040.

Because this proposal makes it so much harder for Congress to increase revenues than to cut spending, it in essence forces the President to match those same restrictions in his budget. In other words, H.J. Res. 2 is a political ploy designed to force the President to submit a budget that reflects the Republican priorities of ending the Medicare guarantee while cutting taxes for millionaires.

SOCIAL SECURITY & MEDICARE

According to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, H.J. Res. 2's balanced budget requirement could result in Medicare being cut by nearly $750 billion, Social Security almost $1.2 trillion, and veterans' benefits $85 billion, through 2021 assuming that the spending cuts would be distributed evenly across the government. These cuts would devastate millions of seniors, veterans, children and the disabled.

These cut would have a devastating effect on the millions of aged, disabled, veterans, children, and others who depend on Social Security. The BBA would have the foreseeable effect of plunging millions of Social Security beneficiaries into poverty and making for a very bleak future for most others. Over two-thirds of seniors and 70 percent of people with disabilities depend on Social Security for half or more of their income. Close to half—47 percent—of all single (i.e., widowed, divorced, or never-married) women over age 65 rely on Social Security for 90 percent or more of their income.

Seniors are spending more on their health care costs, and Americans in general are making less. The face of poverty is a child's face. If a private employer attempted to do what is being asked of us here today, which would be to use their pension plans in a manner that H.J. Res 2 would deal with Social Security that would be against the law.

Furthermore, the need to raise the debt ceiling has no correlation to whether future budgets are balanced; increases in the debt ceiling reflect past decisions on fiscal policy. And as demonstrated by this year's current disagreement about whether and when to raise the debt ceiling, Congress does not need to impose further barriers to its consideration. Treasury has warned that failing to raise the debt ceiling and the resulting government default, which would be unprecedented, could have catastrophic impacts on the economy. Interest rates would rise, increasing costs for the government and potentially on American businesses and families.

Any cuts made to accommodate a mandated balanced budget would fall most heavily on domestic discretionary programs; the immediate result of a balanced budget amendment would be devastating cuts in education, homeland security, public safety, health care and research, transportation and other vital services.

The Founders purposely made the Constitutional amendment process a long and arduous one. Having a Constitutional balanced budget amendment is not a novel idea. Balanced

budget amendments have made it to a floor vote in the Senate five times, and in the House four times, according to CRS. The Senate barely passed a version in 1982, but it failed to gain the necessary two-thirds majority in the House. The House passed a version in 1995, but it failed in the Senate.

Do my Republican colleagues really expect Congress to capriciously pass an amendment altering our Nation's founding document on such short notice; an amendment that will fundamentally change our country without reasonable time for debate; without the opportunity for a hearing or questioning of witnesses; without any reports as to what impact it may have?

By tying the fate of whether the United States pays its debt obligations to the historically prolonged Constitutional amendment process, the Republicans who support this bill have demonstrated, at this critical juncture in American history, that they are profoundly irresponsible when it comes to the integrity of our economy and utterly bereft of sensible solutions for fixing it.

POTENTIAL IMPACT ON MEDICARE

Medicare covers a population with diverse needs and circumstances. Most people with Medicare live on modest incomes. While many beneficiaries enjoy good health, 25 percent or more have serious health problems and live with multiple chronic conditions, including cognitive and functional impairments.

Today, 43 percent of all Medicare beneficiaries are between 65 and 74 years old and 12 percent are 85 or older. Those who are 85 or older are the fastest-growing age group among elderly Medicare beneficiaries. With the aging and growth of the population, the number of Medicare beneficiaries more than doubled between 1966 and 2000 and is projected to grow from 45 million today to 79 million in 2030.

POVERTY

We are constantly discussing cutting the budget, reducing our debt. Any yet, there has not been a single strong job creating measure purported by my Republican colleagues. Instead time and again there is legislation brought before this body to delay having a real debate on job creation. The poorest among us are being asked to bare the brunt of this legislation; cuts to Medicare, cuts Social Security . . . Who do you think these programs serve? We would be asking the poor to pay more for health insurance, to pay more for medical expenses, to pay more for housing. I ask my colleagues a simple question.

Currently more Americans are in need of jobs than jobs are available. Without focusing on creating jobs and advocating for job growth, what will happen to those individuals who are unable to find work, are seniors, are disabled, are children? What about veterans who find their pensions cut? When all these cuts to essential and vital programs occur in order to support this proposed constitutional mandate, what will happen to these individuals—how will they pay housing, health, and basic life necessities come from?

I am, as we all are, deeply troubled by the report issued by the U.S. Census Bureau. One of every six Americans are living in poverty, totaling 46.2 million people, this highest number in 17 years. In a country with so many resources, there is no excuse for this staggering level of poverty.

Children represent a disproportionate amount of the United States poor population. In 2008, there were 15.45 million impoverished children in the Nation, 20.7 percent of America's youth. The Kaiser Family Foundation estimates that there are currently 5.6 million Texans living in poverty, 2.2 million of them children, and that 17.4 percent of households in the state struggle with food insecurity.

In my district, the Texas 18th, more than 190,000 people live below the poverty line. We must not, we cannot, at a time when the Census Bureau places the number of American living in poverty at the highest rate in over 17 years, cut vital social services. Not in the wake of the 2008 financial crisis and persistent unemployment, when so many rely on federal benefits to survive, like the Supplemental Nutrition Access Program, SNAP, that fed 3.9 million residents of Texas in April 2011, or the Women, Infants, and Children, WIC, Program that provides nutritious food to more than 990,000 mothers and children in my home state.

The Census Bureau also reported there are 49.9 million people in this country without health insurance. This is an absolute injustice that must be addressed. We can no longer ignore the fact that nearly 50 million Americans, many of them children, have no health insurance.

Texas has the largest uninsured population in the country; 24.6 percent of Texans do not have health care coverage. This includes 1.3 million children in the state of Texas alone who do not have health insurance, or access to the health care they need.

It is unconscionable that, despite egregiously high poverty rates, Republicans seek to reduce spending by cutting social programs that provide food and health care instead of raising taxes on the wealthiest in the Nation, or closing corporate tax loopholes.

Balanced budget amendments have made it to a floor vote in the Senate five times, and in the House four times, according to CRS. The Senate passed a version in 1982, but it failed to gain the necessary two-thirds majority in the House. The House passed a version in 1995, but it failed in the Senate.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. COFFMAN).

Mr. COFFMAN of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, I've had the honor of serving in both the Army and the Marine Corps, five overseas deployments, two of them in combat.

What has really struck me since I've been in the Congress of the United States and had the honor, as well, to serve on the Armed Services Committee is testimony by former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Admiral Mike Mullen, who said the greatest threat to the United States is our national debt. He didn't say it was al Qaeda. He didn't say it was some foreign power of terrorists. He said the greatest threat to the United States is right here. The greatest threat to the United States are the decades of out-of-control spending by the Congress of the United States that is bringing down this country.

We have an opportunity today to change that. We have an opportunity today to put the discipline in place that we are not going to go down the path of Greece.

I would ask the Members of this body to show the same courage and determination that the young men and women show who serve our country in defense of our freedom every day, to do the right thing and to vote for a balanced budget amendment to the United States Constitution.

If not now, when? Let us vote for this. Let us put this country down the right track. And let us not be the greatest threat to the United States.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Oregon, EARL BLUMENAUER.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. I appreciate my friend for the courtesy of permitting me to speak on this.

I am here in honor of the memory of the late, and I think great, United States Senator from Oregon, Republican Mark Hatfield.

When the balanced budget amendment freight train was moving through Congress in 1995 and a number of people piled on, it passed here overwhelmingly, but it failed in the United States Senate by one vote. The only Republican who voted ''no'' was Senator Mark Hatfield, who was chair of the Appropriations Committee. He was visited repeatedly by some of the most ardent proponents of a, quote, balanced budget amendment importuning him for special treatment.

□ 1800

Senator Hatfield understood that, had that balanced budget amendment been approved, it would have been an excuse for people to feel like they'd done their job and that they could go about continuing business as usual. He took a lot of heat. He, in fact, offered his resignation to Bob Dole, which would have reduced the number of Senators, and the balanced budget amendment would have passed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. CONYERS. I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. But Senator Hatfield understood that that was wrong. He voted against it. It failed.

And what happened?

We were able to move forward under a Democratic administration to be able to rein in spending. We balanced the budget for 4 consecutive years. What happened was, when the Republicans took over, restraint was lost; deficits skyrocketed; and they put in place tax-cut and spending policies that drive the deficit to this day.

Reject this phony solution. Stand up. Provide a balance of increased revenues and program cuts. Don't pretend something that you're not doing and that's not enforceable as an excuse to avoid our responsibilities.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to a member of the Armed Services Committee, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. COOPER).

Mr. COOPER. The chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Mike Mullen, said

that our worst enemy was not any foreign power or al Qaeda—rather, that it's our own national debt. That's right. It's official now. Congress has become basically America's worst enemy.

I wish we would take it upon ourselves to cut spending and to balance budgets. We are failing in doing that, and we have failed repeatedly. I wish the supercommittee would come up with a super solution. That does not look likely.

I regret that we are at the stage now where we need a balanced budget amendment, and I regret that we're at the stage of partisanship when, just 10 years ago, 72 Democrats voted for this, including two out of the three top members of our leadership.

We've got to live within our means. The Nation's future is at stake. It's sad that we have become so lame that we need this crutch, but we need it. America's overspending—our obesity in this body—is so great that we have become America's greatest obesity problem. The balanced budget amendment is the right diet.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE) control the remainder of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Illinois, DANNY DAVIS.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. A balanced budget amendment to the Constitution represents bad economics and bad social policy. The ability to borrow to help our States and citizens is a critical tool to aid our Nation during economic crisis.

One of the most egregious consequences of this bill is the dangerous cuts to Social Security, Medicaid, Medicare, and other safety net programs that would result. Given the vast deficit that exists due to reckless tax cuts for the wealthy, this bill would achieve balance on the backs of the elderly, the poor, and the disabled.

To achieve balance in the short term, massive reductions to critical safety net programs would have to occur—$750 billion in cuts from Medicare, $1.2 trillion from Social Security, and $85 billion from veterans' benefits through 2021. Dramatic cuts to other safety net protections for citizens, such as food stamps and supplemental security income for the disabled, poor, and the elderly, would almost certainly occur.

To add insult to injury, nonpartisan economists with Macroeconomic Advisers estimate that a balanced budget amendment would eliminate 15 million jobs, increase unemployment to 18 percent, and shrink the economy by 17 percent—catastrophic economic losses at the same time that Federal safety programs to support citizens experiencing such hardships are eviscerated.

This is a terrible piece of legislation. It's a bad bill. I could not, would not, and I don't think anybody should vote for it.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. DUNCAN), a member of the Natural Resources Committee.

Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina. I simply ask: Are you better off today than you were $4 trillion ago?

I say not.

Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor today to discuss the most important issue that we will take up this year, and that is a balanced budget amendment to the United States Constitution.

For much too long, Congress has allowed mountains of debt to pile upon our children and our grandchildren. We are in debt to the tune of $15 trillion, and we continue to spend each year in excess of $1 trillion more than we are bringing in.

In the short time that I have been a Member of Congress, it is evident to me that Washington will never voluntarily make the significant cuts to spending. That's why we need to pass a balanced budget amendment, which would force Washington to do what families and small businesses do each and every year: live within their means and stop the spending insanity. It's common sense not spending more than you have; but maybe that's too simple for those who gain some sort of power by providing services that our Nation cannot afford and by spending money that we don't have.

A balanced budget amendment: the right bill at the right time for America to regain control of its finances.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from New Jersey, ROB ANDREWS.

(Mr. ANDREWS asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ANDREWS. Mr. Speaker, when Congress doesn't want to do something, it forms a committee. We tried, and that doesn't appear to be working. Then when it doesn't want to do something, it kicks the can down the road and sets up a process where somebody else does the hard thing. That's what we're doing here tonight.

If you want to balance the budget, then vote to tell the Federal-operating Departments to do with 5 or 10 percent less money than they got last year. I'm prepared to do that.

If you want to balance the budget, then save money in the Medicare program by saying Medicare can negotiate prices of prescription drugs the way the VA does, and save billions of dollars on prescription costs. I'm prepared to do that.

If you want to balance the budget, bring the troops home from Afghanistan sooner. Since we have the ability to blow up the world 24 times, let's not pay for weapons that blow it up a 25th time. Let's not have 90,000 troops in Europe and Korea who are defending against an enemy that largely doesn't exist anymore.

If you want to balance the budget, then vote to tell the hedge fund managers and all of these other people who are making all this money that maybe they should just pay a little bit more in taxes into the Federal Treasury.

All the heartfelt, pious speeches tonight won't save $1, but the things I just talked about would. They're difficult; they're controversial; but they're real. So let's not fool the American public that some process that somebody else someday might follow will balance the budget. If you want to balance the budget, vote to cut spending. You may have ways that I didn't outline. I'd like to hear them. If you want to balance the budget, then vote for some people who can afford to pay more.

Do something real.

That will create the balanced budget, the confidence, and the jobs the American people need—not just another empty, hollow, meaningless political debate. The right action is to balance the budget, and the right vote on this bill is ''no.''

□ 1810

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MCINTYRE), the ranking member of the Seapower Subcommittee of the Armed Services Committee.

Mr. MCINTYRE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.J. Res. 2, a balanced budget constitutional amendment. With the national debt topping more than $15 trillion, it is critical that we pass this important legislation to improve our Nation's economic health and national security.

Mr. Speaker, $48,570, that's the price we're putting on the head of every American, the portion that every man, woman, and child owes today to pay off our Nation's skyrocketing Federal debt. It's often said that our children and future generations will pay for the choices we make today. But the truth is that we're incurring debt at such a rapid pace that we'll begin to pay that price sooner than expected. We'll pay now as well as later. As public debt continues to grow, including borrowing from foreign nations such as China, interest costs alone are soaring into the stratosphere. Our economy, our military strength, and the opportunity for future growth are at risk if this problem is not addressed more quickly. That's why I will stand here today to support H.J. Res. 2, a balanced budget amendment.

Since first coming to Washington in 1997, I have cosponsored legislation that would adopt a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution. This critical legislation would require the Federal Government to balance its budget like most States are required to do. In fact, 49 of the 50 States have some form of a balanced budget requirement. So this is not something

novel or unusual. It's something that makes sense. My home State of North Carolina has one of the most stringent requirements to do so.

Let's stand together today for common sense. Let's send a message to the American people that we can keep our fiscal house in order, that we can balance our budget, and we can do the right thing with the American taxpayers' dollars to put our Nation on a path of economic strength and vitality.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 3 minutes to another gentleman from North Carolina, DAVID PRICE.

(Mr. PRICE of North Carolina asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I rise to oppose the Tea Party Caucus' latest misguided attempt to derail Federal fiscal and economic policy.

I understand the appeal of a simple, sound bite-friendly solution to all that ails us. In fact, some people think that balancing the budget is just a matter of cutting foreign aid and converting to a flat income tax. Many of our colleagues have stoked such nonsense and similar claims that are mathematically impossible. They know very well that balancing the budget through cuts alone would require eliminating every penny of discretionary spending, including the entire Department of Defense. I don't believe that's really what they want.

Why, then, would they vote for this amendment? Well, there is no real risk in establishing a constitutional requirement that can't be enforced. It would likely never, ever produce a balanced budget. In fact, it would make balance harder to achieve. It does absolutely nothing to create jobs or strengthen the economy, and it would put Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid in real jeopardy. But in the short term, proponents are counting on a political payoff. They will be brandishing their ''aye'' vote as proof that they're the most fiscally responsible folks in the land. In fact, these emperors have no clothes.

Many of my colleagues seem to have forgotten this, but we balanced the budget once before, not so long ago. It started with the bipartisan vote in 1990 and the subsequent vote by Democrats alone in 1993. Our country not only had a balanced budget, we ran 4 years with surpluses. And we did it without a balanced budget amendment. In fact, if the amendment we're considering tonight had been in place then, these critical agreements would have failed!

The other lesson of the 1990s is that the best cure for budget deficits is a healthy economy. Here, too, the so-called balanced budget amendment would actually make things worse, tying our hands during periods of economic downturn or high unemployment, locking in recessions and making them deeper.

Mr. Speaker, in earlier years, we had some true fiscal conservatives in this body. They knew that raising the revenue needed to invest in our people and secure our economic success was a lot wiser than drawing ideological lines in the sand. They didn't need a balanced budget amendment to take tough votes, to make compromises, or to stand up for the future of our Nation in the face of uncompromising ''pledges'' demanded by some group or another.

As we watch the ''supercommittee'' on the brink of failure, I don't know what further proof we need that there isn't a silver bullet in the fight for fiscal security. The real answer—and I believe colleagues know this very well—isn't a matter of gimmickry; it's about mustering the political will to do the right thing. I understand it's hard to revolt against King Norquist. But any Tea Party worth of its name ought to be prepared to challenge the monarchy, not to do its bidding. I urge my colleagues to vote against this amendment.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 15 seconds to say that the last time that the Congress balanced a budget with a Democratic controlled Congress was 1969, more than 42 years ago.

At this time, it is my pleasure to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. MCCOTTER), a member of the Financial Services Committee.

Mr. MCCOTTER. I thank the gentleman from Virginia.

I would like to take a quick second to add that in 1969, the Democratic Congress had a Republican President to help them do it.

I rise in support of a constitutional balanced budget amendment. In this debate, we have heard that Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid will be doomed by a balanced budget amendment. But if we do nothing, those entitlement programs will continue to be doomed by today's fiscal implosion. We have heard that tax hikes will somehow manage to balance the budget all by themselves. But we've heard this talk before, and after all the tax hikes of the past, today we face a fiscal implosion.

We have heard that there was a brief glowing era when a Democratic President and a Republican Congress managed to balance the budget. That is the exception that proves the necessity of a balanced budget amendment because, again, today we are fiscally imploding.

We have heard the differences between how families borrow and how the government borrows, and these are absolutely accurate. When a family borrows money, it is personally liable for that debt. It must prioritize its finances and pay it back with its own money. But today we are fiscally imploding because Big Government is not personally liable for that debt. It does not prioritize, and it can't even pay it back with other people's money.

What is the solution? I believe that Big Government is addicted to spending, so we must turn it over to a higher power called the United States Constitution. Only in this way, when Congress spends your money, will you be allowed in the room to sit over their shoulder and say ''no,'' because as we know, today's fiscal implosion is here. And under statutory limitations, the Congress has not been able to balance your budget. Go to the highest law of the land, force them to live within your means, and ensure that the doom and gloom we hear about being able to spend less money to help America actually occurs.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentlelady from Oakland, California, BARBARA LEE.

Ms. LEE of California. I want to thank the gentleman for yielding and for continuing to fight the good fight on behalf of the American people.

Many of my Republican colleagues have come to the floor to keep telling us that the Federal Government must balance the budget, just like every American family. Well, it sounds like it makes sense to me, but it's nonsense. How would those families and businesses feel about Congress passing a constitutional amendment making it illegal to borrow money to invest in their futures? What if they could not get a mortgage to buy a house? What if they could not get credit to buy a car or get a credit card just to buy some clothes? What if they could not get a loan to grow their businesses? That's what this fundamental change to America's Constitution would do to the entire country. Can you imagine opening up the Constitution to make it impossible for people to invest in their future?

In addition, millions of families across America are taking in less income than they need to survive because of failed Republican economic policies that drove our economy into the ditch. Why would you now want to balance the budget on the backs of these people—seniors, the poor, our children, the most vulnerable? Now that people need a helping hand, Republicans want to tie the hands of government and restrict our budget so that exactly when Americans need more, you want to hurt them more.

□ 1820

This is really a moral disgrace. Let's stop wasting time on ridiculous efforts to amend our Constitution when millions of Americans need jobs now. Let's stop wasting time keeping campaign promises to Republican Tea Party supporters and pass real legislation that will create jobs like the American Jobs Act. Let's stop wasting time when nearly 50 million Americans—mind you, 50 million—in the richest and most powerful country in the world are living in poverty.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mr. CONYERS. I yield the gentlelady an additional 30 seconds.

Ms. LEE of California. Thank you very much for the 30 seconds, and I just

want to remind us all that 50 million Americans are living in poverty in the wealthiest and most powerful country in the world. And millions of job seekers are about to lose their unemployment benefits.

We do not need to radically alter our Nation's founding document to do what is right. We just have to take a balanced approach to reducing our deficits and balancing our budgets, and you do this by creating jobs.

So let the unwise Bush tax cuts expire, end the wars, cut the bloated and wasteful Pentagon spending, and protect the social safety net that protects millions of Americans.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, it is my distinct pleasure to yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HENSARLING), the chairman of the House Republican Conference.

Mr. HENSARLING. I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I thank him for his leadership on the balanced budget amendment.

Mr. Speaker, since the President was elected, our Nation has now seen its first trillion-dollar deficit, its second trillion-dollar deficit, and its third trillion-dollar deficit. The President and the previous Congress have been on a spending spree the likes of which this Nation has never seen before. And yesterday, Americans were greeted with the news that our national debt has now topped $15 trillion—$128,000 for every household. We are borrowing almost 40 cents on the dollar, much of it from the Chinese, and sending the bill to our children and grandchildren. In short, there is a debt crisis. The debt is not just unsustainable, it is immoral.

And the American people know that it's because Washington spends too much, not because they are undertaxed. The problem is on the spending side. Now, taxes are temporarily down due to the economy, but they're going to come back. It is spending that is exploding from 20 percent of our economy to 40 percent over the course of the next generation. If that's solved on the taxing side, we'd be the most highly taxed industrialized nation in the world.

Now, the crisis should be solved on the spending side of the equation. I wish we were debating a spending limit amendment to the Constitution. We're not. We had no takers. I know of no takers on the other side of the aisle. So we're debating what is known as the classic balanced budget, the jump ball balanced budget, the clean balanced budget; equal opportunities for spending restraint and tax increases. Now, it's not my preferred policy; yet so many Democrats, Mr. Speaker, will come to the floor and say we need a balanced approach. But the question is: How many believe we need a balanced budget?

Now, we all agree that amending the Constitution is something that should be taken with great reverence, with great deliberation. It is a sacred responsibility.

Mr. Speaker, we know that our Founding Fathers set up a process by which to amend the Constitution, and no less of a Founding Father than Thomas Jefferson said: ''I wish it were possible to obtain a single amendment to our Constitution. I would be willing to depend on that alone for the reduction of the administration of our government; I mean an additional article taking from the Federal Government the power of borrowing.''

Forty-nine of 50 States have some form of balanced budget requirement. Every family in America has to balance their budget. Every small business. Should we expect anything less from a great nation?

Sixteen years ago was the last opportunity we had in the United States Congress to vote on a balanced budget. We came within one vote, one vote in the United States Senate. Imagine where we would be today had that one vote made the difference and we had this amendment. It's sad.

I can tell you, Republicans and Democrats can't seem to agree on spending. We can't seem to agree on taxes. But as Americans, can't we at least agree it's past time, past time to stop mortgaging our children's future and bankrupting the greatest Nation in the history of the world?

There is a real crisis, and to paraphrase Winston Churchill: Haven't we now exhausted every other possibility? Isn't it finally time to do the right thing?

Amend the Constitution, save the country, balance the budget.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 5 seconds.

I hope that those words will help us in the supercommittee that the gentleman from Mississippi is working on night and day.

I now yield 5 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Virginia, BOBBY SCOTT, the former subcommittee chair of the Crime Subcommittee and a former member of the Budget Committee.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, the supporters of this legislation have spoken at length about how nice it would be to balance the budget and how dangerous deficits are. The speeches, there are great speeches about the budget, but the one thing they have not talked about is how the provisions of this legislation will actually help balance the budget.

Now, we had a hearing earlier this month where the former Governor of Pennsylvania talked about the Pennsylvania balanced budget amendment and how their constitutional provision was such a good thing; but he had to acknowledge that other than the title, there is nothing in H.J. Res. 2 that can be found in the Pennsylvania Constitution.

We also found that the gentleman from Arizona had to acknowledge, after he talked about how good the balanced budget amendment works in Arizona, that Arizona was able to balance its budget only because federally borrowed stimulus money provided $6 billion to Arizona; $1,000 for every man, woman, and child in that State. And that wasn't enough. Arizona had to sell their State capitol and supreme court building. That's right, sold their State capitol and supreme court building and leased it back in order to achieve about a billion dollars worth of cash needed that year.

So we should be looking at the provisions of the legislation, not just talking about how nice it is to balance the budget.

One of the provisions is a three-fifths vote to increase the debt ceiling. Last August, the United States lost its AAA credit rating because it looked like we were not going to be able to achieve a simple majority. We should explain how it makes a lot of sense to make that spectacle an annual affair. I think most people would think it would be fiscally irresponsible to enact that provision.

Another provision is a three-fifths vote to pass a budget that's not balanced in a given year. That would cover every budget we considered this year, including the strongest deficit reduction plan, because those budgets are not balanced in the first year.

Now, strong deficit reduction is politically difficult because we're talking about arithmetic. You have to raise taxes and/or cut spending. Now, you can't get a simple majority; we can't even get a simple majority to do that, so why would anyone think that this legislation requiring a three-fifths vote would make it any easier. In fact, that same three-fifths vote will be sufficient to pass new tax cuts and additional spending, making the deficit worse. Last December we passed an $800 billion tax cut. We got three-fifths for that. But instead of discussing just the title of the resolution, we should be noticing that if this legislation were in effect in 1993, we never would have passed that budget.

We've heard people on the other side of the aisle taking credit for the hard work. I came in in 1993, and we passed a tough budget. There were tough votes. Fifty Democrats lost their seats as a direct result of those votes. The deficit was $290 billion at that time. In 1995 when the Republicans came in, they passed their little budgets; and rather than sign those budgets, President Clinton let the government get shut down rather than sign those budgets. If they want to take credit, they can take credit for President Clinton vetoing their budgets and shutting down the government.

□ 1830

In 1997, the deficit had gone from 290 down to less than 25 billion, and there were no tough votes on that. The budget was on the way to balancing itself if we hadn't done anything, and so we find out what would have happened if President Clinton hadn't capitulated in 1995.

In 2001, when the Republicans came in with a Republican President and a Republican Congress, we saw what happened. They passed two tax cuts, fought two wars without paying for them, prescription drugs without paying for them; and rather than, in 2001, when Chairman Greenspan had to answer questions like, What will happen when we pay off the national debt? Are we paying off the national debt too quickly?, it looked like we were on target by 2008 to pay off the entire debt held by the public. Those were the discussions.

The first tax cut was the last time you heard any of that discussion. And as a result of the two tax cuts, two unpaid-for wars and an unpaid-for prescription drug benefit, we ended up in huge deficits. The fact is the 1993 budget never would have passed if we had required a three-fifths vote.

Now we should be focused on the actual effects of the resolution. There's another provision, and that's the provision involving war.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. YODER). The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. CONYERS. I yield the gentleman 1 additional minute.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. All of the provisions of this budget can be set aside when a declared war is in effect or when the United States is engaged in a military conflict which causes an imminent and serious military threat to national security. That provision ought to scare every two-bit dictator around the world because if we're having trouble getting the three-fifths, all we've got to do is drop a bomb on them, and we can pass a budget with a simple majority.

But we ought to be focused on the provisions of the bill. How would the three-fifths vote, when we can't even achieve a simple majority, help balance the budget? It should be obvious that rather than just talking about how nice it would be to balance the budget, how do these provisions actually make that easier? I think the fact of the matter is if we adopt this resolution, it will be harder, if not impossible, to ever balance the budget, and that's why this resolution ought to be defeated.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 30 seconds to complete the record.

As I said in my remarks earlier, Presidents of both parties and Congresses of both parties have much to explain in terms of the lack of the balanced budgets over the last 50 years. Only six times in 50 years have they been balanced. But here is the record: of the 13 of those 50 years that Republicans controlled the Congress, they only balanced the budget four times. Of the 37 years that Democrats controlled the Congress, during that time, they only balanced the budget twice.

It is now my pleasure to yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN).

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, I would encourage my colleagues in this body to consider the balanced budget amendment and to support it.

I do rise in support of this amendment because hardworking taxpayers know that out-of-control spending in Washington is killing job creation and economic growth. In less than 3 years, President Obama and his administration have added $4.3 trillion to our national debt, which is now over $15 trillion. Astounding. That is $47,900 for every American. Is it really fair for our children and grandchildren to have to shoulder that kind of debt for programs they don't want and having to pay for it with money they don't have? Is that really fair?

The Obama economy is stifling the ability of small businesses and hardworking taxpayers to achieve their goals and dreams. It is time to rein in wasteful Washington spending. It is time to stop the madness.

We need a permanent solution to the fiscal problems that are plaguing this economy, and the clear and commonsense solution is to pass this balanced budget amendment. It's not a new idea. Every year in my State of Tennessee, our State, cities and counties across our State all balance their budget, and 49 other States do. Passing a constitutional mandate would require Congress to balance the budget every year and legally obligate this body to spend only what it takes in.

We can no longer kick the can down the road. We can't wait to replace Washington's blank check with the checks and balances necessary to provide true fiscal responsibility. Passing the balanced budget amendment is an effective component of accountability and spending control. Washington mandates too much, spends too much, takes too much, and takes our freedom.

