

this shutdown is bad now, believe me, we are really going to be paying the price if the Republicans get their way when their crown jewel, the special interest tax breaks, and their huge education and Medicare cuts are proposed or go through.

To add insult to injury, the Gingrich Republicans are now talking about calling it quits and going home while people in my district and across this Nation continue to suffer the consequences of the shutdown.

Mr. Speaker, 198 House Democrats want to keep working, working to end the shutdown. The other body wants to keep working; for Pete's sake, BOB DOLE wants to keep working, and as he said just yesterday or earlier this week, enough is enough. But it is the Gingrich Republicans who would rather go home than get Government up and running again. It is the Gingrich Republicans who are willing to hang on to their radical agenda no matter what the impact is on American people, and it is the Gingrich Republicans who are willing to use Federal workers and Federal services, services, by the way, that have been paid for by taxpayers, to try to blackmail the budget process.

Mr. Speaker, for the people of this country, for the families and businesses in my district and across the country, for the honor of this institution, I say to the other party across the aisle here, do not even think about sending us home. We belong here; we must continue working, and we must stop this shutdown and we must do it now.

COMMUNITIES PULLING TOGETHER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Nevada [Mr. ENSIGN] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. ENSIGN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay special tribute to four banks in southern Nevada. Sunstate Bank, Pioneer Citizens Bank, American Bank of Commerce and Bank West. These four banks, Mr. Speaker, have decided to give interest-free loans to Federal workers who are either furloughed or working and not receiving their full paychecks. This is a private-sector solution happening for community banks helping local people. This is a solution that shows that not all answers have to come from the Federal level.

Mr. Speaker, the presidents of these banks, when I approached them about making these loans, these interest-free loans to Federal employees, jumped at the chance. That is the way local communities pull together. These are people living in the local community; they understand the needs of the local people, and they were willing to pull together to help these Federal employees through this difficulty that each one of them is going through at this point.

A few things that have been addressed tonight, Mr. Speaker, that I would also like to address because in

this context of Federal employees being furloughed, we are talking about balancing the Federal budget: There are many, many good people on the other side of the aisle who have talked about balancing the budget and actually have brought a balanced budget to the table. It is something President Clinton himself promised to bring to the table in November, which he has failed to do up to this point. I commend the Democrats in the Congress who have been willing to follow their words with actions and actually bring a balanced budget to the table.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we all know that actions speak louder than words, and in our negotiating, we need to have people to keep their word. But let us keep the bigger picture in mind, Mr. Speaker. Let us keep the big picture of what this country is about.

For the last 26 years, Republicans and Democrats have voted for deficits now that have totaled a national debt of over \$5 trillion. It is immoral to live and to pass on debt to your children and your grandchildren while you enjoy the benefits of that spending.

I just had a little girl born on December 2. Every child born in the United States last year has a \$187,000 bill hanging over their heads just to pay interest on the national debt in their lifetime. They get nothing for that, just interest, because career politicians here in Washington have been unwilling to say no to special interest groups.

Mr. Speaker, I think that the freshman class came here to do something different. We were elected to say no to the big spending career politicians in Washington, and we are doing that, Mr. Speaker. Today we are faced with the opportunity, the greatest opportunity any of us could have imagined, to actually balance the Federal budget over the next 7 years. Frankly, many of us think that it is too long, 7 years is too long. Some people think that 10 years is maybe the amount of time that we should spend. Seven years I think to most Americans, they think that it is too long as well.

For the last 7 years, we spent a little over \$9 trillion, total Federal spending. In the next 7 years under these Republican cuts that you hear about, we are going to spend over \$12 trillion, almost \$3 trillion more in Federal spending under the Republican plan, and we hear in Washington that is a cut. That is why many of us think that 7 years is actually too long.

Medicare alone, the last 7 years, we spent a little over \$900 billion. The next 7 years under Medicare, Mr. Speaker, we are going to spend under the Republican plan of cuts that you hear about, over \$1.6 trillion. That is over \$700 billion more in the next 7 years versus the last 7 years.

