reform agenda, engage appropriately with the West and eschew regional conflict.

In the meantime, Mr. Speaker, we as Americans have a responsibility to live up to our own ideals. How can we preach democracy, yet shun the free and fair choices of Egyptians? Of course, we cannot be naive. We have to recognize that democracy is about more than just elections, but also about protecting minority rights and building institutions that outlast the individuals who occupy them.

But we also have to recognize that supporting only democracies around the world that produce our own preferred results is the height of hypocrisy. On a more practical level, compromising our own values would only strengthen the hands of anti-Western fundamentalists. Refusing to engage with the Muslim Brotherhood would simply achieve a self-fulfilling prophecy by giving rise to extremists over reformists and moderates.

No country following decades of authoritarian rule can make a full transition to a thriving, stable, peaceful and prosperous democracy quickly and painlessly. Even with the most optimistic of outlooks, the Egyptian people will struggle for years to come to throw off the shackles of the past and create the kind of future for which we all strive. We have been working at this for 236 years, Mr. Speaker, and we still haven't gotten it exactly right.

We have a responsibility, as longtime Egyptian allies and as champions of democracy around the globe, to stand with them in this process, encouraging continued reform and providing our support for the development of real democracy in the Arab world's most populous nation.

HONORING AMERICA'S VETERANS AND CARING FOR CAMP LEJEUNE FAMILIES ACT

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

Mr. MILLER of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the Honoring America's Veterans and Caring for Camp Lejeune Families Act, which the House will consider later today, especially title I, the Janey Ensminger Act.

Title I and a similar House bill honor a 9-year-old girl who died from childhood leukemia, most likely because she was exposed to contaminated drinking water at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, when her mother was pregnant with her.

And by honoring Janey Ensminger, we honor those Americans who have shown remarkable determination to make their government do the right thing. They have struggled for more than a decade to learn exactly what chemicals were in the drinking water at Camp Lejeune, water that perhaps a million marines and their families were exposed to over a 30-year period, to learn the health effects of exposure to the contaminated drinking water, and to seek justice for those harmed.

They took on their own government, including the Marine Corps they had served and to which they are still loyal, but which has been shamefully reluctant to accept responsibility for the water contamination.

Janey's father, Jerry Ensminger, is a retired marine who lived with his family on base at Camp Lejeune for a time. Jerry watched his daughter become ill from leukemia, struggle with the disease, and eventually lose the struggle. Years after he watched his daughter die, Jerry learned of the water contamination at Camp Lejeune and has not rested since.

I first met Jerry 4 years ago when he testified powerfully on the Science and Technology Committee's Subcommittee on Investigations and Oversight, which I then chaired. Jerry worked shoulder to shoulder with others, including Tom Townsend, Mike Partain, Jim Fontella, the Byron family and William Hill against long odds.

□ 1220

The Janey Ensminger Act is the result of their remarkable efforts. They were always faithful to the cause of justice for those harmed by the contaminated drinking water.

The Janey Ensminger Act will require the VA to provide medical coverage for certain illnesses to veterans who served at Camp Lejeune between 1957 and 1987, and to their families. The VA will be the ''payer of last resort.'' Justice requires no less for the people harmed by the water contamination at Camp Lejeune.

The harm will never be fully made right. The bill will not help Janey or her father. But the Janey Ensminger Act acknowledges responsibility and provides needed treatment for many others.

The marines who have championed this legislation served our democracy when they wore our Nation's uniform, and they served our democracy by their determination to obtain justice for the people harmed by the toxic drinking water at Camp Lejeune.

THE POLITICS OF FAIRNESS—I.E., THE POLITICS OF FAVORITISM

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, we have heard a lot about fairness from the President lately. Perhaps his Chicago advisers think that if he distracts, divides, and creates envy all in the name of so-called ''fairness,'' Americans will ignore their thin wallets and stacked up bills. But the people are smarter than back-room government policycrats.

If the President is reelected in January, he will have inherited a weak economy from his predecessor—himself. Then who will he blame? The President was elected to solve problems, not place blame and make excuses for failure.

Like most Americans, I want the administration to succeed, but the evidence is not on the administration's side. With unemployment higher than 8 percent for 41 months—even higher for recent college graduates at above 50 percent—and our deficit above $15 trillion, there isn't much of a record to stand on.

So we are involved in a new Madison Avenue campaign diversion called ''Remake America'' to make America ''fair.'' Of course, fairness is in the eyes of the beholder, and it means different things to different folks; but it certainly sounds good at first glance.

Mr. Speaker, let's look at this idea. The politics of ''fairness'' are used when politicians want you to ignore their record and then claim that some people just haven't been treated fairly. This is a mere diversion from failed policy, failed ideas. When you look at the record, you'll see that this administration's definition of ''fairness'' really means ''favoritism.''

There is no fairness in crony capitalism. That is favoritism. There is no fairness in a perpetual bailout culture where the omnipotent government deems some too big to fail and others too small to succeed. That is favoritism. There is no fairness in forcing Americans to fork over money to pay for failed pet endeavors like Solyndra. That is favoritism. There is no fairness in an unaccountable government that constantly takes money from the working people and squanders it in a failed stimulus—or two. That is favoritism. And there is no fairness in enforcing some laws while proudly ignoring other laws. That is favoritism.