Mr. CONYERS. I am pleased to yield 3 minutes to the gentlelady from Florida, Ms. KATHY CASTOR.

Ms. CASTOR of Florida. I thank the gentleman for the time.

I support a balanced budget, and I support a balanced budget amendment; but this version would place a very dangerous straitjacket on our country's ability to address a disaster. I'm very proud to represent the State of Florida. But after a year of devastating tornadoes, floods and fires all across this country, you do not have to hail from the State of Florida to understand the impact of a natural disaster and the importance of our ability to speed assistance to local communities.

This amendment would erect roadblocks to our country's ability to address natural disasters and emergencies. Please recall how many of our GOP colleagues a few months ago sought to stall emergency aid. I will read from a press report from back in August: ''Americans who saw their homes flooded, streets ripped apart and businesses disrupted by last weekend's hurricane are about to face another storm: a new congressional battle. Unless additional disaster aid is appropriated, Federal officials said communities trying to rebuild from natural disasters this year in the Midwest and South will have to wait while funds are diverted to help victims of Hurricane Irene. The recent string of disasters, including a tornado that tore through Joplin, Missouri, and a flood that inundated Minot, North Dakota, is running into the same political buzz saw that nearly forced the government into default over the bitter fight over the debt ceiling this summer.''

Delays in emergency aid are unconscionable, and it is terrible for FEMA to have to choose between which American cities and towns can be helped and which ones can't. And the problem with this version of the balanced budget amendment is that it could cause impacted communities to live that nightmare again. It didn't happen after Hurricane Katrina or 9/11 or other disasters, but after the antics of this Republican Congress this past fall, I am very concerned that this version of the balanced budget amendment would allow another irresponsible Congress to block emergency assistance to local communities.

We should not set our country up to be at the mercy of Tea Party hardliners, not at the times when our neighbors and communities need us most.

I relayed my concerns to the House sponsor after he was kind enough to call me directly, and I appreciate that opportunity. Unfortunately, the Republicans did not allow any amendments or revisions, so I intend to file my own version of a balanced budget amendment, a version that seeks to avoid an irresponsible Congress from withholding disaster assistance.

Because this version of the balanced budget amendment is flawed, I urge its defeat.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. ALTMIRE), a member of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee.

Mr. ALTMIRE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the balanced budget amendment. Forty-nine of the 50 States are required to balance their budgets. And while I'm certain that State legislatures will agree that it's always a difficult process, somehow they annually meet their obligations while achieving balance. The Federal Government should be able to do it, too.

But States aren't the only place Congress can look to for examples. Every family and every business in America has to balance expenses and income. They have every right to expect the Federal Government to do the same; but, unfortunately, Congress has let them down time and again.

Mr. Speaker, the time has come to fix the problem. Constitutional amendments to require a balanced budget have been introduced in Congress for

the past 75 years. Most recently, in 1995, the House passed a balanced budget virtually identical to the one we're debating today, and it passed this House with bipartisan support, 72 Democrats and 228 Republicans. And because that amendment failed by one vote in the Senate, our national debt has now surpassed $15 trillion. The situation has only gotten worse, and the stakes today are much higher than 1995.

□ 1840

This vote is an opportunity to prove to the American people that this Congress can work together and that we are finally committed to balancing our budget and putting our country back on fiscally solid ground.

Mr. CONYERS. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BUCSHON), a member of the Education and Workforce Committee.

Mr. BUCSHON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the balanced budget amendment to the Constitution. This is an opportunity for the Federal Government to keep our checkbook balanced, just as every American is expected to do.

The House passed a very similar amendment in 1995 when our debt was $4.86 trillion. Seventy Democrats voted for the amendment, including 11 of my current colleagues. I urge my friends on the other side of the aisle to vote for this amendment now that our debt has tripled to over $15 trillion.

The President recently said in regards to balancing the budget, ''We don't need a constitutional amendment to do that. We don't need a constitutional amendment to do our jobs. The Constitution already tells us to do our jobs—and to make sure the government is living within its means and making responsible choices.'' Mr. President, I respectfully disagree. Washington, D.C., has not been able to make these choices and is not living within its means. I was elected by the people of Indiana's Eighth Congressional District to help us make that happen.

I'd also like to say that some of Mr. HOYER's comments help us today to outline exactly why Washington, D.C., needs a balanced budget amendment. I thank him for pointing those reasons out. This is not a partisan issue, Mr. Speaker, it's an American issue.

I support this amendment, and I urge my colleagues today to vote ''yes'' on a balanced budget amendment.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to not traffic the well while other Members are under recognition.

Mr. CONYERS. I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CONAWAY), the chairman of the Agriculture Committee General Farm Commodities Subcommittee.

(Mr. CONAWAY asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Speaker, it's already been said tonight that 15 years ago we came within a chigger's whisker of passing a balanced budget amendment and sending it to the States. Imagine how different today's conversations would be had the folks in charge then done that. We'd still be fussing and fighting about what ought to be done, but the argument would be, how do we solve today's problems using today's resources? Instead, we've stacked up another $9 trillion of future generations of Americans' resources in our quest to solve these problems.

Well, think about what 2026 will look like, 15 years from now. The folks in charge then will be able to take out the projections that we have in place today and compare those to what is actually going on then—if we pass this balanced budget amendment—and say, wow, look how much better off this country is. They'll still be fussing and fighting, but it will be using their resources to fix their problems instead of the model that we've put in place collectively, on both sides of the aisle. There's plenty of blame to go around.

The decisions that will have to be made to balance our budget are no different with or without the balanced budget amendment. They are hard. They are difficult. And I've got $15 trillion worth of evidence that we're not making those tough decisions without the balanced budget amendment. Technically, we could get it done, but we're not getting it done—and we are on absolutely no path to get that done.

I received today a petition from Jim Keffer, a State representative from Texas, signed by 969 other good Texans, urging me to support this balanced budget amendment.

Mr. Speaker, I would encourage all of my colleagues to think about the future of this country, how much better off will this country be with a balanced budget amendment. This is the only thing that we are contemplating doing over the next 15 years that has a remote chance of fundamentally changing for the better the future that my seven grandchildren face. It is a bleak future they face today. We can fundamentally change that future for the spending efforts of this country with a balanced budget amendment that will force us to do the things that everybody else does.

I urge all of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support this balanced budget amendment.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
DISTRICT 60,
Austin, Texas, November 16, 2011.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN CONAWAY, it's time for us to stand together and teach Washington the first lesson in Texas economics: Don't spend more than you make!

We Texans know the importance of fiscal responsibility and how to live within our means, and I'm proud that our state constitution reflects these principles by requiring the state legislature to pass a balanced budget each session. This valuable tool allows us to keep the size of our state government in check and our economy stable and job friendly!

I am grateful that through your leadership and the leadership of our party, Congress now has the opportunity to debate and vote on a proposed constitutional amendment requiring a balanced federal budget like we have here in Texas.

You and I have the high honor of representing the hard working men and women of this great state in our respective governing bodies, and I submit to you the names of close to a thousand concerned citizens urging you to vote in favor of this constitutional amendment.

This is a critical moment for our nation's future economic health and stability, and I encourage you join us and stand together as Texans to demand that Washington follow our lead!

Please vote in favor of the constitutional amendment requiring a balanced federal budget!

I sincerely appreciate your consideration on this matter. We value your leadership, and I look forward to the opportunity to continue working with you on the important issues facing our state and nation.

God Bless America and the Great State of Texas!

STATE REPRESENTATIVE JIM KEFFER,
District 60.

FEDERAL BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT PETITION

It's time for Washington to follow our lead and pass a balanced budget amendment.

Sign the petition TODAY!

James Abbott, Floyd Abbott, Robert Abresch, Timothy Ackerman, Peggy Adams, Marza Adams, Cecil L. Adams, Ron Agnew, Francisco Aguilar, Alan Ahlberg, Ronnie Ainsworth, Sharron Albertson, Hale Alderman, Earl Alexander, Dennis Allen, Douglas Allen, Ann Allen, Jack R. Allen, Robert Allen, Brandon Ammons, Linda Amos, Jadell Anderson, Zanna Anderson, Rose Anderson, Belinda Angerer, Steve Angerer, Ky Ash, Ryan Ash.

Juana Ash, Bill Ash, Paul Athas, Evan Autry, Brett Autry, Charles Aycock, Royce Anne Baethge, Caroline Baggett, Judith Bailes, Joy Bailey, Charles Bailey Jr., Martha Baird, Ron Baker, Martha Baker, Sally Baker, Sally Baker, William Baker, Sharon Baker, Walt Baldwin, Juania Ball, Mary Barboza, Andrew Barg, Fawn Barrington, Christopher Barrington, Manuel Barrios, David Barton, Teresa Baty.

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Melissa Bohannon, A.H. Booth, Theodore Bordelon, Roger Borgelt, James Boswell, David Boucher, Kathy Bower, Donald Bowne, Boyce Erwin Boyce, Linda Bradford, Randa Bradley, Don R Bradshaw, David Branch, Cara Branch, Dianne Brandt, david braun, Sherry Breedlove, Mary Breitung, Glenn Breitung, Melvin Brewer, Thomas Brewer, Charlene Brewster, Jim Bright, Janet Bright, Noel Brinkerhoff, Sherry Britton, Jerry Britton, Judy Britton, Eve Brock, Starling Brock Sr., Kevin Brockus, Dale Brooks, Roberta Broussard, Roy Broussard, Linda Brown, Gina Brown, Stan E Brudney,

Alana D Brudney, Kimberly Bruton, Jeanene Bryan, Freddie Buchanan, Lesli Buchanan, Terry Buchanan, Greg Buenger, Robert Bullis, Aletha Burgess, Gerald Burgess.

Melissa Burgin, Travis Burke, Paul Burns, Susan Burns, David Butler, Wilma Butler, Angie Button, Carl Byers, Matt Byrd, Larry Byrd, Carol Cahill, Billy Campsey, Mike Canaday, Bob Cantwell, Dorothy Caram, Harold Carnathan, Bryan W Carpenter, David Carroll, Brenda Carroll, Jane Carter, Watt Casey, Dosia Casey, Watt Casey Jr., James Cashion, Greggory Cassady, Maggie Catherall, Deborah Catsonis, Ruth Cezar, Floyd Chambers, Ira Chambers, Rhonda Chancellor, Jesse Chaney, Barney Chapman, C Dan Chenoweth, Karey Chilson, Sandy Chisholm, Curt Christensen, Willie Christian, Brian Christopher, Danny Clack, Jack L. Clack, Vera Clack, Eugene Clark, James Clark, David Clemens.

Kenny Clement, Calvin Click, Sandra Clinard, Pat Cloud, Carole Cockerham, Darrell Cockerham, Lisa Cody, Bill Cody, Joe Coffey, Betty Cole, Q. Coleman, Glenda Collins, Tom Conley, Janis Connally, Dan Connally, R. Kelton Conner, Michael Cook, Mary Cook, Carol Cook, Suze Cook, Jim Cooley, Robert Cordova, Donald Corley, Edith Corley, Tim Coulter, James Cowan, Jerold Coward, Chris Cox, Chris Cox, Shari Craig, Marsha Cranford, Jerry Criswell, Sharon Crittenden, Leon Crockett, Geri Cronenworth, Ronald Crossman, Jesse Crowell, Carrie Cuoghi, Sherrie Curry, Sherry Curtis, Dolores Dailey, Barbara Daniel, Richard S Davenport, Thomas Davies, Sherrill Davis, J. Davis.

Betty Davis, Russell Davis, Lana Davis, Ronald Davis, Elizabeth Davis, Willie Davis, Jim Dawson, Amy Day, Harry Deal, Karen Deatherage, Theodore Dickinson, Elaine Dippel, Robert Dixon, Mary Donalson, Donald Dorenbach, Richard Dormier, Cynthia Dormier, John Dowling, Frank Drake, Wade Driskill, Margaret Dunham, C. Briscoe Dunn, Trevor Dupuy, Diane Durbin, Adam Dwire, Louis Dyess, Amy Dykes, Rick Dykes, Herbert Earnest, Natalie Earnest, Janet Ebersole, Eleanor Edmondson, Mona Edwards, Joseph Edwards, Angela Edwards, Jerry Edwards, Pat Edwards, Cha Edwardson, Joy Ellinger, Tom Elliott, Mark Elliott, Nancy Emmert, Katy Encalade, Bryan Eppstein, Troy Evans, Bettie Evans.

Brenda Evans, Gary Evans, Kirt Fadely, Shirley Faetcha, Al Faetcha, Larry Fann, Frank Farmer, Terry Farquhar, Robert Favor, Annabeth Favor, Linda Ferguson, Clint Ferguson, Jr., Dale Fessenden, Judy Finch, Linda Finkle, James Finley, Jimmy Fisher, Rosemary FitzGerald, Judy Flanagin, Cheryl Flatt, Pat Flatt, Lowell Fletcher, Grace Fletcher, David Fletcher, Sarah Floerke, Naomi Flores, Christopher Flores, Shirley Ford, Shiela Foreman, Allen Foreman, Steve Fortner, Stephen Foster, Susan Fountain, Justin Fowler, Pat Foy, Barbara Francisco, Mark Francisco, M Dawn Frederick, Steven Freeman, Kathie Freeman, Rodger Frego, Judy French, Jere French, Shai Frietze, Claud Fry, Lorine Fuessel.

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Virginia Hammock, Sam Hampton, Michelle Hanks, Janet Hanna, Michael Hansard, Eli Harden, Amber Hardin, Norval Hardy, Harry Hardy, Tyler Hargrave, John J Hargreaves,LuEtta Hargreaves, Nicki Harle, Terry Harman, William K Harner Jr. Terri Harris, Curtis Harris, Steve Harris, Marilyn Harrison, Karen Hartsfield, James Hasik, Quinton Hayden, Stephen Haynes, Don Hays, Leonard Heathington, Kris Heckmann, Kate Heim, Janice Heiskell, Nell Helfenbein, Sharlene Hetzel, Bob Hieronymus, Amber Higgins, Michael Higgins, Carl Hill, Ann Hill, Waytelle Hill, Deborah Hines, Harry Hingst, Amy Hingst, Jonna Hitt, Jim Hix, Heath Hodges, John Hoffman, C. Suzann Hoffman, Tom Hollaway, Johnny Holcombe, Ralph Hollingshead.

Randy Holson, Carol Holt, Bob Hopkins, Zeda Hopkins, William Horick, Carolyn Houston, Terry Howard, Jane D. Howell, Irene Howell, Glenna Huber, Virginia Huff, Carl Huff, Neal Huffman, Janelle Huffman, Bob Huffman, Ellen Hughes, Alice Hull, Tom Huskey, Bill Hutson, Joe Hyde, Chuck Iannaci, Thomas Imre, Jack Jackson, Robert Jacobs, Treena Jacques, Rodney Jaemsq, Tammy James, Christopher C Jamison, Joe Jessing, Butler Jim, Norwood Johnny, Sheron Johnson, Herma Jean Johnson, Judy Johnson, Keith Johnson, Kim M. Johnson, Martin Johnson, Christine Johnson, Russell Johnston, Dean Johnston, Lori Jolly, Shirley Jones, Judi Jones, Lew Jones, Delnita Jones, Charles Jones, Travis Jones, Marilyn Jones, Thomas Jones, Bettye Jordan, Roger Jordan, Webb Jordan, Louis Jupe, David Kaltenbach, Ronald Karcher, John Kaufmann, Terri Kaufmann, Marvin Kays, Bill Keffer.

Scott Keffer, Leslie Keffer, Ashley Keffer, Charles Keller, Wesley Keller, Brice Kelley, B.R. Kelso, Margaret Kerby, Shirley Keyes, John Keyes, Don Kincaid, Nita King, Dale King, Bill King, Kimberly King, Wanda King, Tracy Kirsch, Daniel Kirsch, Clent Kniffen, Doodie T Knox, Jack L Knox, Sally Koch, Rebekah Kodrin, Louis Kodrin, Lisa Koiner, Doris Konduros, Robert Kostelnik, Leona Ruth Kowis, Sandra Kozak.

Richard Krantz, Judy Krause, Russel Krueger, Elsie Kwok, Dusan Lajda, Dennis Land, Jim Lange, Terry Largent, Ron Latta, Jim Lattimore, Bernice Launius, John Laurance, George Lavender, George Lavender, Jim Law, Jim Law, Catherine Lawson, Ron Lazaro, Donna Leech, Joyce Leidig, Joyce Leidig, Roy Lenoch, Denise Leopard, Thomas LePage, William G. Lewis, Tryon Lewis, Carl Lindberg, Mary Little, Lavada Lockhart, Steve Long Jr., Jorge Lopez, David Lopez, Alice Lott, Pat Lovell, James Lovell, Larry Lowrance, Daniel Luckett, Jerry Luster, Franklin Luttrell, Virginia Lymbery, Robert Lynch, Chris Lyon, Nat Lyons, Walter MacArthur, Hartley Mackintosh, Kerry Magee.

Sandra Magers, Larry Mahand, Wallace Maness, Wallace Maness, Ginger Mangum, Sarita Maradani, Kirk Marchell, Mike Margerum, Ronald Marks, Greg Martin, Carl May, Mitzi Mays, Kay McAfee, James McBroom, Barbara McBroom, Susanne McCaa, Mark McCaig, Kimberly McCleve, Robert McClure, Barbara McCollum, Gary McConnell, Doris McConnell, Stan McCormick, Ron McCormick, Gay McCormick, Roy McCoy, Stan McCracken, James McCutcheon, Bert McDaniel, Tom McDonald, Elizabeth McGill, Patricia McGuire, Dean McIntire, Donald McIver, Denis McKillip, Alex McLean, William McLeod, Lowell McManus, Douglas McNeill, Lee McNutt, MaryAnn Means, Earl Medlin, Sam Mercurcio, Sam Mercurio, Sandra Midkiff, Barry Miller.

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Regina Watkins, Ken Watson, Dean Watson, Phyllis Weatherston, Stanley Webb, Oren Webb, Susan Webb, Priscilla Weisend, Jo Ellen Welborn, Melissa Welch, Erin Werley, Patsy West, Ronnie Westfall, Lawrence Whaley, Debbie Wharton, Randy Wharton, Kenneth White, Lewis White, Jack Whitele, Leona Whitele, Don Whitney, Jane Whittaker, Lynn Whittington, Matt Wiederstein, Birt Wilkerson, Birt Wilkerson, Jennifer Williams, Larry Williams, Jack Williams, Paul Williams, Jack Wilson, Donna Wilson, Peggy M. Wilson, Betty Wilson, Mark Wilson, Bob Wilson, Gary Wilson, Lawrence Winkler, Gerri Winkler, Tom Wisdom, Marie Wolfe, Richard Womack, Candace Womack, Martha Wong, Betsy Wood, Blake Woodall, Roy Wooten, John T Wright, Roger Yates, Gene Yentzen, Judy Yentzen, Joseph Yeo, Tammy Youngblood, Byron Youngblood, Carolyn Zapata, Victor Zengerle, Joseph L. Zimmer, Coy Zumwalt.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, it is now my privilege to yield to JESSE JACKSON, Jr., a distinguished Member from Chicago, Illinois, as much time as he may consume.

Mr. JACKSON of Illinois. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to H.J. Res. 2, the balanced budget amendment. We do need to responsibly reduce our budget deficits and debt, but the best way to do that is by investing, building, and growing our economy, or through balanced economic growth, not a balanced budget amendment.

What is the most important question to be raised with respect to the BBA? We have serious gaps in our society that need to be narrowed. Economic gaps between the rich and the poor—ask the 99 percent. Social gaps between racial minorities and the majority population. Gender gaps—woman earn 76 cents for the dollar of what men earn. Generational gaps—will Social Security be there for the next generation? Infrastructure gaps—upgrades to roads, bridges, ports, levees, water and sewer systems, high-speed rail, airports and more in order to remain competitive in the world marketplace.

So the most important question, Mr. Speaker, is this: How does the BBA narrow these economic, social, gender, generational, and infrastructure gaps? It won't. It simply exacerbates them. The BBA will permanently establish the United States as a separate and unequal society. The BBA will balance the Federal budget on the backs of the poor, the working class, and the middle class.

The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities and Citizens for Tax Justice say that the BBA would damage our economy by making recessions deeper and more frequent; heighten the risk of default and jeopardize the full faith and credit of the U.S. Government; lead to reductions in needed investments for the future; and favor wealthy Americans over middle and low-income Americans by making it far more difficult to raise revenues and easier to cut programs. And it would weaken the principle of majority rule.

Before this Congress affirms a balanced budget amendment, we need to consider our future—not just the future of America's debt, but America's future. Do we want a future that is bright with promise; a future with innovation; a future with the best schools, the brightest students, and the strongest and healthiest workers? Do we want to continue to lead in the world? My answer is yes.

Mr. Speaker, I respectfully urge my colleagues to vote ''no'' on this irresponsible and shortsighted amendment.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 30 seconds to answer the question, what do the 99 percent want? Well, CNN asked them in July. The answer was 74 percent favored a balanced budget amendment; 74 percent of men, 75 percent of women, 76 percent of white voters, 72 percent of nonwhite voters, 72 percent of 18- to 34-year-olds, 74 percent of 35- to 49-year-olds, 75 percent of 50- to 64-year-olds, 79 percent of 65 and older voters want a balanced budget amendment to the United States Constitution.

At this time, it is my pleasure to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CULBERSON), a member of the Appropriations Committee.

Mr. CULBERSON. Mr. Speaker, I first of all want to thank the Congressman from Virginia. BOB GOODLATTE has been a relentless and tireless advocate for balancing the budget of the United States of America with a constitutional amendment. And we are here tonight debating it because of his perseverance. I want to thank Speaker BOEHNER. I want to thank the people of America for electing a constitutional majority to the House—elections make a huge difference.

We must pass this amendment to the Constitution tonight. The Senate must take a vote on it. And the people of America should hold every Member of Congress accountable for their vote because this is a defining vote on a defining evening for the United States Congress. How much more prosperous would America be today if the Senate had passed this amendment 16 years ago? How much stronger would America be today?

The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff has said, as has been pointed out earlier, that America's greatest strategic threat is our national debt. What better evidence of that is there than that the people of Europe tonight are facing panic selling of European Union debt. Greece, Italy, and Portugal are all on the brink.

We cannot let America continue down this path. We have an obligation to our children and grandchildren to ensure that the Nation's books are balanced just as every American must do, just as 49 out of 50 States must do, just as every business in America must do.

This is just fundamental common sense. No amount of confusion or distraction on the part of the opponents can divert the country's attention from the simple, commonsense fact that an amendment to the Constitution requiring a balanced budget requires America to live within its means, to spend no more than is brought in by revenue.

□ 1850

My hero, Thomas Jefferson, said, and his words ring so true today in light of the problems we face, that to preserve our independence as Americans, we must not let our rulers load us down with perpetual debt. We must make our choice, America, between economy and liberty and perfusion and servitude.

I want to thank Congressman GOODLATTE for his leadership and perseverance on this vitally important issue. And I'm looking forward to the day, in 15 to 16 years from today, when this amendment passes the Congress, when it passes the States overwhelmingly, so that my daughter and her children will inherit an America that's more prosperous and more secure because of BOB GOODLATTE and JOHN BOEHNER's leadership in bringing this to the floor tonight so that we will, as a Nation, continue to live within our means.

Mr. CONYERS. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MEEHAN), chairman of the Counterterrorism and Intelligence Subcommittee of the Homeland Security Committee.

Mr. MEEHAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for yielding.

One trillion $1 bills. We're talking about trying to make sense of a trillion dollars. If they were stacked on top of each other, they would reach nearly 68,000 miles into the sky, about a third of the way from the Earth to the Moon. As of yesterday, our national debt was 15 times that $1 trillion.

Fifteen years ago the balanced budget amendment passed the House with bipartisan support, only to lose by one vote in the Senate. Since that time, our Nation's debt has grown $9.2 trillion more.

Every day families make tough decisions in order to live within their means. But when it comes to our country's bank account, both parties in Washington simply don't practice these responsible habits.

It is wrong for us to accumulate this mounting debt that we know we're never going to repay. Instead, we expect our children and our grandchildren to do so. It's our obligation to pass on the blessings of liberty, not a crushing debt to our posterity.

A certain way to ensure that is that Congress and the President will not allow the U.S. to be driven further into debt, and that is to pass an amendment to the Constitution forcing our government to balance the budget each year. Promising to make cuts in Federal spending is one thing, but an amendment to the Constitution demanding it is quite another.

A balanced budget would legally force Congress to spend only what it takes in, and it protects taxpayers and small businesses from the threat of higher taxes to cover Washington's spending habits. This will be for a better future for our children and our Nation.

Mr. CONYERS. I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. FARENTHOLD), a member of the Homeland Security Committee.

Mr. FARENTHOLD. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Every month, millions of American families make tough financial decisions about how they'll pay their bills, balance their budget, and make ends meet. They make tough choices and do without things they want so they can have the things that they need. The American people have to make these tough choices, and we, as their elected leaders, need to do the same thing. America cannot continue to spend more than we take in.

A balanced budget amendment to the Constitution will ensure our grandchildren do not have to deal with the reckless mistakes Congress has already made by overspending and excessive borrowing. Our vote on this amendment will show hardworking American taxpayers who have a hard time balancing their own budgets which Members of Congress get it and who are doing their jobs that they are elected to do.

The current national debt is over $15 trillion, and that's way too much. Passing a balanced budget is the best way to ensure that we don't spend money we don't have on programs we don't need.

The American people want a government that is responsible and accountable. A balanced budget, like almost every State has, like almost every family lives with, is a key to this responsibility and accountability. It makes our economy stronger and healthier and preserves this great Nation for generations to come.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, how much time remains on each side, please?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Michigan has 86¼ minutes remaining. The gentleman from Virginia has 91 minutes remaining.

Mr. CONYERS. I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, at this time it is my pleasure to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Utah (Mr. MATHESON).

Mr. MATHESON. I thank the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE) for introducing the bill, and I thank the gentleman from Virginia for the time.

You know, I'm part of the Blue Dog Coalition, a group of conservative Democrats, and for 16 years the Blue Dogs have been advocating a balanced budget amendment.

It really shouldn't be about Democrats and Republicans. Since I've been in Congress, I've been here when Democrats controlled Congress and Republicans controlled Congress. I've been here when Democrats controlled the White House and Republicans controlled the White House, and neither party has the best track record on the deficit issue. And that's why I think the balanced budget amendment makes sense, because I think we need a structural requirement that brings everyone to the table and says this is what you've got to do, Democrats or Republicans.

This shouldn't be a partisan issue. This should be an issue about setting a path forward that creates stability and sends the right message to the American people and to the rest of the world that we know how to live within our means.

Now, I have to say that I wish we had more support on my side of the aisle than we do because, as I said, I don't think it's a Democratic or Republican issue. I think it's an issue that we all ought to be looking at—balancing the books, balancing your budget. Families do it every day. States do it. At least 49 States have a requirement for a balanced budget. I think that this country needs that, too, and I urge all my colleagues to support this amendment and put us on a path to fiscal responsibility.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 1 minute to ask the speaker who just finished, if I could gain his attention for a moment. I thank the gentleman for coming back into the well.

Does the gentleman agree with me, in examining this bill, that this bill risks default by the United States by requiring a supermajority to raise the debt limit, which is not the case now?

I yield to my friend.

Mr. MATHESON. I think it's the same threshold that requires us to make a decision to deficit spend. It's the same supermajority for that as well. So I think that what we do is we're putting a requirement in where, if you want to default or if you want to raise the debt limit or if you want to deficit spend, it requires a supermajority. But if you want to pass a budget that is within balance, it doesn't require a supermajority. It requires a simple majority, and that's the way the bill is structured.

Mr. CONYERS. Did the gentleman say yes or no to my question?

Mr. MATHESON. I said no.

Mr. CONYERS. That a supermajority is not required to raise the debt limit under this bill?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. CONYERS. I yield myself an additional minute, and I yield to my friend.

Mr. MATHESON. As I said, let's not do apples and oranges here. Let's do apples and apples. If this Congress wants to act in a way to pass a balanced budget, it doesn't require a supermajority. If this Congress wants to make a decision to deficit spend, it can do that with a supermajority, and that's the same requirement as if it wants to raise the debt limit.

By the way, if a simple majority balances the budget, there is no need to raise the debt limit. There's no need to raise the debt limit if we have a balanced budget, and that would be a simple majority to pass a balanced budget each year.

Mr. CONYERS. I want to thank my colleague for answering the question.

I would like now to turn to the gentleman who represents the majority, a distinguished member of the Judiciary Committee, Mr. GOODLATTE.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has again expired.

□ 1900

Mr. CONYERS. I yield myself 2 additional minutes.

I would like to ask him if he is aware of the fact that H.J. Res. 2 would require a supermajority to raise the debt limit.

I'm pleased to yield to the gentleman.

