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Some of them are beginning to figure out there are consequences.

We cannot slash taxes and give millionaires \$112,925 without paying for them. We are paying for these massive tax cuts for the rich with massive deficits for America. The economy has produced 300,000 jobs this month, and none last month, not a single one. This month they say they have 300,000. I do not know, maybe they saved last month's to build up this month's; or whatever they did, 250,000 jobs are required every month to simply maintain. They have not added anything to the economy; they are maintaining.

The administration remains in denial, but some Republicans are beginning to see the truth, and I hope the light, about extending unemployment benefits. Unemployment is getting worse in State after State. My State ranks fourth in the Nation, yet the administration refuses to extend unemployment benefits.

To every American I say this: the money is there in a trust fund to provide for this lifeline program. Not a single dollar in new taxes is needed to extend a helping hand to people who cannot find a job because this administration cannot create one. Not one job, remember, last month.

Now, the other day, Myra, a lady from Washington State who is part of the "Show Me the Jobs" bus trip across America, came here. Fifty-one people representing every State and the District of Columbia went from town to town telling their personal stories of grief and hardship as a result of economic policies of the administration. They ended their trip here the other day because they came to the place where you can actually do something. We tried in December, Scrooge said no from the White House. We tried after the first of the year, the President said no. We tried in February, and the President said no.

The money is there, set aside for this very purpose, paid for by the very people who are out of work, and the President continues to say no.

We have tried over and over again. Just the other day the Democrats tried to get the President and the Republican leadership to extend those benefits on a bill that was before us. Once again, the President, with his warm, compassionate conservative heart said, no.

Now, Myra, you do not have to feel bad. You can hold up your head. You have nothing to be ashamed of, but we do. Because this administration knows the truth of what is happening across America, but will not act.

You have to believe, folks. They want you to pray that there will be a job. People young and old are losing jobs and losing hope. People are graduating from college, they studied hard, they worked hard, they did everything they were supposed to do to get the American dream. Under this President and this Republican leadership, the Amer-

ican dream is turning into a nightmare for millions of Americans. Instead of pay-as-you-go and work-and-you-get, you get from these people, pray-as-you-go. Let us hope our prayers are answered on November 2.

In the meantime, the Congress on this day should pass extended benefits. The money is there, Mr. Speaker. Please tell the President the money is there. I told Myra the money is there. I hope some Republicans finally have the courage to do the right thing and extend benefits now.

OUR GROWING ECONOMY IS CREATING JOBS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BURGESS). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. DREIER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, as we have all seen by now, the Department of Labor released its payroll survey dated today showing that in the month of March the economy created 308,000 new jobs. Mr. Speaker, 308,000 new jobs created in the month of March. It also revised its new jobs data for January and February with sharp increases in both months.

Now, these strong numbers, Mr. Speaker, clearly demonstrate the vitality of our 21st-century economy. They are a reflection of what other indicators like the strength of the stock market, the level of homeownership, and the growth in gross domestic product have shown. They have been telling us for months that we have a growing economy that is creating jobs.

But the real significance of the job creation numbers is what it tells us about the best way to ensure job growth in this country. We would all like a job creation number like 308,000 every single month. It is a strong number that Americans would like to see more of; and everyone here would, of course, like to see that continue. The question is, How can we ensure that those kinds of job numbers continue?

There are always lots of ideas and proposals being touted as the best way to grow the number of American jobs, but they all boil down to essentially two fundamental approaches.

The first is to try, try very hard to keep any existing job that we have from being lost. We have seen this in proposals such as the one included in the presumptive Democratic Presidential candidate, JOHN KERRY's, economic plan. He proposes a tax increase for companies that invest in growing overseas markets in an attempt to prevent any American job from being lost.

Now, many of our colleagues have proposed different approaches like preventing globally engaged companies from bidding for Federal contracts or saddling them with further regulation. But the ultimate goal is always the same: to prevent any job from being lost.

These job-preservation proposals may be new here in the United States; but

they are old news, they are old news in Western Europe. For years, countries like France and Germany have imposed strict regulations in an attempt to prevent any company from ever making an employment decision that would possibly eliminate a single job.

For example, both countries, France and Germany, require a significant notification period before a company can reduce its workforce. France guarantees all workers a hearing; and in Germany, a worker can go to court and get a preliminary injunction to stay on the job until the issue is resolved in the courts.

Now, at first glance, these "job security" measures may seem like a good idea. After all, they are clearly intended to save jobs and prevent hardship for workers. But have they worked? Are the French and German people better off than the American people are?

Well, let us look at the jobs data. It clearly shows that they are not. In France, the unemployment rate has been stuck around 10 percent, more than double the unemployment rate that we have here. In Germany, the job situation is almost as bleak, with a long-term average of over 8 percent unemployment.

Growth in GDP has been at a near standstill for many years in both of those countries as well. Neither country has seen an annual growth rate of over 2 percent in a long time. Remember, we had an 8.1 percent growth rate a couple of months ago, and we are going along now at an excess of 4 percent growth that is double what France and Germany have seen. New business start-ups, venture capital, research and development, by virtually every possible measure, the French and German economies and job markets are very, very weak in all of those areas.

Now, Mr. Speaker, these attempts at job preservation clearly failed the workers in France and in Germany. They will not help American workers, either. What will help Americans is encouraging greater job creation.

