lost on that argument, which is why we were in the deepest recession at the end of the last administration that this country has been in my lifetime, and I'm not one of the younger Members of this body.

I am, with the majority leader, hopeful that we can work together and come to agreement on that on which we agree and move forward. The American people, I think, hope that as well, Mr. Speaker.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

ADJOURNMENT TO TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 2012

Mr. CANTOR. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at noon on Tuesday, September 18, 2012; and when the House adjourns on that day, it adjourn to meet at noon on Wednesday, September 19, 2012, for morning-hour debate and 2 p.m. for legislative business.

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

There was no objection.

IT IS TIME TO PUT GOVERNING OVER POLITICS

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

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with disappointment. I'm disappointed that this Nation's leaders have once again kicked the can down the road instead of making tough and important decisions on our Nation's spending.

Yesterday, the House passed a continuing resolution without my vote to simply continue to fund government into the 2013 fiscal year at current levels as catastrophic cuts loom on the horizon set to hit in January of 2013. Sequestration, as these cuts are known, threaten our national security. An estimated 200,000 jobs in Virginia will be lost, jobs that support our warfighters and their mission around the world.

Mr. Speaker, we have 16 days to the beginning of a new fiscal year, yet Congress has delayed tough decisions again. These delays are unconscionable. These delays are unacceptable. Congress should stay in Washington and stop ignoring the reality of these looming cuts.

It is time to put governing over politics.

HONORING NEIL ARMSTRONG

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

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, it is a great privilege for me to rise on the floor of the House today to pay tribute to astronaut Neil Armstrong, an American hero.

Yesterday, at the National Cathedral, we paid tribute to him as a national hero and recognize that his name will forever be a testament to our Nation's will to prevail in the challenge for successful space exploration and push the boundaries, going where no man has gone before.

As a 12-year member of the House Science Committee and a member of the Space and Aeronautics Subcommittee, I can tell you that I am deeply indebted, but also embedded with the idea of human space exploration. How can I not be, representing and coming from the community where NASA Johnson Space Center is.

Today I rise in tribute to all of them and recognize the greater leadership that Neil Armstrong gave as a humble American. He, along with fellow astronauts Buzz Aldrin and Michael Collin, shared a most significant time in our history—one small step for man, but a great and gigantic step for humanity.

Right now in Houston, we are celebrating 50 years of human space exploration at the Hyatt Regency, commemorating NASA Johnson. I want to thank Dr. Mae Jemison and all those who came after this great hero for continuing the dream. They can count on me as a Member of the United States Congress to fight again for human space exploration.

Thank you, Neil Armstrong, an American hero. May you rest in peace.

WE NEED TO WORK TOGETHER TO CREATE JOBS

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

Mr. DOLD. Mr. Speaker, this is not what economic recovery looks like. Last Friday's painful jobs report showed for every one American job that was created, four people simply exited the labor force. In fact, the percentage of Americans participating in the labor force today is lower than it has been at any time since September 1981.

Mr. Speaker, this is a national crisis. Over 23 million Americans remain unemployed, underemployed, or have simply given up looking for work. Our Nation's GDP growth was lower in this year's second quarter than the first. The average monthly jobs created is less this year than last.

Washington has tried a trillion dollar stimulus, 4 straight years of trillion dollar deficits, yet unemployment has remained above 8 percent for over 43 consecutive months. The American people are honestly asking themselves: Am I better off today than I was $6 trillion ago?

Mr. Speaker, we need to work together to empower businesses to create jobs and grow our economy, which is why I've introduced a bipartisan, bicameral jobs bill, the Global Investment in America Jobs Act. This isn't about politics. It's about the millions of Americans who are unemployed and seeking opportunities for a better future.

□ 1320

GRANT TRADE WITH RUSSIA

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

Mr. REICHERT. Mr. Speaker, I am speaking in favor today of granting Russia permanent normal trade relations. I would like to emphasize this will hold only benefits for the United States. There is no downside for us unless we fail to act.

While we wait to consider this legislation, our global competitors are racing ahead, taking advantage of their new access to Russian markets. U.S. exports to Russia could double in the next 5 years. Currently exports to Russia support over 1,400 jobs in my State. Passing this bill will increase America's export goods and services substantially, and this growth and trade will serve as a no-cost job creator.

If we fail to act, U.S. companies, farmers, and workers will not receive the benefits of Russia's membership, nor will the U.S. Government have authority to hold Russia accountable under WTO rules.

