

our economy and to national security. Republicans would rather cut Medicare, education, and medical research than close a single wasteful tax loophole or ask a single millionaire to contribute a little more. The Republicans should stop protecting millionaires, billionaires, and wealthy corporations and start working with us to pass an alternative to these terrible cuts that protect the middle class. We want to start to do something to begin changing this so we protect the middle class. We must not jeopardize the progress of the last 4 years.

Even though our work to restore economic prosperity must continue, we should take pride in the 35 months of private sector job growth and 6.1 million new American jobs. Imagine how many more jobs could be created with just a little cooperation from our Republican colleagues.

Now our friends across the aisle have another opportunity to engage constructively. They have a second chance to work with Democrats to rebuild the middle class by investing in that which in the past has made Americans strong—world-class roads, bridges, dams, peerless schools, industrial factories, and creative entrepreneurs who are the best in the world.

President Ronald Reagan, in his first address of a joint session of Congress, spoke of these building blocks of prosperity. Ronald Reagan said:

Substance and prosperity of our Nation is built by wages brought home from the factories and the mills, the farms, and the shops. They are the services provided in 10,000 corners of America: the interest on the thrift of our people and the returns for their risk-taking. The production of America is the possession of those who build, serve, create, and produce.

He didn't say the substance of our Nation is built on profits gleaned from shipping jobs overseas. He didn't say the prosperity of America is the possession of investment banks or wealthy oil companies alone. Rather, he said, our substance and prosperity are earned in factories, mills, farms, and shops. The rewards belong to all those who build, serve, create, and produce—not only to the few strong enough or rich enough to take for themselves.

It is time to return to those roots. It is time to remember fairness is not just a principle for which to strive but a powerful engine of growth and prosperity for all Americans.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican leader is recognized.

STATE OF THE UNION

Mr. McCONNELL. I would like to say a word about last night's State of the Union. To me, at least, the occasion cried out for bold and courageous leadership from a reelected President who

has run his last campaign. It called for a President who was willing to stare down America's challenges, reject the easy choices, and step outside his political comfort zone to unite a deeply divided public behind a common goal.

Sadly, history will record no such moment. An opportunity to bring together the country instead became another retreat of lip service and liberalism.

For a Democratic President entering his second term, it was simply unequal to the moment. Following 4 years of this President's unwillingness to challenge liberal dogma, we have more of the same. The President spoke about energy infrastructure but didn't even mention the Keystone Pipeline. He chose the Nation's biggest stage to promote something that is inefficient and costly, such as solar panels, instead of something that is proven, reliable, and domestically produced, such as coal.

He advocated tax reform but mostly as a way to increase the size of government, not as a way to increase our competitiveness. He spoke of workers' minimum wages instead of their maximum potential.

In short, with the exception of his impressive delivery and trademark style, last night's speech was pedestrian, liberal boilerplate that any Democratic lawmaker could have given at any time in recent memory. Gun control, cap and trade, tax increases, and spending programs are exactly what we have come to expect from a liberal President who seems perfectly content to preside over a divided country and a stagnant economy.

Of course, everyone recognizes the President is a very good campaigner. We all acknowledge his skill in that area. He will be doing more of that today down in North Carolina.

A State of the Union Address should be about something bigger. Instead of dividing Americans, it should unite them. Instead of inflaming passions, it should show what is possible when the two parties actually work together.

I am glad he mentioned things such as expanding trade opportunities with Asia and Europe. That is an area where we can cooperate, and I look forward to working with colleagues from both parties to do just that.

Overall, I am disappointed. I am especially disappointed he chose not to seriously address the transcendent issue of our time, which is finding a way to control our spiraling debt before it controls us. If we don't do that, we will not be able to leave our children the kind of country our parents left us; that is, a goal all of us should share.

Take the Obama sequester as just one example. The President had a chance last night to offer a thoughtful alternative to his sequester, one that could reduce spending in a smarter way. That is what Republicans have been calling for all along, and it is the kind of thing the House has already voted to do not once but twice. We

want to work with him to actually make that happen.

Instead we just heard gimmicks and tax hikes, just one more plan from the President that is designed to fail so he can blame others when it does fail. It is too bad for the country. It truly is.

The American people, in their collective judgment, decided to send divided government to Washington. I am sure the President wishes that weren't so, but it is the reality, and Americans look to him to use forums such as the State of the Union to bring people together and get things done with the government we have, not the one the President wishes he had. That is what Ronald Reagan did, and he accomplished great things. President Clinton was able to get quite a bit done with divided government too.

Why is it this President can't seem to demonstrate the same kind of leadership? He says he wants balance—balance. His approach so far has been anything but. Just as "investment" has become a Washington code word for more spending, "balance" has now become a code word for my way or the highway.

Remember, the President already received the additional revenue he wanted in January. He didn't agree to a single cut in spending then, just revenue. Obviously, the balanced thing to do now would be to look at cuts. Last night the President didn't propose any real cuts; he just demanded more and more taxes. With a \$16 trillion debt, he actually called for more spending too, although he didn't say how he would pay for it or even how much it would cost. Pretend, for a moment, the Republicans agreed to go along with all those taxes and all that spending. What do you think he would demand the next time and the time after that? Of course, more taxes and more spending. And we all know Washington uses tax increases to fund even more spending on things such as robosquirrels and Solyndra, not to reduce the deficit. That is what history shows us. It is how we got in this mess in the first place.

