

outstanding first responders and emergency management officials because, when times truly get tough, we rely on them to protect our loved ones, neighbors, and friends, and we rely on them to save lives.

This past week, a nearly unprecedented wave of frigid temperatures and snow bore down on the Hoosier State. In Madison County, Indiana, windchills plummeted to nearly 40 degrees below zero. In Hamilton County, Indiana, more than a foot of snow made roads unpassable. At one point, there were more than 70,000 power outages in our State, and schools actually still remain closed even today, for the entire week.

Fortunately, Hoosiers were able to rely on a coordinated and effective response from government officials, first responders, utility providers, and volunteers. They relied on our National Guard, which stepped up to assist in clearing roads. They relied on police officers and firefighters, who went door-to-door. They relied on the Red Cross, which set up numerous emergency shelters. In Indianapolis, they relied on the Mayor's Action Center, which took more than 10,000 calls to address their concerns.

It is times like these when we are reminded how much we rely on our emergency management people. We rely on them to be ready, and they always answer the call. For that, we are so grateful.

EXTEND UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS

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

Mr. CÁRDENAS. Mr. Speaker, less than 2 weeks ago, more than 1 million Americans lost access to unemployment insurance benefits. Another 3.5 million will be impacted if Congress doesn't act. American families will lose that tiny amount of money, that small amount of money that keeps food on the table for millions of Americans.

Has unemployment decreased? Well, it has decreased a bit. But unfortunately, unemployment is still too high for the people of the San Fernando Valley and many places around our country. Californians have already lost more than \$64 million in unemployment income just in this past week.

This is unacceptable. We cannot balance the budget on the backs of Americans struggling to buy food for their families; and, unfortunately, the budget that was passed recently did just that.

We must act now and pass an unemployment insurance extension bill immediately. We need to continue the opportunity for these millions of American families to be able to put food on the table. That is the America that we grew up in, and that is the America that we have to figure out how to keep going forward.

An extension of unemployment insurance occurred under President George

W. Bush, continues under President Obama, but this Congress needs to act to make sure we continue now.

HONORING THE LIFE OF AMIRI BARAKA

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

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, today I come to the floor to honor the life and legacy of an icon, poet Amiri Baraka, who died yesterday in his hometown of Newark, New Jersey, at the age of 79.

Born during a time when racial tensions were at their peak, Amiri Baraka used poetry to empower and enlighten. He eventually founded the Black Arts Movement of the 1960s and '70s in Newark and around the country, and received countless awards for his contributions to the arts.

My father and he attended high school together, and I will never forget, as a youngster, hearing Amiri Baraka's poetry and recognizing the power his written words had over a person, regardless of race, age, or gender.

Amiri Baraka was not only a poet, he was an activist. In 1969, he organized the Black and Puerto Rican Convention, which brought those communities together at a time when it looked bleak. He also was one of the main organizers and the keynote speaker of the 1972 Black Political Convention in Gary, Indiana. His profound words were influential as many searched for meaning in some of the most troubling struggles of our time, like civil rights, war, oppression, and poverty.

My heartfelt condolences go out to the entire Baraka family, including my former colleague, Newark City Council Member Ras Baraka, and his brother Amiri Baraka, whom I have come very close to over the course of the past 4 or 5 years. To their mother, who has brought me in as almost a son as well, my deepest sympathy. I know where you are. I have been there just a short while ago. But let it be known, today the Nation is in deep mourning at his passing.

LIBERTY AND TYRANNY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, sometimes people say, Gee, if you are back here in Texas, you ought to be in Washington in session. I have to remind them that when we are in session, it is often the single biggest threat to American liberty, because when we are in session, we pass laws; and most every law, in some way, impacts people's liberty in one way or another, for good or for bad.

So often we think we know so much more here in Washington, that we can do so much better than others. And, of

course, that message is not helped by ignorance in the media, particularly left-wing and so many in the mainstream.

Mr. Speaker, I spoke a couple of days ago here about a real burden on my heart for women who are lured into ruts by promises of money by the Federal Government, lured into dependence, and how that is immoral for the government to do that. The government is not supposed to encourage or lure people into conduct that is not helpful to the individual. The government is supposed to be about encouraging good conduct. But if you do evil, then you should be afraid of the government because, as Romans says, God didn't give the sword to the government in vain.

That is the point, that we should not be about encouraging or paying people to engage in conduct that is hurtful to them. And yet ignorance in the left wing of our media is so pervasive that you could actually have people write stories saying I was up here blaming single moms. I mean, it is either ignorance or just complete dishonesty of people that want to destroy the very fabric and foundation of this country because of their ill will for all that is good and wholesome.

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Why would they want to protect a system that lures people into dependency and prevents them from reaching their God-given potential? I realize some of them don't believe there is a God, and that is problematic because, since the Founders believed that we were endowed by a Creator with certain inalienable rights, among those life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, if you don't believe there is a Creator, it creates a problem, because then you have to think that government is the sole source of your rights, and if that is the case, you really have no rights.

C.S. Lewis pointed out after he went from being an atheist to being a believer in some God, some universal authority of right and wrong, if you don't believe that, then there can be no justice, no right and no wrong, if there is not a universal standard. So if it is relying on some government to establish what is right and not an innate sense instilled in us by some Higher Power, then there's no hope for most people of ever having rights, freedoms and liberties as we have had in this country.

It is plain that as we become more and more secular, there become fewer and fewer liberties and less and less privacy. Now especially, looking at ObamaCare, the government invades every room in the house. It used to be that our liberal friends here in the House complained repeatedly if they thought a Republican bill might, in some way, invade some room in the house. Yet without a single Republican vote, the Democrats passed through a law that invades every room in the house.