Mr. Speaker, it is my sincere hope that we can come together and pass this legislation. Grant Russia permanent normal trade relations.

112TH CONGRESS IN REVIEW

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 5, 2011, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. MORAN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. MORAN. Mr. Speaker, next week, following Senate action on a 6-month continuing resolution to keep the Federal government funded until March 27 of 2013, Congress is likely to adjourn until after the fall elections.

Really? Seriously. In other words, over the next 53 days before the election, this House will be in session about 1¾ days. It's a sad state of affairs, and the best that this House can do is to punt all spending decisions on this year's budget to the next Congress.

But that's what we just did this week. Before we adjourn, there will be no resolution on the budget, there will be no resolution on the sequester, $1.2 trillion, that is causing disruption throughout the country and particularly among the entire Federal Government, especially the defense industry, which will have to absorb half of that sequester. It could affect directly about a million jobs, about 2 million jobs indirectly, but we're not going to do anything about it.

There will be no resolution on tens of billions of dollars of expiring measures before the election. We'll do nothing on the farm bill. We'll do nothing on postal reform. We'll do nothing on dozens of other important issues on which the public is counting on us to do something. The most basic and fundamental responsibilities our constituents sent us to Washington to address are being left unresolved.

I proudly served in this institution for more than 20 years. Never have I seen this House so unproductive and so dysfunctional. I served during the so-called Gingrich revolution. I served during Mr. Clinton's administration and during Mr. Bush's administration, but this House has never been less functional.

Our Nation is suffering from high unemployment and the residual effects of the worst economic downturn since the Great Depression. Of course, our current situation is the result of two deep tax cuts in 2001 and 2003, which primarily benefited those who needed tax cuts the least; two wars, neither of which were ever paid for; and an expansion of Medicare which was not paid for. That's what's put us in this deep hole, plus the fact that we deregulated the financial industry.

The American people, the working class Americans, their median income didn't go up. In fact, it edged downward so they had less disposable money. They borrowed from the one asset they had, which had been appreciating real estate, their home, and they borrowed on their credit cards.

Now, after the economy imploded, their home values declined. In fact, almost 70 percent of African American families lost almost 70 percent of their household wealth, Hispanic Americans over 60 percent, white Americans lost more than 16 percent of their household wealth. They obviously don't have the money to be spending again.

They have learned their lesson: they are not going to keep borrowing. Their home values are down, so they can't borrow as much off their real estate. Then you don't get those cold calls from people suggesting that you can borrow more money off your home and consolidate your credit cards. They're not coming. People aren't borrowing, and it's understandable. That's why our economy is in such a deep recession, why it's so difficult to pull out of it.

Now, Mr. HOYER pointed out that we tried something different in the 1990s from what we tried in the first decade of the 21st century. When President Clinton balanced the Federal budget, those who were in the House majority now all voted against it. In fact, every Republican voted against it. It was a pure party-line vote. The deciding vote was cast by a freshman Member from Pennsylvania who lost her seat as a result, but it passed.

We have some empirical evidence as to what happened. I remember during the debate it was suggested that if this passed that, in fact, we would see deep unemployment, we would go into a recession, millions of people would be out of their jobs, and it was the wrong thing to do. I remember the words of Mr. Gingrich, Mr. Armey and others.

Well, we have empirical evidence, as I say. We know exactly what did happen. We did raise taxes on the people at the top, raised up to 39.6 percent. Those folks in the top tax bracket actually brought home more after-tax income than at any time in American history.

Everyone was better off. About 22 million new jobs were created. That number seems as though it's in a different world today, when we struggled so hard to create jobs but, just think of all the job creation we experienced, one of the lowest levels of poverty. The rising tide lifted all boats. It worked.

But beyond a strong economy and to some extent because of that strong economy, we were able to get control over the Federal deficit and in fact, for the last 3 years of the Clinton administration we had a surplus.

Mr. Gore was derisively scorned for talking about the lockbox, but the lockbox was all about putting some of that surplus aside to pay for the retirement and health costs of the baby boom generation.

□ 1330

I'm a member of that baby boom generation. We haven't all retired. But there's more than 70 million of us. Many of us feel we should pay for our own expenses. That would have enabled us to do so, but that wasn't what happened.