Mr. GOODLATTE. As the gentleman from Utah correctly noted, it requires the same supermajority of 60 percent to not balance the budget or to raise the debt limit. Quite frankly, if you have a constitutional amendment in place that requires a balanced budget, you're going to generate surpluses most years, and therefore raising the debt limit will occur less and less frequently. But those two requirements are in place in order to have an enforcement mechanism so that Congresses of the future will not do what Congresses of the past have been doing.

Mr. CONYERS. Did the gentleman answer me with a ''yes''?

Mr. GOODLATTE. Would the gentleman repeat that question?

Mr. CONYERS. Did the gentleman understand the question?

Mr. GOODLATTE. I understand it and answered it.

Mr. CONYERS. Was the answer ''yes'' or ''no'' to my question?

Mr. GOODLATTE. The answer is, yes, it requires a supermajority to raise the debt limit and a supermajority to not balance the budget, which would be an unusual thing in the future because in the last 50 years, it's only been balanced six times.

Mr. CONYERS. Then let me ask my colleague this question: Does it presently require a supermajority to raise the debt limit?

Mr. GOODLATTE. No, there is no such requirement today.

Mr. CONYERS. Thank you. It isn't. And there would be in this bill, would it not?

Mr. GOODLATTE. Absolutely.

Mr. CONYERS. And the gentleman supports a supermajority to raise the debt limit?

Mr. GOODLATTE. Very much so.

Mr. JACKSON of Illinois. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. CONYERS. I yield to the gentleman from Illinois.

Mr. JACKSON of Illinois. Is the gentleman aware that under such a scenario, a budget crisis in which a default becomes a more threat is more likely because the limits placed on the fluidity of the debt ceiling—

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman from Michigan has again expired.

Mr. CONYERS. I yield myself an additional 3 minutes and continue to yield to the gentleman from Illinois.

Mr. JACKSON of Illinois. I thank the gentleman. My question is of the chairman as well.

Under such a scenario where a three-fifths vote of the House would be permitted to raise the debt limit, a budget crisis in which a default becomes a more threat is obviously more likely. And because of the limits placed on the fluidity of the debt ceiling, that default becomes more likely to occur.

Is it the gentleman's opinion that a small minority within the Congress could indeed hold the entire Nation hostage to such a vote?

Mr. GOODLATTE. I don't agree with that at all. In fact, in the greatest debt limit crisis you might ever say we've had, which was just this summer, close to, if not in excess of, 60 percent of the Members of the House voted to raise the debt limit. So I don't believe that future Congresses would be any more irresponsible. I think future Congresses are likely to be more responsible than prior Congresses because we have not balanced the budget for but six times in the last 50 years.

We have a $15 trillion debt.

Mr. JACKSON of Illinois. May I reclaim the time?

Mr. Chairman, in the event that Congress fails to act, obviously under this amendment the courts would be empowered to provide remedial orders for when Congress failed to provide a balanced budget. The decisions would then force the courts to be political in nature.

Is it the gentleman's opinion that the judicial branch and that members of the court are in a better position to make judgements about congressional budgets and about the Nation's budgets than Members of Congress?

Mr. GOODLATTE. It's my opinion that Members of the United States Congress will uphold the oath to uphold the Constitution of the United States. And that scenario will be very unlikely to occur; and when it does, judges will, as they historically have on matters involving the internal business of the Congress, exercise judicial restraint.

Mr. JACKSON of Illinois. Respectfully, Mr. Chairman, the courts could then mandate a government shutdown once revenue has been expended, unlike the CRs that Congress passes.

Mr. NADLER. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. JACKSON of Illinois. I would be happy to yield.

Mr. NADLER. Just two comments.

First of all, going back to what you were discussing a moment ago, the answer to your question is that under this amendment, 40 percent of either House could hold the entire country hostage against the other 60 percent. Sixty percent could want a balanced budget and there may be a necessity for an increase in the debt ceiling, but 40 percent could say no. Forty percent could hold the country hostage as we saw the country was held hostage this year. With this, it would be much easier to hold the country hostage because the minority, not a small minority, but 40 percent could do it.

Secondly, if the gentleman's answer is correct that the courts would exercise judicial restraint and not make decisions on tax increases or revenue or spending cuts, then there's no point to this whole amendment because you're saying it's unenforceable. Either the amendment is enforced by action of the court or it's not enforced.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman from Michigan has again expired.

Mr. CONYERS. I yield myself an additional 3 minutes.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Does the gentleman from Michigan wish to yield the time to the gentleman from Illinois?

Mr. CONYERS. I would yield time to the gentleman from Illinois.

Mr. JACKSON of Illinois. I thank the gentleman, the distinguished ranking member, and I thank the chairman for his response, but I want to raise a question with Mr. NADLER, a distinguished constitutionalist.

The courts could mandate, therefore, if Congress failed to pass a balanced budget, it could mandate a government shutdown once revenue has been expended; is that correct?

Mr. NADLER. The amendment is silent. All it says is ''this will happen.'' ''This must happen.'' When this must happen in our system of government, if it doesn't, or if someone thinks it's not going to, they go to court and they ask for a court order to make sure it happens.

The court either will—there are two possibilities and only two. One, the court will say, Here's how we'll make an order. We'll raise this tax, we'll lower that expenditure; or the court will say, in which case you have unelected judges making those decisions—and this amendment gives no guidance on how to make those decisions—or the court will say as the gentleman from Virginia just suggested the court would do, the court will exercise judicial restraint and will say this is a political question. We decline to make any order, in which case this amendment is not worth the paper it's written on because it's not enforceable at all.

Either it's enforceable by the court saying increase this tax, decrease that expenditure, or it's not enforceable and it's a total joke. One way or the other.

Mr. CONYERS. I would like to yield to the distinguished gentleman from Virginia, BOBBY SCOTT.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I think one of the things we're forgetting is that during that spectacle last August, the United States lost its triple A credit rating, and it was a simple majority.

I just think you cannot make a serious case that it is fiscally responsible to increase the likelihood that we would go through that spectacle again.

The other is we talk about a simple majority for a balanced budget or a supermajority for an unbalanced budget. We forget that a serious deficit reduction is technically unbalanced and you need three-fifths to pass a deficit reduction plan. And if you have a question of three-fifths to pass a serious deficit reduction or new tax cuts and new spending totally irresponsible; and if we know we need three-fifths this year to pass a budget, deficit reduction, as you get closer and closer, how are you going to get those extra votes?

Now, the tradition has been you get those extra votes with a little pork here, a little pork there; and rather than buying enough pork to get to a simple majority, you're going to have to give away enough to get to a 60 percent. And so the question is whether the three-fifths vote will make it more likely that you're going to have a serious deficit reduction or a totally irresponsible budget.

In my view, I think the experience is it's hard enough to get a simple majority to pass meaningful deficit reduction. You will never get to three-fifths, so you get your new tax cuts. You get your new spending. I'm going to get another aircraft carrier out of it. I don't know what you want. But we need to get to three-fifths. You get it by more spending and more tax cuts.

Mr. CONYERS. Could I conclude on this side by asking my friend from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE) if he shares the view offered by Mr. SCOTT?

Mr. GOODLATTE. No, I very definitely do not share the view offered by my good friend and colleague from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT).

The fact of the matter is the downgrade that we received in the bond ratings was due to the fact that we have a $15 trillion debt and the Congress has not come to agreement on sufficient reductions in that debt to satisfy the bond rating agencies. A balanced budget amendment to the United States Constitution is exactly what's needed to put that kind of pressure on the Congress to make real and meaningful reductions in our deficits.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman from Michigan has again expired.

Mr. CONYERS. Could I get some time from the other side to continue this discussion?

Mr. GOODLATTE. I have a lot of Members who are planning to come tomorrow to debate this issue, and I'm going to have to reserve our time for that purpose.

□ 1910

Mr. CONYERS. The time is already allotted for tomorrow. The time we use tonight will not be put on tomorrow. We have divided the time up, so you have a few minutes left if the gentleman cares to share it.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, a parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman will state his inquiry.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Can time unused tonight be carried over tomorrow?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Time unused tonight can be used tomorrow.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from North Dakota (Mr. BERG).

Mr. BERG. I thank the chairman for yielding.

One year ago, as House freshmen, we came out here. We were elected to change how Washington works.

When we arrived in Washington, there was one thing we agreed on, and that was that our country was on an unsustainable path. As I'm here tonight, listening to some of this debate, I'm stunned that the way you get 260 votes is with pork. This is what's wrong with Washington. This is why it has to change.

We know the crisis we're in. We've heard that the $15 trillion of debt matches our whole country's economy. Fifteen years ago, had we passed a balanced budget amendment, America would be the financial powerhouse of the globe. We would not be comparing ourselves to Greece and comparing ourselves to Europe.

I strongly believe that the one fundamental thing we can do to change the way Washington does business is to have a balanced budget amendment. We wouldn't need this amendment if we actually balanced the budget. We are at a critical stage in our Nation's history, and tomorrow, we have the opportunity to make the future look better—by passing this balanced budget amendment.

This is Congress' opportunity to get it right. We can pass a balanced budget amendment, and we can change the course of our country's future. It's time. Now is the time for a balanced budget amendment.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, how much time is remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Michigan has 76¼ minutes remaining.

Mr. CONYERS. I yield myself 1¼ minutes, the time allotted us for tonight.

I think the instructive discussion that we've had here tonight illustrates an irreconcilable problem with the requirement that a supermajority is necessary under H.J. Res. 2 to raise the debt limit. It's frequently difficult enough to raise the debt limit with a simple majority, so I'm sure that everyone in this Chamber will realize, by raising the requirement by a considerable figure, it is going to make it nearly impossible to raise the debt limit.

We've just gone through a summer of problems of raising the debt limit by a simple majority. Now, tonight, we are told that we're going to make this a constitutional proposition, which will make it even more difficult.

Just for the record, for the last time, I yield to the gentleman from Virginia for an explanation:

Would you explain to me how raising the debt limit to a supermajority is going to facilitate a more progressive or operative Congress.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. CONYERS. I yield to the gentleman from Virginia.

Mr. GOODLATTE. The goal is to balance the budget and to pay down this enormous national debt of $15 trillion.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Does the gentleman from Michigan seek to yield himself additional time or does the gentleman from Michigan reserve?

Mr. CONYERS. We have no more time.

Mr. GOODLATTE. How much time remains on this side of the aisle?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Virginia has 88½ minutes remaining.

Mr. GOODLATTE. I yield myself 30 seconds just to say to the gentleman that the only time you're going to need to raise the debt limit is on an occasion when you've already voted by a supermajority to not balance the budget. Therefore, under those circumstances, it seems entirely reasonable to me that you'd also have a supermajority to raise the debt limit.

That, I think, is the key to that provision. It's a discipline in this bill.

Mr. JACKSON of Illinois. Will the distinguished chairman yield for just one question?

Mr. GOODLATTE. I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. JACKSON of Illinois. Mr. Chairman, what is it that qualifies a Federal judge to make a decision about the Federal budget process?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. GOODLATTE. I yield myself an additional 30 seconds to respond to the gentleman.

I will just say to the gentleman that the doctrines that the court has imposed upon internal operations of the Congress have historically called for judicial restraint, so it will be very rare, in my opinion, that you will find courts involved in this process. I believe that there is very good material, which we have put into the record in the Judiciary Committee, that would reflect upon just that process. This is something that the Congress has to resolve for itself, and that's why we need it in the Constitution, because the Congress does not resolve it now.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. RICHARDSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to H.J. Res. 2, the proposed Balanced Budget Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, and I appeal to my colleagues to join me in rejecting this ill-considered and unwise amendment to the world's greatest national charter.

I oppose the proposed amendment for three principle reasons:

First, it is unfair, since it would roll back Social Security, Medicaid, Medicare, unemployment insurance, nutrition assistance, and other programs with expenditures that fluctuate over time.

Second, it is dangerous, as it would effectively cripple the Federal Government's efforts to respond to economic emergencies like the Great Depression and the present crisis.

Third, it will be nearly impossible to enforce, thus opening the door to judicial activism and intervention involving every act of Congress with a mechanism for raising revenue.

Worse, the proposed amendment, if ratified, would result in an unprecedented transfer of power from the Legislature, the first branch of government, to the Judiciary, the third and least accountable branch.

At first glance, the balanced budget amendment seems like a good idea, but its superficial appeal vanishes when one examines its key provisions closely.

Proponents argue that the Federal Government should be required to balance its budget, spending no more than it takes in, like most American families.

The problem with this analogy is that it is simply untrue. In real life, most families and businesses do not limit expenditures to the amount of revenues. They borrow and take on debt to buy homes, send kids to college, and cope with unexpected emergencies.

Forcibly balancing the federal budget would be like telling families that they are prohibited from borrowing or taking out any loan, ever—no matter how good their credit or how prudent their financing plan may be. It bars the government from taking out loans and enforces cuts on social programs while making tax cuts to the wealthy a permanent fixture.

The passage and ratification of H.J. Res. 2 would mean massive cuts to Medicare, Social Security, and many other programs. Obligations will not be met because there will literally not exist enough money in circulation to pay for them.

The destruction of these programs is the true aim of this legislation. It would force spending cuts by requiring a majority vote of the whole number of each chamber for all legislation imposing or increasing a tax, while requiring only a simple majority of those present to cut out funding for vital social programs.

Moreover, without deficit spending, programs intended to combat economic downturns such as unemployment insurance, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), and food stamps would be jeopardized. Known as automatic stabilizers, these programs grow when the economy dips and cushion the blow for those hardest hit by recessions.

Increased outlays for these programs, which have no set budgets since they follow the fluctuations of the economy, will come into direct conflict with a balanced budget amendment, meaning harder times for those without work.

Equally bad is that under H.J. Res. 2, necessary stimulus such as the New Deal legislation of the 1930s or the Recovery Act of 2009 would be nearly impossible to pass. We would have no way to stimulate the economy at critical points to respond to downturns of the business cycle.

The result is that what would otherwise be a mild recession could spiral down into a great depression.

Imagine if the balanced budget amendment was in effect in 2008, when this Nation was on the brink of an economic meltdown. Instead of rescuing the savings of millions and saving the nation's automobile manufacturing industry, the Federal Government would have been busying itself with cutting Social Security, national parks, cancer research, Medicaid, defense, and hundreds of other programs.

That was the Hoover response to the Great Depression which was repudiated by voters and replaced by Roosevelt's New Deal.

Like its variants, H.J. Res. 2 is incredibly vague on how it would be measured and enforced.

There is no way to accurately balance the budget, since the Congressional Budget Office, whose job it is to predict expenditures, is often off by hundreds of billions of dollars a year.

If revenues fall short because of a projection error, the Federal Government could conceivably come to a halt toward the end of the fiscal year and stop paying benefits to Social Security.

I Finally, since it is an amendment to the Constitution, it would ultimately fall to the judiciary to define and implement economic policy. This will burden the courts with issues that are intrinsically political in nature.

H.J. Res. 2 also comes with an escape clause, whereby under a three-fifths vote, the provisions of the amendment may be waived. The Constitution is a statement of fundamental principles, such as free speech and equal protection under the law. The fact the proposed amendment can be waived so easily by Congress reveals that this entire exercise is merely theater intended by the Republican majority to placate its fervent base of Tea Partiers.

H.J. Res. 2 is a terrible idea and would be bad for our country. I urge my colleagues to reject this ill-advised and poorly-conceived amendment to the greatest constitution ever devised.

Mr. BACHUS. Mr. Speaker, families across America have to live within their means and balance their budgets. Sometimes it means making hard decisions and giving up things that you might like but can't afford. For too long, Washington has avoided making those choices. Its practice has not been to control spending but to keep borrowing more and more. For families, this approach results in bankruptcy. For countries, it leads to the financially and socially perilous situation that we are seeing in Greece and other debt-ridden nations. It is very clear that the only sure way to bring long-term fiscal discipline to Washington is to adopt a Balanced Budget Amendment to the Constitution. The Balanced Budget Amendment will provide us with a disciplined framework for the important decisions on entitlement changes and other spending reforms that will be needed to place America on firmer fiscal ground. Amending the Constitution is not something that should ever be done lightly. But I truly believe that what is at stake here is the financial integrity of our country and the future prosperity of our children and grandchildren. Our parents left us with a stronger America. We do not want to leave them with a weaker one.

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the Ranking Member for the time to speak on this horrible legislation. The supposed reason for bringing up this amendment is because this country has taken on a horrible debt over the last 12 years.

Let us not forget how we got in this mess. Institutional memory is in order. When you have your head in the lion's mouth, you ease it out. What happened? How did we get here? When President Clinton left, we were operating with a surplus. But we had 8 years of Bush and two wars and a deficit of $1.3 trillion.

Do you think this mess started when President Obama was elected? No, it did not.

We have been practicing what I call reverse Robin Hood for 10 years. Nobody remembers what happened here just last December? We gave $800 billion to not just millionaires, but to billionaires and now you complain that we are broke.

It is all about your priorities.

Under this balanced budget amendment, elderly citizens are not a priority. Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security would have to compete against all other federal spending. A balanced budget would require Congress to cut all programs by an average of 17.3 percent by 2018. If spending cuts are spread proportionately, Medicare would be cut by about $750 billion, Social Security by almost $1.2 trillion, and veterans' benefits by $85 billion.

Transportation infrastructure is not a priority. We know for every billion dollars that we spend, it generates 44,000 permanent jobs. Without transportation infrastructure, we cannot compete on a global level. While private businesses and households borrow all the time to finance capital spending, a balanced budget amendment would prevent federal borrowing to finance any investment expenditures.

Our priorities are out of whack when we cannot agree to protect those who need our help the most: the poor, the working class and the sick.

I am hoping that the American people will wake up. It is shameful that over and over again in the people's House, in the people's House, we attack the people who do not have lobbyists on Capitol Hill. And so I yield back the balance of my time, but I do know that elections have consequences. The American people are watching you.

Do not support this sham of a policy.

Vote no on the Balanced Budget Amendment.

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I oppose this balanced budget amendment. It's not because I support reckless spending, deficit spending, or believe that we don't have a fiscal problem in this country. I oppose this balanced budget amendment because I believe it is a heavy handed approach, which has the potential to harm Social Security and Medicare recipients and will hamstring our Nation's ability to respond to natural disasters, terrorist attacks, and acts of war.

We balanced our budget in the 1990s without a balanced budget amendment to our Constitution and we can do it again. Balancing our budget is good policy, I am even open to the idea of a carefully crafted amendment that will not threaten Social Security and Medicare recipients and not endanger our future national security and emergency preparedness. The proposal before us today does none of this and is just bad policy.

It is true that our Nation's debt has gotten too big and it is projected to expand even more if nothing is done to curtail it. For this reason, I support immediate measures to reduce our debt to a level that is both manageable and sustainable, which will put our country on a path to economic stability and prosperity. I oppose this proposal, but look forward to working with my colleagues, Democrat and Republican, to find better ways to address our fiscal challenges.

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Speaker, today the House is scheduled to consider House Joint Resolution No. 2. This bill proposes a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution. I am very proud to be a cosponsor of this legislation. The national debt just climbed above $15 trillion. We know that Washington should not spend more than it takes in. We know this, but we continue to rack up massive yearly deficits. We need a balanced budget amendment now more than ever.

Before being elected to Congress, I served as a city councilman for 4 years, as a mayor for 2 years, and as a state representative for 18 years. During my entire twenty-four years of combined state and local government service, by law I was always required to have a balanced budget. We should mandate the same requirement for the federal government that most state and local governments have to produce a balanced budget.

Earlier this year, the Texas Legislature called on Congress to propose and submit to the states a balanced budget amendment. I am pleased that the House is taking the first step to fulfill this request made by Texas and other states. I look forward to continuing the fight for its passage and ratification. Our fiscal problems are not getting any easier. We cannot simply continue to kick the can down the road. The longer that we wait only makes our fiscal problems that much more difficult to solve.

We must act now before we further ruin the economic futures of our children and grandchildren. We cannot ignore our fiscal situation any longer. The Federal Government must balance its budget. A balanced budget amendment is the ultimate solution to our current lack of fiscal discipline.

I strongly urge my colleagues to join me in voting in favor of this bipartisan resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 2 of House Resolution 466, further consideration of this motion is postponed.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3094, WORKFORCE DEMOCRACY AND FAIRNESS ACT

Ms. FOXX, from the Committee on Rules (during consideration of H.J. Res. 2), submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 112–291) on the resolution (H. Res. 470) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3094) to amend the National Labor Relations Act with respect to representation hearings and the timing of elections of labor organizations under that Act, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message in writing from the President of the United States was communicated to the House by Mr. Brian Pate, one of his secretaries.

AUTHORIZATION OF CONTINUED PRODUCTION OF NAVAL PETROLEUM RESERVES BEYOND APRIL 5, 2012—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 112–73)

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FARENTHOLD) laid before the House the following message from the President of the United States; which was read and, together with the accompanying papers, referred to the Committee on Armed Services and ordered to be printed:

To The Congress of the United States:

Consistent with section 7422(c)(2) of title 10, United States Code, I am informing you of my decision to extend the period of production of the Naval Petroleum Reserves for a period of 3 years from April 5, 2012, the expiration date of the currently authorized period of production.

Attached is a copy of the report investigating continued production of the Reserves, consistent with section 7422(c)(2)(B) of title 10. In light of the findings contained in the report, I certify that continued production from the Naval Petroleum Reserves is in the national interest.

BARACK OBAMA.

THE WHITE HOUSE, *November 17, 2011.*

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate agrees to the report of the committee of conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the amendments of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 2112) ''An Act making consolidated appropriations for the Departments of Agriculture, Commerce, Justice, Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related programs for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2012, and for other purposes.''.

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PROGRESSIVE CAUCUS HOUR: THE BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 5, 2011, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I am grateful for the opportunity to allow members of the Progressive Caucus to continue this discussion and as well to continue to educate the American public.

It is worth noting that part of the discussion that occurred on the floor of the House is that we have come to this point, if I might say, through a peculiar process. Some might call it hostage-taking, but certainly it is a process that has skewed, if you will, the regular order of this Congress.

This little book, the Constitution of the United States, that can fit into a document of this size, even though it is found in law books and many major large-sized books in the Library of Congress, hopefully convinces the American people of the wisdom of the Founding Fathers. It is noteworthy that they did not include a balanced budget amendment in the first group of amendments called the Bill of Rights. And even as they proceeded, they took the challenge of speaking to any number of issues, the freeing of the slaves in the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments, giving the right to vote finally in the 15th Amendment, suggesting that there should be no obstacles to voting. They went on to the 24th Amendment to indicate that there should be no poll tax, the 19th Amendment giving women the right to vote. But never did they feel the necessity to talk about a balanced budget amendment.

The reason, I believe, that they cast their lot on the responsible thinking of Members of Congress is because that is what we are supposed to do. We are supposed to be responsible Members of the United States Congress with no intervening body, no layered approach, no handcuffing of our deliberation. And that's what a balanced budget amendment is all about.

You've just listened to a portion of our debate. We will go on into tomorrow, mind you, taking up 5 hours of time that could be dedicated to coming together around job creation.

The underlying premise of this bill, Mr. Speaker, is that two-thirds of this body, two-thirds of the other body, and three-quarters of the States must consent to a balanced budget amendment. Thank goodness that our Founding Fathers made amending the Constitution so difficult. And that is because they wanted us to be thoughtful. So when we think of the amendments that are in this book, this little book that starts off with ''We, the people,'' a part of the Declaration of Independence, and then the beginning part of the Constitution says that we have come together ''to form a more perfect union,'' they've made it that challenging so that we could be thoughtful in our moving amendments.

Maybe for those of us who are in certain types of church families, whether it be Baptist or the underlying overriding general Protestant structure, we know that there are pastors, ministers, reverends, board of trustees, a board, or maybe a deacon board, there is some sort of policy board, and then there is a congregation. The reason why I mentioned the faith community is because we can get very sensitive about how our places of worship are run, how the business part of it is run. And you would wonder how many congregations would welcome the overlay of some outside entity—albeit formed by members—that was over the pastor, that was over the board of trustees, that was over the congregation. That's what we have done and forced ourselves to do with the intervening supercommittee that was put together by the concept of needing to raise the debt ceiling and then adding into it another hot pepper pot, and that is, of course, having to be forced to pass a balanced budget amendment.

I want to refer my colleagues again to a headline in a local paper, SHEILA JACKSON LEE can't slow down the Republican balanced-budget amendment freight train. It's not necessarily because it was my name, but that's just what we have experienced, a freight train.

I have no doubt that there will be a strong vote tomorrow. I am hoping that the debate will generate enough thought to cause many of my colleagues to reflect on whether or not we could, in the regular order, do some of the suggestions that have been made. Taxation of investment transactions, where many who are well vested and who have experienced the bounty of this land would be willing to contribute and to understand how we should move forward. The expiration of the Bush tax cuts, another revenue-generator that would, I believe, increase the opportunities for reducing the debt. Getting rid of the mighty, if you will, bungled opportunity to help seniors, becoming a gigantic handout budgetary fiasco. Medicare part D—ask every senior when you visit them at their senior centers, are they begging for the closing of the doughnut hole? But more importantly, are they trying to get relief from Medicare part D? Give them relief, close the doughnut hole, and you will find a huge amount of money going into the Treasury.

Going back to the Affordable Care Act and implementing the public option and allowing the United States to negotiate the cost of medications, prescription drugs under Medicare—just watch the debt go down, down, down. So I want to recite, as I did on the floor of the House, the words of Chairman Ben Bernanke, the chairman of the Federal Reserve, who indicated to the Committee on Financial Services, We really don't want to just cut, cut, cut. You need to be a little bit cautious about sharp cuts in the very near term because of the potential impact on the recovery. That doesn't at all preclude—in fact, I believe it's entirely consistent with—a longer-term program that will bring our budget into a sustainable position.

Nowhere did he say, Well, why don't you just do a balanced budget amendment with no thinking and not being able to deal with emergencies beyond another vote by the Congress, sometimes a majority, sometimes even longer.

Mr. Speaker, a balanced budget amendment was wrong when our Founding Fathers began to write the Constitution. It was wrong as the Founding Fathers wrote amendment after amendment. It was wrong to think about it in World War II, to think about it in the 1929 financial collapse, to think about it in the conflicts of the 1950s, the Vietnam war or wars thereafter, such as the Persian Gulf, the Iraq war, and, of course, the Afghan war, Kosovo, Bosnia, Albania, Libya, and places where we've been called to act on behalf of the American people in defending our honor and democracy and protecting the vulnerable around the world. It is wrong, wrong, wrong.

What the American people who voted for Members of the United States Congress are asking us to do is what the Progressive Caucus is doing: It is finding a way, first of all, to submit a reasoned budget that has seen a responsible approach to addressing the needs of revenue-raising and belt-tightening. What it is also asking is, as the Progressive Caucus is doing, drafting a major omnibus jobs bill that will incorporate a wide range of initiatives, many not costly initiatives, that will bring about jobs in America not only for those languishing 2 and 3 years unemployed but for our wonderful college graduates and others that are coming out of the institutions of higher learning.

But as Dr. Jeffrey Sachs said, We have even more challenges because, although we all point to college graduates and going to institutions of higher learning, maybe I should wake up America and let you know that we have some of the lowest numbers of college graduation rates probably in the history of America: white males at 34 percent, African Americans somewhere under 20, and Hispanics 11 percent.

So the balanced budget amendment is not going to invest in the human resources of America. It's not going to answer the question in our competitive reach as we compete around the world. It's not going to respond to the numbers of Ph.D.s that India is now producing, probably in years to come more so than people in the United States, or the number of masters and Ph.D.s in China.

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Our reach in competition is way beyond our borders. But everyone knows that America's marketability is our genius in invention and manufacturing, our genius as it relates to prescription drugs, our genius in medical science and medicine, our genius in Silicon Valley and the little Silicon Valleys that are springing up around America.

Our genius, for example, in the MD Anderson Cancer Center located in Houston, Texas, the fourth largest city in the Nation, magnificent research occurring in that institution, seeking a viable 21st-century, 22nd-century cure for this devastating disease, but also branching out for creative thinking in the next generation of research. That is the genius of America. We are not broke, and we're certainly not broke in our genius.

Let us be reminded as we debate the balanced budget amendment that our corporations are flush with cash. Our banks are flush with cash, and countries around the world are eager to have us hold their money in the framework of loans that are being made to us. If they wish to loan to anyone, they are eager to loan to the United States. Why? Because they believe their cash is safe.

So it is important that we are thoughtful in the idea of a balanced budget amendment and why now. Why are we doing a balanced budget amendment in the course of the need to do, as Dr. Sachs has said, long-term, systematic changes in how we do business in the United States of America?

So just take a fact sheet on the question of the balanced budget amendment. It came about because we went to the brink of raising the debt ceiling, something that had been done many times since President Eisenhower, going forward to Presidents thereafter, many times under Bush I, the 41st President of the United States; many times under the 42nd President of the United States, William Jefferson Clinton; many times under the 43rd President of the United States.

And lo and behold, an African American President ascends to the Presidency, voted on by the American people, and the debt ceiling becomes a crisis in the making. And, frankly, the pundits, economists around the world indicated it was not the question of raising the debt ceiling. It was the debacle shown around the world that the Members of Congress were not allowed to get their business in order. They were not allowed to debate this in a reasoned manner. They were strung and strangled by voices that are driven by outside party politics, in this instance the Tea Party and those who adhere to pledges governed by Mr. Norquist.