Mr. Speaker, this year in the United States we spend in Medicare \$4,800 per person in Medicare this year. Under the Republican plan in the year 2002, we will spend a little over \$7,100 under the Republican cuts that you hear about, \$4,800 to \$7,100.

Under the President's plan, we would be looking at \$7,200. A difference of actually \$137 a month out of over \$7,000 per person spending. It is a minute amount, and yet we hear how the Republicans are going to be throwing old people out in the streets, they will not be able to get quality medical care. I think that if you ask any American if they actually thought about a cut in Medicare, they would think that if you are spending \$4,800 a year now, that you would actually be spending less of that in the year 2002 per person.

Mr. Speaker, let us just let the facts speak for themselves. Let us do what is right for the future of America, for my children, for your children and the future of America's children.

REPUBLICAN LEADERSHIP SHOULD KEEP ITS WORD

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Georgia [Mr. BISHOP] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BISHOP. Mr. Speaker, I have heard a lot about keeping their word. I think one of the most interesting things that has happened this year is that during the first 100 days as a part of the so-called Contract With America, there was an item that some of us supported called the line-item veto.

We passed the line-item veto. It passed both Houses of the Congress and yet it has not been sent to the President for his signature. They will not send it. They will not keep their word, because had there been a line-item veto, we would not be in this shutdown that we are now in. We would be able to continue the operation of Government and the American people would no longer be suffering, and only those items in the budget where there was a bone of contention would be on the table for discussion.

Keeping their word, the Republican leadership ought to keep its word and send to the President a line-item veto and get us out of this shutdown.

There are some of us that have supported a 7-year balanced budget, some in the 103d Congress using CBO numbers, but having no tax cut.

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We are being led to believe that the reason that the Government is shut down is because Democrats and the President will not agree to a 7-year balanced budget using CBO numbers. The real bone of contention is the tax cut, 245 billion dollars' worth for wealthy people, while cutting in half the tax breaks and adding to the taxes of the working poor, people who earn \$26,000 a year or less, by repealing half of their earned income tax credit.

I must agree with Senator DOLE—enough is enough. This message comes across loud and clear from my constituents in the Second District of Georgia.

For the second time in 3 months, the U.S. Government ran out of money and

nine Federal agencies serving millions of Americans shut their doors. The shutdown occurred after a short-term funding resolution expired and Republicans failed to pass a fair and equitable funding bill for the various agencies.

The cost to the taxpayers of this budget failure increases every day that the impasse continues. As the Government shutdown enters its 20th day and the cost of that shutdown to the American taxpayer is \$50 million each business day, citizens from southwest Georgia are also experiencing this shutdown in other ways.

My constituents are fed up with a shutdown that stops money for the Older Americans Senior Citizens Center, a facility that has provided needed services such as meals and transportation. Meals on Wheels for many senior citizens in Macon, GA; a shutdown that stopped 40 students and teachers from Whigam Elementary School in Whigam, GA from touring the White House, the FBI, the Smithsonian Institute, and from laying a wreath at the tomb of the unknown soldier at Arlington National Cemetery after a 2-year fund-raising effort on their part; a shutdown that stops access to passports for members of the African Methodist Episcopal Church who want to travel to South Africa to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the founding of their church in that country, a Mercer University student from Cordele, GA, who earned a fellowship to study this semester in England; and for a Kendrick High School student in Columbus who could not go to Japan on a nonrefundable ticket that she worked a year to purchase, all because she could not get a passport because of the shutdown; a shutdown that stops many Federal workers from paying house payments, utility bills, car notes, and from buying food and medication for family members.

Mr. Speaker, this is immoral and unconscionable. Enough is enough. It is time for Republicans to offer a funding bill, a fair and equitable funding bill that will reopen the Government and still continue the budget negotiations. Americans have been away from their jobs long enough and without services long enough.

Mr. Speaker, the House should take up and pass H.R. 1643 to end the shutdown of the Government, to return Federal workers to work and restore needed services to American citizens. Then we should pass a fair and equitable balanced budget, 7 years, using CBO numbers, without a tax cut until the budget is balanced.

