

wonderful individuals in my congressional district: Betti and Carlos Lidski, National Trustees of The Foundation Fighting Blindness.

The Foundation is working valiantly to find a cure for retinal degenerative diseases. These debilitating diseases currently claim the sight of over six million Americans. Through the tireless efforts of the scientists at the Foundation and through the generosity of individuals like the Lidskis, exciting strides have been made in finding a cure and providing viable treatment options for those who suffer with these illnesses.

I thank Betty and Carlos and their entire family for the love, compassion, and unwavering dedication that they demonstrate every day for the visually impaired. They are truly an inspiration, not only to our South Florida community but indeed to our entire Nation.

Gracias to Betti and Carlos.

URGING THE FCC TO COMPLETE ITS WORK

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

Mr. BOSWELL. Mr. Speaker, as the Members know, I with many others in our Congress have served halfway around the world in a place called Southeast Asia. Sometimes we wondered how long it would take to get the equipment to us. It would take up to a month, but it always arrived. It always got there.

Mr. Speaker, I am sure all of us in this Chamber would agree that we must ensure the government operates efficiently and in a timely manner. However, a situation has come to my attention that I find very troubling.

Three months ago, the FCC adopted its Triennial Review order. I believe the economic implications of this action will be of great benefit throughout our Nation. However, the FCC has had 3 months to issue rules on this action and has done nothing. Meanwhile the companies are held hostage because, quite frankly, their hands are tied.

Mr. Speaker, how is it possible the United States can ship a large piece of military equipment halfway around the world in a shorter period of time than it takes the FCC to send its rules up a flight of stairs?

I am here today urging the FCC to complete its work and bring some certainty to the telecommunications industry so that our Nation can move forward and our economy can once again begin to grow.

JOBS AND GROWTH PACKAGE

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

Mr. REHBERG. Mr. Speaker, today or tonight this body will get another

chance to vote on the Jobs and Growth package. The benefits of this bill are so obvious, one has to wonder what is going on in the minds of anyone who still opposes it. From their arguments, the opponents in the press and in this building seem to be saying, "Do not create jobs, do not trim taxes, do not stimulate the economy. Washington needs the money to spend on new programs and bigger government."

On the other hand, maybe these tax relief antagonists are saying, "We do not want a Jobs and Growth package because stimulating the employment and energizing the economy will not get us reelected".

Then again, perhaps the jobs and growth opponents are saying "Give the people our money? Oh, no, you don't. It is our money, not the people's money. Every dollar in tax relief is a dollar out of our hands. We cannot let that kind of power slip out of our control."

The truth is, listening to the tortured arguments of those who still oppose this bill makes even the casual observer want to put a bag over his head just for tuning in.

This is not rocket science. Simple economics tells us when we put more money in the hands of working families and small businesses, we get more spending, new jobs and a revived U.S. economy. It works.

EXTENDING UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS

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

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. Speaker, if the House does not act today or tomorrow, 80,000 Americans will be denied extended unemployment benefits on June 1. Every week thereafter, another 80,000 laid-off workers will be denied benefits, totaling \$2 million over the next 6 months. This is in addition to the one million unemployed workers who have already exhausted their extended benefits.

Last week, Democrats tried three times to get a vote on extending unemployment benefits, but each time the Republicans said no. We are now in the longest period of negative job growth since the Great Depression. The unemployed are looking for work, but they cannot find jobs. They need and deserve extension of unemployment benefits.

Mr. Speaker, I would hope that you would entertain a request to immediately consider legislation introduced by the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL) and myself, H.R. 1652, to extend unemployment benefits for millions of Americans who have lost their jobs, not just those who have exhausted their State benefits. This request would simply ensure that the unemployed at least get a vote on the floor before we adjourn. We have the money in the Federal Unemployment Trust Fund to pay for these benefits. That is the least we can do.

BROADBAND REGULATION

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

Mr. BASS. Mr. Speaker, by most measures the United States is the most technologically advanced country in the world. One measure, however, where the U.S. is sorely lacking behind other industrialized nations is high-speed Internet access for citizens and small businesses alike. The United States is not even among the top five countries in these broadband access rates. In fact, we are behind South Korea, Canada, Taiwan and Sweden, just to name a few. The statistics for DSL, a form of broadband that uses the telephone infrastructure, are even worse. The U.S. is not even in the top 10.

The Federal Communications Commission has begun to see that regulation of DSL harms the ability of companies to deploy that technology. Part of the FCC's Triennial Review, adopted this past February, improved some of the DSL regulations. That should help make DSL deployment easier.

However, there are two problems. The first is that the FCC has yet to actually issue these rules agreed upon in February, and the second is that action in February is just a start.

The FCC is looking at whether or not to regulate DSL as a telephone service. The broadband provided over cable, satellite or wireless is not as regulated as telephone.

I urge this body to urge the FCC to move forward on this rule-making process.

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GOING OUT WITH A BANG

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

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, Congress can recess for the Memorial Day break with a big bang. We are going to increase the debt ceiling by \$984 billion, almost \$1 trillion, and also later today the Congress will vote to borrow over \$300 billion to reduce the taxes, principally of a wealthy few in this country, under the premise that under trickle-down economics, they will invest that money in such a way it will create jobs.

Well, the last tax cut of \$1.2 trillion cost the country 1.7 million jobs and caused us to borrow another \$1 trillion, because we are now running deficits.

We could make real investments and put people back to work, investments in roads, bridges, highways, mass transit, sewer, water systems, things that increase the productive capacity of the country and the wealth of the country.