So it is important that a constitutional debate be separated from the entrenched political views that would disallow a thoughtful discussion. We could have raised the debt ceiling with a thoughtful discussion; but it came with not strings but ladened with heavy steel, bricks tied to our arms and body as we walked slowly and dragged down.

So we have a supercommittee. With great respect for those working, I have the greatest respect for our colleagues and wish them well. We have the requirement of a balanced budget amendment, a constitutional discussion dragged down by the requirement that you're not going to get the debt ceiling raised. You're not going to be able to pay the bills for our seniors and our soldiers on the battlefield if you didn't hang with all of this weight to carry forth an instruction that really is not done thoughtfully.

So here's what we get with the balanced budget amendment. We risk default by the United States by requiring a supermajority to raise the debt limit. It destroys 15 million jobs and doubles unemployment to 18 percent. If enacted in fiscal year 2012, nonpartisan economists with Macroeconomic Advisers, LLC, estimate that enactment of a balanced budget amendment would eliminate 15 million jobs, double the unemployment rate to 18 percent, and cause the economy to shrink by 17 percent.

Remember what I said, dragged down by steel anvils tied to our legs and arms, our ankles, around our necks. This is what we will be doing tomorrow. This is what the vote will entail tomorrow.

It harms seniors by cutting Medicare and Social Security and veterans by reducing their benefits, even though Social Security is solvent until 2035, requiring a thoughtful decision of how we go forward. And even though there are ways to eliminate waste, fraud, and abuse from Medicare without cutting providers, we want to go with a balanced budget amendment which could result in Medicare being cut by about $750 billion, Social Security $1.2 trillion, and veterans benefits $85 million through 2021.

How many of us joined our neighbors in celebrating Veterans Day last Friday? I did. We went to the Veterans hospital and shook the hands of bedridden veterans and promised them, by giving them cards of cheer, that we would not in any way cut their benefits. These cuts will result in draconian cuts, worse than the Ryan GOP budget. It opens the doors for courts to intervene—and the gentleman from Illinois may want to comment on this—in Federal budget decisions by placing the balanced budget amendment into the Constitution. It will generate enormous—in fact, there will be a line to

the courthouse on constitutional challenges on cutting Pell Grants and cutting food stamps and cutting housing and cutting veterans benefits, as I said.

And then, of course, more than 270 organizations representing people that are the most vulnerable have begged us to unshackle the steel anvils from our legs and arms and do the people's business.

I would be happy to yield to the gentleman from Illinois.

Mr. JACKSON of Illinois. I wanted to ask the gentlelady a question because I think she touched upon a thoughtful comment in her remarks.

I can imagine since every Member of Congress and every candidate for Congress is running for office and they run to uphold the Constitution of the United States, they swear to uphold the Constitution and its various provisions within the context of the debate that we have here on the floor of the Congress. In my district, I run on a campaign to try and provide better housing for my constituents. I run a campaign trying to provide health care for the health care-less, those who don't have health care. I run trying to say that the Federal Government has an obligation to address issues of unemployment and provide jobs. And when the private sector won't invest its money in and on the south side of Chicago, that it should do more. I run my campaigns arguing that people should get involved in the political process because if they vote for me, I can provide them some hope. I will come to the floor of the Congress and have their grievances redressed by the Government of the United States.

Under the balanced budget amendment as proposed by the gentleman from Virginia, it seems to me that anyone running for Congress in the future isn't going to be running making promises or commitments to do anything about the social ills or the gaps that exist within our society. They will be running for office saying, What I guarantee is you cannot have better housing, that you cannot concern yourself about the Federal Government's role in health care, or that the Federal Government should have no role in addressing issues of unemployment. Let the private sector work its way to the south side of Chicago or to Houston, Texas.

The gentlelady's argument seems to suggest that the balanced budget amendment itself changes the framework and the structure of America; and instead of candidates running for office making the case for hope and making the case for change and encouraging the promise of America, it's just the opposite.

Would the gentlelady comment on that, please.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. The gentleman is eloquent in his analysis. And as an appropriator, the gentleman knows full well the value of regular order. That is that the voices of not only the appropriators, meaning those on the Appropriations Committee, but other Members are able to, in essence, craft the ultimate appropriations, maybe working with a budget, maybe not, based upon the current needs of the American people.

□ 1940

The balanced budget amendment will stand not as a guard at the door of the United States Congress—the doors are to my left. We come in and out. It will literally be a lock and chain on the door because it will say to those who are running for office, in essence, you are powerless. You will either be as other litigants in the courthouse in the third branch of government seeking refuge for your constituents, or you will make at being a Member of Congress and spend most of your time fighting the balanced budget amendment in the courts.

The gentleman is absolutely correct, and I would add to this that, even though they make a way for disasters and wars, even if it is presumed to be under the jurisdiction of the President's executive powers to even expend any dollars, one would have to come to this body to receive a majority vote by this House and a majority vote by the other House.

That means that all branches of government will be under this lock. The President will not be able to act as a President. The Congress will have disagreement as to whether or not it's a war we support or conflict we support or an emergency we support, and, in essence, to the gentleman's very fine point, and as I indicated, we will be clogging the Federal courts on each iota of disagreement dealing with from vast issues of protecting the homeland to the necessity of defending the principles of democracy around the world. And I know there are some probably listening and they are probably applauding because they are saying, I don't want to help anyone anyhow. But some of that help falls back on the safety and security of the American people.

What is going on in Somalia, the frightening devastation of death that we are not acknowledging, might be a cause for the support of the American Government to help in the survival of those people. We will be in a stranglehold from doing that. The crisis in Syria, which I wanted to just make mention of and to ask Dr. Assad, as the Arab League has asked, and as I continue to ask and as my Syrian American neighbors have asked, to step down, which might warrant the United States joining with people of goodwill to help the Syrian people, we will find ourselves in court for each step of our responsibilities. The oath we take, that will be in conflict with the balanced budget amendment as it is presently written by the gentleman from Virginia.

By the way, if it is not passed as it is, a long-winded process will generate, and I assume that it is the same balanced budget amendment on the other body, but this will be a long, protracted process while we continue to languish and not do the people's bidding. I would rather do the people's bidding than I would want to, again, yield to a process that by its very nature is fractured and does not adhere to the Constitution as relates to having control of the pursestrings, being able to raise armies, being able to provide for the general welfare of the American people.

What are we talking about here? Am I going to have to prosecute a case in the Federal courts on the question of the general welfare of the American people when we will be thwarted here on the floor of the House because of the balanced budget amendment?

I would be happy to yield to my friend.

Mr. JACKSON of Illinois. I thank the gentlelady for yielding, and I'm not so sure that many of the distinguished colleagues appreciate that the distinguished gentlelady from Texas was a jurist before she came to the Congress of the United States. And so we heard from the author of the amendment, the distinguished gentleman from Virginia, that a three-fifths requirement would be required by this House, I believe, to raise taxes.

Now, unlike the Senate, which has a staggered election process, every 6 years is usually the tenure of a Senator, here in the House, Members of Congress run every 2 years. Essentially they're elected a year, then they run a year, then they are elected a year, then they run a year. And I'm finding it nearly impossible to imagine that in the event that revenues are at a shortfall in the Congress of the United States that there will ever be a Congress under the three-fifths requirement as spoken of in this amendment that would ever be willing to raise taxes on wealthy Americans in order to help balance the Nation's budget or to pay for programs. The politics of the way in which Congress is elected, that we serve 2 years, that we essentially serve a year, run a year, serve a year, do politics a year, which is a fundamental tenet of our system and a Constitutional requirement for the House, it just seems to me that inherent in the idea that somehow this Congress is going to have enough political courage in an election year, which, by the way, is every year for Members of Congress, that they're going to be willing to raise taxes in order to help provide for necessary needs of the American people.

As a jurist, would the gentlelady please comment on this idea of a three-fifths requirement in order to move revenue through this building.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. I want to remind the gentleman, I'm looking at a statement that my office brought to my attention that I was on the floor of the House September 22, 2004. Let me say that I wasn't on the floor of the House. I was in a markup on a proposed balanced budget amendment. And I had

in the markup, Mr. JACKSON, an amendment called the ''poor children's amendment.'' In achieving a balanced budget, outlays shall not be reduced in a manner that disproportionately affects outlays for education, nutrition and health programs for poor children. That was called the ''poor children's amendment,'' dated November 22, 2004.

We were dealing with an amendment at that time. It seems like we've done it over and over again. But I want to raise that to say you are very right in your analysis. What that means is that those who would be on the side of saying that we have a crisis with poor children, with nutrition, with the SCHIP program, children's health insurance program which is now merged into our Affordable Care Act, any other programs that deal specifically with the poor—let me just cite this: 2008, 15.45 million impoverished children in the Nation, 20.7 percent of America's youth. The Kaiser Family Foundation estimates that there are currently 5.6 million Texans living in poverty. We have the most uninsured.

What it means is that Congresswoman JACKSON LEE would battle it out in the courts. I would leave the floor of the House. I couldn't get the amount increased, and I would challenge the constitutionality of the balanced budget amendment. That would be part of my remedy because I couldn't raise up a three-fifths in this body, which is a supermajority, in essence, a supermajority to do the constitutional right that we have for taxation.

The House has the pursestrings, and that's a constitutional task. We've now changed that simple majority that has been written by our Founding Fathers who were building a nation and said, when building a nation, we don't want to be reckless with spending, but let us have a majority that will allow us to tax ourselves and build a nation. We're now arguing that it will be three-fifths.

And as we have made it your point, a constitutional amendment, as you know that we've gone to courts on the Ninth Amendment, the right to privacy. We are presently in the throngs of the amendments dealing with due process; and out of that 13th, 14th, 15th Amendments came the Voting Rights Act of 1965, Civil Rights Act of 1964. That generates court action. To your point, we will be in court. But I will say this. We will be in court on defense matters as well.

Let me just indicate a point about defense. In order to spend more than has been appropriated, agencies tasked with defense and national security will need approval from Congress. This increased reliance on emergency appropriations will have detrimental effects on the sound functioning of our defense and national security institutions. The more these institutions are forced to rely on emergency funding, the more unpredictable these budgets will become.

This legislation would allow a military conflict or threat to national security to take the budget out of balance. However, in order to authorize additional funds for military engagement or threats to national security that require action, Congress will need to pass legislation citing a specific amount. So the gentleman who was on the floor is very accurate in what the balanced budget amendment will do is kick us off budget if we have an emergency.

Might I just say, as my voice is coming to somewhat of a raspy end, that in addition to being off budget for this Congress, those of us—I see the good speaker, a dear friend from Texas. Those of us who are familiar with State budgets, we know that there is a capital budget, and we don't have one here in the Federal Government. And so we spend, if people would know, monies out of the Federal Government to ensure the infrastructure of America.

□ 1950

Just a few days ago, Texas had articles talking about our water level. Our water is a lifeline for our ranchers, and something has to be done. I expect the legislature will dig deep to address the diminishing water sources and the water shelf that we have to deal with in places where we have to keep our ranchers going.

By the way, ranchers of Texas, I love you; and I am proud to be from Texas where ranching still goes on. You hold on. We have to deal with it; it is a Federal proposition to deal with water all over America. So all of this would be kicked off budget. And I would hope maybe my Texas colleagues would be in the courts with me when they would be denied the right to secure Federal funding to help Texas that is now suffering from enormous deprivation of water because of the drought that we had and some problems that come about through Mother Nature.

May I pause for a moment and ask the Speaker how much time is remaining.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman has 28 minutes remaining.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Then let me just add a few more points to my commentary on this.

Let me just say that in my district in Texas, more than 190,000 people live below the poverty line. And I want to take Mr. JACKSON's comments—I will say that he took the words out of our collective mouths in the Congressional Progressive Caucus that this issue of poverty is really unspoken, but is in need of raising the ante. And it's the highest rate in 17 years.

The thresholds proposed in H.J. Res. 2 are completely unrealistic. Even during Ronald Reagan's Presidency, before the baby boomers had reached retirement age, swelling the population eligible for Social Security and Medicare when health care costs were lower, Federal spending averaged 22 percent of GDP. We don't have that low number that was offered in the Judiciary Committee, but it is unrealistic as this country grows.

My friends, the country has gotten larger. We can't have the same percentages that we had under President Eisenhower. Only 5 years in the last 50 has the Federal Government posted an annual budget surplus. All of the years the government has been in a deficit. We must contain it and restrain it. We must raise money. We can do that. We've just got to move the various ghosts of tax pledges and other third-party restraints away from the Halls of Congress and move the blocker of doing intelligent work, and that would be a balanced budget amendment.

So I believe it is crucial, as this debate goes forward, that we understand the Constitution and the American people understand that you pass a balanced budget amendment and you give up the vote that you cherish every 2 years, when you vote for a Member of Congress who is allowed to vote for or against, who will stand on the floor of the House and advocate, under the Constitution of the United States, the authority of this House of Representatives to institute taxes through the discourse of debate and the appropriate use of those taxes to raise up the general welfare of the American Government and people.

With that in mind, I would beseech of you, as I close, to be able to truly understand the Preamble to the Constitution of the United States. Allow me to read this into the RECORD:

> We the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

I beg of you, my colleagues who will vote tomorrow, have this Constitution in your hand. Posterity can come through the reasonable work. Posterity can come through the thanking of the supercommittee for its work and moving beyond the supercommittee into 2012. Begin to analyze the needs of the American people and vote for revenue and vote for belt-tightening.

Don't take the Constitution and shred it tomorrow, voting for a balanced budget amendment that no Founding Father saw fit to implement, and throwing America's children, veterans, returning soldiers, and seniors into the Federal courthouses of America and depending upon the Federal court system for justice. We can do justice tomorrow. We can join with the Congressional Progressive Caucus long range, but we can do justice tomorrow and reject the balanced budget amendment on behalf of the constitutional rights of the people, and on behalf of the people of the United States of America.

I am happy to yield control of the remaining time to the gentleman from Illinois.

Mr. JACKSON of Illinois. I thank the gentlelady.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 5, 2011, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. JACKSON) is recognized for the remainder of the hour as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. JACKSON of Illinois. May I inquire of the Speaker how much time remains in the Democratic hour.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman will have 25 minutes.

Mr. JACKSON of Illinois. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Over the course of this session of Congress, I have given a number of Special Order speeches in order to get across to this body the basic needs of the American people and how the Constitution is the best means of meeting those needs.

In April, I came to the floor and denounced a balanced budget amendment as the end of progress in our society. It would appear that my colleagues on the other side of the aisle didn't pay close attention. Perhaps, as they often do, they blatantly ignored what I believe was the logic and the reason behind my arguments.

Either way, Mr. Speaker, here we are just a few months from my original statement against the BBA and the House leadership has brought a balanced budget amendment to the floor. This week, we will cast our vote on what Ezra Klein referred to in the Washington Post as ''the worst idea in Washington.''

In a New York Times editorial published on July 4, the dangers of the balanced budget amendment are laid out in plain English—no frills, none of the rhetoric that our constituents fall prey to. As simple as the BBA sounds, requiring the Federal Government to balance its books every year would be like ''telling families they cannot take out a mortgage or a car loan or do any other kind of borrowing, no matter how sensible the purchase or how credit worthy they may be.''

Worse than just balancing our budget, the amendments that we will see in the coming weeks will force the supermajority to approve any borrowing to finance spending and cap all spending at under 20 percent of GDP. Additionally, a two-thirds majority would be required to raise taxes, making that process effectively impossible.

Sometimes a meaningful investment leads to greater returns in the long run. The average American can't afford to purchase a car, a house, or an education outright. They need a loan or some arrangement in which they owe money. They might be expected to pay installments at a later date, but the product of that loan could get them to a job interview, in a house, or in a university. A car could get them home after a long night at the office. A car lets them purchase groceries and, in turn, contribute to the success of the car industry. A house provides safety and security for one's family. An education adds to the quality of a person's life and the betterment of society. A loan may not always be the most desirable situation, but no one would deny its necessity.

The chief argument used to sway forlorn Americans to the misguided belief that a BBA would benefit our Nation is this: each and every home has to balance its checkbook every month, so why shouldn't our Federal Government do the same? First of all, let me be clear: you cannot compare the budget of the Government of the United States to the budget of a household. It's simply not realistic.

Aside from that critical flaw, the truth is that while each and every American home must balance its bank account, this doesn't include the mortgage, the car note, or the car loans that haven't been paid back yet. A true balanced budget is unrealistic in almost any scenario.

□ 2000

Lest my words again fall on deaf ears, Mr. Speaker, let's start at the beginning. For my colleagues who did not hear me the first time, this may be a little bit redundant, but I'd like to address the history of the balanced budget amendment. It's been a long road.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, if I weren't so appalled by the nature of this effort, I'd be apt to congratulate my friends across the aisle for never letting go of their dream. I can absolutely relate, as I have a few constitutional amendments myself. I guess the Disney phrase, ''Anything can happen when you believe'' really did stick with them.

They believed since 1936 when, in reaction to FDR's New Deal, Republican Congressman Harold Knutson of Minnesota introduced the first version of the amendment in 1936. Like many constitutional amendments, this resolution did not receive a hearing or a vote.

During President Dwight D. Eisenhower's first term, the Judiciary Committee of a barely Democratic Senate held its first hearing on this amendment. It, again, did not receive a vote.

After these partial defeats, the BBA supporters shifted their focus to the States. From 1975 to 1980, 30 State legislatures passed resolutions calling for a constitutional convention to propose this amendment directly to the States.

The election of President Ronald Reagan and a Republican Senate in 1980 renewed hopes for the balanced budget amendment passed by Congress. While the Senate did adopt the amendment in 1982, it failed to garner the necessary two-thirds majority in the House. This failure energized conservative groups such as the National Taxpayers Union and the National Tax Limitations Committee to refocus on State action.

In 1982 and 1983 the Alaska and Missouri legislatures passed resolutions supporting the BBA, bringing the total of number of these resolutions to 32, two short of the 34 needed for a convention. However, a growing concern about the scope of a constitutional convention led some States to withdraw their resolutions, re-shifting focus to congressional action.

From 1990 to 1994 Congress would make three additional attempts to codify this amendment. All failed to garner the necessary two-thirds majority. However, the BBA made a comeback when it was included in former Speaker Newt Gingrich's Contract with America. Twenty-six days after taking office, the newly empowered Republican majority adopted the BBA, giving conservatives their first congressional win in a decade. Disappointment awaited in the Senate however, when two separate votes fell short of its adoption. This failure, along with the balanced budget and the balanced budget surplus at the decade's end, sapped any remaining congressional support for the BBA.

There was renewed Republican support for the amendment in 2000, as it was included in the party's platform. The Bush tax cuts, wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, the passage of Medicare Part D, all unpaid for, led to massive deficit spending by Republicans that eventually led them to sweep the balanced budget amendment back under the rug. In fact, by 2004 the Republican party had created such debt and was so embarrassed that they left any mention of a balanced budget amendment out of their platform.

Again, in recent years, with the advent of the Tea Party and the return of extreme fiscal conservatism in the Republican party, there are currently 12 balanced budget amendments in the House and three in the Senate.

Mr. Speaker, we have a troubling national debt and deficit, but the balanced budget amendment is not the solution. I've already addressed for you the chief argument that proponents of the BBA use to draw in more misinformed worshipers of flawed austerity, comparisons to everyday families.

In the same vein of bandwagon fallacies, my colleagues across the aisle have consistently pointed to another entity that is required to balance its books, the States.

Mr. Speaker, I, again, can't continue without pointing out a serious dilemma in comparing the governments of individual States to the Federal Government. Perhaps if our Founding Fathers had seen fit to stick with the Articles of Confederation, this argument might be more legitimate. But at the end of the day we, instead, find ourselves under the guidance of the Constitution of the United States, by which I'm able to stand here before you tonight as an elected official conveying the views of my constituents.

The requirements and expectations of our Federal Government, to the great and continuous dismay of some of my colleagues, are now and forever different from those of the States. The Federal Government is bound to protect, via military force, and provide for the collective security of our Nation; maintain the national currency; determine the scope of the Federal courts;

promote and encourage our Nation's scientific and technological advancements via patents; and even regulate trade between the States that make up this great Union. At the end of the day, the States rely on the Federal Government, much like the citizens of the United States.

Alas, Mr. Speaker, since this logic doesn't seem to carry with my conservative friends, I would like to point out a few technical problems with this impressively mature ''the States do it'' argument. On its face, I'm willing to say this may be true. Nearly every State in the union has some form of a balanced budget requirement. Unfortunately, however, this has not kept them out of debt.

Furthermore, their amendments have restricted their ability to care for their citizens in times of austerity or emergency. Quite frankly, I don't think that's an option for the Federal Government. And in the face of such an emergency, I think every constituent we represent would agree.

According to a Forbes analysis of the global debt crisis in January of 2010, every single State in the country is carrying some form of debt. These debts range from as little as $17 per capita in Nebraska to $4,490 in Connecticut.

In fiscal year 2012 approximately 44 States will face revenue shortfalls. Many are desperately looking for ways to declare their State bankrupt. Bankrupt. I say it again, Mr. Speaker, because this proposed amendment would place the Federal Government in an equally unacceptable predicament.

For instance, in Rhode Island, judges and court workers have cut pay and left 53 positions unfilled. This is still not enough to balance their budget. As a desperate last resort, the chief justice has begun to dispose of cases on backlog. Literally, the judge is tossing them out. Florida is in the same predicament.

This past week I spoke to the Federal courts in the Northern District of Illinois. Federal workers being laid off and furloughed, and men and women who have pensions and long investments in the system being told that the Federal courts in the Northern District of Illinois can no longer sustain themselves. I told them I would bring their message back to this Congress.

If this Congress can spend billions of dollars to fight a war in Afghanistan and Iraq, we can spend billions of dollars on scientific exploration, we can spend billions of dollars to put a man on the Moon, why can't we find the money in this Congress to put a man or a woman on their own two feet right here in America?

My colleagues across the aisle are so concerned about handing our children and grandchildren any amount of national debt that they fail to realize we are setting future generations up for failure. States are already cutting too many services that make the American workforce strong and competitive. Should the Federal Government do the same, our legacy will be an America that is undereducated, ill-equipped to compete on a global level.

What happens to America when both State and Federal Governments can't make the investments in the education our youth need to compete at the global level? When our State and national capitals are both hiding behind balanced budget amendments? What happens to America?

The ones who will suffer won't be the conservatives pushing for this amendment. It will be our poor, our children, our veterans, our elderly, the disabled, the America that doesn't have an interest in corporate tax rates, subsidies for big oil companies, or whether the Federal Government or insurance company underwrites their flood insurance. Everyday America will suffer.

The balanced budget amendment is the wrong key to the doors of prosperity. It fits inside the keyhole, it seems like a perfect match, but it really doesn't open the door. We twist it, we shake it, we fiddle with it, but wind up stripping the lock, doing more harm than good. And at the end of the day, we've moved no further, made no progress from where we started.

A BBA is not going to solve America's deficit crisis. According to the Center for Budget and Policy Priorities, Citizens for Tax Justice, and others, a Federal balanced budget amendment would damage our economy by making recessions deeper and more frequent, heighten the risk of default, and jeopardize the full faith and credit of the U.S. government, lead to reductions in needed investments in the future, favor wealthy Americans over middle- and low-income Americans by making it far more difficult to raise revenues and easier to cut programs. It would weaken the principle of majority rule, making balancing the budget more difficult.

And no one, to my satisfaction, not on the Democratic side and not on the Republican side, has explained to me yet what qualifies a Federal judge to intervene in this budget process and make a judgment about what programs to cut.

□ 2010

Do they have degrees in economics? Have they studied programs? Have they studied the needs of constituents around the country? Have they been to Appalachia? Have they been to the barrios, the ghettos, and the trailer parks of our Nation?

What qualifies a Federal judge to determine when someone's benefit or assistance should not be given to them? Nothing qualifies them, and yet this Congress votes tomorrow to change the Constitution of the United States as if their opinion should matter in this particular process.

Mr. Speaker, I want to go into a little bit more detail about these faults because I need my colleagues to understand the level of damage they'll cause if they continue to sugar this bill and force it down the throats of the American people.

First, a balanced budget amendment would damage the economy and make recessions deeper and more frequent. Under a BBA, Congress would be enforced to adopt a rigid fiscal policy requiring the budget to be balanced or in surplus every year regardless of the current economic situation or threat to the Nation's security. A sluggish economy with less revenue and more outgoing expenditures creates a deficit, as we've seen from recent events. A deficit necessitates economic stimulation in order to reverse negative growth.

This is why in the last session of Congress the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act invested in roads, bridges, mass transit, and other infrastructure. It provided 95 percent of working Americans with an immediate tax cut, extended unemployed insurance and COBRA for Americans hurt by the economic downturn through no fault of their own. If Congress were forced to function under a BBA, deficit reduction would be mandated, even more so during periods of slow or stalled economic growth, which is the opposite of what is needed in this situation.

My Republican colleagues have taken to finger-pointing about the stimulus package. Every day I see a commercial laughing about the embarrassing and painful ways it failed to push our economy out of recession. I find it funny that no one has talked about what would have happened without it.

Here in the Halls of Congress, we're expected to legislate on a vast number of issues; but we always try to take our advice from the experts. And the experts, the economists, told us we should have done more.

The BBA risks making the Nation's recessions more common and more catastrophic for middle class families, senior, veterans, the disabled, the poor. Under such an amendment, Congress is stripped of any power to adequately respond.

Secondly, a BBA would risk default and jeopardize the full faith and credit of the United States. We've already been down this road. We already know how dangerous that turn really is. In August, we teetered on the brink of default playing political games and pointing fingers. We couldn't pass a respectable debt ceiling increase, and we only needed a simple majority to do so.

A balanced budget amendment would bar the government from borrowing funds unless a three-fifths vote in both Houses of Congress permitted a raise in the debt limit. Under such a scenario, we wouldn't have been able to raise the debt limit in the last debate. A budget crisis in which a default becomes a threat is more likely and because of the limits placed on the fluidity of the debt ceiling, that default becomes more likely to occur.

After the chaos we just experienced a few short months ago after the downgrade of our Nation's credit rating, not because of our debt but because of our lack of ability to lead and govern, I would think, Mr. Speaker, that we would try to avoid an identical future situation. A BBA would exacerbate the same issues we saw in the August debt ceiling debacle.

Third, Mr. Speaker, a BBA would lead to reductions in needed investments for the future. Since the 1930s, our Nation has consistently made public investments that improve long-term productivity and growth in education, infrastructure, research and development. These efforts encourage increased private sector investment leading to budget surpluses and a thriving economy.

A balanced budget amendment which requires a balanced budget each and every year would limit the government's ability to make public investments, thereby hindering future growth.

For years, conservatives have abused the debt and the deficit as a springboard from which to argue for smaller government and cuts to programs that serve as social safety nets to the American families. Although we must consider the debt and deficit, the larger and more significant issue is the nature of the debt and what it created.

If you invest $50,000 in a business, a house, or an education, you can expect future returns on your investment. If you invest the same $50,000 in a gambling debt, what is the future return? Both expenditures result in a $50,000 debt. But only one results in a return that can transform that debt into a long-term asset or gain.

Social investments provide the potential for greater returns in the long run in the same fashion as personal investments. Even small expenditures on social programs lay a foundation for great wealth in the long term. If the Nation chose to invest over a 5-year period $1.5 trillion in building roads and bridges and airports and railroads, mass transit, schools, housing, health care, we would create a debt. But the increased ability of companies to interact and shift their goods over well-paved and planned roads, the new businesses that would sprout around freshly built or newly expanded airports, the high wages of a student who is well-educated and able to attend college resulting in more tax revenue, the improved productivity of employees at their healthiest would eventually result in greater returns for our country.

The extension of Bush-era tax cuts for corporations and the rich brought about some short-term stimulus for consumer spending; but similar to the Reagan tax cuts, which resulted in record government deficits and debt, the long-term damage outweighs the immediate effects. Reagan's tax cuts for the rich came at the expense of investing in our Nation's need for long-term, balanced economic growth.

The Reagan administration neglected and cut back our Nation's investment in infrastructure, education, health care, housing, job training, transportation, energy conservation, and more.

The inclination of most conservatives in both parties—I'm not picking on Republicans today—in both parties, is to cut the debt by cutting programs for the most vulnerable amongst us—our poor, our children, our elderly, our disabled, and minorities. This approach, however, has proven false too many times. A balanced budget amendment would take us back to this archaic and ineffective system permanently.

Fourth, Mr. Speaker, a balanced budget amendment favors wealthy Americans over middle- and low-income Americans by making it harder to raise revenue and easier to cut programs. Under current law, legislation can pass by a majority of those present and voting by a recorded vote.

The BBA requires that legislation raising taxes must be approved on a rollcall vote by a majority of the full membership of both Houses. Before I even finish this point, Mr. Speaker, I want to make this point: look at the supercommittee. Look at what they're wrestling with. We don't even have a balanced budget amendment. Look at who they're targeting. Look at the emphasis of their cuts.

So instead of a balanced budget amendment in the Constitution, we already see that Congress is ineffective in light of what we've already passed. Imagine if it were a constitutional requirement.