Mr. Gore lost the election. Or at least I should say rather than Mr. Bush being elected, the Supreme Court selected him. But it's done. We took a very different course of action. The $5.6 trillion surplus that was projected at the end of the Clinton administration was almost immediately lost with two very deep tax cuts that, as I say, did not benefit the middle class. They benefited people who needed them the least. Then we declared two wars. You certainly can't pay for two wars with two deep tax cuts.

We expanded Medicare. It cost a lot more than it should have, I think, because we put a provision in that forbid the Federal Government from negotiating with the drug providers in order to get the lowest rate for Medicare beneficiaries, using the leverage of the Federal Government. We couldn't do that. We had to pay retail prices. And so the Veterans Administration, which can negotiate, can use the leverage of such a large pool of buyers. They pay a fraction of the price that we pay under the part D program of Medicare.

But all that was done. It made people happy, temporarily. The term ''sugar high'' was used. Well, this was kind of a ''fiscal sugar high.'' And now we're paying the price. Now we're paying the price for the fiscal policy that didn't work. As I say, we have empirical evidence that it did not work. The question is: Where do we go from here?

Now we hear from the other side what sounds a lot like the campaign of about 12 years ago: more tax cuts is the answer. We're hearing a lot of bellicose rhetoric about getting reengaged militarily in the Middle East. After finally concluding the Iraq war, we're talking about military involvement with Iran. We're talking about deregulation, of repealing Dodd-Frank regulations on the financial industry; repealing the Affordable Care Act, even though this country spends twice as much per person on health care. And yet we don't live as long and we're not as healthy as other countries that spend half what we spend. The reason is that we pay for the quantity of services provided, almost regardless of the quality of the care that we're paying for.

The Affordable Care Act is all about reversing that. It's about using best practices; about reimbursing hospitals and doctors and other health care providers based upon how effective their treatments, their analyses, their procedures are in making the patient well. We reward best practices, and in fact we're going to reduce reimbursement for hospitals that keep seeing the same patient over and over again for the same illness. People get infections actually in the hospital. And for any number of other reasons that drive up the cost of health care in this country, other countries have resolved more efficiently, effectively, and in the better interest of the patient.

So we're going to try to turn that around while we include everyone and while we make everyone pay in the same way that we do with Social Security and Medicare. You pay in advance when you're young and healthy so that you'll have insurance when you're older and sicker. That's the whole idea. That's what the individual mandate is all about. It simply makes sense. It made sense in Massachusetts when Mr. Romney was Governor there. It's working there. People are happy with it. We ought to apply it here and certainly not repeal it. But that's what we're hearing: repeal regulations, repeal the Affordable Care Act, more tax cuts, and more bellicose rhetoric. I think that's what got us in much of this situation in the first place.

On the other side, the President understands that while we're certainly not losing 800,000 jobs a month, as we were at the end of the Bush administration, the glass is at least half full. We ought not drain it so that it's empty again, but we ought to build on our successes. Now if we're going to build on those successes, regardless of who's elected President, the legislative branch needs to do its job. That's why it's so troubling that with all the things that need to be done, now, today, over the next 53 days, Members of Congress are going to be nowhere in sight, at least certainly not up on Capitol Hill doing the public's business. We'll be out in our districts politicking, seeking votes. It's going to be a tough record to run on.

Now, we can go back in history and compare what we're doing now with the past. I do think it's informative to suggest that this is not just unfounded political rhetoric suggesting this is a dysfunctional, do-nothing Congress. We have empirical evidence. We have facts. We have statistics. In fact, in Roll Call—I want to give them credit for this—page B–9 yesterday, September 13, the headline is: ''Congress on Pace to Be Least Productive.'' They have a chart. We have the very good people who support our work, who I hope will get a break over the next 53 days. At least that's something positive.

But they have blown up this chart. I'll read it, because the title is: ''A Dubious Historical Distinction.'' From high-water marks in the 1950s. Remember the 1950s? That was when we passed the GI Bill that put our returning veterans to work, got them higher education, enabled them to buy a home. It really created the middle class, thanks to Franklin Roosevelt, Harry Truman, and Dwight Eisenhower. And then Dwight Eisenhower followed up by building the interstate highway system, laying down physical infrastructure in this country, employing hundreds of thousands of people in the process.

Imagine what we would be without an interstate highway system, the numbers of towns and communities that would have been marginalized in our economy without an opportunity to be on a road that led from one place to another and that you could stop and you could buy something and you could stay overnight and you could decide, well, this is a nice town; maybe I want to put roots down here.