Fortunately, this is where Americans excel. While the French and Germans have cornered the market on stifling regulation, Americans have long been the global leader in innovation and entrepreneurship. We are the world leader in venture capital, new business start-ups, research and development, and new patents. Our emphasis on creativity, productivity, and free thinking has made our economy the most dynamic in the world. It has allowed Americans to constantly develop new ideas and create new jobs.

In fact, fully 25 percent of all Americans are working in fields that did not even exist in the Department of Labor's job codes 25 years ago; and today, a third of all job creation is in the entrepreneurship categories of self-employment and independent contracting.

If we continue to encourage the innovation that leads to new opportunities, we should be looking at the barriers to

productivity and job creation. We should be looking at ways to minimize the damaging effects of frivolous lawsuits, excessive regulation and taxation, and rising health care costs, just to name a few.

The critical part is that our job growth agenda has got to be a job-creation agenda. We need to recognize that we are on the right track and we can do even better.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. NORTON addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

THE MONEY IS THERE FOR EXTENDING UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. STRICKLAND) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. STRICKLAND. Mr. Speaker, we are going to be leaving Washington, D.C. this afternoon and going back to our home districts, and it saddens me that we are leaving Washington without extending the unemployment benefits that are so desperately needed by so many unemployed Americans.

Just in Ohio alone, since George W. Bush became President of our country, we have lost 236,000 jobs, and 170,000 of those jobs have been high-wage jobs with good benefits. Across the Nation, some 3 million jobs have been lost under the President's watch, making him the first President since Herbert Hoover to actually have a net loss of jobs during his tenure as President. That makes it all the more troubling to me that with so much job loss in our country and so many unemployed workers in my State of Ohio, that we would leave Washington, D.C. for this extended vacation without extending unemployment benefits to our unemployed constituents.

The fact is that in Ohio alone, already, 31,300 workers have exhausted their benefits; and between now and June, this will be 2,200 workers per week who will have exhausted their unemployment benefits.

In my region of eastern Ohio in the Steubenville area, 380 workers have already exhausted their benefits; and by the end of June, that number will swell to 700 workers.

Mr. Speaker, these statistics are not merely numbers; they represent workers. They represent the heads of households. They represent parents who need to provide for themselves and their children, to be able to contribute to their communities and their churches.

That is what we are facing in Ohio. It just is amazing to me that in light of these circumstances, the President's Treasury Secretary, Mr. John Snow,

came to Ohio last week and he verbally defended the outsourcing, the sending of American jobs to other countries, indicating that it strengthens our economy to do so. How can Treasury Secretary Snow or President Bush come to Ohio and look unemployed people in the eye and tell them that they care about them when they deny them these needed resources?

The money is there, Mr. Speaker. What I am suggesting and calling for will not result in an increase in taxes. There are multiple billions of dollars in the unemployment fund, money that has been placed there by workers and employees for just such a time as this. Yet it seems to me that perhaps out of an insensitivity to what is really happening, and unawareness of the tragedy of unemployment, or maybe a hardness of heart, this House and this administration will not support the extension of these benefits. I assume it is because if we extended the benefits it would be an admission that we have not solved the problem of joblessness in this country. Maybe we do not want to add to the accounting that would increase the amount of the deficit. But I want to tell my colleagues, the leadership of this House and the President of the United States have no hesitancy in increasing the deficit if it is necessary in order to give tax breaks to the richest people in this country.

Think of this: here we are leaving Washington, D.C. today, going home and knowing that there are thousands and thousands of unemployed workers who are, on a weekly basis, exhausting their benefits, and who, through no fault of their own, they have lost their jobs.

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But through the resources of this government we can help them. We could lessen the pain that they feel. We could make it possible for them to continue to provide the needed resources for their families. And, yet, we are turning our back on them in their hour of need.

I hope that when President Bush comes to Ohio for his next visit the constituents in Ohio will ask him, Mr. President, why were you unwilling to support an extension of unemployment benefits to those who are out of work?

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BURGESS). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DEFAZIO addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DAVIS of Illinois addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. CONYERS addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. PALLONE addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. RYAN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, it is always a pleasure to follow my fine colleague, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. STRICKLAND), who I think touched on some very important points that we need to address in this Congress and we should not be leaving.

Many of us to go back to our districts, some of us to go on Easter vacation, before we address this issue of unemployment benefits; and I think this issue illustrates for the country exactly how removed the United States Congress actually is from the problems that we are dealing with in middle America.

It is easy for politicians to mouth words that somehow we are supposed to address the problems that we have in this country. But the American people are beginning to realize that the rhetoric that has been coming from the Nation's Capitol, the rhetoric that has been coming from this administration, has not been addressing the issues that face average working families in the State of Ohio. The unemployment rate actually crept up to 5.7 percent.

Do we want jobs to be created in this country? Absolutely. You will never hear me, or I think any other Member of this body, somehow downplay job growth as if it is a bad thing. Because we want the American people to go back to work.

But there is so much that needs to be done with this economy. Let us look for a second at the issue of the minimum wage. I want to talk about a couple of other issues, but for now we want to talk about the minimum wage.

During most of the 1960s and 1970s, working at the minimum wage kept a family of three out of poverty. Today, that same family is 24 percent below the poverty level.

The purchasing power of the current \$5.15 per hour minimum wage is well below that of the 1960s and 1970s level. From its peak in 1968, the purchasing power of the minimum wage has declined over 36 percent.

If you are wealthy in the United States of America, you are doing pretty well, and you get all the benefits