

see someone who is the chairman of the committee on the Republican side reaching out to the Democrat on the committee and saying let us see if we can work together and come to a consensus on a bill. That is why most of the time you did not have to have these situations where you would vote in the middle of the night and have to get people to change votes because, if the bill came to the floor most likely it was a consensus measure and most people voted for it.

Some people may say not everything has to be that way, and not everything was that way, but the bottom line is when someone is elected, when you are elected or I am elected, our constituents send us down here. They do not expect us to just come down here and object to everything because we do not have input. They expect that we are going to have some input on what goes on, and to deny us that, which is what the Republican leadership does for the most part now, I think denies the basic principle of democracy.

We are not supposed to be coming down here and just objecting. We are supposed to be part of what goes on, but we are not allowed to for the most part. We cannot bring up amendments or ask for hearings. So this is the problem.

I just want to go back and say one more thing. The reason why the Republicans do not want the oversight and do not want the accountability is because they are doing bad things. The reason they do not want to have this bipartisan Katrina Commission is because they do not want the commission to come back and report that there were problems in what the FEMA Director and the administration did during the hurricane.

It is pretty simple stuff, because if it is bipartisan and it has equal members and there is a lot of oversight, they are going to show what the problems were. They want to whitewash. That is the bottom line. That is why they do not want this independent commission. It is uncovering things.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Exactly. So they are picking their own personal political situation over what is best for the American people. Can you think of a better reason to take someone out of their leadership position?

We all play politics here. We are just here. You get 435 people in a room, there is going to be politics. We understand that, but when you consistently and constantly pick your own personal political interests over the public interests, even if it means not getting to the bottom line, not getting to the kind of reforms that are going to be needed, then that is a real problem, I think, and I think the American people from the polls and from the people we talk to in our district seem to feel the same way.

Mr. PALLONE. There was an editorial in the New York Times on September 26 about faking the Katrina inquiry. The last paragraph, if I could

just read it, said this. It says, There is no way to whitewash a hurricane. A government dominated by one party should be disqualified from investigating itself. Just as President Bush repeatedly fought the creation of the 9/11 Commission until public pressure forced him to yield, so should the public now demand the administration and Congress get real about Katrina.

That is what we are getting with this Republican-dominated committee. It is just going to be another whitewash, and we cannot allow it. So I appreciate the opportunity.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. I think what is important here are several points that the gentleman has already made.

You have this chart here dealing with the whole gas price issue on the middle class, and I just want to take a couple of minutes of this hour just to talk a little bit more about what is called an energy bill.

We had an alternative, and the reason why I call it an alternative to the gas or to the energy bill is the fact that we were in the majority and it would be called an energy bill dealing with price gouging and also making future investments and bringing out alternative fuels to be done by a certain date. Also, our alternative said if you price gouge, we are not talking about someone at the pump, we are talking about the oil industry that has soaring, through-the-roof profits in a time that we have individuals who cannot even make it to work now because they cannot afford to buy a tank of gas. They did not get an increase. Their employer did not say, listen, we are going to give you about three hundred more dollars a month so you can pay for gas. They did not say that.

So we dealt with those individuals in our alternative by saying that if you price gouge the American people, not only will it allow State Attorneys General to enforce the law, but you will pay serious fines, up to \$3 million a day. Every day you price gouge, you pay. You do not get your profits and run off and the stockholders are happy. No, you are punished, and it not only dealt with gas. It dealt with oil and LP Gas and heating gas.

I think it is important for folks to understand that we were for real about it, and the majority side was really defending the industry. I know we are going to have more time.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Let me do this, we want to give the e-mail address, 30somethingdems@mail.house.gov.