But you only do that if it's accessible. The interstate highway system made the whole country accessible. But from the 1950s, Congress has passed fewer bills, enacted fewer laws over time. But even compared with recent years, this Congress, the 112th Congress, has shown a remarkable lack of lawmaking activity.

Now, this is not some kind of partisan rag. This is Roll Call, which is clearly bipartisan, nonpartisan. The 112th Congress, this Congress, during its first year passed the fewest bills, really, in our lifetimes, the middle of the last century. This is public laws enacted. We had a high point up here way back in the 84th Congress. And now look at it; it looks like a ski slope.

□ 1340

We've gone from 1,028 laws to 151.

In terms of bills passed, in the House, here you go, in the 84th Congress, 4,628 bills. Now, maybe not all of those were of consequence, but at least it shows they were doing something.

Here you go. All the way down to this. Now look at this. You get down here to the 100th and then, boom, you drop off a cliff. Less than 600 bills; 4,628 bills back in the 84th Congress to 598, less than 600 bills here today in this Congress. Yet for the next 53 days, we'll be in session for about 1¾ days.

I don't think that I'm talking about something that ought not be of concern to everyone. And I'm not exaggerating. This is unbelievable.

You know, through the course of the history of this Congress, of this institution, really, that's what I mean to say because this Congress is not typical. The approaches have oftentimes been different between the two political parties. But Republicans and Democrats in past Congresses have worked across the aisle. We have found common ground. We have enacted legislation when it was needed to stimulate the economy. We have helped the unemployed. We have helped families struggling. We have reached out to the poor, not with handouts but with a helping hand to create greater opportunity. The outcome is never going to be the same. But people ought to have some sense of equal opportunity, of getting a fair break in this economy.

We've maintained this Nation's infrastructure. Today, there's more than $2 trillion of unmaintained infrastructure needs in this country. Roads and bridges and transit and rail and ports and airports. Seaports and airports are going neglected—$2 trillion. Millions of jobs.

There are jobs in this country. There are skilled jobs. There are jobs that should get paid a good wage. And there are jobs that will pay an investment, a dividend, for years to come. They're investments, not expenditures. They're investments. We'll see the benefit of them for generations to come, and yet we can't even get the American Jobs Act enacted, which is primarily to invest in the physical infrastructure of this country, as well as the human infrastructure, putting money into education and research and innovation and to the things that are going to give us a stronger economy, a more stable society, a more inclusive society, a fairer society. That's what the American Jobs Act does.

But we can't get it through this body.

You know, when Ronald Reagan faced down a recession in the early 1980s, he proudly signed a transportation authorization bill that raised the tax on gasoline in order to maintain our Nation's highways and transit systems, and he called it a jobs bill, and Democrats supported it, and it was enacted. It helped get us out of that recession. It strengthened our economy, and it's still paying dividends for generations to come.

Same thing with President Eisenhower with the interstate highway system.

When President Obama urged Congress more than a year ago to consider the American Jobs Act, because it was a plan to get Americans back to work by investing in our Nation's infrastructure, nonpartisan, apolitical economists estimated that it would create 2.6 million jobs and protect an additional 1.6 million existing jobs.

So 4 million jobs were at stake. Yet he was given a cold shoulder, primarily driven by a fairly substantial bloc of what some people refer to as Tea Party Republicans, whatever the proper designation is, an anti-government attitude.

I think that the government has a role, particularly in a recession, to get us back on our feet so that the private economy can take over.

It's not relying on the Federal Government, but is looking to the Federal Government to be there when we need it to give some, yes, and I'll say the world ''stimulus'' to the private sector. That's what the American Jobs Act was all about.

Today, the House leadership and too many of its rank-and-file members think economic stimulus is a dirty word. In fact, you'd think that the Federal Government is some kind of alien enterprise. The Federal Government is us. We should be proud of the Federal Government. People who work for the Federal Government are the least corruptible large civil service in the entire world. The fact is that they consistently have been the most effective in dealing with our problems and making us, enabling us, to have a more inclusive society and a more prosperous economy.

We just had a debate today over the issue that has become the rallying cry for anti-government politicians, Solyndra. Solyndra failed. It's half a billion dollars. The private sector put a billion dollars in. That loan represented some of the less than 2 percent of failures of that guaranteed loan program. The estimate when it was established was it would be about a 10 percent failure rate. It's been about 2 percent.

