

Madam Speaker, Ava is right: ObamaCare is not good for seniors on Medicare. They will pay more for less care because of this expensive government takeover of America's health.

And that's just the way it is.

FOOD SHOULD BE OUT OF THE CONVERSATION

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

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. One of the most significant congressional accomplishments in 1965 was to create a program whereby American citizens could have the opportunity for nutritious foods. The SNAP program allows 46 million Americans to avoid being hungry. The benefits go to deserving individuals. Fifteen percent are elderly; 20 percent are disabled. The average gross monthly income for a food stamp household is \$731. The average net income is \$336.

Now we see an effort to roll back these benefits to these vulnerable populations. The Ryan House budget calls for \$35 billion in cuts. The Lucas-Peterson plan marked up last night calls for \$16 billion. That will result in 3 million Americans losing basic nutrition.

Madam Speaker, this proposal will hurt real people and literally take food off of their table. It's wrong, it's immoral, and it's irresponsible to take food away from deserving American citizens to balance a budget that is unbalanced because of reckless policies that have benefited the rich.

I urge my colleagues to develop a balanced approach to deficit reduction, to include cuts and new revenue. But food should be out of the conversation.

NATIONAL STRATEGIC AND CRITICAL MINERALS PRODUCTION ACT OF 2012

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill, H.R. 4402.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. POE of Texas). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Washington?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 726 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 4402.

The Chair appoints the gentlewoman from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) to preside over the Committee of the Whole.

□ 0915

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the

consideration of the bill (H.R. 4402) to require the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture to more efficiently develop domestic sources of the minerals and mineral materials of strategic and critical importance to United States economic and national security and manufacturing competitiveness, with Mrs. CAPITO in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS) and the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Washington.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Chair, the United States of America is rarely last at anything. Unfortunately, that is not the case when it comes to permitting mining projects. In 2012, the U.S. was ranked dead last, along with Papua New Guinea, out of 25 major mining companies on the pace of mining permitting. Now I can't speak for Papua New Guinea, but the reason the U.S. is so slow to issue new mining permits is simple: government bureaucracy.

Burdensome red tape, duplicative reviews, frivolous lawsuits, and onerous regulations can hold up new mining projects for more than a decade. These unnecessary delays cost Americans jobs as we become more and more dependent on foreign countries for raw ingredients to fuel manufacturing and our economy. The lack of American-produced strategic and critical minerals are prime examples of how America has regulated itself into 100 percent dependence on at least 19 unique elements.

Rare Earth elements, a special subset of strategic and critical minerals, are often used as core components for the manufacturing of everything from national security systems to consumer electronics to medical equipment to renewable energy components and everyday household items. Even though America has a plentiful supply of rare Earth elements, our negative approach to producing these crucial materials has resulted in China producing 97 percent of the world's rare Earth elements. Just like the United States' dependence on foreign oil causes pain at the pump, Americans will soon feel the impact of China's monopoly on the rare Earth element market. Those impacts will be felt when they need a CAT scan or they want to buy a new computer for their small business or purchase an iPhone or install solar panels on their roof.

H.R. 4402, the National Strategic and Critical Minerals Production Act, introduced by our colleague from Nevada (Mr. AMODEI) will help to end this foreign dependence by streamlining government red tape that blocks strategic and critical mineral production. First and foremost, this is a jobs bill, and

the positive impact of this bill's intent will extend beyond the mining industry. For every metals mining job created, an estimated 2.2 additional jobs are generated. And for every nonmetal mining job created, another 1.6 jobs are created. This legislation gives the opportunity for American manufacturers, for small business technology companies, and construction firms to use American resources to help make the products that are essential for our everyday lives, and in the process this will put Americans back to work.

As China continues to tighten global supplies of rare Earth elements, we should respond with an American mineral mining renaissance that will bring mining and manufacturing jobs back to the United States. The National Strategic and Critical Minerals Production Act will help supply our national security, high-tech, health care, agriculture, construction, communications, and energy industries with homemade American materials. This bill is the latest example of House Republicans' commitment to and focus on American job creation. The House has passed over 30 job creation bills that still sit in the Senate, where their leaders, unfortunately, refuse to take any action.

□ 0920

This includes several bills from the Natural Resources Committee to increase production of our all-of-the-above energy resources and to protect our public access to public land.

H.R. 4402 will enable new American mineral production. We must act now to cut the government red tape that is stopping American mineral production that furthers our dependence on foreign minerals.

So I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" for this underlying legislation; and with that, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MARKEY. I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

It is really quite fitting that the Republican-controlled House of Representatives is taking up a bill today to weaken environmental regulations for the hard rock mining industry. Because just last night the Republican candidate for President held a lavish \$25,000-a-plate fundraising dinner out in Montana. For those who don't know, the Daly mansion where that event was held was owned by a famous guy, Marcus Daly, was one of the three "copper kings" of Montana during the Gilded Age. He was infamous for his epic battles with other robber barons for control over the copper industry in Montana and around the country.

In fact, the Supreme Court's recent 5-4 decision to invalidate the Montana election law of 1912 overturned a law that was originally enacted to respond to the very excesses of mining barons like Marcus Daly.

So here we are out here on the House floor embracing the Gilded Age. But here in the Republican House, we are