CONGRESS NEEDS TO FINISH ITS WORK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. (Mr. METCALF). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Maryland [Mr. CARDIN] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. Speaker, I have the opportunity to travel back to my dis-

trict every day. I live close enough to home to be able to do that, and I have the chance to talk to my constituents every day and learn firsthand of the hardships that are being caused because of our failure to do our work and get our budget passed on time.

I have had a chance to talk to the people at our veterans hospital, in which supplies are dangerously low, affecting the quality of health care for our veterans; where money for transportation for rehabilitation services is not available to take care of our veterans' needs.

I received a telephone call from a constituent in Howard County, MD who has a FHA-insured mortgage and wants to participate in the mortgage assignment program but cannot find anyone at HUD to make that review because of the furloughs in that agency.

I have talked to a small business owner who trains SSA employees, whose classrooms are closed because of our inability to fund appropriations for that agency. The small business owner is in danger of laying off many of his employees and closing his operation.

This morning I had coffee with a law enforcement officer who is working without pay, whose life is on the line every day, who made some arrests yesterday. I talked to that law enforcement officer for some time. He explained to me the morale issues within his agency.

How do you explain some people working without pay, some people not working without pay, and Federal taxpayers paying their taxes and not receiving Government services? You cannot explain that to our constituents. It is unfair, it is wrong. It is unfair to Federal workers, it is unfair to Federal taxpayers.

And now we hear that the Committee on Rules has recommended a rule that will allow the Speaker to give recess authority so that we will go home with our Federal workers still on furlough, without getting our work done. That is wrong and should not be allowed.

Mr. Speaker, I have taken this time this evening to inform my colleagues of a resolution that I am filing. This resolution will prohibit us going into a recess or adjournment during any period of a lapsed appropriation for the Federal Government. We should not leave here until we have gotten our work done. It would be unconscionable for us to leave with the appropriations not available to keep Federal offices open.

I hope my colleagues will join me and cosponsor this resolution to make it clear that we will stay here until we get our work done.

Our first order should be to pass a continuing resolution. We should have done that 20 days ago. We should do that first, open up the Government offices, allow Federal taxpayers to get their services for the taxes that they have paid. That should be our first order.

After we have done that, we should negotiate in good faith, be willing to

compromise for a budget that, yes, is balanced in 7 years but also protects the priorities that are important to the people of this Nation.

In doing that, I think we do have the framework to reach a bipartisan agreement on a budget. Look at the coalition budget that now is getting much praise. Many of us have been speaking for a long time in favor of that approach and have been looking for help for our colleagues in this House and the Senate. That particular budget provides the opportunity for us to balance the budget within 7 years and hold true to the priorities that are important to the American people.

But we will never get that opportunity unless we restore decent order in our community. That requires us on a bipartisan basis tonight to pass a continuing resolution so that Federal workers can work and that our taxpayers can get the services that they have paid for.

I hope that we can find that bipartisan cooperation in this House so that we can do the people's work, open Government back up and then move forward with the budget of this country.

DEMOCRATS TO CONTINUE TO FIGHT TO SUPPORT MIDDLE CLASS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Tennessee [Mr. CLEMENT] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CLEMENT. Mr. Speaker, I join the gentleman from Maryland [Mr. CARDIN] in his legislation because I feel strongly we must stay here until we get the job completed. Part of that assignment is to get the Federal workers back to work because this partial shutdown surely does not make any sense at all.

As a Member of Congress, I have had the opportunity to vote in support of a balanced budget amendment and I am proud of it, and we passed it in the House of Representatives. It failed by one vote in the U.S. Senate.

Since I have been a Member of Congress, I have also had the opportunity to support and vote for a line-item veto, and why the Republicans and the Republican leadership would hold it up now simply because we have a Democratic President, and the same Republicans year after year when we had a Republican President in office wanted a line-item veto, and now when we have the opportunity, that window of opportunity to have a line-item veto, we do not have it because the Republicans have held it up.

We have not gotten much credit in the last few years for cutting the budget deficits in half, but we have accomplished that objective by working together. We have downsized the military. The cold war is over. That is a major achievement for the U.S. Congress and something we all ought to be proud of. We have downsized the Federal Government. We needed to do it.