The private sector saw fit to put a billion dollars of its own money in. The Obama administration deferred to the private sector and said, yeah, if you put your money in, we will not take back what money is left. If in fact they do fail, you get it first. We'll subordinate the government loan. That turned out to be a mistake. It's a preference towards the private sector. I don't think you should argue with the good intent, the reliance upon the private sector; but the public sector, the taxpayers suffered a loss.

Yet substantial advances have been made in solar power and wind energy. The reason why Solyndra went under is that the Chinese Government figured this out, figured out that we can't be so reliant upon fossil fuels, that the future is not with fossil fuels, it's with sustainable forms of clean energy from the sun and from the wind.

So they've already gotten to the point where they can manufacture solar devices that capture the sun and heat and energy from the sun.

In fact, if you go over there, you see that their robots are even more sophisticated than ours. They're likely to put us out of business in that area, too. Their robots go smoothly like that. Ours go like some kind of jerk dance, you know. I can't do it. I can't even

dance the whatever they call it. But the fact is it's herky-jerky motion, many of our robots. Theirs are smooth, very precise because they knew to invest in that kind of technology, and they're investing in solar panels. So they dumped those solar panels on our economy, and that's why Solyndra went under.

We can't lose out to communist countries, to state-owned enterprises. We have to be at the cutting edge.

□ 1350

We've got the best schools. We've got the most creative people. Yet China, they've decided that over the next decade 70 percent of their preschool children from 1 to 5 are going to have at least 3 years of preschool education because they understand that in the earliest years of a child's life, that's when the brain is most absorbent. They're going to invest in early childhood. And yet what does our budget, the budget that was passed through the House—obviously the Democratic side voted against it—what does it do? It eliminates 200,000 Head Start slots, cuts money for early childhood education, eliminates the child care tax credit.

Think about this. Not only is the child care tax credit—and I don't want to digress too much, but 10 million single mothers with small children would go deeper into poverty, but 2 million—that's what I want to focus on—2 million mothers with small children would have to leave the workforce where they're getting paid roughly minimum wage, just enough to support their rent and food on the table, they would be faced with the choice of either giving up their job, going on welfare again, or locking their small children in an apartment because they can't afford child care.

Is that really who we are as a country? Is that where our priorities are? Is that how we're going to compete in the future with countries like China and countries in Asia and Brazil and India? No, it's not. I trust the American people understand that. But that's all related to this Solyndra mess, the way that it's mischaracterized, the reason people don't understand what it's really about.

So, again, the House voted No More Solyndras. They rejected the amendment that was made by Mr. MARKEY that says if we're going to continue to give $4 billion of tax subsidies to fossil fuel companies that extract oil and gas from publicly owned land—land owned by the taxpayers—if we're going to continue to give these tax subsidies to the industries who are the wealthiest corporations in the world, many of whom pay no taxes because of these subsidies, if we're going to continue to do that while at the same time as this bill that was passed today would take away subsidies for wind and solar power, we should at least reconsider the tax subsidies we give to the industries that need it the least. At least let's be fair about it. Let's save those billions of dollars every year of subsidies going to the wealthiest corporations for extracting natural resources owned by the American people and then boosting the price of oil at the gas pump.

We continue to pay more than we should at the pump. But they're a corporation. They're going to maximize their wealth. They're going to pay the minimum taxes they can get away with. Yet this body wants to eliminate efforts to come up with clean, sustainable sources of energy comparable to what our competitors in the global economy are doing.

I know all that's a digression, but, you know, it's all related.

The fact is that the one thing that this Congress has proven it can do is nothing. For those most dependent upon the Federal Government's willingness to reach out a helping hand to help them climb ladders of economic opportunity, the attitude of the majority in this Congress has been: You're on your own, survival of the fittest, winner take all. That's been the tax policy. That's been the spending policy. As far as I'm concerned, that's not what made this country great; it's what has gotten this country into the economic circumstances that we face today.

Now, there's a drought brought on by a changing climate—climate change. People in the House majority want to deny even the existence of climate change even when it's standing right in front of us, facing us with all these extreme violent storms, with the fact that this has been the warmest year on record. Yet they want to deny climate change because it's brought about by human action, human decisions, decisions made by groups such as the American Congress to protect the fossil fuel industry, which is the primary contributor to global warming. As a result, all of this warmer weather, these droughts, these violent storms are bringing devastating economic injury to thousands of America's farmers.

