United States of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 113th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 159 WASHINGTON, MONDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2013 No. 16

House of Representatives

The House met at 2 p.m. and was called to order by the Speaker.

PRAYER

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

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

We thank You that we are a Nation fashioned out of diverse peoples and cultures, brought forth on this continent in a way not unlike the ancient people of Israel. As out of a desert, You led our American ancestors to this promised land, where they declared their independence and constituted a new Nation founded upon unalienable rights given to us by You, our Creator.

Bless our Nation with wisdom, knowledge, and understanding, and bless the Members of this people's House. Renew in us the adoption by Your spirit, that we may affirm our freedoms, not only with the conviction in the way we understand others, but in ourselves by actions proven beyond words.

Bless us this day and every day. May all that is done here be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

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

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the 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.

TIME TO SUBMIT A CREDIBLE PLAN

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

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, families budget, small businesses budget, cities budget, churches budget, schools budget, my state of North Carolina budgets, but Washington does not.

Instead, year after year, budgetless Washington spends every single cent of the money it takes from the American people and $1 trillion more.

Not since 2009 has the Democrat Senate bothered to pass a budget, and not since 2010 has President Obama submitted his plan for a budget on time.

When you don't plan, it's easy to overcommit. And when a country overcommits year after year after year, it ends up $16.4 trillion in debt.

That debt doesn't just rob our future; it hurts Americans looking for jobs today. While government spending ballooned, 8.5 million more people have given up looking for work since 2009.

Mr. Speaker, the unchecked spending has got to stop. It's time to get this government on a budget. It's time for the President to submit a credible plan.

SEQUESTRATION

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

Mr. COURTNEY. Yesterday, Defense Secretary Leon Panetta bluntly warned if sequester happens on March 1 it's going to badly damage the readiness of the United States of America. It will go right at readiness, right at maintenance, right at training.

The Navy has told us too it will cancel maintenance on 23 ships, reduce flying hours on deployed aircraft carriers by 55 percent, cancel submarine deployments, and reduce steaming days by 22 percent.

The Bipartisan Policy Center has warned us that 1 million jobs will be lost if sequester happens.

What is the response of the majority party? The Budget chair, Mr. RYAN, simply said, ''Sequester is going to happen. We can't afford to lose those cuts.''

For the sake of our economy, for the sake of our national defense, we have to do better than that. Congress must adopt the President's balanced plan and avoid the economic and military calamity, a calamity that can easily be avoided.

REPLACING PRESIDENT OBAMA'S SEQUESTER

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

Mr. BOEHNER. Mr. Speaker, President Obama missed a great opportunity today to help our economy. This was supposed to be the day that the President submitted his budget to the Congress, but it's not coming. It's going to be late. Some reports say that it could be as long as a month late. I think that's too bad. Our economy could use some Presidential leadership right now.

On Thursday, the President disbanded his jobs council after a grand total of four meetings in two years. Then, as Americans got to work on Friday, they learned that our economy still isn't creating enough jobs. The unemployment rate actually went up.

Now, if government spending does cause growth, as the President believes, we shouldn't be having these problems. And then maybe it wouldn't be so disappointing that his budget is late.

Printed on recycled paper.

Well, we are having trouble, in large part because spending is the problem. It's what's chasing jobs overseas and causing much anxiety about our future.

One example of something the President's budget could have addressed is his sequester. A sequester is Washington-speak for automatic spending cuts. The President first proposed the sequester in 2011 and insisted that it be part of the debt limit agreement.

Now, twice the House has passed legislation to replace the President's sequester with commonsense reforms that would reduce spending and preserve and strengthen our safety net for future generations. We've spelled it all out. We've done our work because we're committed to getting spending under control, and we've long said there's a better way to cut spending.

Unfortunately, our Democratic colleagues in the Senate haven't taken action. They haven't acted on our plan to replace the President's sequester or haven't offered one of their own.

What we should do is replace the President's sequester with responsible reforms that will help balance the budget in 10 years. Our goal is to grow the economy, expand opportunity and prosperity, and ensure America maintains its leading role in the world with a strong national defense.

To do that we need to budget responsibly. We need a budget that reflects those priorities. But to replace the President's sequester, we need our Democratic colleagues to get serious about spending.

I wish I could give the American people more cause for optimism, but we see the President's budget is late and the Senate hasn't passed a budget in nearly four years.