□ 2200

30-SOMETHING WORKING GROUP: REFORMING GOVERNMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. FOXX). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. RYAN) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Madam Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to be back

and continue our discussion here. I hope for the next hour, my good friend, we can talk about something that I think is very important for the Democratic Party and what the future of the Democratic Party is all about, and that is reforming government. We are the party of reform. We have offered alternatives, as we have talked about in the past hour and over the past several weeks, that have been ignored; but we are not going to let that stop us. We are going to continue to talk throughout the rest of this year and into next year about the different reform measures that we are going to propose, and we are going to be critical of what we think is a broken system in general and broken systems in general, all of these different systems in our government.

I was thinking about this and talking about this last night, about how our government runs today; and our government really runs today totally designed like an industrial-age system. It is almost like an assembly line. We have our health care over here and our education is over here and our foreign policy is over here and our research is over here, and none of the component parts are allowed to ever come together. That is an old assembly line kind of system. You deal with this part and you put that part on and then that part, and everything is separated.

Government in the 21st century needs to be integrated and unified. A health care system that does not teach healthy eating habits and has a diverse physical education requirement in our schools or gives our kids good food in our schools, that is not a comprehensive health care system. Because at some point we are going to pay the bill for obesity or diabetes, or whatever may come from the long-term effects of not having a healthy diet. And one day, somebody is going to be on Medicare, and we are going to have to pay the price.

I want to just talk for a couple of minutes about what is going on with Delphi and their bankruptcy and how I think the system right now is a bit broken. Basically, over the last 30 years or so, this company and their workers have generated a lot of wealth over the past 30 years. A lot of people in Ohio and in Mississippi and all over the country have made money. Workers were paid well, and they had pensions and benefits and health care coverage and everything else. The wealth that these workers created was taken and invested in China, first in Mexico, then in China. And now, because of all of that that has happened, we increased the global supply of labor, that is driving down the wages here in the United States of America, which leads to Delphi filing bankruptcy because they cannot compete with their competitors who are doing a lot of business in China.

It just is something broken when a worker or a group of workers who create wealth and that money is taken

and invested somewhere else comes back to bite you on the behind. And now their company is filing for bankruptcy. The workers are going to be asked to take, they are asking them now to take about a 60 percent pay cut. Now, there is not a person in the world, there is not a person in the United States for sure who could take a 60 percent pay cut in the course of a few months and not file bankruptcy. How do you do that? I do not care if you are making \$40,000 or \$200,000 a year. If you are asked to take a 60 percent pay cut, you are going to have to file bankruptcy.

So the squeeze is on the workers here in the United States. Many people may say, well, those workers are making \$27 an hour, that is a lot of money; and that is a whole other argument. But the bottom line is, there is going to be in my community \$150 million pulled out of our local economy.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Madam Speaker, let us just think about that for a minute. A 60 percent pay cut, the gentleman does know that a 60 percent pay cut, some folks are going to lose their homes.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Absolutely, they are going to lose their homes.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. The media quick-fix probably would be to try to go out and get a loan. Now you make a little bit less than what you used to make, and you may not be able to get the loan because you do not make the money you used to make and the uncertainty of how long your company is going to be able to provide the money that you thought that you were going to be able to make. I think this is a real issue. I think it is a real issue, and I think it is something that we need to be very concerned about.

I agree with the gentleman 110 percent. I have been reading in the paper what is going on. The gentleman from Ohio is living it because it is right there in his district. But guess what, I say to the gentleman, it is happening throughout America. A number of other communities are going through it. And once again, I think it is important, it falls back on the heels of governance again, and also our stronghold and our love affair with China.

I mean, it goes far beyond, far beyond that particular company and the relationship with China. It is almost like if China was to make some sort of move, it would affect the United States of America, whether it be in manufacturing, or if they were to make an issue as it relates to debt, call in some of those chits that they have out there with us as it relates to the debt, because they are buying our debt. If they were to deal with other countries as it relates to oil, it would have some issues and would deal with our economy.