What this ''fairness'' debate—or the politics of favoritism—achieves is a systematic desire by government to create animosity—animosity towards those who have or are just trying to achieve some success. It also creates animosity toward government from those who built it on their own without being a member of the government's favored class.

This debate degrades the American Dream because it removes the equality of opportunity and creates a class of favorites—the class of government ''friends.''

There is no equality or fairness in forced equal outcomes. Since some people are more successful than others, to paraphrase Lincoln, the government, which cannot make everyone rich, is trying to accomplish what it can do—make everyone poor and dependent on the government for success. This is fairness? I think not.

Instead of encouraging individuals to succeed on their own, this administration tells citizens that they need the government. In fact, according to The Wall Street Journal, almost 50 percent of the population lives in a household where at least one member receives a government benefit.

Bad policies have forced more Americans to grow dependent on government. The President wants to, in his own words, remake America. Remake it into what? A Nation where the government is running roughshod over our lives and our liberty? A country where no one is allowed to succeed unless the government gives permission? No thanks. I thought we threw that idea away when we left the regime of King George III.

America doesn't need to be remade into a Third World country totally oppressed by a government that wants America to be another European nanny state where special favoritism is given to government's special friends.

We need to return to what our country was founded on: the pursuit of opportunity or, as Jefferson said it, the right of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

The American Dream—a dream that can come true with individualism and hard work and without a government that punishes ambition, creativity, and success while rewarding failure—all in the name of fairness.

The politics of favoritism, under the guise of ''fairness,'' is not the America we need. Mr. Speaker, the America I know doesn't need to be remade into the politics of favoritism.

And that's just the way it is.

HONORING THE LIFE OF WILLIS EDWARDS

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 to honor the life of a friend and a remarkable individual from Los Angeles, Willis Edwards.

For the past 40 years, Mr. Edwards tirelessly advocated for civil and political rights and worked to ensure that positive images of African Americans were seen by the American public.

Throughout his life, Willis Edwards was known for his strength of conviction and passion for the promotion of the African American community. After working for the Robert Kennedy Presidential campaign in college and earning a Bronze Star in the U.S. Army during the Vietnam war, Edwards helped to elect the first African American mayor of Los Angeles, Tom Bradley, and served as the youngest-ever city commissioner on his Social Services Commission.

Mr. Edwards continued his career of service as the director of black student services at the University of Southern California, where he helped future generations of students discover their passion.

In 1982, Mr. Edwards was elected president of the Beverly Hills-Hollywood branch of the NAACP. Under his leadership, the branch fought to improve the image and gain more jobs for African Americans in front of and behind the scenes in Hollywood. As president in 1986, he helped to nationally televise the NAACP Image Awards, which continues today as a highly regarded entertainment event.

Mr. Edwards never shied away from controversial subjects or issues. After his diagnosis with AIDS, he used his position on the national board of the NAACP to publicly discuss the impact of HIV/AIDS in the African American community, and he organized the NAACP's participation in World AIDS Day. Despite his health challenges, Mr. Edwards continued to support his friends and communities.

Until Rosa Parks's death in 2002, Mr. Edwards was a friend and confidant of the civil rights legend. He helped to promote her legacy by escorting her to the 1998 Oscar ceremony and worked alongside former Congresswoman Julia Carson for Parks to receive the Congressional Medal of Honor. Upon her death, Edwards arranged for her to lie in state here in the Capitol rotunda.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to have called Willis Edwards a friend and a mentor. He has left an indelible mark on Los Angeles, and his dedication to California and national politics will never be forgotten. It is a great honor to recognize his life here on the floor today. His spirit and vision will truly be missed.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 28 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. SIMPSON) at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

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

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

As the Members of this people's House return, grant them the generosity to serve You as You deserve; to give of their industry and not count the cost; to fight for their convictions and not heed the political wounds; to toil and not seek for rest; to labor and not ask for reward except for knowing that, in being their best selves, they do Your will.

And, dear God, on this day, we ask Your blessing upon the family of Tim Harroun. Grant them peace and consolation as they mourn the loss of their mother.

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

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. 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 pro tempore. Will the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. FOXX 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.

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.

REGULATORY REFORM

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

Ms. FOXX. The President's policies have failed and are making the economy worse.

Since President Obama took office, we've seen a 52 percent increase in completed regulations deemed ''economically significant,'' which means they cost the economy at least $100 million a year. We can't create a fair system for job creators when the government keeps changing the rules. We can't help the job seeker by punishing the job creator with more government red tape.

How can someone who believes that small business owners didn't even build their own businesses understand the effects of red tape? He can't.

That is why House Republicans passed the Red Tape Reduction and Small Business Job Creation Act—a combination of pro-growth bills aimed at cutting red tape to make it easier for small businesses to create more jobs. In order to grow more jobs for the American people, we need to shrink the amount of red tape coming from Washington.

TAX RATES

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

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, in exactly 5-months' time, the tax rates for every tax filer in this country will go up in the event of the so-called ''fiscal cliff,'' which most mainstream economists believe would push our country back into a double-dip recession.

There is hope, however.

Last week, the U.S. Senate passed a measure which protects the incomes of every tax filer up to $250,000 and allows rates for incomes above that point to