And what has been the reaction of the House leadership? The Republican majority has chosen to block a farm bill from even being considered on the House floor even though it passed the Senate with an overwhelming vote, bipartisan vote, and yet we can't bring it up on the House floor. Instead, the House leadership has wasted time on the House floor with legislation designed to dismantle the Affordable Care Act, eliminate the prospect of more secure and affordable health care for millions of Americans.

Three dozen times we've had votes to repeal the Affordable Care Act, knowing that the Senate understands how important it is to the American people and how important it is in the long run to get a grip on this economy, understanding that our corporations can't continue to pay the kind of money they're having to pay for health care that is less effective than the health care provided by every other industrialized country. The Senate understands it. The House doesn't get it, and so we keep having these votes that are pure political posturing.

Of course the House Republican leadership as well has wasted floor time voting to dismantle just about every landmark environmental law, blaming laws passed in the 1970s and the 1990s as the cause for today's high unemployment rate, laws that were passed, many of them, in the Nixon administration and the George H.W. Bush administration. The Nixon administration created the Environmental Policy Act, and it saved hundreds of thousands—if not millions—of lives, children that have not been afflicted with asthma, people who have not gotten the kind of illnesses that they were vulnerable to because we have had cleaner air and water. But now we can't even update it with the latest technology and the latest information. EPA has been the prime target of these budget cuts.

So we now have—I think it's been about 38 individual votes that have been taken to destroy environmental laws and regulations. Those votes, most of them, have died in the Senate, fortunately, but is that really what this institution should be all about?

When our children look back on the opportunities that this House of Representatives had to secure a better future for them, be it a pathway toward a balanced budget so they don't have to pay off the debt of their parents and grandparents or better, more affordable opportunities for their educational advancement, elementary and secondary education assistance so we don't have to lay off hundreds of thousands of teachers—we've laid off almost a quarter of a million teachers now throughout the country as a result of the recession and as a result of local and State legislators not being willing to invest in education—or the Pell Grants, which enable lower income families who have students who have worked hard to be able to afford college, those opportunities are being lost, as well as the opportunity to have a cleaner alternative energy future which would have generated more than 40,000 jobs. Instead, in the effort to eliminate financial help for wind and solar power, we've already cut about 2,000 jobs, and I guess it's closer to 3,000 jobs now.

□ 1400

With the elimination of guaranteed loans, we're looking at nearly 40,000 jobs in an industry that represents the future for our children and grandchildren that other global competitors are investing in.

They will look at this Congress and rightly blame us for not seizing on those opportunities. Disappointment would be an inadequate word to describe the public's proper assessment of this Congress.

But, Madam Speaker, it's not over yet. We'll have a lame duck session.

We'll have an election in November. This country will choose which path it wants to go forward. Does it want to revisit the policy, the first 8 years of the 21st century?

Does it want to look at what happened in the last decade of the 20th century, compare the results, and then assess in which direction we need to be going?

The empirical evidence is there. The opportunity will be present on November 6 to choose which path this country will take.

It's clear, Madam speaker, that the path this Congress has been on, this 112th Congress, is not the path that leads to a better, more prosperous future for our children and grandchildren.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

A CHOICE OF TWO FUTURES

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. ELLMERS). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 5, 2011, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. WOODALL) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. WOODALL. Madam Speaker, I appreciate the time. You know, you and I, Madam Speaker, are freshmen in this House. And I've a learned a few things about coming down to the floor from watching my colleagues, about how to make a good impression. You know, everybody's back in their offices watching the proceedings on TV, or folks back in the district watching it on TV. And I see our colleagues come, and they'll take the podium down to the very lowest level so that when they walk up to the podium they'll be able to drag it all the way up to the top and look big and strong and powerful.

You know, in the 18 months that you and I have served here, Madam Speaker, we've gotten a lot of advice about how to look good. We've gotten a lot of advice about how to tell the good story, how to spin the good tale.

And as I listened to my friend from Virginia make his presentation earlier, I thought, you know what? He and I are looking at exactly the same set of facts and we are drawing exactly the opposite set of conclusions. And that makes it so hard to legislate here, Madam Speaker, because you and I, as part of this freshman class, we don't care two hoots about what looks good. What we care about is what is good.

We don't care about trying to make people believe it's the truth, we care about actually finding the truth, and that's been the challenge up here in the 18 months that you and I have had a voting card.