So it is almost like we have to be very, very careful, because the U.S. taxpayers are not only, obviously, the main contributor to many of our trade policies, because it is, unfortunately, a

negative trade policy, and that we are having to take in space where U.S. jobs have been lost, people cannot provide for their families like they used to, so then government has to try to be there to be able to assist not only local governments but State governments in areas where individuals through even their payroll taxes could cover some of the costs of some of these unfunded mandates that are now out there, and the Federal Government has to rise up and be a part of that experience.

But I wanted to just, I want the gentleman to finish his point on sharing with us what is happening in your district, and then I want to go back to an article that talks about the issue of not only health care, but where our priorities are as a Congress when it comes down to dealing with the American people. Because that is what the gentleman is talking about right now.

The gentleman is talking about the American people, and the gentleman has a lot of individuals that are deployed out of the State of Ohio that are in harm's way right now, and some of their families are tied up in this. And I can tell my colleagues right now, I am here, I am with my family; but what if I were not and something like this were to happen to a spouse or a loved one or a significant other or a brother or a sister. We are going have to all come together to try to help that individual financially.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Madam Speaker, the ultimate question is, and that is why we need to issue a reform agenda for the country, because it just seems like nothing is really working right now the way the system is currently set up, and there are a lot of arguments against it, but it is based on a world that really no longer exists.

The idea of comparative advantage, the great free trade concept of comparative advantage is from the 1800s. I mean, trying to apply it to a society today that is so much different than it was a few hundred years ago. So our reform agenda that the Democrats are promoting is to reform the way government works. Whether it is the way workers here who have created a lot of wealth and their wealth is then invested into China, to steal their own jobs and wages and benefits and everything else, or to argue literally for a supply-side economic theory where you cut taxes for the top 1 percent, and, the theory goes, they invest in the United States and that creates wealth here.

Well, who in their right mind thinks a millionaire who gets a couple hundred thousand dollars back is investing in the United States? They are investing the money in China or they are going to invest it in mutual funds in different investment schemes in China. They are not investing it in the United States. If people were investing in the United States, companies like Delphi would not be going bankrupt. And that is the bottom line.

The question for America is, Who is investing in the United States today?

We have cut taxes; we have a huge budget deficit, so the government does not have any money to make any progressive investments like magnetic levitation trains or education or scientists and engineers, or research and development. And then you cut taxes for the top 1 percent, and they take that money and they invest it in China. Who is investing in the United States? That is the ultimate question. I think that the government has a responsibility. It cannot do it all, but we need to certainly create an environment in which it is okay to do business and it is worthwhile for people to make the proper investments, and that brings up why we need to reform the health care system.

I was just talking to a gentleman who runs a hospital in Youngstown, Ohio. The one hospital left in Youngstown, with a population of about between 80,000 and 90,000, almost 90,000, they do about \$50 million a year in charity care. \$50 million. These are people who walk into the emergency room because they have nowhere to go. Do you know how much money we are wasting by waiting until they come into the emergency room? That makes no business sense at all. You cannot be a businessperson and analyze our health care system and think in any way, shape, or form it makes any sense.

Would it not be smarter to maybe give them access to a clinic to where they could take some preventive measures, get their antibiotics, take care of a cold instead of pneumonia. Pregnancies, as far as pregnancies go, have the prenatal care, whatever it takes, expand SCHIPS, do these things that will take care of the preventive side, instead of emergency room care. The taxpayer is paying either way. The current system is cheating the taxpayer. It is no good.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Madam Speaker, that is the reason why people elected us to come up here and govern, to make sure that we stand up and forecast future issues. Now, that hospital had to close, I am pretty sure, because the funding just was not there in the preventive way to be able to deal with the issues that are facing indigent patients, or everyday working folks.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. They are open. They are open.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. But what I am saying is that we do not do things because we are supposed to do them; we respond to it after it happens.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Right.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Examples are the health care system, and New Orleans.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Bingo.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Madam Speaker, \$14 billion to make ready for a category 5 storm, \$200 billion later, or several, up into the \$60 billion and \$70 billion to not only fix it, but also deal with other issues, because of a result of the fact that we did not do what we were supposed to do when we were supposed to do it. Going back to

vulnerabilities here in the United States, that community was ranked number one as it relates to a storm, a natural disaster in a catastrophic way as it relates to the damage that would be done.