This week the House will act on a measure introduced by the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. PRICE) that requires the President to submit a balanced budget, because we know—and I think the American people agree—spending is the problem. And the sooner we solve our spending problem, the sooner we'll solve our jobs problem too.

□ 1410

THANK YOU, LIZARD'S THICKET

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, in 1977, Bob and Anna Williams moved back to Columbia, South Carolina, from Alabama and opened a restaurant. Due to their hard work, Lizard's Thicket is now one of South Carolina's finest restaurant chains, celebrating 35 years of service. This real country cooking operation has grown to serve over 12,000 patrons a day at 15 different locations. Not only do people across the Palmetto State choose to dine at Lizard's Thicket for the outstanding home-style cooking, they also return time after time for the exceptional customer service.

For the past few decades, my wife, Roxanne, and I have always cherished taking our children, grandchildren, and mother-in-law to this great restaurant where we enjoy completing the meal with a warm serving of peach cobbler.

I am extremely grateful for the Williams family, their three generations of service, and the jobs they have provided across the Midlands. I wish them future success and look forward to dining with them for another 35 years.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

IN MEMORY OF TED OGLE

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

Mr. MESSER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of one of my constituents and a dear friend, Ted Ogle.

Ted was a loving husband and father, a loyal friend, and a highly effective public leader with a great passion for his country, his State, and his community. Over the last decade, Ted's work touched the careers of Hoosier elected leaders all across our State.

On a personal note, I will be forever indebted to Ted Ogle. Ted was one of the first and most vocal supporters in my campaign for State representative 10 years ago and, as Sixth District chairman, played a central role in last year's campaign for U.S. Congress.

Ted loved his family, loved his country and State, loved his friends, and loved the Indiana Republican Party. His passing came way too soon. Ted Ogle will never be forgotten, and he will be forever missed.

I ask the entire Sixth District to keep Anne, their children Eric and Nadia, and the entire Ogle family in your thoughts and prayers in the coming weeks and months.

PASS PAYCHECK FAIRNESS ACT

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

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, last week on the fourth anniversary of the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act, I met with women leaders in my district to discuss the importance of ensuring women earn equal pay for equal work.

The women I met with told personal and powerful stories of how continued wage disparities have affected their families. In cities like Flint, Saginaw, and Bay City, women still only earn about 74 cents for every dollar that men do. That is unacceptable.

Mr. Speaker, the time is long overdue for women to be paid equal pay for equal work. Women make up half of our workforce, yet they are not paid the same as men for the same work. This means women have less money for groceries, for rent, for child care, and for the everyday needs of their families.

Mr. Speaker, that's why I have cosponsored the Paycheck Fairness Act, which seeks to close disparities in pay. It's time to pass the Paycheck Fairness Act. Until women receive equal pay for equal work, we will not be the just society that we ought to be.

UNLEASHING ECONOMIC POTENTIAL OF HARDWORKING AMERICANS

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

Mr. ROTHFUS. Mr. Speaker, last week we received troubling economic news. In January, unemployment went up and 169,000 people gave up looking for work. And the economy stopped growing and actually shrank.

I rise today in solidarity with those looking for work and a higher income to pay their bills, loans, and mortgages. Those seeking a better lot want to know: Where are the jobs?

Before we address any other issue grabbing headlines today, Congress and the President need to make a priority of unleashing the potential of hardworking Americans and creating the conditions for a healthy economy. We must balance our budget, reform the Tax Code, reduce excessive regulations, and expand energy production.

I call on my colleagues in this House to refocus their attention and to work to accomplish these goals so that the American people can get back to pursuing their dreams.

AMERICA HAS A SPENDING PROBLEM

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

Mr. BENTIVOLIO. Mr. Speaker, America has a spending problem. The numbers don't lie. With the national debt at $16 trillion and climbing, each American's share is more than $50,000. Things only stand to get worse. In fact, Federal spending is now projected to double to 40 percent of GDP in the next three decades. This out-of-control spending is a drag on our economy and a threat to our future.

The American people agree. Polls by Gallup, the Winston Group, and Politico last month indicate that Americans overwhelmingly support cutting government spending over raising taxes to address our debt. Despite the facts, President Obama and his fellow Democrats continue to deny we have a spending problem, pointing to more revenue as the answer to our debt crisis.

This Congress, House Republicans are committed to working together to find real spending cuts, meaningful reforms of the entitlement programs that are