The point is so simple, Mr. Speaker. The BBA would make it harder to cut the deficit by curbing special interest tax breaks of the oil and gas industries and making it easier to reduce programs such as Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security, veterans benefits, education, environmental programs, and assistance to poor children.

Wealthy individuals and corporations receive most of their government benefits in the form of tax entitlements while low-income and middle-income Americans receive most of their government benefits through programs.

As evidenced by the cuts that both parties agreed upon recently, it's far easier to cut social welfare programs than to cut spending on our military or to increase taxes. As long as spending is a political issue, cuts to those programs that assist those with the smallest voice in Washington will always happen first.

Raising taxes, the only option to address a budget deficit aside from cutting programs, is already a burdensome issue. The additional requirements of a BBA further complicate the process of raising taxes. This means the richest Americans will likely keep the benefits they receive from our government via tax cuts.

Meanwhile, the poor, they lose their programs that provide them with housing, with food, with health care, and the means to survive. This will further reinforce the growing gap between the rich, the rest of our society, middle class, working poor, and the destitute alike.

□ 2020

The BBA insists that the total government expenditures in any year, including those for Social Security benefits, not exceed total revenues collected in that same year, including revenues from Social Security payroll taxes. Thus, the benefits of the baby boomers would have to be financed in full by the taxes of those working and paying into the system then. This undercuts the central reforms of 1983.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, the BBA weakens the principle of majority rule and makes balancing the budget much more difficult. Most balanced budget amendments require that, unless three-fifths of the Members of Congress agree to raise the debt ceiling, the budget must be balanced at all times. They also require that legislation raising taxes must be approved on a roll call vote by a majority of the membership.

Mr. Speaker, in no way is this an exhaustive list. I know that my time is up, but this is my second attempt to bring my conservative friends to their senses. The only parties served by a balanced budget amendment are corporate interests and the wealthy, whom they seem to be serving instead of everyday working Americans.

My answer is ''no,'' Mr. Speaker, to the balanced budget amendment tomorrow. My answer is ''yes'' if my colleagues agree there is no way that they can pass the balanced budget amendment unless we, ourselves, agree that we must invest, build, and grow this economy and work our way out of this problem as Americans.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

GOP DOCTORS CAUCUS: THE EFFECTS OF THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT ON AMERICA'S HOSPITALS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 5, 2011, the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. BUERKLE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Ms. BUERKLE. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Here in Washington, we are divided on many issues, but whether we are a Republican or a Democrat, Members of Congress recognize the essential role that our hospitals play in our communities.

Hospitals provide care for the sick, and the clinics provide essential care to many. They are engaged in important medical research, and teaching hospitals are educating doctors and nurses to provide care for future generations. In many districts across the country, including mine, New York's 25th Congressional District, our hospitals are our major employers.

They're perhaps the largest single employer a congressional district may have.

The health care sector constitutes nearly 18 percent of the United States' economy, and it is one of the more stable portions of our economy. American hospitals employ more than 5.4 million people; and as hospitals and hospital employees buy goods and services from other businesses, they create additional jobs. The economic impact is felt throughout the community. Hospitals are a vital part of our local and our national economy. In New York State, particularly in my home district, hospitals are the largest single employer.

I want to call your attention to this chart, Mr. Speaker, with data provided by the Hospital Association of New York, which shows the importance hospitals have on my district's local economy. Five hospitals in my district employ over 18,000 people. Together, payroll and purchases in my district alone amount to over $2.4 billion. They generate over $100 million in State and local income sales taxes. This is in my district alone with regard to the economic impact of our hospitals.

Looking at New York State as a whole—and I hope some of my New York colleagues will join me here tonight—the hospitals contribute nearly $108 billion to our State and our local economies. Mr. Speaker, it is no exaggeration to say hospitals are a mainstay of our New York State economy; so when our hospitals are hurting, the effects extend to the entire community. Our hospitals are under assault. Not only will it affect our local and State economies, but it will also affect access to health care, to some of the most basic services that our hospitals provide to our communities.

I now yield to the gentleman from Georgia, Dr. GINGREY.

Mr. GINGREY of Georgia. I thank the gentlelady from New York for yielding to me.

Mr. Speaker, as I think most of my colleagues know, Congresswoman BUERKLE is a member of the House GOP Doctors Caucus. There are 21 of us, all health care providers—some doctors, some nurses, some dentists, some psychologists. We've got a really good, diverse group that has—I would hate to say, Mr. Speaker, the total number of years of clinical experience that we all have in the aggregate, but it's several hundred. I have thoroughly enjoyed having Congresswoman BUERKLE as a member of the House GOP Doctors Caucus. She is a Registered Nurse, who has worked for years in hospitals in the New York area.

As she has pointed out, the four hospitals in her district are probably, if not the major employer, one of the major employers; and it's so important to her community, the 25th District of New York. That is so true, Mr. Speaker, across so many of our districts. I happen to be an OB/GYN physician, having practiced in my congressional district, the 11th of Georgia, for some 26 years.

In our hospital system there, in the main town in Cobb County, Marietta, Georgia, where we have lived for the last 36 years, just as in Congresswoman BUERKLE's district, the hospital system is one of the main drivers of the economy—that and the public school system. The hospital systems are employers, and we sometimes forget that.

I think, as a physician, a lot of times I may be guilty of concentrating on issues that mainly affect my colleagues in the medical profession—the practitioners, the MDs; yet Congresswoman BUERKLE is pointing out—and I know she has got a number of posters and slides for us to look at tonight—the devastating effects that the so-called Affordable Care Act—the unaffordable care act, indeed—has had on our hospitals like hers, the four hospitals in the 25th District of New York, and on the WellStar Health System and its, I think, six different facilities in the metropolitan Atlanta, Cobb County area. It is devastating.

So I really appreciate the opportunity to join with her tonight, along with some of my other colleagues in the House GOP Doctors Caucus, to make sure that people understand that it's not just the doctors and the health providers outside of the hospitals who are suffering because of this unaffordable care act, but it's our hospital systems all across the Nation.

I thank the gentlelady for yielding to me, and I plan to be with her during this next hour.

Ms. BUERKLE. I thank the gentleman from Georgia for being here this evening.

Mr. Speaker, as my colleague mentioned, the President's Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, which became law in March of 2010, included some welcome provisions, such as allowing people to stay on their parents' insurance until the age of 26 and prohibiting insurers from denying coverage based on preexisting conditions. These positive provisions, which proponents quickly point to when facing criticism, are far outweighed by the negative consequences that the Affordable Care Act has on our providers and the health care system.

These measures could have been accomplished in a much simpler manner. I say to you, Mr. Speaker, so many roads are paved with good intentions, but the unintended consequences are devastating to our hospitals.

As a health care professional, my opposition to the Affordable Care Act has never been solely based on philosophical grounds, but on strategic and tactical ones. Most Americans—myself included and my colleagues here in Congress—recognize that health care needs to be reformed and that health care costs continue to rise. We need to figure this out. We disagree as to what the health care reform should look like. If I thought that the Federal Government could be the necessary agent of change, that would be one thing; but I don't believe the government can change health care.

The Affordable Care Act affects our hospitals and our providers. This is not a Republican or a Democratic issue, but an American one—as access to health care affects every American.

□ 2030

Mr. Speaker, I yield now to the gentleman from Michigan, Dr. BENISHEK.

Mr. BENISHEK. I thank the gentlewoman for yielding to me.

Mr. Speaker, I have spent 28 years as a physician practicing rural medicine, even serving on the board of my local hospital. I am well aware of the great financial difficulties most rural hospitals and clinics experience each year.

Today I was pleased that the State of Michigan celebrated Rural Health Day. On behalf of the thousands of Michiganders that call small towns and farming communities home, my State's Governor chose to recognize the hospitals and community-based centers that provide for the diverse and unique health care needs of these areas. Tonight I would like to join the State of Michigan in raising awareness about the importance these providers bring to the communities that I represent.

While we recognize the importance of rural health today, I would be remiss if I did not mention one of the great rural health facilities in my district. Many of my colleagues may have visited the Straits of Mackinac during a summer vacation, or perhaps they've seen the Mackinac Island featured on a ''Pure Michigan'' ad. The Rural Health Clinic in St. Ignace is the single largest employer in the community, supporting not only the local township but, in addition, the 900,000-plus seasonal visitors that depend upon the hospital for services each year.

I recently received a distressing letter from Mr. Rodney Nelson, the CEO of Mackinac Straits Health System. Mr. Nelson is very worried about the impact Medicare cuts may have on his patients, employees, and ultimately the ability to keep the doors to the hospital open. Mr. Speaker, the Mackinac Straits Health System is one of 25 hospitals in my district that is considered either critical access or sole community hospital. Of these, 56 percent are already operating in the red.

Unlike urban areas, my constituents often do not have another option when seeking health care. In the case of the St. Ignace Hospital, the next closest clinic is 50 miles away. What you may not know, Mr. Speaker, is that caring for patients in rural facilities is far more economic than providing urban care. In fact, rural patients cost less to treat in eight of the nine CMS regions.

As my colleagues and I discuss possible ways to trim the budget, I feel it's important to remember that without rural hospitals, many of my constituents would not have access to medical care. A 2 percent reduction in Medicare

spending is estimated to cost 389 jobs in my district as a direct result of the cuts to rural hospitals. If this number were raised to 10 percent, the figures would only get worse. At that point, 76 percent of the hospitals would be operating in the red; and the total impact is expected to be nearly $68 million, with 1,900 jobs affected. Mr. Speaker, I don't need to tell anyone that northern Michigan can't afford to lose another 1,900 jobs.

Mr. Speaker, if we force these cuts, not only will we lose these jobs, but we will lose access to many people's sole source of health care. We are forcing rural patients to travel longer distances to seek more expensive care. This just costs everyone more money.

I urge my colleagues to exercise caution when considering reductions to Medicare programs, especially those specific to physicians, critical access, and sole community hospitals.

Ms. BUERKLE. I thank the gentleman from Michigan.

Mr. Speaker, we've touched upon it, and I want to continue having this conversation about the effect that the Affordable Care Act is going to have on our hospitals in our Medicare population. Now, Mr. Speaker, you may have heard over and over again from our colleagues from the other side of the aisle, demagoguing our budget proposal that came out in April. They say we want to kill Medicare; we want to kill Social Security; we don't care about our seniors.

Tonight I stand here, Mr. Speaker, and I tell you, and I want to tell the American people, that the Affordable Care Act, in fact, cuts Medicare spending by $500 billion. Those are actual cuts that are now in the Affordable Care Act, or what is known as the health care law. One of the most negative effects is the result of reductions in hospital Medicare payments and the CMS code, offsetting reductions to hospital payment plans.

I have a chart here, Mr. Speaker. And as I go through my notes, I want it to be clear that you can see 2010 and what happens to Medicare reimbursements, down until 2018. Our hospitals can't sustain these cuts. The five hospitals in my district have come to me, and they said, This Affordable Care Act—and many of these hospitals were big proponents of the Affordable Care Act because they know in our country we need to reform our health care system, we need to make some changes, so they were in support of the law.

But what they didn't realize was this law is going to cut their Medicare reimbursements, which so many of them depend on. It's the mainstay—by 28.6 percent. I've had hospitals in my district say to me, We cannot sustain these cuts. We will go bankrupt. Because you see, Mr. Speaker, it's not only this Medicare, the reduction in these rates, but it also is a series of other cuts which we will get into as the evening proceeds.

I yield to the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. GINGREY of Georgia. I thank the gentlelady for yielding to me.

I wanted to take an opportunity, Mr. Speaker. I have an article from the Atlanta Journal-Constitution, Atlanta's main newspaper—this was several months ago—referencing one of our best hospitals, Piedmont Health Care. The title of the article is ''Piedmont Health Care Cutting 5 Percent of Workforce.'' And this is what Misty Williams of the Atlanta Journal-Constitution says in this op-ed piece:

''Faced with a rising number of uninsured patients and unknown impact of the new health care law''—that would be the so-called Affordable Care Act—''Piedmont Health Care announced Thursday evening''—this was 5 months ago—''plans to cut 464 jobs as part of an effort to save an estimated $68 million. Totaling roughly 5 percent of its workforce, the cuts include 171 positions that were vacant or altered because of scheduling changes. Layoffs are coming from across the board, including Piedmont's four hospitals, physician groups, heart institute and corporate division, spokeswoman Nina Day said.''

And I quote Ms. Day: ''This is heart wrenching. This is not easy stuff when you're talking about people.''

''The move is, in part, a reaction to hurdles''—the hurdles that Congresswoman BUERKLE and Congressman BENISHEK were just talking about—''to hurdles many hospitals are facing, including a growing number of uninsured patients, a new State hospital bed tax, anticipated cuts to Medicare reimbursements, and the Medicaid expansion in 2014.''

The article goes on, talking more and more about how devastating this would be. And in conclusion—without reading the entire article—I'll finish up and then yield back to my colleague.

The last paragraph of this article by Ms. Williams: ''While hospitals will get more insured patients as a result of the Medicaid expansion in 2014, it's a big trade-off with Medicare cuts. State officials have estimated Georgia''—my State—''could add more than 600,000 enrollees to its Medicaid program as a result of this expansion.'' Again, under ObamaCare. ''It's a challenge in time just trying to navigate all of these changes.''

Again, it's just so important that we're having the opportunity tonight on behalf of our leadership to tell our colleagues on both sides of the aisle—Congresswoman BUERKLE moments ago said, It's not a Democrat or a Republican issue. It's a people issue. It's a community issue. And it's devastating. And it's sad news that we're bringing to our colleagues, but we need to do that. And the American people need to understand what's coming. The worst has not yet hit.

Ms. BUERKLE. I thank the gentleman from Georgia.

I have spent most of my professional career in the health care industry. I have represented a hospital for a number of years, so I know up close and personal how these issues have affected and will affect our hospitals and our providers. And despite the best intentions of this health care law—whether we disagree with it or we agree with it—despite the best intentions of this health care law, what we are seeing are the unintended consequences.

□ 2040

The fact that our hospitals, our health care providers, will not be able to proceed, will not be able to perform the services that our communities need and expect and have come to expect. That certainly wasn't the intent of the health care law, but ladies and gentlemen and Mr. Speaker, that's exactly what is happening.

I would like to yield and recognize the gentlewoman from North Carolina.

Mrs. ELLMERS. Thank you, Congresswoman BUERKLE, for holding this Special Order tonight, along with my colleagues on the Doctors Caucus. And thank you, Mr. Speaker, for being here. We are all here because we are health professionals. We know the real world of health care, and we know the real world solutions. It's the reason I'm here in Washington now, that and the fact that I'm concerned about where the future of the country is going for our children.

Many times in our health care practice as a nurse and in my husband's surgery practice as small business owners, over time we have always looked at these issues, whether we're talking about Medicare, whether we're talking about the possibility of having real, good, concrete tort reform, all of these different issues that we've said if we could put these in place, health care could have a much more solid foundation moving forward.

We already know that we have the best health care in the world. But being in the industry, having that small business and understanding where Medicare and Medicaid reimbursements—which were down—were going, you have to ask yourself, how can this continue? How can we provide health care into the future? Well, of course we know that the health care bill was passed in the 111th Congress, and now we are seeing the effects of it. One of the effects, as you've pointed out, are to our hospitals. You know, it's important that we are able to articulate this to the American people, connecting the dots.

When we talk about the importance of why ObamaCare is devastating to physicians, it's because it affects their ability to be reimbursed for their services. When Medicare will be cut—as we know in ObamaCare, it was cut by $500 billion. Today our seniors are saying to us, we're worried that you're going to cut our benefits. Well, their benefits will not be cut by any of us in Washington. However, because the dollars have been taken out in a significant amount, Medicare will have to say, I don't know what we'll cover. What are we going to cover?

And as we know, again, in the President's health care bill, the 15-person panel has been put in place. This 15-person panel will decide what Medicare will and will not pay for. That will be direct payments to hospitals, not just physicians but hospitals, based on the services that they're providing. And if they decide that a service cannot be paid for, there are penalties that can be assessed.

There are solutions to this issue, and I pointed out one would be significant tort reform. Not only for our physicians, but again for hospitals. Why is that important? Sometimes I'm afraid we don't explain well enough to the American people why something like malpractice reform would help the situation.

Well, we know that in our Nation's hospitals if you go into the emergency room, you're going to receive care whether you can pay for it out of pocket or not, whether you have an insurance card or not, whether you're on Medicare or Medicaid, it doesn't matter. You're going to receive the care. The problem is someone does have to pay for those services because services are rendered. You go into the emergency room, and many tests are ordered. Physicians order more tests out of pure fear for missing something. You can't go into an emergency room and get the good care that you need to get if you cannot identify the problem. So as we know, physicians and hospitals, physicians and doctor's offices, tend to cover all their bases rather than simply relying on the medical education that they have received, the ability to diagnose with just that—with the ability of their practice.

So here we are. We talk about health care costs every day, and the escalating cost of them. A good contributor to that is another piece of the President's health care bill which basically puts a tax on all medical devices. Well, think about the cost for any hospital, any provider. What do we do in hospitals? We do surgery. We provide health care. These are medical devices. These are instruments that have made our lives better and help us live longer, but yet now they will be taxed. This is a tax that will have to be assessed. Someone will have to pay for it. If the effort is truly to decrease the cost of health care, how can we continue by increasing the cost? It doesn't make sense. It doesn't add up.

So again, the importance is for us to connect the dots for the American people; to show that if we are able to pull back on ObamaCare, that we are able to remove it, repeal it, as we have already voted here in the House, then we can make the significant changes.

There is one more point that I would like to touch on, and it has to do with the ability to pay for services. There was a consulting firm, Mercer Consulting Company, and they did a study that shows that 9 percent of employers with 500 or more workers say they are likely to cancel health benefits in 2014 after State-run health insurance exchanges begin offering coverage under the health care law. There again, once again, it will become the government paying for it, which is paid for by the American taxpayers' dollars. We simply cannot continue on this path with health care or any other issue. It has to come with free-market solutions, and we have those solutions and we are ready to put those in place.

I just, again, want to reassure our seniors who are receiving Medicare now or in the near future that we are doing everything we can to rescue Medicare from the President's health care bill and put those necessary pieces in place so that we can continue those services into the future that they have paid for their entire lives.

I again thank my colleague from New York for holding this Special Order.

Ms. BUERKLE. And I thank the gentlelady from North Carolina for being here this evening.

I would just like to continue on because of my concern, and I know my colleagues have such concerns, about the health and the well-being of their hospitals. As I mentioned earlier, they are the largest employer in my district. We refer to it as ''eds and meds.'' We have a large university there and some colleges, but we also have five hospitals in my district. So our reliance for our local economy and for our State economy is just so very important.

I want to talk a little more about what this health care law is going to do to Medicare and do to our hospitals. There is $112 billion in reduced market basket updates to hospitals. There is a $36 billion reduction to Medicare and Medicaid disproportionate share hospital payments.

Now, Mr. Speaker, disproportionate share may sound a little confusing. I'm going to explain what that is. In a district such as mine, we have hospitals that have missions. And I'm sure across the country, many hospitals have missions. They want to make sure that the indigent population, folks who can't afford insurance, who are self-pays or maybe are on Medicaid, that they have access to quality services. So the government says to these hospitals, we understand that Medicaid reimbursements or self-pay patients will not cover your services. So what we're going to do is, we're going to try to make you whole with this disproportionate share. Mr. Speaker, the health care law eliminates the disproportionate share for hospitals, and so hospitals that have a high indigent population or a high number of self-pay patients or those who are on Medicaid, they are not going to get that disproportionate share.

The hospital in my district came down here. It is a large teaching institution. They made a special trip down here to tell me that provision of the health care law will bankrupt them. They probably receive somewhere around $80 million a year to make them whole because of their mission. And isn't that what we want? We want to make sure—and wasn't that the original intent of the health care law?—to make sure that there was accessible care for all Americans. But here again we reached the unintended consequences, and the effect that this law is going to have on our hospitals.

□ 2050

There is a $7.1 billion reduction for readmissions. We will talk about that in a little bit.

Hospitals, and many of the ones in my district, and I know throughout this country, they are heavily dependent on Medicare and Medicaid dollars. And with that narrow margin, Medicare and Medicaid don't even cover their costs. And so there's such a small margin for them to operate that there's really little capacity for improvements. Realistically, hospitals—especially teaching hospitals and hospitals that are treating the underserved—cannot bridge that gap, and they won't be able to bridge that gap because of this new health care law.

Hospitals must be able to invest in their infrastructure. Having such a narrow margin and/or no margin operating in the red, they're not going to be able to do that. They're not going to be able to invest in infrastructure, systems improvements, new techniques to reduce hospital-acquired infections, new models of delivering health care and electronic health records.

And I want to talk about electronic health records because they were mandated in the health care law. The Affordable Care Act mandates that hospitals must move to electronic health records. Now, from a patient safety standpoint, that's a good thing, but getting hospitals up to speed and getting them ready for business has very high IT costs for our hospitals. So, again, you've got this health care law mandating electronic records, and you've got these drastic cuts to our hospitals in their Medicaid and Medicare reimbursements.

I yield to the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. GINGREY of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding once again.

Just a few minutes ago, one of our colleagues spoke also about this problem with hospitals, Representative ELLMERS from North Carolina, who knows of what she speaks. She works in an office with her husband, a general surgeon. They see patients every day in the office, but they also have a largely hospital-based practice because it's surgery and you just don't do that in the office. But she had listed some of the things in ObamaCare, in this so-called Affordable Care Act, Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010, when it was passed a year and a half ago.

We all realized that this was a new entitlement program, Mr. Speaker, and the American people need to understand that it's not about strengthening

and saving Medicare for our seniors. That entitlement program is struggling mightily. And as Representative BUERKLE mentioned, to take $500-plus billion out of that program to pay for a whole new entitlement program, ObamaCare, for in many cases the young and healthy, and also to put some of the burden of paying for that new entitlement program on the Medicaid program, the safety net program for the poor, it only weakens that program. So you literally gut Medicaid for the poor and the disabled and Medicare for our senior citizens, when both programs need strengthening and saving, not gutting.

It was this whole idea of having Medicare for all, really, or national health care, there are all kinds of euphemisms to describe this, especially, not the least of which is the name of it, the Affordable Care Act. And as I said earlier, Mr. Speaker, and I know my colleague from New York would agree with this, it is the unaffordable care act. And both she and Representative ELLMERS from North Carolina said, look, we know on both sides of the aisle that health care in this country is too expensive, and we need to go about changes that will lower the cost and not hurt the quality. And we can do that.

President Obama keeps denying that there are any ideas and certainly didn't listen to the physicians in this body or the health care providers or physicians and the nurses that said, look, let us come over and sit down and talk with you or any of your folks in the Executive Office of the Presidency and let us explain, because we have—and I said it earlier—several hundred years of clinical experience. We do have some ideas, and we really believe we want to be part of the solution and not part of the problem.

But my colleague who is leading the hour and doing such a great job of it, I know she will agree that I haven't been called, I haven't been invited over. I will ask my colleague and yield back to her and ask her the same question. And I know what the answer will be.

Again, the important thing for our colleagues, Mr. Speaker, to understand, is that the creation of this new program, this new entitlement program so that everybody can get health care, whether they want to buy health insurance or not, is so detrimental to Medicare and Medicaid that I fear for the future of those programs. I really, really do.

That's what it's all about here tonight, to take an opportunity to explain so people really understand the ultimate consequences of this.

Ms. BUERKLE. I thank the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. Speaker, I want to just emphasize again with regards to this health care law and the fact that this law—and, Mr. Speaker, this is a law, this isn't a budget proposal, this is a law—guts Medicare by $500 billion. It should be of concern, Mr. Speaker, to our seniors because this law, in fact in 2014, will begin to gut Medicare. I again would look at this chart and the Medicare reimbursements. There will be no hospitals that will be able to provide health care. If you look at what the trend is for Medicare reimbursements to our hospitals, they cannot continue to exist based on what is set forth in the Affordable Care Act.

I spoke with the CEO of one of our local hospitals, Crouse Hospital in Syracuse, and he spoke with one of my health care staff; and he indicated to us today that Crouse Hospital, one hospital in the district, is facing a projected loss of $18 million in reimbursement reductions. That number goes to access to care. We can have the most comprehensive health care law on the books, but if we don't have hospitals who are able to provide that care, and we don't have physicians who are able to provide that care, we will have access-to-health-care problems.

Mr. Speaker, earlier I talked about hospital readmission penalties. This is another concern hospitals have to deal with. And tonight we've talked a lot about what the Affordable Care Act will do to hospitals, the effect that it will have on our hospitals, the drastic cuts in Medicare and Medicaid reimbursements and the disproportionate share being eliminated.

But our hospitals are under assault from all sides, and that's part of the difficulty. Maybe they could somehow figure out how to deal with these cuts in the Affordable Care Act; but taken in its totality, our hospitals are having a very difficult time. In fact, as I mentioned earlier, many are concerned that they will be unable to sustain and unable to continue on with their services, given the whole assaults that are coming from all directions.

And this actually is part of the Affordable Care Act. It establishes a punitive policy for our hospitals when they readmit a patient. And I will explain that, Mr. Speaker. Under the health care law, the Affordable Care Act—we call it the Affordable Care Act, we call it ObamaCare, we call it many things—but under this new law that is taking effect gradually, under this to their expected readmission rates, if even more than one readmission occurs—and that readmission means that you discharge a patient, the hospital sends a patient home and then for some reason they have to come back. If that happens with one of three diagnoses within the Medicare scheme, the hospital will be penalized for all of the Medicare reimbursements, not just that one case where there was a readmission, but all of the Medicare reimbursement cases. You can imagine the magnitude and how that will affect Medicare reimbursements.

□ 2100

The other part of this provision in the health care law is that it really doesn't discern between what's avoidable and what's not avoidable readmission. So sometimes a hospital may discharge a patient and it was premature, or something wasn't done and the patient needs to come back. And certainly that should be considered, and we should figure out what went wrong because readmissions are expensive, and so Medicare doesn't want to pay for them. And I understand that. However, some readmissions are unavoidable, and a hospital shouldn't be penalized for an unavoidable readmission; and yet the Affordable Care Act does exactly that.

The Secretary of the Department of HHS, Health and Human Services, which has the authority now to expand what were three diagnoses, now has the authority to expand that list of conditions with regards to readmissions. Hospitals nationwide, Mr. Speaker, are projected to face more than $7 billion in Medicare reductions over 10 years because of this policy, $7 billion to our hospitals.

We began this discussion tonight, Mr. Speaker, talking about the importance to our local economies, the employment numbers, what hospitals pay into our community with their purchases and with their employees, the taxes that they give back to the community; and now we're talking about cutting them again because of this policy.

You know, the issue of hospital readmission is complex, and I hope I did a good enough job tonight of explaining it. And while health care providers agree there's always room for improvement across the continuum of care, readmissions occur for many reasons. And punitive action via reduced reimbursements is not only counterproductive, but it's also potentially harmful to our hospitals, to our patients, and to our communities.

Mr. Speaker, as we work hard to make sure our seniors get the Medicare benefits from the system that they have paid into—and, Mr. Speaker, I want to emphasize that over and over again during the course of this hour, our seniors have paid into Medicare, into the health care system all of their life. And now, as they reach the Medicare eligibility age, they deserve to get Medicare coverage that they expect, that they deserve, and that they've paid into.

But this health care law, this $500 billion cut to Medicare, is going to change that for our seniors. It's not the budget proposal in April that's going to—that was a budget proposal. And you've heard my friends and colleagues across the aisle demagogue our budget proposal in April, saying we want to cut benefits to seniors, Medicare, and Social Security.

The fact is, Mr. Speaker, this health care law, passed into law in 2009, will devastate Medicare. And our seniors, Mr. Speaker, should be very, very concerned about this Affordable Care Act. Not only will it affect our hospitals—as we've spent so much time talking about tonight—but it will also affect

the care and the access to care for our seniors.

Hospitals, Mr. Speaker, already operate on such thin margins, and we talked about this earlier, that for many providers, especially specialized programs, treating patients struggling, say, with substance abuse or helping the developmentally disabled, they will be reduced or they will end those programs. Hospitals cannot operate on such a thin margin and then run the risk of all of these devastating Medicare and Medicaid reimbursements.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to speak tonight a little bit about graduate medical education. As I mentioned earlier, I was an attorney in Syracuse, New York, and I represented a hospital that was a large teaching hospital. And so I know how much they rely on what's called graduate medical education. We often refer to it as GME, sort of the acronym for it, the initials. I'm going to explain what GME is because it's so important to our hospitals. And even hospitals that don't have a medical school attached to them, we'll talk about some of the reimbursements they get because medical students and residents train within these facilities.

Graduate medical education is the training medical school graduates receive either as a fellow or an intern or a resident. Medicare is the largest contributor to the GME. Now, why do I even bring this up? I bring this up because we talked earlier about the many assaults on health care providers, the many assaults that hospitals are concerned about. This is not per se in the health care law, so I want to make that clear. But when it comes to cutting, when it comes to finding and helping this terrible national debt that we have that is now $15 trillion, often we look to Medicare. And one of the areas in Medicare, the low-hanging fruit—whether it's a hospital or a physician—that seems to be the easiest place to go to rather than really looking at our health care system, making it a free market, allowing the market to compete, getting the government out of health care and letting folks buy insurance across State lines. Rather than letting the free market in it, we have the government involved. So Medicare is the largest contributor to this GME.