Madam Speaker, I think it is also important for me to point out, when we start talking about this issue, the gentleman mentioned Democrats having to stand up and make sure that we deal with the whole corruption and cronyism issue, and I think that that is important.

□ 2215

And I think it is also important to make sure that we deal with that, but to deal with that, A, we are trying to deal with it by calling out some of this stuff out here on the floor.

We are trying to do the best we can. And there are others who are trying to do the best they can. The gentleman from California (Mr. WAXMAN), who is the ranking member on the Committee on Government Reform, can only do all that he can do to point out some of these issues.

And I have a number of reports as it relates to contracting under the Bush administration. But guess what? If we were in the majority we could do these things and make sure that we save the Federal taxpayer money, we save those dollars. We make sure that they are paying taxes, which we all are, okay, that it is being spent in the way that the American people want us to spend it, in a responsible way.

Now, this whole issue, once again, this corruption and cronyism issue is so deep here in Washington, DC, I do not even have to say, well, let me pick up the paper a week ago because there were some stories in there that I think I need to bring to your attention, or I hear there is a story coming out on Thursday about some of this stuff that is going on here in the Capitol.

You can just walk out the door here in Washington, DC or in your local community and pick up the paper on any given day, be it a Saturday or Sunday or Monday or Tuesday, it does not matter what day, there is always something here, because there are several things that are here because there are several things that are going on in this town, and that is just in the present.

That is just what has happened already. Think about what is happening as we speak, and what is not happening under the culture of corruption of cronyism. What do not we know about now that we will know 6 months from now, because it will have worked on someone's conscience to be able to say, hey, you know something, this is wrong. And it is not wrong because of a personal decision that someone has made, it is wrong because they made a decision that changed the very fiber of the Congress. I mean changed the culture of Congress, I mean, what we are supposed to be doing and not doing.

Yes, we know we have individuals that make bad independent decisions.

Oh, I have made some. But they were independent. Did not affect my constituents. Did not affect this country, a bad decision that I have made.

But you have folks that are knowingly and willfully making bad decisions that are altering this Congress, and that will alter many Americans' lives and the way they live and the way they provide for their children, and it is happening every day without a conscience.

Now in the Washington Post, there are some folks here, and we know that there are some folks here in the Capitol that have said, okay, we have to deal with this Katrina issue. It is \$200 billion and we are going to have offsets and we are going to deal with it.

Where are we going go for the offsets? Well, in this story, it is not saying, well, maybe we need to look at some of our advanced weapons systems that possibly may be useful to us sometime in the future. Maybe we need to say that we are spending \$50 million or \$50 billion or \$130 billion out there on advanced weapons systems, maybe since they are, you know, advanced, maybe there are some other areas we can take 5 billion here or ten billion there and then maybe we can come up with some offset.

No, not that. Maybe we can go to the tax cuts that we gave to the billionaires. All right. I am not even talking about the millionaires. I am talking about the billionaires. Maybe ask them to give a little sacrifice under this time that the country is going through a lot. Maybe, you know, maybe just a 5 or 2 percent cut from there.

No, they are not mentioned. No, where we are going to go, this is the Republican leadership. This is the discussion that is taking place over there. This is not my report, because I am going to tell you right now this is the Washington Post. House GOP leaders are setting up third party validator, set to cut spending as it relates to Medicaid.

Wow. Let us go after the big people. Let us, you know, the folks that catch the early bus in the morning. Let us go after them. Yeah. They are really strong. In a program that has already been cut.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. And the poverty numbers are up so there are going to be more people applying for this or qualify for this program.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Let us go pick on someone that is not our own size. Yeah, let us go after individuals and make them, because they are not giving in the way maybe some of these other folks are. Okay. Let us go after them.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. They are not pharmaceutical lobbyists.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Well, let us go after some folks that we were sent up here to protect. Let us go after them. Let us turn on our own. I am bigger than that person. So maybe that guy, you know, that is driving the pickup truck running around here shopping

where he is bundling T-shirts and clothes and leaving the truck now parked because he cannot take the kids to the recreation center where they can stay out of trouble, let us beat up on them.