By the administration's own measures, if we diverted that money instead of borrowing it to give to wealthy people in the hope it might create the 1

million jobs the President hopes for, we could create 13 million jobs directly in construction, with a huge spillover in economic activity across the country.

There is a very viable alternative: do not borrow money to give to a few people. Never have we borrowed so much to give to so few.

GOVERNMENT WASTE

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

Mr. CHOCOLA. Mr. Speaker, I came to Congress from a business background, and I ran for Congress in large part because I believe that we need more of a small business perspective here in Washington, especially when it comes to eliminating wasteful spending.

Every day, the families and businesses in my district have to make tough decisions. They have to meet a payroll, they have to live within a budget, and small businesses and families must eliminate wasteful spending. I do not think the Federal Government should be any different.

This year the Heritage Foundation identified \$386 billion of wasteful Federal Government spending. Mr. Speaker, that was \$386 billion. If Congress would only eliminate waste, mismanagement, and inefficiency in the Federal Government, we could save the taxpayers billions and billions of dollars.

But it is not enough to just complain. We have to do something about it. This week the majority leader, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY), and the Committee on the Budget chairman, the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. NUSSLE), announced a significant effort to root out and eliminate government waste during the 108th Congress. I applaud their effort, and I pledge that I will join them and my colleagues to reduce waste, fraud, and abuse in government in my time in Congress. I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to join in this effort.

ON RAISING THE DEBT LIMIT

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

Mr. STENHOLM. Mr. Speaker, at the very time negotiators are putting the final touches on a tax cut that will add several hundred billion dollars to our national debt, the leadership in Congress is planning on slipping through the largest increase in the debt limits in the history of our country, without any debate up or down.

We are about to engage in brinkmanship with the full faith and credit of the United States Government by adjourning before Congress completes action on the debt limit, in order to force the other body to approve the largest debt limit in history. We are going to cut and run.

Mr. Speaker, I am willing to support a temporary increase in the debt limit. In a few moments I will offer a unanimous consent request to approve legislation providing for an increase in the debt limit through the end of the current fiscal year, with the requirement that the President submit a plan to bring our budget back into balance. This will allow us the time to consider a long-term larger increase with the deliberation the serious matter deserves.

If my friends on the other sides of the aisle honestly believe that tax cuts with borrowed money is good economic policy, they should stand up and vote to increase the national debt to pay for their tax cuts, relying on parliamentary maneuvers to avoid an up-or-down vote on the issue.

Mr. Speaker, in light of this, I ask unanimous consent that the House end this charade of borrowing money to pay for tax cuts and immediately take up H.R. 2156, which provides a temporary increase in the public debt, but makes no room for additional debt-financed tax cuts.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LATOURETTE). Under the Speaker's consistent guidelines, the gentleman is not recognized for that purpose, and his time has expired.

KEEPING MONEY IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

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

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, it is really very simple: there is waste in the private sector, just like there is waste in the public sector; but the waste in the business world pales in comparison to the waste in government. Thus, every dollar we can keep in the private sector creates more jobs and lowers more prices. We get more bang for the buck, so to speak, from every dollar kept in private hands.

Who benefits the most from having more jobs and lower prices? The poor and lower-income and working people of this country. This has been proven time and again all over the world. Small government means a good economy. Too much government means a starvation economy where the middle class gets wiped out.

Mr. Speaker, that is what this tax cut is all about. If people really want to help the lower-income and working people of this country, they will support the President's tax cut initiative.

ECONOMIC CLASS WARFARE

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

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. Speaker, the Republican tax plan is nothing more than voodoo economics. Only in Washington would Republicans tell average

American families that raising their national debt is a way to solve this economy's malaise. Raising their debt.

This is not a \$350 billion tax package; it is a \$1 trillion tax package, because no one believes that it will be ultimately eliminated once it is enacted. And that \$1 trillion tax package is a job killer, not a job creator. Ask the 2 million-plus jobs we have already lost under the original Bush tax plan.

And, yes, it has a child tax credit; but then, before you know it, it is taken away and eliminated. But guess what is not eliminated? The accelerated reductions in the top income tax. They are forever. Child tax credit: here today, gone tomorrow. Top tax relief: there forever. That is class warfare.

FEDERAL PRISON INDUSTRIES TAKING AMERICAN JOBS

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

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Mr. Speaker, one of the fastest growing companies in America today is Federal Prison Industries. In the last 2 weeks they have unveiled a brand-new scheme to take jobs from the private sector and move them into Federal Prison Industries.

Their new scheme is, under competitive bidding, companies come in and present their bids; and at the opening, companies get excited because they have won the bid. But Federal Prison Industries comes in and says no, no, no, you do not understand the new bidding process. Give us your bid. We will take a look at it, and then there will be a second round of bidding. But the only company that gets to bid in the second round is Federal Prison Industries.

Mr. Speaker, it is time to stop this charade. It is time to provide best value to government contractors. Let the bidding process work. Let American workers compete against Federal prisons, so they can keep their jobs.

TAX CUT PLAN A FRAUD AND FAILURE

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

Mr. INSLEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to salute the common sense of the American people who, after weeks of stumping by the President, have concluded that this alleged tax cut plan is a fraud and a failure.

According to the Wall Street Journal, Americans two to one have concluded that this plan will have no real effect on U.S. economic performance, and the American people are right. Six out of ten Americans have concluded that this plan shortchanges job creation in favor of tax cuts weighted to the rich; six out of ten Americans have concluded that this tax cut plan benefits the wealthy more than average people; and six out of ten Americans