GME payments, as I mentioned, have been targeted. They've become a target for recommended budget savings. In 2010, the President's Simpson-Bowles Deficit Commission recommended limiting hospitals' GME payments to 120 percent of the national average salary paid to residents in 2010, and reducing another reimbursement the hospitals get, the IME, the indirect medical education, by 60 percent, from 5.5 to 2.2 percent.

Mr. Speaker, these two changes—Medicare reimbursement to the GME, Medicare reimbursement to the IME—would reduce Medicare medical education payments by an estimated $60 billion through 2020, $60 billion.

Mr. Speaker, these aren't just numbers. These proposed cuts would endanger the ability of teaching hospitals to train physicians. We must face the fact that cuts to graduate education would result in fewer practicing physicians and ultimately reduced access to care, which is getting back to why there was an Affordable Care Act.

I talked about this road paved with good intentions. And now what we are seeing is that our hospitals, our health care providers, and the training of physicians are both going to be significantly and severely impacted to the point where access to health care becomes a problem. And so seniors—not just seniors, but all Americans—will have to begin to deal with the fact that primary care physicians, there won't be as many of them. There will be fewer doctors being trained, and for a number of reasons.

The GMEs and the IMEs going to hospitals, if there is any reimbursement reductions to those, but also the fact that as a physician goes through all those years of training and he goes through 4 years of college, 4 years of medical school, an internship, 3 years of a residency, and then if he's a fellow because he wants to specialize, all of those years, and then they go into practice. And you see what the Affordable Care Act, you see what all these assaults are doing on our Medicare and Medicaid reimbursements to physicians as well as our hospitals.

Hospitals that are primarily teaching hospitals face an additional challenge that could threaten the stability of their institutions. Hospitals that have residents in an approved graduate medical education—again, that GME program—receive an additional payment for a Medicare discharge to reflect the higher cost of care. Because they are a teaching hospital, their cost of care is higher.

The regulations regarding the calculation of this additional payment—and I talked about this earlier—is the indirect medical education. This is all very complicated, but what I want to say and what I want to make clear, Mr. Speaker, is that if these cuts go through, it has been estimated that it will cost GME and IME reimbursements from Medicare $60 billion.

□ 2110

This could mean a loss of 2,600 jobs and $653 million in State and local revenue. And, Mr. Speaker, a $10.9 billion loss to the U.S. economy.

At current graduation and training rates, the Association of American Medical Colleges projects that the Nation could face a shortage of as many as 150,000 doctors in the next 15 years—150,000 doctors.

We talked about this, and I think whether you're on one side of the aisle or the other, whether you agree with the health care law, we all agree that we want to have, in a country as rich and as generous as ours, we want to have access to health care for all Americans. But if we don't have physicians to provide that care—and this estimate is 150,000 doctors in the next 15 years—a shortage of that many, it will discourage this access to health care and will result in the longer waiting times for patients.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I want to just emphasize a few points this evening. And it's always an honor to be here on the House floor. It's always an honor to talk to the Speaker. And tonight it's been an honor to be able to address health care.

As a health care professional, I spent years as a nurse and then, as I mentioned, as an attorney representing a hospital. I know that people within the health care profession are dedicated. They have a passion to provide the American people, to provide any people with quality health care, to make sure and ensure that they have quality health care.

Mr. Speaker, the United States of America has the best health care in the world, and so it is so imperative that we preserve this health care system.

My colleague from North Carolina mentioned earlier that we voted to repeal the health care law, the Affordable Care Act, because it's not in the best interest of good health care. And tonight you heard, Mr. Speaker, from several of my colleagues who are health care professionals who dedicated their whole lives to providing medical services to the people in their communities. They care about quality health care. They care about people, and they care that the United States of America has a good health care system.

But we don't believe that good health care, access to health care, reasonable costs within health care, are going to result from the Affordable Care Act. The Affordable Care Act, I want to emphasize this one more time, Mr. Speaker, cuts Medicare to our seniors by $500 billion. To our seniors, that will be a devastating blow to the services and the access to services that you will have.

But beyond that, it affects how our hospitals can provide care, how our hospitals will be paid, how our doctors and our young doctors will be trained for future generations. This Affordable Care Act may have been the most well-intentioned law, but it is devastating for health care and health care delivery services in the United States of America.

Mr. Speaker, hospitals serve us and our communities. The crafting of the Affordable Care Act was carried out with the good intentions of many, as I said. I don't want to indicate or imply that people didn't have good intentions with this Affordable Care Act, but they approached it from the wrong direction. They put the government in the middle of a physician and the patient, and that can never work.

But good intentions are not enough to excuse legislation which has a terrible and far-reaching, albeit unintended, consequence for all sectors of our society, especially our patients, our doctors, and our hospitals.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

HEALTH CARE AND THE BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HULTGREN). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 5, 2011, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) is recognized for 30 minutes.

Mr. GOHMERT. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

One thing we've got plenty of around here is paper, unfortunately. We've got bills, we've got laws that we should have taken up that we haven't.

And when we talk about the health care bill, people know we talk about ObamaCare, whatever the formal name is. Cutting $500 billion out of Medicare already. That's a done deal. That was rammed through by the majority when Speaker PELOSI was in charge at the behest of our President Obama—$500 billion in cuts. Our seniors deserve better than that kind of treatment.

Republicans, I don't think we had any Republicans vote for that. But it was driven through against the will of the American people, and against the will of the Republicans. But Democrats had the votes, so they did it—$500 billion in cuts to Medicare.

So when AARP has all these seniors send in petitions saying, I'm a member of AARP, don't you dare cut anything from Medicare, we try to make sure our seniors know that it was AARP that stood by the President as he cut $500 billion, and we're glad that they're finally waking up to just what the President and AARP, with AARP's assistance, what they did to seniors.

But if you look at how much money we are spending on Medicare, not to even mention right now Medicaid, just look at how much we're spending on Medicare, and you look at the number of households we have, around 17.5 million Medicare households—this was from 2009. You divide that into the amount of money that we're spending, the Federal Government's spending on Medicare—not even Medicaid, just Medicare: We're spending right at $30,000 for every household with somebody on Medicare. $30,000?

Now, for someone who's got bad heart problems or some kind of chronic disease, well, that's not so bad when you consider what all kinds of treatments and medicines they're getting. That's if you look at the bills that are sent out.

If you look at the amount of actual money that are paid for those procedures, or actually paid or reimbursed by insurance companies or the government for that money, it's not near that much for most households, even most households on Medicare.

That's why I was shocked in the not too distant past to find out that in one situation that I'm aware of personally, when there were $10,000 in bills between the hospital, the physicians, the ambulance, the testing, the people reading the tests, and all that stuff, 2 days of hospitalization, $10,000. It turns out that the insurance company, the health insurance company resolved all $10,000 in bills for about $800.

Well, if we knew exactly how much was being paid to pay for those exorbitant health care bills, we could then finally reintroduce something known as free market principles.

Now, the doctors I talk to, the health care providers I talk to, they wouldn't mind that. Their hands get tired. There are some insurance policies or contracts that health care providers have with some of the health insurance companies that said they cannot charge—that's what I'm told—they can't charge somebody paying cash as little as a health insurance company providing the contract gets out by paying.

You can't have competition in health care until people know how much they're paying for their medicine, for their hospital stay. You've got to know what they're paying.

It was a great thing growing up in a small town in East Texas. I loved the town, Mount Pleasant, Texas.

□ 2120

After I finished 4 years out of the Army from a scholarship at Texas A&M, my wife and I settled in Tyler. We've loved it. It's the only home my kids knew growing up. Been so good to me. But my wife and family, we've all been blessed there.

But in the smaller town I grew up in, everybody knew the doctors. And from time to time we would go to a different doctor. And a lot of the times it was because we found out one upped their price so we would go to another doctor who didn't charge quite as much because they were good. That's called free market competition. We don't have that any more in health care. We've got to get back to it. If we're going to bring the costs down, we've got to get back to it.

People have to know what it costs to go to the doctor. People need to know that their medicine that they see a cost of $900, that the insurance companies, when they reimburse for that $900 prescription, don't pay but a fraction of that. So if somebody can't afford insurance, why should they have to pay $900 for a prescription drug that a health insurance company wouldn't pay a fraction of that much? We have to get back to having some competition in the cost of things.

So there's one way, really the only way I see we get off this track to total socialized health care that ObamaCare puts us well on down the road toward arriving on, and that would be through greater use of health savings accounts. We're told by some actuarials that if kids in their twenties and thirties start putting money in a health savings account and it grows and it grows because they don't use much at that young age, by the time they're eligible for Medicare, not only would they not want to use Medicare, they wouldn't need it. They'd have so much money built up in their health savings accounts that they didn't get through every year.

I agree with some of the people that I've consulted over the last 4 years on what would be a better plan that if you could have people putting money every month in a health savings account, building that account, then not allow it to be drawn out for something like buying a boat or anything like that, but it has to be for health care, can't be for anything else. Once its dedicated in a health savings account, and it should be allowed to be put in there pre-tax, then it has to be for health care.

Oh, sure, we ought to be able to allow people to donate that to some charity that keeps health savings accounts for the less fortunate, ought to be allowed to gift it or bequeath it to children, to family and help them grow that big nest egg of a health savings account, and then you have a debit card coded to cover nothing but health care costs. And you use that health savings account until you reach the amount of the high deductible that the health insurance policy has, and then the health insurance kicks in. That would help make health insurance so much cheaper for most folks. That's what a lot of us have gone to, and I have myself. It is a lot better deal. It is a lot cheaper.

But to think about, as these numbers indicate from 2009, that every household with someone on Medicare is costing nearly $30,000, it is just staggering. And that's why instead of continuing to move toward rationed care putting our seniors on lists where they can't get treated very quickly, they have to wait, because let's face it, the way of socialized medicine is rationed care.

And President Obama not only must have known that that was the truth, but he put a man in the position to oversee ObamaCare who had made clear in prior statements that it's not a matter of if we go to rationed care, it is a matter of when. And then he's the guy that ends up in charge of ObamaCare because obviously this President and the Democratic majority in the last Congress intended—expected—that seniors would be getting rationed care.

How much better to say, you know what seniors, you've got a choice. How about that? We've had so many people on the Democratic side of the aisle talk about it should be people's right to choose. They should have choice. How about in health care? How about giving seniors a chance to choose? You want Medicare? You want to be denied some medicines? You want to have to keep buying that supplemental coverage from AARP? Your choice.

On the other hand, if you want to do something different, we'll put—and I'm flexible on the amount, but it appeared $3,500 was a good, effective amount for achieving that kind of high deductible and lower cost for the insurance policy. Then we, the Federal Government, will

buy you a private health insurance policy that covers everything over $3,500, and then we will give you cash money in a health savings account, the debit card to go with it that you hold, you use as you see fit, you choose what medicine, you choose what doctor. And if you exhaust the $3,500, then the insurance kicks in and you've got that coverage.

You don't have to buy supplemental coverage, and I know that would cost AARP hundreds of millions. I get that. And I know they care deeply about retired folks. I get that. But, boy, if retired folks wouldn't have to pay anything for supplemental insurance, seems like that would be a good thing.

We would give them the choice. Let seniors choose what you want. You want control of your own health care and the money to pay the deductible if you get that high and an insurance policy to cover everything beyond that if you go beyond that? You control things? Or do you want to let the government keep telling you what you can and can't get in the way of treatment?

The country is better off when the Federal Government is the referee, not the player, because government's always going to be the referee; but when it's the player and the referee, that's when it's so grossly unfair. Anybody should be able to figure that. That would be so much better for seniors. Give them the choice.

But you know what? This President, Speaker PELOSI, Leader REID, they felt like they knew better for seniors. They felt like it would be better if they did not allow seniors to have a choice. Too bad, seniors. We're going to cut $500 billion from the amount of money that we're spending on Medicare, and you're about to find out what real rationed care is about once ObamaCare kicks in to the full.

Why not give them a choice? Why not force doctors and health care providers for the first time in decades to start posting what the cost of health care is? How much at your hospital is a hospital bed in a single room or in a double room with two patients in there? How about showing people that, letting them decide which is cheaper? Because as long as an insurance company or the government is paying all of those costs, people really don't care. That's the way of the world.

That's why in the Soviet Union in 1973 when I asked some farmers in the middle of the morning who were sitting in the shade visiting instead of being out in the field working, and I tried to do it as nicely as possible, spoke a little Russian back then, When is it you work out in the field?

□ 2130

The loudest one said, I make the same number of rubles when I'm in the shade here or if I'm out there, so I'm here.

That's socialism.

When the Federal Government socializes medicine, as ObamaCare is driving us toward—it's just one giant step; we're virtually there—well, then, it changes everything.

People don't really care how much things cost because they're not paying for them. People don't try to go to a less expensive doctor or hospital because they don't care. Somebody else is paying it. Then when they see the bill that says this stay cost $10,000, they say, Well, gee, I'm glad I'm not paying that. They don't care because they're not paying it. They don't know that there may have been $200 paid for that hospital bed rather than $10,000.

People deserve to know what health care costs. As I say, the health care providers—the doctors I talk to—wouldn't mind being able to do that. They would love it if patients could come in and give them a health savings account debit card. Then they don't have to have extra people who are chasing down the new codes and all this information about what the government pays and what the insurance company will or won't pay. We'd get back to a doctor-patient relationship. Wouldn't that be wonderful?

As I've told health insurance companies before at a convention here in Washington, D.C., we need to get the health insurance companies back in the health insurance business and out of the health management business, because if health insurance companies are determined to stay in the health management business where they manage our health care, they're eventually going to have everybody mad at them, and they're going to be run out of business, and there won't be any health insurance companies anymore.

Other than the socialist Federal Government of the United States. I don't want to get there.

We're almost there with ObamaCare.

That's why this body, with the majority of Republicans having taken over this year, voted to repeal ObamaCare.

When it's real health insurance, people pay a small monthly, quarterly, semiannual, annual fee in order to insure against some unforeseen disease or accident down the road—unforeseen because, if they could foresee it, they'd know how much they'd need to save in order to take care of that event that's coming or the disease. You pay an insurance company for something you don't know might happen—maybe it will, maybe it won't.

The thing is, if we went to the place where we allowed those on Medicare to choose—to stay with Medicare if that's what you want, and keep buying that supplemental insurance—or we'll give you the cash in a health savings account and a debit card, then we'll buy the insurance to cover everything over the cash we put in your account for the year, and we'll do that every year.

When I was drafting the bill in the prior Congress, Newt Gingrich was very helpful. He sent a couple of experts to come visit about ideas.

They said, You know, we ought to have an incentive in the bill so that seniors would have an incentive not to spend all the money, all the $3,500 that's put in their HSAs every year.

So we put in a provision that if someone on Medicare didn't use up all of the $3,500 in their health savings account, then they got a percentage of that cash money that they could take. No income tax would have to be paid on it. It was just cash money in their pocket at the end of the year in order to encourage them not to waste money from the health savings account by buying stuff they didn't need, because they were going to get a percentage of that if they didn't spend it within the year. Give them incentives. That's what market forces are about: incentives.

Now, if we were to do something like that, then certainly there will be people who are chronically ill. We will always have people who are chronically ill, and those are the people we should help. They can't help themselves. That's what a caring society does.

But when there are people who are able to help themselves, then those are the folks who ought to be able to grow a health savings account over the years so that they don't need any government help by the time they get to the point where they're eligible for Medicare. If they need it, they'll get it. That would finally get us on track to get out of this massive amount of debt that we're in. That's the way to go.

In the meantime, not only is that not something that's occurring, but we're not able to innovate new things that will become law. We're innovating new things, like the alternative to Medicare—the choice we could give seniors—but we know, as the President has called us—and it really only applies to the other end of the Hall—we've got a do-nothing Senate. It's not the Republicans. They keep clamoring—trying to push, trying to get the Democratic leadership in the Senate to do something to help the economy, to truly do something to help health care, but they're not interested in doing that.

We've got a supercommittee, as it has been dubbed, that we really shouldn't have set up. I have nothing but sympathy for my Republican friends who have been put on that committee because they were put into a position where, unbeknownst to our Republican leadership that negotiated the deal that brought this committee about, the Democrats really don't have anything to push them to reach an agreement.

That appears to be why the Democrats seem to be interested in what PAT TOOMEY had floated out as a framework with the support of his colleagues. They seemed to be interested in it; but, apparently, after consulting with Democratic leadership, they realized, uh-oh, we're told not to work a deal because if we don't work a deal, there will be draconian cuts to our national security, which we don't mind—we've been wanting to do that for years—and then the other cuts will be to Medicare.

Apparently, because of the lack of interest by the Democrats in seeing that there is a deal done, it would appear they don't mind having the cuts to Medicare.

And that's what was puzzling me last week.

After they hear how far backwards Republicans are willing to go on the supercommittee, how is it that the Democrats end up walking away, basically, from what they wanted? So I struggled to try to figure out what it was that would keep them from being desperate to cut a deal with the Republicans because surely they don't want those cuts to Medicare.

Then I realized, well, Democrats are 100 percent totally responsible for the $500 billion in cuts to Medicare that are contained within ObamaCare. They also know that millions of dollars of Republican campaign money will be spent next year in probably talking about the $500 billion in cuts that the Democrats solely, on their own, pushed through in ObamaCare and that unless there is at least a couple hundred billion in cuts to Medicare, then at least that amount would result from a failure to pass some kind of bill from the supercommittee.

Unless there's something like that, the $500 billion that the Democrats cut from Medicare last year is all anybody is going to basically be talking about in the next election.

But if the supercommittee fails and if the House and Senate don't pass what they've sent, then we've already seen the rhetoric begin: Republicans, they say, are wanting to cut health care; they're wanting to cut Medicare.

So now we see how it's playing out.

□ 2140

Some, apparently, on the Democratic side—not all, but some, apparently the leadership of the Democratic Party—apparently the President—want to see a failure so they can campaign against Republicans saying, No, they didn't want agreement anyway; and look at the cuts to Medicare that they've forced. I don't see any other explanation for the cavalier attitude of the Democratic leadership and not pushing so hard to get an agreement to avoid the massive cuts to Medicare. Even with the massive cuts, it won't be as big a cut as ObamaCare was to Medicare; but it will be enough, apparently, for them to campaign and try to demonize the Republicans.

Apparently tomorrow we're going to vote on a balanced budget amendment. It will either be House Joint Resolution 1 or House Joint Resolution 2. House Joint Resolution 1 has a cap on spending that we can't go above, a percentage of gross domestic product. It requires a supermajority in order to raise taxes. That's House Joint Resolution 1. That's what passed out of committee after a long and exhausting day of debate and amendments.

But we're bringing to the floor joint House Resolution 2. It just says, You've got to balance the budget. I know there are those who say, Well, that would mean that our decisions start being made by the courts. Well, 49 out of 50 States, as I understand it, have a balanced budget requirement in their constitutions. Their courts don't make those decisions. I don't see why it would be otherwise if it was. Under the Constitution, we've got the power to restrict jurisdiction for everybody but the Supreme Court. We could do that if that's what we chose to do.

We're in a mess, because we're not doing the things we promised we would when we ran and got elected to the majority, the very things the Democrats lost the majority in this House because they didn't fulfill. It's time to get serious about our promises.

Everybody is aware of Francis Scott Key who wrote our wonderful National Anthem. As my time runs out, I want to finish tonight with something else that Francis Scott Key said. On February 22, 1812, he said this:

> The patriot who feels himself in the service of God, who acknowledges Him in all his ways, has the promise of Almighty direction, and will find His Word in his greatest darkness, ''a lantern to his feet and a lamp unto his paths.'' He will, therefore, seek to establish for his country, in the eyes of the world, such a character as shall make her not unworthy of the name of a Christian nation.

We've got a lot to do if we're going to live up to our commitments, our oaths. A balanced budget amendment with a spending cap is what we need to do. That's what we passed out of committee in regular order. That's what I would vote for tomorrow. Since that's not coming, then I don't want to push through a balanced budget amendment that requires ever-upward spiraling taxation because, as we've shown this year, without a balanced budget amendment, Congress doesn't have the will to cut spending, not a majority of the House and Senate both.

It's time to live up to the commitments we've made and what we owe our creator, our maker. If we'll do that, we can have another 200 years of greatness as a Nation. If we don't, as Abraham Lincoln said, This Nation will die by suicide. I want it to live and flourish. I want us to keep our commitments.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mrs. NAPOLITANO (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today and the balance of the week on account of attending an important event in the district.

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of attending the funeral of a family relative.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported and found truly enrolled a bill of the House of the following title, which was thereupon signed by the Speaker:

H.R. 2112. An act making consolidated appropriations for the Departments of Agriculture, Commerce, Justice, Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related programs for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2012, and for other purposes.

SENATE ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

The Speaker announced his signature to an enrolled bill of the Senate of the following title:

S. 1412. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 462 Washington Street, Woburn, Massachusetts, as the ''Officer John Maguire Post Office''.

BILL PRESENTED TO THE PRESIDENT

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House reports that on November 16, 2011 she presented to the President of the United States, for his approval, the following bill.

H.R. 398. To amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to toll, during active-duty service abroad in the Armed Forces, the periods of time to file a petition and appear for an interview to remove the conditional basis for permanent resident status, and for other purposes.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 9 o'clock and 44 minutes p.m.), the House adjourned until tomorrow, Friday, November 18, 2011, at 9 a.m.

EXPENDITURE REPORTS CONCERNING OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL

Reports concerning the foreign currencies and U.S. dollars utilized for speaker-authorized official travel during the second, third and fourth quarters of 2011, pursuant to Public Law 95–384 are as follows:

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, DELEGATION TO BELGIUM AND HUNGARY, EXPENDED BETWEEN JUNE 29 AND JULY 2, 2011

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem [1]		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]
Hon. Cliff Stearns	6/29	6/29	Belgium				(3)				
	6/29	7/2	Hungary		243.00		(3)				243.00
Hon. Vern Buchanan	6/29	6/29	Belgium				(3)				
	6/29	7/2	Hungary				(3)				
Hon. Ed Whitfield	6/29	6/29	Belgium				(3)				
	6/29	7/2	Hungary		243.00		(3)				243.00
Hon. Brian Bilbray	6/29	6/29	Belgium				(3)				
	6/29	7/2	Hungary				(3)				
Hon. Loretta Sanchez	6/29	6/29	Belgium				(3)				
	6/29	7/2	Hungary		243.00		(3)				243.00
Ed Rice	6/29	6/29	Belgium				(3)				
	6/29	7/2	Hungary		153.00		(3)				153.00
Sarah Blocher	6/29	6/29	Belgium				(3)				
	6/29	7/2	Hungary		29.36		(3)				29.36
Jean Carroll	6/29	6/29	Belgium				(3)				
	6/29	7/2	Hungary		100.00		(3)				100.00
Hon. Sheila Jackson-Lee	6/29	6/29	Belgium				(3)				
	6/29	7/2	Hungary		243.00		(3)				243.00
Hon. Jim Costa	6/29	6/29	Belgium				(3)				
	6/29	7/2	Hungary		243.00		(3)				243.00
Committee total					1497.36						1,497.36

[1] Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.
[2] If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.
(3) Military air transportation.

HON. CLIFF STEARNS, Chairman, Nov. 2, 2011.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, DELEGATION TO TUNISIA, EGYPT, JORDAN, LEBANON, IRAQ, AND IRELAND, EXPENDED BETWEEN SEPT. 24 AND OCT. 3, 2011

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem [1]		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]
Dreier	9/25	9/27	Tunisia		372.00		(3)				372.00
Price	9/25	9/27	Tunisia		282.00		(3)				282.00
Ellison	9/25	9/27	Tunisia		372.00		(3)				372.00
Moore	9/25	9/27	Tunisia		372.00		(3)				372.00
McDermott	9/25	9/27	Tunisia		372.00		(3)				372.00
Smith	9/25	9/27	Tunisia		372.00		(3)				372.00
Leman	9/25	9/27	Tunisia		372.00		(3)				372.00
Lis	9/25	9/27	Tunisia		372.00		(3)				372.00
Hildebrand	9/25	9/27	Tunisia		327.00		(3)				372.00
Lawrence	9/25	9/27	Tunisia		372.00		(3)				372.00
Dreier	9/27	9/29	Egypt		534.00		(3)				534.00
Price	9/27	9/29	Egypt		448.00		(3)				448.00
Ellison	9/27	9/29	Egypt		534.00		(3)				534.00
Moore	9/27	9/29	Egypt		534.00		(3)				534.00
McDermott	9/27	9/29	Egypt		534.00		(3)				534.00
Smith	9/27	9/29	Egypt		534.00		(3)				534.00
Leman	9/27	9/29	Egypt		534.00		(3)				534.00
Lis	9/27	9/29	Egypt		534.00		(3)				534.00
Hildebrand	9/27	9/29	Egypt		489.00		(3)				489.00
Lawrence	9/27	9/29	Egypt		534.00		(3)				534.00
Dreier	9/29	10/1	Jordan		606.00		(3)				606.00
Price	9/29	10/1	Jordan		520.00		(3)				520.00
Ellison	9/29	10/1	Jordan		606.00		(3)				606.00
Moore	9/29	10/1	Jordan		606.00		(3)				606.00
McDermott	9/29	10/1	Jordan		606.00		(3)				606.00
Smith	9/29	10/1	Jordan		606.00		(3)				606.00
Leman	9/29	10/1	Jordan		606.00		(3)				606.00
Lis	9/29	10/1	Jordan		606.00		(3)				606.00
Hildebrand	9/29	10/1	Jordan		561.00		(3)				561.00
Lawrence	9/29	10/1	Jordan		606.00		(3)				606.00
Dreier	9/30	9/30	Lebanon								
Price	9/30	9/30	Lebanon								
Ellison	9/30	9/30	Lebanon								
Moore	9/30	9/30	Lebanon								
McDermott	9/30	9/30	Lebanon								
Smith	9/30	9/30	Lebanon								
Leman	9/30	9/30	Lebanon								
Lis	9/30	9/30	Lebanon								
Hildebrand	9/30	9/30	Lebanon								
Lawrence	9/30	9/30	Lebanon								
Dreier	10/1	10/2	Iraq								
Price	10/1	10/2	Iraq								
Ellison	10/1	10/2	Iraq								
Moore	10/1	10/2	Iraq								
McDermott	10/1	10/2	Iraq								
Smith	10/1	10/2	Iraq								
Leman	10/1	10/2	Iraq								
Lis	10/1	10/2	Iraq								
Hildebrand	10/1	10/2	Iraq								
Lawrence	10/1	10/2	Iraq								
Dreier	10/2	10/03	Ireland		267.00		(3)				267.00
Price	10/2	10/03	Ireland		181.00		(3)				181.00
Ellison	10/2	10/03	Ireland		267.00		(3)				267.00
Moore	10/2	10/03	Ireland		267.00		(3)				267.00
McDermott	10/2	10/03	Ireland		267.00		(3)				267.00
Smith	10/2	10/03	Ireland		267.00		(3)				267.00
Leman	10/2	10/03	Ireland		267.00		(3)				267.00
Lis	10/2	10/03	Ireland		267.00		(3)				267.00
Hildebrand	10/2	10/03	Ireland		222.00		(3)				222.00
Lawrence	10/2	10/03	Ireland		267.00		(3)				267.00
Committee total											17,262

[1] Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.
[2] If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.
[3] Military air transportation.

HON. DAVID DREIER, Oct. 24, 2011.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, DELEGATION TO HAITI, EXPENDED ON OCT. 10, 2011

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem [1]		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]
Hon. David Dreier	10/10	10/10	Haiti				(3)				
Hon. Lois Capps	10/10	10/10	Haiti				(3)				
Hon. Susan Davis	10/10	10/10	Haiti				(3)				
Hon. Gwen Moore	10/10	10/10	Haiti				(3)				
Hon. Maxine Waters	10/10	10/10	Haiti				(3)				
Hon. Donald Payne	10/10	10/10	Haiti				(3)				
Hon. Adam Schiff	10/10	10/10	Haiti				(3)				
Hon. Mazie Hirono	10/10	10/10	Haiti				(3)				
Hon. Yvette Clarke	10/10	10/10	Haiti				(3)				
Hon. Donna Christensen	10/10	10/10	Haiti				(3)				
Barry Jackson	10/10	10/10	Haiti				(3)				
John Lis	10/10	10/10	Haiti				(3)				
Rachael Leman	10/10	10/10	Haiti				(3)				
Asher Hildebrand	10/10	10/10	Haiti				(3)				
Committee total											

[1] Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.
[2] If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.
[3] Military air transportation.

HON. DAVID DREIER, Oct. 27, 2011.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, DELEGATION TO SWITZERLAND, EXPENDED BETWEEN OCT. 16 AND OCT. 20, 2011

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem [1]		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]
Robert Reeves	10/16	10/20	Switzerland	1,238.15	1,255.68		1,886.00				3,141.68
Thomas Wickham	10/16	10/20	Switzerland	1,238.15	1,265.68		1,886.00				3,151.68
Committee total											6,293.36

[1] Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.
[2] If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.