Let us deal with the individuals that the company that they went to work for, said maybe you need to go get on Medicaid because it is better than what we have to provide, because there is really no incentive as a business person for me to provide health care for you, because there is no national policy.

Let us pick on them. Let us take Title I lunch programs to help poor kids to have the nutrition to be able to go to school and think correctly so that they can learn, and so they have to pass a standardized test that this Congress has called for to make sure that they learn, or they retain, whatever the test is supposed to pull out of them, let us take that, let us reduce that.

Yeah. Let us take away from the kids, because guess what, they cannot vote. They are definitely not going to give a campaign contribution. Let us deal with them.

Now I am going to tell you something. And I know there are some well-intended Members here in this Congress. And I know that there are some leadership individuals that are saying, well, you know, maybe that is a great idea. But I can tell you right now, if you are going to do it, we are not going to be sitting here watching and allowing you to do it. You are not going to talk about it in the back halls of Congress and then come to this floor under regular order and say, well, we are doing this because we have to help the people in the devastated area.

As a matter of fact, not only are we helping you, the folks in the devastated area, and I must add there is no discussion in here, well, we are going to take away from the Democratic areas, we are going to carve out those counties and parishes and we are going to cut them. No, no, we are going to do it to you all. We are going to make sure, and this is a national blanket cut, so if you are sitting in Illinois tonight, Member, or if you are down the street, you know, at your apartment or house, I want you to realize that what some Members of the Republican Congress are talking about is cutting programs in your district.

This story goes further on to talk about small farming programs. Okay, so if you are sitting there, Member of Congress, saying, well, they are not talking about me, they might be talking about those folks that are on Medicaid, that I must add if a Member is saying they are talking about those folks on Medicaid, they are talking about your constituents too, but they are going to cut that.

Meanwhile, whatever Mr. Rumsfeld calls for out of the Pentagon, and whatever the White House says that needs to happen, without an exit strategy or even a discussion of the exit

strategy on what is our goals and objectives outside of the several elections that are going on in Iraq and that will continue to go on. What we are going to need as long as we are going to need it. Do not ask any questions. What are you asking questions about?

You are asking a question of me about what I am asking for for the troops as it relates to money? My question is, is it really for the troops or is it really to continue to feed family and friends that are out there making billions on this war, billions they are making?

And I will tell you this also. They can run commercials, I know Halliburton is the shining example of what goes on under a culture of cronyism and corruption and a lack of oversight. I just gave an analysis of what took place of oversight hearings and how the decline has taken place, because no one wants to call out the next person, because we have an oversight hearing, oh, my goodness, we may start to govern around here.

I think it is important for us to also understand that we are sitting here talking about we are for the troops and you know all of this kind of stuff, but we are not willing to lead in a way to say that, hey, excuse me, excuse me, Mr. President, can we talk about maybe when will this be over? Or maybe what is the strategy?

Is the strategy as long as there is an insurgency, we are going to be there? Well, that is a 20-year strategy, Madam Speaker, because we are spending billions to fight an insurgency, not the troops, not the individuals that a train was not ready.

The individuals that said that we should go did not do what they were supposed to do as it relates to the planning. We are going to run to Baghdad, we are going to have bombs and stuff. We are going to get there and this is a race and everybody has a clock going, and the news media like we are here now. Wow, record time. Wow.

There was nothing after that. And because of that, hundreds upon hundreds of Americans have lost their lives, thousands upon thousands of Americans are injured that have come back to their community, that have served their country because their country asked them to serve.