I have beside me, Madam Speaker, a chart that has been down on this floor a number of times. It's called A Choice of Two Futures, and you've seen it, Madam Speaker. It's the one that shows the red line of current spending promises. It's the one that goes all the way back to 1940, Madam Speaker. It shows debt as a percent of GDP.

It shows back at the end of World War II when we were fighting the Nazis, we were fighting the Japanese, we were fighting to defend freedom and democracy around the global. In the name of ending that world war, we borrowed 100 percent of our economy. Our national debt grew to 100 percent the size of our economy. And that was an investment well made, Madam Speaker, having defended the liberty of citizens around the world.

But we're right back in that same place today, Madam Speaker. This chart goes from 1940 all the way out to 2080. It's 140 years of past policy and projected policy. And what it shows is that today, America is on the verge of carrying that same debt burden.

We're not in the middle of a world war to defend freedom and liberty. We're not in the middle of fighting the Nazis and trying to prevent a hostile takeover of the world. But we've borrowed 100 percent the size of our economy.

But that's not even the most damning part of this chart, Madam Speaker. What we see is, represented by this red line, if we do nothing, Madam Speaker, if our freshman class had never come to this town, if we closed the Congress, if we closed the White House, if we never passed a new law and never made a new promise, this red line represents the promises already made. And what we see is debt rising to 200 percent, 300 percent, 400 percent, 500 percent the size of our economy, levels that economists tell us will never be sustainable. And that's if we don't make one new promise on the floor of this House.

My colleague from Virginia spoke passionately about the need for child care in this country; spoke eloquently about families at home struggling to balance the demands of work and the demands of child care. You see it in your district, Madam Speaker, I see it in my district. He's absolutely right about the struggles that every single American family faces and, from his words, believes in his heart that the right way to address those challenges in my small town of Peachtree Corners, Georgia, is with a Federal program, a program that comes right down the street here, maybe from the Department of Health and Human Services, maybe from the Department of Education, but that somehow we can create a program here in Washington, D.C., that will be the absolute best and most efficient way to deal with my family's challenges and my neighbors' challenges back in Peachtree Corners, Georgia.

Madam Speaker, what I've learned, I serve on the Budget Committee and the Rules Committee and, listening to my colleagues talk, I somehow thought that perhaps there were some dollars here in Washington, D.C., that came from somewhere other than my constituents' pockets. But I've learned that's not the case, that every single dollar that this institution spends, every single commitment that the administration makes, every single project that the Senate wants to fund, every single dollar comes out of the pockets of my constituents back home, and your constituents back home, Madam Speaker.

So when we talk about—I think the phrase my friend from Virginia used was the anti-government forces on Capitol Hill. I don't know who those forces are. I feel like he was talking about me and this freshman class. I don't know of any anti-government forces.

What I know about are folks who talk about what's the right level of government to get the American taxpayer the absolute best value for their tax dollar. And who are those folks who honestly believe that the best value for their tax dollar, back in Peachtree Corners, Georgia, is to take that dollar out of the back pocket of a hardworking taxpayer in Peachtree Corners, move it through the Gwinnett County government, move it through the State of Georgia government, bring it up here to the Federal Government, then send it back down to Federal agency that's going to send it back down to a State agency that's going to send it back over to a county government in order to provide child care.

Who believes that's the absolute best and most efficient way to spend an American tax dollar?

And that's the battle that we have here in this House. It's not about government and anti-government. It's about good government and bad government.

You know, we're here in the Federal Government, Madam Speaker, the Federal Government, and there are responsibilities that we have, making war, one of our responsibilities, defending our border, one of our responsibilities, maintaining the postal roads, one of our responsibilities.

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But there are so many other levels of government—State government, county government, local government—that can fulfill some of these needs that my colleagues seem to believe only the Federal Government is right to fulfill.

I want to go back to this chart, Madam Speaker. This is the chart of promises already made.

So often I pick up the newspaper, and it sounds like everybody is just complaining up here in Washington, D.C.—that it's all about pointing fingers and that it's not about solving problems. What I am so proud of in the 18 months you and I have been here under the leadership of some senior members, like the gentleman from Indiana, is that we have not only identified the problem, which is a crushing debt burden that threatens the economic security, not just of our children and of our grandchildren, but of our very Republic, but that we've promulgated a solution. It's represented here on the chart by this green line that's labeled ''the path to prosperity.''

I'm just so proud I serve on the Budget Committee. My chairman is PAUL