ROBERT REEVES, Oct. 27, 2011.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN JULY 1 AND SEPT. 30, 2011

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem [1]		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]
Hon. Collin Peterson	9/24	9/27	Greece		1,012.47		(3)				1,012.47
	9/27	9/18	Turkey		329.50		(3)				329.50
	9/28	9/29	Cyprus		351.93		(3)				351.93
	9/29	9/30	Turkey		390.11		(3)				390.11
Committee total					2,084.01						2,084.01

[1] Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.
[2] If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.
[3] Military air transportation.

HON. FRANK D. LUCAS, Chairman, Oct. 28, 2011.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN JULY 1 AND SEPT. 30, 2011

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem [1]		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]
Brooke Boyer	6/26	6/30	Peru		1,037.00						1,037.00
	6/30	7/3	Guatemala		583.00						583.00
Misc. Embassy Costs									343.00		343.00
Misc. Transportation Costs							20.00				20.00
Commercial Airfare							2,404.00				2,404.00
Timothy Prince	6/26	6/30	Peru		1,037.00						1,037.00
	6/30	7/3	Guatemala		583.00						583.00
Misc. Embassy Costs									343.00		343.00
Misc. Transportation Costs							160.00				160.00
Commercial Airfare							2,404.00				2,404.00
Brooke Boyer	7/23	7/26	Korea		908.01						908.01
	7/26	7/28	Japan		337.50						337.50
	7/28	7/31	Guam		787.75						787.75
Misc. Costs (room taxes)									167.55		167.55
Misc. Transportation Costs							336.96				336.96
Commercial Airfare							16,302.46				16,302.46
Megan Rosenbusch	7/23	7/26	Korea		908.01						908.01
	7/26	7/28	Japan		337.50						337.50
	7/28	7/31	Guam		794.30						794.30
Misc. Costs (room taxes)									167.55		167.55
Misc. Transportation Costs							276.96				276.96
Commercial Airfare							17,319.46				17,319.46
Ann Reese	7/22		Travel Day		10.37						10.37
	7/23	7/26	Korea		908.01						908.01
	7/26	7/28	Japan		337.50						337.50
	7/28	7/31	Guam		717.51						717.51
Misc. Costs (room taxes)									167.55		167.55
Misc. Transportation Costs							432.96				432.96
Commercial Airfare							16,441.26				16,441.26
Sarah Young	7/29	7/31	Guam		736.73						736.73
Misc. Transportation Costs							42.50				42.50
Commercial Airfare							16,208.62				16,208.62
Hon. Mario Diaz-Balart	6/29	7/1	Lithunia		604.34						604.34
Misc. Embassy Costs (overtime)									163.24		163.24

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN JULY 1 AND SEPT. 30, 2011—Continued

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem [1]		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]
Misc. Transportation Costs							488.06				488.06
Commercial Airfare							3,489.70				3,489.70
Hon. John Carter	8/11	8/14	Kuwait		401.95						401.95
	8/13	8/14	Iraq				(3)				
Commercial Airfare							6,776.80				6,776.80
Susan Adams	8/16	8/19	Tanzania		733.00						733.00
	8/19	8/23	Kenya		1,400.00						1,400.00
	8/23	8/25	South Sudan		252.00						252.00
Misc. Transportation Costs							746.96				746.96
Misc. Embassy Costs									1,611.25		1,611.25
Commercial Airfare							9,848.90				9,848.90
Erin Kolodjeski	8/16	8/19	Tanzania		733.00						733.00
	8/19	8/23	Kenya		1,400.00						1,400.00
	8/23	8/25	South Sudan		252.00						252.00
Misc. Transportation Costs							746.96				746.96
Misc. Embassy Costs									1,611.25		1,611.25
Commercial Airfare							9,848.90				9,848.90
Brooke Boyer	8/18	8/20	New Zealand		643.55						643.55
	8/20	8/26	Australia		2,138.04						2,138.04
Misc. Transportation Costs							116.00				116.00
Commercial Airfare							15,794.30				15,794.30
Adrienne Ramsay	8/18	8/20	New Zealand		643.55						643.55
	8/20	8/26	Australia		2,138.04						2,138.04
Misc. Transportation Costs							82.24				82.24
Commercial Airfare							15,794.30				15,794.30
Hon. Harold D. Rogers	8/26	8/29	United Kingdom		1,546.00						1,546.00
	8/29	8/31	Germany		833.15						833.15
	8/31	9/2	Austria		880.98						880.98
	9/2	9/5	Germany		1,691.88						1,691.88
Misc. Delegation Costs									4,345.13		4,345.13
Return of Unused Per Diem					(−53.43)		(3)				(−53.43)
Hon. Norm Dicks	8/26	8/29	United Kingdom		1,546.00						1,546.00
	8/29	8/31	Germany		833.15						833.15
	8/31	9/2	Austria		880.98						880.98
	9/2	9/5	Germany		1,691.88						1,691.88
Misc. Delegation Costs									4,345.13		4,345.13
Return of Unused Per Diem					(−58.70)		(3)				(−58.70)
Hon. Ed Pastor	8/26	8/29	United Kingdom		1,546.00						1,546.00
	8/29	8/31	Germany		833.15						833.15
	8/31	9/2	Austria		880.98						880.98
	9/2	9/5	Germany		1,691.88						1,691.88
Misc. Delegation Costs							(3)		4,345.13		4,345.13
Hon. Ken Calvert	8/26	8/29	United Kingdom		1,496.00						1,496.00
	8/29	8/31	Germany		833.15						833.15
	8/31	9/2	Austria		880.98						880.98
	9/2	9/5	Germany		1,445.30						1,445.30
Misc. Delegation Costs									4,345.13		4,345.13
Return of Unused Per Diem					(−100.00)		(3)				(−100.00)
Hon. Steve Womack	8/26	8/29	United Kingdom		1,030.00						1,030.00
	8/29	8/31	Germany		833.15						833.15
	8/31	9/2	Austria		880.98						880.98
	9/2	9/5	Germany		1,691.88						1,691.88
Misc. Delegation Costs									4,345.13		4,345.13
Return of Unused Per Diem					(−56.00)		(3)				(−56.00)
William Inglee	8/26	8/29	United Kingdom		1,496.00						1,496.00
	8/29	8/31	Germany		833.15						833.15
	8/31	9/2	Austria		880.98						880.98
	9/2	9/5	Germany		1,445.30						1,445.30
Misc. Delegation Costs									4,345.13		4,345.13
Return of Unused Per Diem					(−273.00)		(3)				(−273.00)
David Pomerantz	8/26	8/29	United Kingdom		1,496.00						1,496.00
	8/29	8/31	Germany		833.15						833.15
	8/31	9/2	Austria		880.98						880.98
	9/2	9/5	Germany		1,445.30						1,445.30
Misc. Delegation Costs									4,345.13		4,345.13
Return of Unused Per Diem					(−203.00)		(3)				(−203.00)
Anne Marie Chotvacs	8/26	8/29	United Kingdom		1,496.00						1,496.00
	8/29	8/31	Germany		833.15						833.15
	8/31	9/2	Austria		880.98						880.98
	9/2	9/5	Germany		1,445.30						1,445.30
Misc. Delegation Costs									4,345.13		4,345.13
Return of Unused Per Diem					(−360.42)		(3)				(−360.42)
Ben Nicholson	8/26	8/29	United Kingdom		1,496.00						1,496.00
	8/29	8/31	Germany		833.15						833.15
	8/31	9/2	Austria		880.98						880.98
	9/2	9/5	Germany		1,445.30						1,445.30
Misc. Delegation Costs									4,345.13		4,345.13
Return of Unused Per Diem					(−148.62)		(3)				(−148.62)
B.G. Wright	8/26	8/29	United Kingdom		1,496.00						1,496.00
	8/29	8/31	Germany		833.15						833.15
	8/31	9/2	Austria		880.98						880.98
	9/2	9/5	Germany		1,445.30						1,445.30
Misc. Delegation Costs									4,345.13		4,345.13
Return of Unused Per Diem					(−41.45)		(3)				(−41.45)
Jeffrey Ashford	8/29	9/2	Estonia		1,047.40						1,047.40
Misc. Transportation Costs									65.00		65.00
Commercial Airfare							2,241.60				2,241.60
Stephanie Gupta	8/29	9/2	Estonia		1,047.40						1,047.40
Misc. Transportation Costs									38.93		38.93
Commercial Airfare							2,241.60				2,241.60
Tim Peterson	9/25	9/28	Belgium		1,541.21						1,541.21
	9/28	9/30	Luxembourg		1,040.00						1,040.00
Misc. Transportation Costs							46.37				46.37
Commercial Airfare							2,263.60				2,263.60
Elizabeth C. Dawson	9/25	9/28	Belgium		1,541.21						1,541.21
	9/28	9/30	Luxembourg		1,040.00						1,040.00
Misc. Transportation Costs							46.37				46.37
Commercial Airfare							2,263.60				2,263.60
Sarah Young	9/25	9/28	Belgium		1,541.21						1,541.21
	9/28	9/30	Luxembourg		1,040.00						1,040.00
Misc. Transportation Costs							46.37				46.37
Commercial Airfare							2,263.60				2,263.60
Committee total					77,131.09		147,495.41		48,129.62		272,756.12

[1] Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.
[2] If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.
[3] Military air transportation.

HON. HAROLD ROGERS, Chairman, Oct. 28, 2011.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN JULY 1 AND SEPT. 30, 2011

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem [1]		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]
Dyess, Mary A.	7/22	7/29	Guam		1,672.50		2,881.06		159.70		4,713.26
Schmidt, Carol J.	7/22	7/29	Guam		1,672.50		2,881.06		710.42		5,263.98
Committee total					3,345.00		5,762.12		870.12		9,977.24

[1] Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.
[2] If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.

HON. HAROLD ROGERS, Chairman.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN JULY 1 AND SEPT. 30, 2011

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem [1]		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]
Hon. Mike McIntyre	6/25	6/27	Italy		398.00						398.00
	6/27	6/29	Georgia		168.00						168.00
	6/29	6/30	Lithuania		320.20						320.00
	6/30	7/2	Russia								
	7/2	7/3	Portugal		117.00						117.00
Hon. Madeleine Bordallo	6/25	6/27	Italy		398.00						398.00
	6/27	6/29	Georgia		168.00						168.00
	6/29	6/30	Lithuania		302.17						302.17
	6/30	7/2	Russia								
	7/2	7/3	Portugal		117.00						117.00
Catherine McElroy	6/26	6/29	Morocco		307.00						307.00
	6/29	6/30	Algeria		202.88						202.88
	7/1	7/2	France		289.50						289.50
Commercial Transportation							9,504.30				9,504.30
Michele Pearce	6/26	6/29	Morocco		307.00						307.00
	6/29	6/30	Algeria		202.88						202.88
	7/1	7/2	France		376.00						376.00
Commercial Transportation							8,117.00				8,117.00
Paul Lewis	6/26	6/29	Morocco		307.00						307.00
	6/29	6/30	Algeria		202.88						202.88
	7/1	7/2	France		376.00						376.00
Commercial Transportation							8,250.00				8,250.00
Jamie Lynch	8/7	8/9	Japan		668.00						668.00
Commercial Transportation							6,611.00				6,311.00
Jack Schuler	8/7	8/9	Japan		668.00						668.00
Commercial Transportation							6,611.00				6,611.00
Debra Wada	8/7	8/9	Japan		668.00						668.00
Commercial Transportation							6,611.00				6,611.00
John Phillip MacNaughton	8/8	8/9	Japan		334.00						334.00
Commercial Transportation							6,311.00				6,311.00
Peter Villano	8/8	8/9	Djibouti		337.00						337.00
	8/10	8/12	Kenya		682.80						682.80
	8/12	8/12	Uganda								
Commercial Transportation							15,579.00				15,579.00
Paul Arcangeli	8/8	8/9	Djibouti		337.00						337.00
	8/10	8/12	Kenya		682.80						682.80
	8/12	8/12	Uganda								
Commercial Transportation							16,158.42				16,158.42
Mark Lewis	8/8	8/9	Djibouti		337.00						337.00
	8/10	8/12	Kenya		682.80						682.80
	8/12	8/12	Uganda								
Commercial Transportation							16,158.42				16,158.42
Delegation Expenses	8/10	8/12	Kenya				1,074.00		72.46		1,146.46
Roger Zakheim	8/16	8/18	Egypt		534.00						534.00
	8/18	8/19	Italy		144.00						144.00
Commercial Transportation							6,340.00				6,340.00
Jenness Simler	8/16	8/18	Egypt		534.00						534.00
	8/18	8/19	Italy		144.00						144.00
Commercial Transportation							8,289.72				8,289.72
Michael Casey	8/16	8/18	Egypt		534.00						534.00
	8/18	8/19	Italy		144.00						144.00
Commercial Transportation							6,340.00				6,340.00
Delegation Expenses	8/16	8/18	Egypt						173.00		173.00
Michele Pearce	8/15	8/16	Russia		575.35						575.35
	8/16	8/18	Tajikistan		550.84						550.84
	8/18	8/20	Turkey		504.28						504.28
Commercial Transportation							8,662.90				8,662.90
Paul Lewis	8/15	8/16	Russia		575.35						575.35
	8/16	8/18	Tajikistan		550.84						550.84
	8/18	8/20	Turkey		504.28						504.28
Commercial Transportation							9,322.90				9,322.90
Kevin Gates	8/22	8/25	United Kingdom		1,554.00						1,554.00
	8/25	8/27	Estonia		440.00						440.00
Commercial Transportation							4,244.00				4,244.00
Timothy McClees	8/22	8/25	United Kingdom		1,554.00						1,554.00
	8/25	8/27	Estonia		440.00						440.00
Commercial Transportation							4,244.00				4,244.00
Hon. Robert Wittman	9/2	9/3	Philippines		237.00						237.00
	9/3	9/5	South Korea		738.24						738.24
	9/5	9/7	Japan		494.30						494.30
Commercial Transportation							1,318.20				1,318.20
Hon. Madeliene Bordallo	9/2	9/3	Philippines		237.00						237.00
	9/3	9/5	South Korea		738.24						738.24
	9/5	9/7	Japan		494.30						494.30
Commercial Transportation							1,318.20				1,318.20
Hon. Stephen Pallazzo	9/2	9/3	Philippines		237.00						237.00
	9/3	9/5	South Korea		738.24						738.24
	9/5	9/7	Japan		494.30						494.30
Commercial Transportation							1,318.20				1,318.20
Ms. Michele Pearce	9/2	9/3	Philippines		237.00						237.00
	9/3	9/5	South Korea		738.24						738.24
	9/5	9/7	Japan		396.47						396.47
Commercial Transportation							1,322.80				1,322.80

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN JULY 1 AND SEPT. 30, 2011—Continued

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem [1]		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]
Vickie Plunkett	9/2	9/3	Philippines		181.00						181.00
	9/3	9/5	South Korea		578.24						578.24
	9/5	9/7	Japan		418.00						418.00
Commercial Transportation							1,318.20				1,318.20
Brian Garrett	9/2	9/3	Philippines		181.25						181.25
	9/3	9/5	South Korea		553.71						553.71
	9/5	9/7	Japan		70.46						70.46
Commercial Transportation							1,318.20				1,318.20
Elizabeth Nathan	9/11	9/13	Kuwait		866.52						866.52
	9/13	9/14	Afghanistan								
	9/15	9/17	Pakistan		160.00						160.00
	9/17	9/19	Saudi Arabia		194.00						194.00
Paul Lewis	9/11	9/13	Kuwait		866.52						866.52
	9/13	9/14	Afghanistan								
	9/15	9/17	Pakistan		160.00						160.00
	9/17	9/19	Saudi Arabia		239.00						239.00
Committee total					29,489.09		155,442.46		245.46		185,177.01

[1] Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.
[2] If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.

HON. HOWARD P. ''BUCK'' McKEON, Chairman, Oct. 31, 2011.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN JULY 1 AND SEPT. 30, 2011

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem [1]		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]
Hon. Virginia Foxx	9/24	9/27	Greece		822.69		(3)				822.69
	9/27	9/28	Turkey		252.74		(3)				252.74
	9/28	9/29	Cyrpus		247.84		(3)				247.84
	9/29	9/30	Turkey		338.61		(3)				338.61
Committee total											1,661.88

[1] Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.
[2] If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.
[3] Military air transportation.

HON. JOHN KLINE, Chairman, Oct. 31, 2011.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN JULY 1 AND SEPT. 30, 2011

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem [1]		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]
Hon. Michael Burgess	8/12	8/13	Kuwait				10,9742.10				10,974.10
	8/13	8/15	Iraq		111.00				322.19		433.19
Hon. John Shimkus	9/24	9/24	Germany				3,583.50				3,583.50
	9/24	9/28	Lithuania		468.00						468.00
	9/28	9/28	Finland								
Committee total					579.00		14,557.60		322.19		15,458.79

[1] Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.
[2] If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.

HON. FRED UPTON, Chairman, Nov. 1, 2011.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN JULY 1 AND SEPT. 30, 2011

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem [1]		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]
Joan Condon	8/8	8/11	Ethiopia		1,134.00						1,134.00
	8/11	8/14	South Sudan		651.00						651.00
	8/14	8/16	Uganda		589.00						589.00
Roundtrip Airfare							10,947.32				10,947.32
Jacqueline Quinones	8/11	8/14	South Sudan		710.00						710.00
Roundtrip Airfare							7,518.72				7,518.72
Peter Quilter	8/16	8/19	Nicaragua		680.00						680.00
Roundtrip Airfare							539.10				539.10
Gregory Simpkins	8/16	8/17	South Africa		392.00						392.00
	8/17	8/21	Madagascar		719.05						719.05
Roundtrip Airfare							10,618.90				10,618.90
Algene Sajery	8/16	8/17	South Africa		392.00						392.00
	8/17	8/21	Madagascar		812.36						812.36
Roundtrip Airfare							10,802.90				10,802.90
Sajit Ghanda	8/21	8/23	India		760.00						760.00
	8/23	8/27	Sri Lanka		858.00						858.00
Roundtrip Airfare							10,059.20				10,059.20
Hon. Eliot Engel	9/2	9/7	Israel		1,317.00				[4] 11,211.99		12,528.99
Roundtrip Airfare							7,222.95				7,222.95
Jason Steinbaum	9/2	9/7	Israel		1,317.00						1,317.00
Roundtrip Airfare							7,222.95				7,222.95
Matthew Zweig	9/23	10/1	Egypt		746.48						746.48
Roundtrip Airfare							4,502.50				4,502.50
Christina Jenckes	9/23	10/1	Egypt		917.34						917.34
Roundtrip Airfare							4,502.50				4,502.50

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN JULY 1 AND SEPT. 30, 2011—Continued

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem [1]		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]
Alan Makovsky	9/23	10/1	Egypt		801.00						801.00
Roundtrip Airfare							4,502.50				4,502.50
Robert Marcus	9/23	10/1	Egypt		801.00						801.00
Roundtrip Airfare							4,502.50				4,502.50
Hon. Dan Burton	9/24	9/27	Greece		1,012.41		(3)				1,012.41
	9/27	9/28	Turkey		329.48		(3)				329.48
	9/28	9/29	Cyprus		351.04		(3)				351.04
	9/29	9/30	Turkey		389.99		(3)				389.99
Hon. Ted Poe	9/24	9/27	Greece		878.76		(3)				878.76
One-Way Ticket							1,130.00				1,130.00
Hon. Gregory Meeks	9/28	9/29	Cyprus		702.80						702.80
	9/29	9/30	Turkey		389.99						389.99
One-Way Ticket							6,369.00				6,369.00
Sarah Blocher	9/24	9/27	Greece		794.08		(3)				794.08
	9/27	9/28	Turkey		252.26		(3)				252.26
	9/28	9/29	Cyprus		247.84		(3)				247.84
	9/29	9/30	Turkey		368.64		(3)				368.64
Jesper Pederson	9/24	9/27	Greece		1,012.41		(3)				1,012.41
	9/27	9/28	Turkey		329.48		(3)				329.48
	9/28	9/29	Cyprus		351.04		(3)				351.04
	9/29	9/30	Turkey		389.99		(3)				389.99
Brian Wanko	9/24	9/27	Greece		1,012.41		(3)				1,012.41
	9/27	9/28	Turkey		329.48		(3)				329.48
	9/28	9/29	Cyprus		389.99		(3)				389.99
	9/29	9/30	Turkey		389.99		(3)				389.99
Hon. Steve Chabot	9/25	9/27	India		313.35						313.35
	9/27	9/29	Sri Lanka		590.00						590.00
	9/29	10/1	Nepal		391.00						391.00
	10/1	10/2	Bhutan		90.00						90.00
	10/2	10/2	India								
Roundtrip Airfare							9,941.60				9,941.60
Kevin Fitzpatrick	9/25	9/27	India		313.35						313.35
	9/27	9/29	Sri Lanka		595.00						595.00
	9/29	10/1	Nepal		381.00						381.00
	10/1	10/2	Bhutan		85.00						85.00
	10/2	10/2	India								
Roundtrip Airfare							9,182.60				9,182.60
Edward Burrier	9/25	9/28	Senegal		784.00						784.00
Roundtrip Airfare							5,228.50				5,228.50
Gregory McCarthy	9/25	9/28	Senegal		918.81						918.81
Roundtrip Airfare							5,193.50				5,193.50
Kristin Jackson	9/25	9/28	Peru		789.50						789.50
Roundtrip Airfare							727.84				727.84
Hubbell Knapp	9/25	9/28	Peru		789.50						789.50
Roundtrip Airfare							727.84				727.84
Jacqueline Quinones	9/25	9/28	Peru		789.50						789.50
Roundtrip Airfare							727.84				727.84
Commitee total					30,349.32		122,170.76		11,211.99		163,732.07

[1] Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.
[2] If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.
[3] Military air transportation.
[4] Delegation expenses.

HON. ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN, Chairman.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN JULY 1 AND SEPT. 30, 2011

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem [1]		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]
Hon. Pedro Pierluis	6/27	6/29	Brussels		794.00		787.50				1,581.50
	6/29	7/1	Israel		932.00		(3)				932.00
	7/1	7/3	Bratislava		472.60		(3)				472.60
Committee total											2,986.10

[1] Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.
[2] If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.
[3] Military air transportation.

HON. DOC HASTINGS, Chairman, Oct. 28, 2011.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN JULY 1 AND SEPT. 30, 2011

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem [1]		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]

HOUSE COMMITTEES

Please Note: If there were no expenditures during the calendar quarter noted above, please check the box at right to so indicate and return.☒

[1] Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.
[2] If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.

HON. DARRELL E. ISSA, Chairman, Oct. 27, 2011.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON RULES, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN JULY 1 AND SEPT. 30, 2011

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem [1]		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]

HOUSE COMMITTEES

Please Note: If there were no expenditures during the calendar quarter noted above, please check the box at right to so indicate and return.☒

[1] Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.
[2] If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.

HON. DAVID DREIER, Chairman, Oct. 26, 2011.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE, SPACE, AND TECHNOLOGY, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN JULY 1 AND SEPT. 30, 2011

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem [1]		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]
Margaret Caravelli	8/28	8/30	Italy		348.00		*2,944.00				3,292.00
	8/30	8/31	Switzerland		178.00						178.00
	8/31	9/02	Netherlands		267.00						267.00
Mele Williams	8/28	8/30	Italy		348.00		*2,944.00				3,292.00
	8/30	8/31	Switzerland		178.00						178.00
	8/31	9/02	Netherlands		364.00						364.00
Dahlia Sokolov	8/28	8/30	Italy		348.00		*2,944.00				3,292.00
	8/30	8/31	Switzerland		178.00						178.00
	8/31	9/02	Netherlands		364.00						364.00
Committee total					2,573.00		8,832.00				11,405.00

[1] Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.
[2] If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.
* Transportation included all legs of trip (roundtrip to Italy, Switzerland, and the Netherlands.)

HON. RALPH M. HALL, Chairman, Oct. 31, 2011.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN JULY 1 AND SEPT. 30, 2011

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem [1]		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]
Wally Herger	9/24	9/27	Greece		1,012.61						1,012.61
	9/27	9/28	Turkey		329.48						329.48
	9/28	9/29	Cyprus		335.12						335.12
	9/29	9/30	Turkey		389.99						389.99
Committee total											2,067.20

[1] Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.
[2] If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.

HON. DAVE CAMP, Chairman, Oct. 31, 2011.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, PERMANENT SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN JULY AND SEPT. 30,2011

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem [1]		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]
Jefferson Miller	8/6	8/7	Middle East		135.00						
	8/7	8/11	Middle East		112.00						
Commercial Aircraft							18,916.50				19,163.50
Tom Corcoran	8/6	8/7	Middle East		135.00						
	8/7	8/11	Middle East		112.00						
Commercial Aircraft							8,674.50				8,921.50
Carly Scott	8/6	8/7	Middle East		123.00						
	8/7	8/11	Middle East								
Commercial Aircraft							8,674.50				8,797.50
Robert Minehart	9/25	9/29	Asia		1,480.00						
	9/29	10/1									
Commercial Aircraft							14,883.00				16,363.00
Judith Boyd	9/25	9/29	Asia		1,480.00						
	9/29	10/1									
Commercial Aircraft							14,883.00				16,363.00
William Koella	9/25	9/29	Asia		1,480.00						
	9/29	10/1									
Commercial Aircraft							14,873.00				16,353.00
Hon. Mike Rogers	9/25	9/28	Middle East								
Commercial Aircraft							7,980.40				7,980.40
Michael Allen	9/25	9/28	Middle East								
Commercial Aricraft							7,980.40				7,980.40
Darren Dick	9/25	9/28	Middle East								
Commercial Aircraft							7,980.40				7,980.40
Committee total					5,057.00		104,845.70				109,902.70

[1] Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.
[2] If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.

HON. MIKE ROGERS, Chairman, Oct. 31, 2011

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE, EXPENDED BETWEEN JULY 1 AND SEPT. 30, 2011

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem [1]		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]
Hon. Chris Smith	6/26	7/1	Belgium		1,453.46		1,798.60				3,252.06
Mark Milosch	6/26	7/1	Belgium		1,682.69		1,798.60				3,481.29
Winsome Packer	6/29	7/2	Austria		1,309.29		5,025.50				6,334.79
	9/21	9/24	Bosnia and Herzegovina		662.43		4,756.90				5,419.33
	9/24	9/25	Austria		353.70						353.70
Robert Hand	7/5	7/11	Serbia		1,715.00		4,869.80				6,584.80
Cynthia Efird	7/7	7/11	Serbia		1,706.00		2,809.80				4,515.80
Alex Johnson	7/5	7/11	Serbia		1,800.00		597.00				2,397.00
	7/1	8/3	Austria		10,584.01						10,584.01
	9/11	9/30	Austria		7,560.00		1,515.40				9,075.40
Hon. Chris Smith			Serbia		252.00						252.00
Hon. Robert Aderholt			Serbia		252.00						252.00
Mark Milosch			Serbia		252.00						252.00
Committee total					29,582.58		23,171.60				52,754.18

[1] Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.
[2] If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.

MARK MILOSCH, Oct. 28, 2011.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

3899. A letter from the Director, Office of Science and Technology Policy, transmitting a letter reporting the views of the Office of Science and Technology Policy regarding the conclusion of the GAO that the Office violated the Antideficiency Act; to the Committee on Appropriations.

3900. A letter from the Acting Under Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting the termination of the Joint Tactical Radio System Ground Mobile Radio based on growth in the unit procurement costs; to the Committee on Armed Services.

3901. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting notification that the President approved changes to the 2011 Unified Command Plan; to the Committee on Armed Services.