And I am going to tell you, and I want to make sure that we get clarity on this, that it is our job to govern here in the Congress. It is our job to protect these individuals. It is not our job to continue to hold on and to cover for individuals that are making bad ideas or that are sharing bad ideas and continuing to compound on these ideas, and to continue to come here and say, well, you know, why are you asking me the question, and with great arrogance.

Now I am going to share this with you. It is our job, and you know it, for us to not only call out the fact of a lack of governance, a look of oversight, a lack of bipartisan working on these very issues, and bringing to a head of

what is important here. The head is, is making sure that we govern in the way we are supposed to govern.

And for some of the individuals that are calling out saying that we have to have offsets, Hey, we have been calling for offsets. We have been saying, if you are going to spend it, you better have a plan on how you are going to pay for it but, listen, did not get religion now when we are talking about the American people.

Do not stand up and say, well, I am going to get religion on this week. I am going to make them pay when you will not even stand up to big companies, when you come to the floor with an energy bill that is a gift to the industry.

You did not come here on behalf of the American people. You came here on behalf of oil company profits. Tell the truth. At least come to the floor and be straight with the American people. Because if you are not, we will. And let me tell you something. It really infuriates me that folks will run around here and even hold their head up going after poverty programs saying that we are going to balance the budget on the back of poverty.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Can I ask a question? Where is the Christian Coalition? Where is the Christian Coalition when you are cutting poverty programs? Where are you? You know, they are fighting over Supreme Court justices and meanwhile poverty programs are being cut for poor people.

Now I do not know. 12 years of Catholic school, and I know you had a religious upbringing as well. Where is the Christian voice in all of this? All of a sudden silence. Medicare, Head Start, No Child Left Behind, which would help more in high poverty schools than any other. Where is the Christian right? Silence. Silence. Because they are getting overrun by the corporate greed and the corruption and the cronyism that is going on here. That is the problem. Right under their nose.

Join us. You talked about Medicaid. You talked about poverty. You talked about Head Start. You talked about helping people that cannot help themselves. I cannot think of anything more Christian. I do not want to get religious, because this is a public forum. But it has been invoked time and time again from the other side.

□ 2230

We hear it every day.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. I will put it to you pointblank. Never apologize for representing not only what you feel spiritually about what is going on, because I think your spirit makes religion act right. That is the bottom line. Spirit brings about the kind of change that we call and pray for in government and in our regular lives.

When we talk about young children, when we talk about the weak, physically, maybe financially, these are individuals that are going to pay the high prices for the heating oil. These

are the individuals that we ask to go out and vote. They do not need to be Democrat, Republican or Independent, Reform Party, Green Party or no party; and we ask them to go out and take part in this democracy. They are the first ones on the chopping block. As a matter of fact, they were the first under regular order when it came down to even working the budget out in the first place.

Now, when it comes down to responding, going back to what is the federal Commitment to the South, I would add also the poor in this country, and then the first time out of the blocks we are going to go after Medicaid? We are going to cut it. We are going to go after reducing free lunch. We are to go after Head Start. We are going to go after small farming programs. We are going to go after those individuals who cannot hit back.

That is almost like someone who cannot move their arms and their legs, and we get the world heavy weight champion of the world and he hits them and beats them up and it is over in one round and he jumps up and waves his hand and says, I am the heavy weight champion of the world. They expected you to win because you are the heavy weight champion of the world. But the bottom line is, it is okay to have offsets. Goodness gracious, we are calling for offsets. Let us call for some offsets in some other areas so we can ask some Americans who can afford to take the sacrifice of an offset, or a particular program that this Congress has put forth that has very little to do with right now but it has something to do, hopefully, dealing with the future.

And if it is something that is dealing with the future, okay; and we are the superpower of the world, and there is an advanced weapons system that somebody in Congress likes, maybe we need to go to that person in Congress or that person in the other body over there and say, you know something, you know that project we passed, the \$400 billion, the advanced weapons project for several million dollars that you wanted, maybe we need to try to offset that. Maybe we can try to do it verses 5 years, we can do it in 8 years. With that money we can have some offsets for the Hurricane Katrina and Hurricane Rita package to help us as it relates to bringing about offsets.