So we are not going to play the Washington game. The stakes for American families are too high to keep taking the easy way out, with more taxes and more wasteful spending. Republicans believe taking on this massive burden of debt should be more important in this town than winning the next election. That is why we need commonsense reforms, such as a balanced budget amendment. All Republicans support it, and Democrats should too. But we won't get anywhere as a nation if the President refuses to lead. We just can't. So the question is, Will he lead or will he continue this endless campaign?

I want to end on a positive note, so I would like to point out that there were areas of agreement last night, and I particularly appreciated the President's reference to Burma. And Senator RUBIO did a great job with the Republican address. I hope the President

will actually listen to some of the things Senator RUBIO said, and I hope he will come back to Congress with some different ideas. We can get important things done in his second term, and if he is ready to come to the center, to the political center, we will.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to peak therein for up to 10 minutes each, with the Republicans controlling the first 30 minutes and the majority controlling the second 30 minutes.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. JOHANNIS. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

(The remarks of Mr. JOHANNIS pertaining to the introduction of S. 317, S. 318, S. 319, and S. 320 are printed in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

Mr. JOHANNIS. Madam President, I yield the floor and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

A CASE OF AMNESIA

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, after listening to President Obama's State of the Union speech last night, I was left scratching my head. Essentially, the President wants us to pretend the last 4 years never happened. He wants us to pretend his economic policies have delivered a strong recovery from the recession of 2008; he wants us to pretend his administration has made real progress on reducing the national debt; and he wants us to pretend that more taxes, more spending, and more debt are the key to middle-class prosperity. In other words, the President is hoping we all have a case of amnesia.

He wants us to forget about \$5.8 trillion in new debt that was racked up

during his first term—\$5.8 trillion. He wants us to forget our gross national debt is now larger than our entire economy—100 percent of our gross domestic product. He wants us to forget the debt is projected to grow even further, to \$26 trillion, by 2023; and he wants us to forget his health care bill will increase taxes by \$1 trillion over the next 10 years. He wants us to forget America's credit rating has been downgraded for the first time in our history.

He also wants us to forget we have been suffering through the weakest economic recovery since the Great Depression, as well as the highest, longest period of high unemployment since the Great Depression.

He wants us to forget that nearly 4 out of every 10 unemployed Americans have been jobless for at least 6 months. He wants us to forget that the average family median income has fallen by nearly \$2,500 since the official end of the recession. He wants us to forget that the cost of health insurance for the average American family has increased by more than \$2,300. And he wants us to forget that as part of the fiscal cliff negotiation, the payroll tax went back up, taking an additional bite out of the check of middle-class workers.

Last night President Obama said we should ask ourselves three questions every day—those of us with the privilege of serving here in the Nation's Capital in the Congress and in the administration. He said: No. 1, how do we attract more jobs to our shores? No. 2, how do we equip people with the skills they need in order to get those jobs? And No. 3, how do we make sure hard work leads to a decent living? I may have my differences with President Obama on a number of policies, but I actually think those are really good questions.

If the President is truly serious about finding the answers to those questions, this may not surprise my colleagues, but he need look only to the model reflected in my home State of Texas.

I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD an article entitled "The Texas Growth Machine" at the end of my remarks.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

(See exhibit 1.)

Mr. CORNYN. The fact is our State relies on a simple economic model the Federal Government could emulate if it would like to have similar positive results: lower taxes, limited government, sensible regulations, and progrowth energy policies.

I know the occupant of the chair comes from a State that I believe is the second largest producer of oil and gas in the country—second only to Texas—and I know the Presiding Officer has seen the economic engine that is created when we unleash our potential when it comes to our energy resources. These are policies that recently helped

Texas turn a \$5 billion deficit during the recession into an \$8.8 billion surplus. These are the policies that made our State a robust engine of job creation that is attracting Americans from all across the country. The total number of jobs in Texas since 1995 has grown at the rate of 32 percent. When we compare that with the rate of growth of jobs in America nationwide, we see it is 12 percent—32 percent to 12 percent. That is not an accident.

Texas is also a leader in the creation of high-paying jobs. Between 2002 and 2012, our State accounted for close to one-third of all U.S. private sector job growth in industries that pay more than 150 percent of the average wage, even though we have only 8 percent of America's total population.

Last night the President talked about, How do we get middle-class wages up? His prescription was an increase in the minimum wage, but I say why don't we look at ways to achieve a maximum wage by creating private sector, high-paying, good jobs, as we have been successful in doing in Texas and as a few other States have done as well.

After 4 years of trillion-dollar deficits and historically high unemployment—right now our unemployment rate is roughly 7.9 percent, but that doesn't really account for all of the people who have since given up looking for work, and it is estimated that more than 20 million Americans either are out of work or they are working part time when they would like to work full time, but they can't find those kinds of jobs.

I believe it is time for the President and this Congress to try a new approach. The great thing about our system of government—of shared sovereignty between the States and the National Government—is that we have essentially laboratories of democracy all around our country where we can try different things to see what works and what does not work. I only hope the President and Congress will look at those places around the country where the policies actually work in creating jobs and economic growth.

I believe it is time for the President to embrace policies that will encourage private entrepreneurship, private sector job creation, income growth, and greater domestic energy production. In short, it is time for him to embrace the Texas model.

EXHIBIT 1

THE TEXAS GROWTH MACHINE

(By Wendell Cox)

The American economy has had little to cheer about since the 2008 financial meltdown and the resulting recession. Recovery has been feeble, and many states continue to struggle. One bright spot in the general gloom, however, is Texas, which began shining long before 2008. Not only has Texas created jobs at a stunning rate; it has also—pace critics like the New York Times's Paul Krugman—created lots of good jobs. Indeed, the rest of the nation could turn to the Lone Star State as a model for dynamic growth, as a close look at employment data shows.