3902. A letter from the Deputy Chief, Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Structure and Practices of the Video Relay Service Program; Sprint Nextel Corporation Expedited Petition for Clarification, Sorenson Communications, Inc. Petition for Reconsideration of Two Aspects of the Certification Order; AT&T Services, Inc. Petition for Reconsideration of AT&T [CG Docket No.: 10-51] received October 31, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

3903. A letter from the Deputy Director, Defense Security Cooperation Agency, transmitting Transmittal No. 11-24, pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

3904. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Labor, transmitting the Reissued Agency Financial Report for FY 2010; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

3905. A letter from the Director, Office of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting the Draft Strategic Plan: Fiscal Years 2012- 2016; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

3906. A letter from the Director, Office of Personnel Management, transmitting the Office's Annual Privacy Activity Report to Congress for 2010; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

3907. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Endangered and Threatened Species; Designation of Critical Habitat for the Southern Distinct Population Segment of Eulachon [Docket No.: 101027536-1591-03] (RIN: 0648-BA38) received November 8, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

3908. A letter from the Federal Liaison Officer, Department of Commerce, transmitting the Department's final rule — Trademark Technical and Conforming Amendments [Docket No.: PTO-T-2010-0014] (RIN: 0651-AC39) received November 8, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

3909. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's determination on a petition on behalf of workers from the Piqua Organic Moderated Reactor in Piqua, Ohio to be added to the Special Exposure Cohort (SEC), pursuant to the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program Act of 2000 (EEOICPA); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

3910. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's determination on a petition on behalf of workers from the Ames Laboratory at Iowa State University in Ames, Iowa, to be added to the Special Exposure Cohort (SEC), pursuant to the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program Act of 2000 (EEOICPA), pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

3911. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's determination on a petition on behalf of workers from W.R. Grace and Company in Curtis Bay, Maryland, to be added to the Special Exposure Cohort (SEC), pursuant to the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program Act of 2000 (EEOICPA), pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

3912. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's determination on a petition on behalf of workers from the Ames Laboratory at Iowa State University in Ames, Iowa, to be added to the Special Exposure Cohort (SEC), pursuant to the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program Act of 2000 (EEOICPA), pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

3913. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's determination on a petition on behalf of workers from the Y-12 facility in Oak Ridge, Tennessee, to be added to the Special Exposure Cohort (SEC), pursuant to the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program Act of 2000 (EEOICPA), pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

3914. A letter from the Administrator, FEMA, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting notification that funding under Title V, subsection 503(b)(3) of the Robert T.Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, as amended, has exceeded $5 million for the cost of response and recovery efforts for FEMA-3322-EM in the State of Louisiana, pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 5193; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

3915. A letter from the Program Analyst, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Dowty Propellers Type R321/4-82-F/8, R324/4-82-F/9, R333/4-82-F/12, and R334/4-82-F/13 Propeller Assemblies [Docket No.: FAA-2010-1270; Directorate Identifier 2001-NE-50-AD; Amendment 39-16788; AD 2005-25-10R1] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received November 3, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

3916. A letter from the Program Analyst, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Bombardier, Inc. Model DHC-8-400 Series Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2011-0381; Directorate Identifier 2010-NM-203-AD; Amendment 39-16799; AD 2011-18-17] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received November 3, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

3917. A letter from the Program Analyst, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Bombardier, Inc. Model DHC-8-400 Series Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2011-0151; Directorate Identifier 2009-NM-205-AD; Amendment 39-16781; AD 2011-17-17] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received November 3, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

3918. A letter from the Program Analyst, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Model A330-200 and -300 Series Airplanes, and Model A340-200 and -300 Series Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2011-0474; Directorate Identifier 2010-NM-213-AD; Amendment 39-16802; AD 2011-18-20] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received November 3, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

3919. A letter from the Program Analyst, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Model A330-201, -202, -203, -223, and -243 Airplanes, Model A330-300 Series Airplanes, Model A340-200 Series Airplanes, and Model A340-300 Series Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2011-0387; Directorate Identifier 2010-NM-222-AD; Amendment 39-16804; AD 2011-18-22] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received November 3, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

3920. A letter from the Program Analyst, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Model A318, A319, A320, and A321 Series Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2010-1045; Directorate Identifier 2010-NM-101-AD; Amendment 39-16809; AD 2011-19-04] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received November 3, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

3921. A letter from the Program Analyst, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Gulfstream Aerospace LP Model Galaxy and Gulfstream 200 Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2011-0646; Directorate Identifier 2010-NM-224-AD; Amendment 39-16814; AD 2011-20-04] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received November 3, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

3922. A letter from the Program Analyst, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Model DC-8-11, DC-8-12, DC-8-21, DC-8-31, DC-8-32, DC-8-33, DC-8-41, DC-8-42, and DC-8-43 Airplanes; Model DC-8-50 Series Airplanes; Model DC-8F-54 and DC-8F-55 Airplanes; Model DC-8-60 Series Airplanes; Model DC-8-60F Series Airplanes; Model DC-8-70 Series Airplanes; and Model DC-8-70F Series Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2011-0221; Directorate Identifier 2010-NM-120-AD; Amendment 39-16805; AD 2011-18-23] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received November 3, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

3923. A letter from the Program Analyst, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Model A330 B4-600, B4-600R, and F4-600R Series Airplanes, and Model C4-605R Variant F airplanes (Collectively Called A300-600 Series Airplanes) and A310 Series Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2011-0647; Directorate Identifier 2010-NM-193-AD; Amendment 39-16812; AD 2011-20-03] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received November 3, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

3924. A letter from the Program Analyst, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Model 737-600, -700, -700C, -800, -900, and -900ER Series Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2008-1118; Directorate Identifier 2007-NM-318-AD; Amendment 39-16792; AD 2011-18-10] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received November 3, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

3925. A letter from the Program Analyst, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Austro Engine GmbH Model E4 Diesel Piston Engines [Docket No.: FAA-2010-1055; Directorate Identifier 2010-NE-35-AD; Amendment 39-16801; AD 2011-18-19] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received November 3, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

3926. A letter from the Program Analyst, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Bombardier, Inc. Model DHC-8-400 Series Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2010-0910; Directorate Identifier 2011-NM-151-AD; Amendment 39-16797; AD 2011-18-15] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received November 3, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

3927. A letter from the Administrator, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, transmitting a statement of actions with respect to the GAO report entitled, ''ACQUISITION PLANNING: Opportunities to Build Strong Foundations for Better Services Contracts''; jointly to the Committees on Oversight and Government Reform and Science, Space, and Technology.

3928. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a report entitled ''Report to Congress on Iran-Related Multilateral Sanctions Regime Efforts'' covering the period from February 17, 2011 to August 16, 2011; jointly to the Committees on Foreign Affairs, Financial Services, and Ways and Means.

3929. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting a legislative proposal to implement a pay reform initiative; jointly to the Committees on Education and the Workforce, Oversight and Government Reform, Homeland Security, and Ways and Means.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Ms. FOXX: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 470. Resolution providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3094) to amend the National Labor Relations Act with respect to representation hearings and the timing of elections of labor organizations under that Act (Rept. 112–291). Referred to the House Calendar.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. MCKINLEY (for himself, Mrs. CAPITO, and Mr. RAHALL):

H.R. 3451. A bill to designate the Federal Building and United States Courthouse located at 1125 Chapline Street in Wheeling, West Virginia, as the ''Frederick P. Stamp, Jr. Federal Building and United States Courthouse''; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. BISHOP of Utah (for himself and Mr. CHAFFETZ):

H.R. 3452. A bill to provide for the sale of approximately 30 acres of Federal land in Uinta-Wasatch-Cache National Forest in Salt Lake County, Utah, to permit the establishment of a minimally invasive transportation alternative for skiers, called ''SkiLink'', to connect two ski resorts in the Wasatch Mountains, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. BENISHEK (for himself, Mr. RIBBLE, and Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan):

H.R. 3453. A bill to amend the Endangered Species Act of 1973 to authorize permits for takings of wolves to protect from wolf depredation in States where wolf populations exceed the recovery goals in a recovery plan under that Act; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mrs. ROBY (for herself, Ms. SEWELL, Mr. BACHUS, Mr. BONNER, and Mr. ADERHOLT):

H.R. 3454. A bill to amend the Food Security Act of 1985 with respect to maximum enrollment and eligible land in the conservation reserve program; to the Committee on Agriculture.

By Mr. PALAZZO (for himself, Mr. HOLDEN, Mr. BARTLETT, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mr. WESTMORELAND, Mr. LATHAM, Mr. LOBIONDO, Mr. NUNNELEE, and Mr. HARPER):

H.R. 3455. A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to include the Chief of the National Guard Bureau as a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and to reestablish the position of Vice Chief of the National Guard Bureau; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Ms. HAYWORTH:

H.R. 3456. A bill to authorize the President's request to eliminate the Ready-to-Learn program; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. ISRAEL (for himself, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. BISHOP of New York, and Ms. DEGETTE):

H.R. 3457. A bill to require ingredient labeling of certain consumer cleaning products, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. SCHOCK (for himself, Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS, Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan, Mr. REHBERG, and Mr. WALDEN):

H.R. 3458. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to ensure the eligibility of eligible professionals practicing in rural health clinics for electronic health records and quality improvement incentives under Medicare; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. BECERRA (for himself and Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN):

H.R. 3459. A bill to establish within the Smithsonian Institution the Smithsonian American Latino Museum, and for other purposes; to the Committee on House Administration, and in addition to the Committees on Transportation and Infrastructure, and Natural Resources, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. BERKLEY (for herself, Mr. MORAN, and Mr. POLIS):

H.R. 3460. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow temporarily a reduced rate of tax with respect to repatriated foreign earnings; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mrs. CAPITO (for herself, Mrs. MALONEY, Mr. BACHUS, Mr. SCHWEIKERT, Mr. POSEY, Mr. WESTMORELAND, Mr. RENACCI, Mr. CARNEY, Mr. PEARCE, and Mr. DUFFY):

H.R. 3461. A bill to improve the examination of depository institutions, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. CLARKE of Michigan (for himself, Mr. BENISHEK, Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan, and Mr. WALBERG):

H.R. 3462. A bill to require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to make tuition payments for veterans enrolled in institutions of higher learning who are receiving assistance under the Post-9/11 Educational Assistance Program by not later than the tuition due date for the quarter, semester, or term; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. HARPER (for himself and Mr. COLE):

H.R. 3463. A bill to reduce Federal spending and the deficit by terminating taxpayer financing of presidential election campaigns and party conventions and by terminating the Election Assistance Commission; to the Committee on House Administration, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. HONDA (for himself and Mr. COLE):

H.R. 3464. A bill to authorize the Secretary of Education to award grants to promote civic learning and engagement, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. INSLEE (for himself, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. MARKEY, Ms. DEGETTE, Mr. HINCHEY, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. BERMAN, Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, Ms. DELAURO, Mr. SERRANO, Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. MORAN, Mr. ANDREWS, Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia, Mr. WAXMAN, Mr. HONDA, Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. GUTIERREZ, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. NADLER, Mr. CUMMINGS, Ms. TSONGAS, Mr. DOYLE, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Ms. SCHWARTZ, Mr. ACKERMAN, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mr. STARK, Mr. LIPINSKI, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. RAHALL, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. SCHIFF, Ms. EDWARDS, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. LUJÁN, Mr. COOPER, Mr. HOLT, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. BRALEY of Iowa, Mrs. CAPPS, Ms. MOORE, Mr. DINGELL, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, Ms. CHU, Mr. ROTHMAN of New Jersey, Ms. WOOLSEY, Mr. WALZ of Minnesota, Ms. LEE of California, Mr. PASCRELL, Mr. MCNERNEY, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. OLVER, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. CONYERS, Mrs. MALONEY, Mr. TIERNEY, Mr. CARNAHAN, Ms. NORTON, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Mr. FILNER, Ms. SPEIER, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. FARR, Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas, Mr. QUIGLEY, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Ms. SUTTON, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. SARBANES, Ms. FUDGE, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. HIGGINS, Mr. JACKSON of Illinois, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. MILLER of North Carolina, Mr. KILDEE, Mr. DOGGETT, Mr. NEAL, Mrs. LOWEY, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. COHEN, Mr. RUSH, Mr. ISRAEL, Mr. KEATING, Mr. KUCINICH, Ms. RICHARDSON, Mr. CLAY, Mr. TONKO, Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. FATTAH, Mr. JOHNSON of Illinois, Mr. KIND, Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York, and Ms. CASTOR of Florida):

H.R. 3465. A bill to protect inventoried roadless areas in the National Forest System; to the Committee on Agriculture, and in addition to the Committee on Natural Resources, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. KING of New York (for himself, Mr. CUELLAR, Mr. GRIMM, Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York, Mr. MEEKS, Mr. POLIS, Mr. HANNA, Mr. MCCAUL, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. BURTON of Indiana, Mr. AKIN, Mr. WOLF, Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California, Mr. MCCOTTER, and Mr. BACHUS):

H.R. 3466. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to establish and provide a checkoff for a Breast and Prostate Cancer Research Fund, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. MCDERMOTT (for himself and Mr. RANGEL):

H.R. 3467. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to reform the estate and gift tax; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. MEEHAN (for himself and Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California):

H.R. 3468. A bill to prevent trafficking in counterfeit drugs; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. NORTON:

H.R. 3469. A bill to amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to encourage the implementation or expansion of prekindergarten programs for students 4 years of age or younger; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. RIBBLE (for himself, Mr. PETRI, Mr. MEEHAN, and Mr. AUSTRIA):

H.R. 3470. A bill to remove arbitrary and anticompetitive limitations from the grant program for ICAC Program training; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. TSONGAS:

H.R. 3471. A bill to authorize the Secretary of Labor to award grants for the employment of individuals in targeted communities to perform work for the benefit of such communities; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. YOUNG of Alaska:

H.R. 3472. A bill to prevent forfeited fishing vessels from being transferred to private parties and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, and in addition to the Committees on Natural Resources, Energy and Commerce, and Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. CASTOR of Florida:

H.J. Res. 89. A joint resolution proposing a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution of the United States; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. KING of Iowa (for himself, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. PAUL, Mr. WALSH of Illinois, and Mr. WESTMORELAND):

H. Res. 471. A resolution amending the Rules of the House of Representatives to require that rescission bills always be considered under open rules every year, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Rules.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Mr. MCKINLEY:

H.R. 3451.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article IV, Section 3, Clause 2 and Article 1, Section 8, Clause 17 of the Constitution.

By Mr. BISHOP of Utah:

H.R. 3452.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution, specifically Clause 1 (relating to the power of Congress to provide for the general welfare of the United States) and Clause 18 (relating to the power to make all laws necessary and proper for carrying out the powers vested in Congress), and Article IV, Section 3, Clause 2 (relating to the power of Congress to dispose of and make all needful rules and regulations respecting the territory or other property belonging to the United States).

By Mr. BENISHEK:

H.R. 3453.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article IV, Section 3, Clause 2

The Congress shall have Power to dispose of and make all needful Rules and Regulations respecting the Territory or other Property belonging to the United States; and nothing in this Constitution shall be so construed as to Prejudice any Claims of the United States, or of any particular State.

By Mrs. ROBY:

H.R. 3454.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

In the U.S. Constitution under Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3, Commerce Clause.

By Mr. PALAZZO:

H.R. 3455.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1: Section 8 of the Constitution of the United States of America,

''Congress shall have the power . . . To make laws for the government and regulation of the land and naval forces.''

By Ms. HAYWORTH:

H.R. 3456.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1: The Congress shall have Power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defense and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States.

By Mr. ISRAEL:

H.R. 3457.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 Clause 3 of the United States Constitution, which grants Congress the power ''to regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with Indian Tribes.''

By Mr. SCHOCK:

H.R. 3458.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the power of Congress as stated in Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. BECERRA:

H.R. 3459.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, clause 17 and Article I, Section 8, clause 18 of the Constitution.

By Ms. BERKLEY:

H.R. 3460.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, §8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mrs. CAPITO:

H.R. 3461.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3, authorizing Congress to regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.

By Mr. CLARKE of Michigan:

H.R. 3462.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 (Necessary and Proper)

The Congress shall have Power *** To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by the Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Mr. HARPER:

H.R. 3463.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 4 of the U.S. Constitution granting Congress the authority to make laws governing the time, place, and manner of holding Federal elections.

Additionally, Amendment XVI to the United States Constitution.

Additionally, since the Constitution does not provide Congress with the power to provide financial support to candidates seeking election to offices of the United States or to U.S. political parties, the general repeal of the presidential election fund is consistent with the powers that are reserved to the States and to the people as expressed in Amendment X to the United States Constitution.

Further, Article I, Section 8 defines the scope and powers of Congress and does not include this concept of taxation in furtherance of funding campaigns within the delegated powers.

By Mr. HONDA:

H.R. 3464.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18 of the United States Constitution

By Mr. INSLEE:

H.R. 3465.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The Constitutional authority of Congress to enact this legislation is provided by . . . Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18, which provides that Congress shall have the power to make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by the Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Mr. KING of New York:

H.R. 3466.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1

The Congress shall have Power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States.

By Mr. MCDERMOTT:

H.R. 3467.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 1 of Section 8 of Article 1 of the United States Constitution

By Mr. MEEHAN:

H.R. 3468.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the Constitution of the United States and Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the Constitution of the United States.

By Ms. NORTON:

H.R. 3469.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following: clause 1 of section 8 of article I of the Constitution.

By Mr. RIBBLE:

H.R. 3470.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the U.S. Constitution.

By Ms. TSONGAS:

H.R. 3471.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8.

By Mr. YOUNG of Alaska:

H.R. 3472.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3 and Article 1, Section 8, Clause 1.

By Ms. CASTOR of Florida:

H.J. Res. 89.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article V of The Constitution.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions as follows:

H.R. 10: Mr. DESJARLAIS, Mr. FLAKE, Mr. MICA and Mr. DOLD.

H.R. 23: Mr. INSLEE.

H.R. 114: Mr. BERG.

H.R. 139: Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mr. ANDREWS, Ms. DELAURO, Ms. DEGETTE and Mr. KEATING.

H.R. 303: Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California.

H.R. 365: Mr. HOLDEN.

H.R. 436: Mr. TURNER of New York.

H.R. 458: Mr. RUSH.

H.R. 463: Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina.

H.R. 487: Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas.

H.R. 615: Ms. HAYWORTH.

H.R. 665: Mr. QUIGLEY.

H.R. 733: Mr. BOUSTANY and Mr. COHEN.

H.R. 735: Mr. AKIN.

H.R. 745: Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas.

H.R. 778: Mr. RAHALL, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. CONYERS and Ms. BERKLEY.

H.R. 797: Ms. WOOLSEY.

H.R. 835: Mr. BARTLETT and Mr. WALBERG.

H.R. 893: Ms. MCCOLLUM.

H.R. 998: Mr. INSLEE.

H.R. 1029: Mr. PERLMUTTER.

H.R. 1148: Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. CARNEY, Mr. POE of Texas, Mr. HIMES, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. MICHAUD, Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts, Mr. BURGESS, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. HINCHEY, Ms. PINGREE of Maine, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. WEST, Mr. PETERS, Mr. BASS of New Hampshire, Mr. PRICE of North Carolina and Mr. ACKERMAN.

H.R. 1164: Mr. WESTMORELAND and Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina.

H.R. 1167: Mr. BILIRAKIS.

H.R. 1173: Mr. SHUSTER.

H.R. 1175: Ms. SCHWARTZ.

H.R. 1176: Mr. HIMES.

H.R. 1193: Mr. ENGEL.

H.R. 1206: Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky.

H.R. 1221: Mr. COFFMAN of Colorado.

H.R. 1281: Mr. LATTA.

H.R. 1307: Mr. WESTMORELAND and Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina.

H.R. 1340: Mr. GUTHRIE.

H.R. 1352: Mr. WELCH.

H.R. 1370: Mr. NUNES and Mr. DESJARLAIS.

H.R. 1386: Mr. ISRAEL, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. CARNAHAN and Ms. SLAUGHTER.

H.R. 1416: Mr. GRIJALVA.

H.R. 1426: Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mr. GERLACH and Mr. FLEISCHMANN.

H.R. 1449: Mr. HARRIS and Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California.

H.R. 1489: Mr. PALLONE.

H.R. 1558: Mr. WHITFIELD.

H.R. 1633: Mr. AKIN and Mr. BROUN of Georgia.

H.R. 1639: Mr. CRAWFORD, Mr. MEEHAN, Mr. MARCHANT and Ms. WILSON of Florida.

H.R. 1648: Mr. WELCH, Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, Mr. MCNERNEY and Mr. INSLEE.

H.R. 1653: Mr. NEUGEBAUER, Mr. DESJARLAIS and Mr. RIBBLE.

H.R. 1715: Mr. ROHRABACHER.

H.R. 1730: Ms. HANABUSA, Ms. BASS of California, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. CICILLINE, Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas and Ms. WILSON of Florida.

H.R. 1734: Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina and Mr. WESTMORELAND.

H.R. 1738: Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ.

H.R. 1744: Mr. DUFFY.

H.R. 1749: Mr. CLEAVER.

H.R. 1755: Mr. CHANDLER.

H.R. 1756: Mr. KELLY and Mr. MEEKS.

H.R. 1798: Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California and Mr. GARRETT.

H.R. 1815: Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. INSLEE, Mr. MILLER of Florida, Mr. STEARNS, Mr. SIMPSON, and Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA.

H.R. 1834: Mr. ALTMIRE.

H.R. 1842: Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania and Mr. BISHOP of New York.

H.R. 1903: Ms. DEGETTE and Mr. GRIJALVA.

H.R. 1946: Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia.

H.R. 1971: Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia.

H.R. 2040: Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia.

H.R. 2053: Mr. BENISHEK.

H.R. 2070: Mr. RIBBLE, Mr. STUTZMAN, Mrs. HARTZLER, Mr. BROOKS, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. CONAWAY, and Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan.

H.R. 2122: Mr. TURNER of New York, Mr. MCCAUL, and Mr. BILIRAKIS.

H.R. 2131: Mr. ROSS of Arkansas, Mr. BRALEY of Iowa, Mr. SHULER, Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER, Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee, Mr. GUTHRIE, and Ms. JENKINS.

H.R. 2137: Mrs. CAPITO.

H.R. 2226: Mr. ANDREWS.

H.R. 2288: Mr. BACHUS and Mr. ROONEY.

H.R. 2299: Mr. MCCLINTOCK.

H.R. 2334: Mr. DEUTCH and Mr. ANDREWS.

H.R. 2360: Mr. HOLT.

H.R. 2446: Mr. DOLD, Mr. COOPER, and Mr. FLEISCHMANN.

H.R. 2477: Mr. COSTA.

H.R. 2492: Ms. HAHN and Mr. BARTLETT.

H.R. 2505: Mr. KIND, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, and Mr. PERLMUTTER.

H.R. 2514: Mr. BERG.

H.R. 2580: Mr. SERRANO.

H.R. 2604: Ms. HAHN.

H.R. 2617: Ms. PINGREE of Maine.

H.R. 2672: Mr. KELLY.

H.R. 2674: Mr. PALAZZO.

H.R. 2679: Mrs. CHRISTENSEN.

H.R. 2697: Mr. WESTMORELAND, Mr. MORAN, and Ms. BERKLEY.

H.R. 2705: Mr. DOGGETT.

H.R. 2717: Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, Mr. KISSELL, Mr. BOSWELL, Mr. PETERSON, Mr. ANDREWS, Mr. SHULER, Mr. CLAY, Mr. BARTLETT, Mr. BOREN, Mr. ALTMIRE, and Mr. COOPER.

H.R. 2731: Mr. FLORES.

H.R. 2735: Ms. JENKINS.

H.R. 2770: Mr. PETERSON.

H.R. 2787: Mr. ALTMIRE.

H.R. 2815: Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas.

H.R. 2827: Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan.

H.R. 2874: Mr. MANZULLO, Mr. MILLER of Florida, and Mr. CASSIDY.

H.R. 2885: Mr. COFFMAN of Colorado and Mr. CRENSHAW.

H.R. 2898: Mr. LATTA.

H.R. 2900: Mr. ROSS of Florida and Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia.

H.R. 2902: Mr. JACKSON of Illinois, Mr. COHEN, Mr. CLARKE of Michigan, and Ms. HAHN.

H.R. 2914: Ms. SPEIER.

H.R. 2926: Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia.

H.R. 2948: Mr. SHERMAN.

H.R. 2949: Mr. CUELLAR.

H.R. 2950: Mr. CUELLAR.

H.R. 2962: Mr. GRIJALVA, Mrs. BLACK, Mr. HECK, Mr. HIMES, and Mr. REHBERG.

H.R. 2966: Mr. MEEHAN and Mr. HANABUSA.

H.R. 2978: Mr. FINCHER, Mr. WHITFIELD, Ms. JENKINS, Mr. COBLE, and Mr. GOWDY.

H.R. 2982: Mr. BRALEY of Iowa, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, and Mr. CAPUANO.

H.R. 3020: Mr. GUTIERREZ and Mr. NEAL.

H.R. 3039: Mr. HANABUSA, Mr. HONDA, and Mr. LOBIONDO.

H.R. 3059: Mr. COHEN.

H.R. 3063: Mr. GUTIERREZ.

H.R. 3096: Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER.

H.R. 3126: Mr. STARK.

H.R. 3127: Mr. COBLE.

H.R. 3151: Mr. NADLER and Ms. DELAURO.

H.R. 3159: Mr. ROHRABACHER.

H.R. 3178: Mr. BISHOP of New York, Mr. HOLT, Mr. KUCINICH, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, and Mr. HONDA.

H.R. 3179: Mr. CRAWFORD and Mr. CAPUANO.

H.R. 3236: Mr. MORAN.

H.R. 3268: Mr. RUSH.

H.R. 3269: Mr. CRAWFORD, Mr. ROSS of Florida, Mr. NEAL, Mr. PIERLUISI, Mr. ADERHOLT, Mr. MILLER of Florida, Mr. BROOKS, Mrs. MYRICK, Mr. HECK, Mr. FINCHER, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. GERLACH, Mr. MULVANEY, Mr. CRITZ, Mr. GUTHRIE, Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts, Mr. SIMPSON, Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. BOUSTANY, Ms. SCHWARTZ, Mr. STEARNS, Mr. AKIN, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Mr. GINGREY of Georgia, Mr. HANNA, Mr. DESJARLAIS, Mrs. ROBY, Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois, Mr. MCHENRY, Mr. RIBBLE, Ms. HAHN, Mr. MATHESON, Mr. GRIMM, Mr. WALZ of Minnesota, and Mrs. BLACK.

H.R. 3294: Mr. ROKITA.

H.R. 3299: Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ.

H.R. 3327: Mr. TURNER of New York, Mr. HANNA, Mr. LONG, and Mr. RIBBLE.

H.R. 3359: Mr. JONES, Mr. MCNERNEY, and Mr. FARR.

H.R. 3362: Mr. GOHMERT.

H.R. 3364: Mr. LATHAM, Mr. DOYLE, and Mr. BOSWELL.

H.R. 3373: Mr. LUJÁN.

H.R. 3381: Mr. PIERLUISI.

H.R. 3391: Ms. DEGETTE.

H.R. 3409: Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Mr. BUCSHON, Mr. KELLY, and Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky.

H.R. 3410: Mr. DENT and Mr. SCHILLING.

H.R. 3414: Mr. WALBERG and Mr. MARCHANT.

H.R. 3421: Mr. MARINO, Mr. ROONEY, Mr. GRIMM, Mr. WEST, Ms. TSONGAS, Mr. HANNA, Mr. NUNES, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mr. MCKINLEY, Mr. CRENSHAW, Mr. GUINTA, Ms. BERKLEY, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. CALVERT, Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania, Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas, Mr. WALDEN, Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, Mr. CRITZ, Mr. BROOKS, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. RUNYAN, Mr. GOWDY, Mr. HECK, Mr. WOLF, Mr. HOLDEN, Mr. OLVER, Mr. KELLY, Mr. ALTMIRE, Mr. ROSS of Florida, Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina, Mr. SULLIVAN, Ms. RICHARDSON, Mr. POLIS, Mr. CRAWFORD, Mrs. ROBY, Mr. PALAZZO, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. HOLT, Mr. SHULER, Mr. LIPINSKI, Mr. WALZ of Minnesota, Mr. DENHAM, Mr. GUTHRIE, Mr. GIBBS, Mr. BISHOP of New York, Mr. BOSWELL, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mr. FARENTHOLD, Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan, Mr. DOYLE, Mr. YARMUTH, Mr. LOEBSACK, Mrs. SCHMIDT, Mr. LUETKEMEYER, Mr. KINGSTON, Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois, Mr. KISSELL, Mr. MCCAUL, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. BERG, Mrs. BLACK, Mr. BENISHEK, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. CRAVAACK, Mr. DUFFY, Mr. FLEISCHMANN, Ms. GRANGER, Mr. GRAVES of Missouri, Mr. HARRIS, Mr. HURT, Ms. JENKINS, Mr. SIMPSON, Ms. SPEIER, Mr. WALSH of Illinois, and Mr. CONAWAY.

H.R. 3425: Mr. TIERNEY.

H.R. 3440: Mr. ROSS of Florida, Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California, and Mr. YOUNG of Alaska.

H.J. Res. 28: Mr. HONDA, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Ms. RICHARDSON, Ms. WILSON of Florida, and Mrs. CHRISTENSEN.

H.J. Res. 29: Mr. ELLISON.

H.J. Res. 30: Mr. ELLISON.

H.J. Res. 31: Mr. ELLISON.

H.J. Res. 32: Mr. ELLISON.

H.J. Res. 33: Mr. ELLISON.

H.J. Res. 34: Mr. ELLISON.

H.J. Res. 35: Mr. ELLISON.

H.J. Res. 36: Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas and Mr. ELLISON.

H.J. Res. 86: Mr. COHEN.

H.J. Res. 87: Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. LANGEVIN, and Mr. YARMUTH.

H. Con. Res. 63: Ms. KAPTUR and Ms. WOOLSEY.

H. Con. Res. 82: Mr. RIBBLE.

H. Res. 295: Mr. ROTHMAN of New Jersey, Mr. LATOURETTE, and Mr. REYES.

H. Res. 298: Mr. POLIS and Mr. TIPTON.

H. Res. 433: Mr. FORBES and Mr. WILSON of South Carolina.

H. Res. 468: Mr. HANNA, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. MULVANEY, Ms. HAHN, Mr. BARTLETT, Mr. COFFMAN of Colorado, Mrs. ELLMERS, Mr. LANDRY, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Mr. RIGELL, Mr. RICHMOND, Mr. LOEBSACK, Mr. COBLE, and Ms. RICHARDSON.