No, that conversation was not in The Washington Post. But we are going to take people, real Americans, and say we are going to make you pay because we are not big enough to stand up to the special interests here in Washington, D.C. Let me just take that way out. The majority leadership of opening discussions, this is the opening discussion, this is not even the "maybe there was a small discussion." No, this is a serious discussion within the leadership of the Republican Caucus in this House about cutting those programs. That is a serious discussion.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Let us put all this together here because as I am listening

here; I am beginning to see how this is coming together. Let us see if we can outline this here. If you are poor or working poor, which is the dark underbelly of the United States of America, the working poor that do not qualify for Medicaid so they do not have health care but they are working a couple of jobs and they are trying to make ends meet. So if you are in that class, this outfit, the Republican outfit that we have in right now wants to cut Medicaid, is not funding No Child Left Behind, they are cutting Head Start and we have a health care system that is a wreck. Watching health care in America is like watching a train wreck happen. It is terrible.

So if you are poor or working poor, those programs are getting cut, school lunches, all the other good stuff. And you probably live in a community where you are having criminal justice issues like we are having in a lot of our communities where you cannot afford the prison, the jail. You do not have enough sheriffs, deputies to run the jail. You do not have enough police on the beat. And if you do, you put them in the court system and they wait and wait and they get back on the street. A whole other set of the issues.

If you are in the middle class, the Republican majority has done nothing for Pell grants to try to reduce the cost of college tuition when tuition has doubled in just about every State in the Union in the past 5 years.

If you are in the middle class trying to provide health care, if you are a union worker in Delphi or some other UAW or something else, you are getting squeezed. If you are part of the 45 million or 50 million now that do not have health care, you are getting squeezed. If you are a middle-class small businessperson, you are getting squeezed. We get calls every day in my office about small businessmen and women who cannot afford to provide health care for their workers. Squeezed.

If you are in the upper middle class and you are trying to provide health care, it is not working. These systems that we have in place are broken; and instead of fixing them, instead of reforming the system or the systems, our ideas are so antiquated, old school, supply-side economics in a world where that does not work. Look around. I mean, look around. This does not work. It is crazy.

What are we doing here? We have a reform agenda that invests in education, invests in research and development, helps kids with math and science, fully funds No Child Left Behind, puts money into the Pell grants so your kids can go to college and afford it, reforms the health care system to move the investment on the preventative side instead of on the tail end when people are so sick and acutely ill that it costs so much more money.

The reforms that we want to make on the preventative side provide for

mental health coverage so people do not go out and commit crimes who are mentally ill because they have medication or they have some basic counseling which saves us money. We are cheating the taxpayer right now. They want to tell us we were tax and spend. They are borrow and spend. And they are not even spending it right. They are spending at a billion and a half a week in Iraq. They are giving it to billionaires. That is not good government.

That stinks. That is not right. It is just not right because average people are suffering. Let me say this, we do not come to this floor for what this week will probably be 3 or 4 hours. All day we are here and we get an opportunity to come at night. We are not doing this for therapy. We are not doing this because we like to come down here and listen to each other talk. If we wanted to do that, we would go out and grab a hamburger and a Starbucks and go talk and drink some green tea. We are here because the country is unraveling before our very eyes, and the Republican leadership is either doing nothing or doing something to make it worse.

The Democrats have an agenda on health care, education. We are ready to reform. We are ready to take over. We just need the chance. And I know from people in my district and from the gentleman's district and from the district of the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE), people are suffering; and the government is part of the problem now. Maybe Ronald Reagan was right, government is the problem. Right now it is. But I think government can be a positive, progressive leading force in society with the proper leadership. And right now it is just not happening. But we are not doing this stuff for therapy.

We could be going out and having dinners and everything else. We have come here because this country needs reform; and if no one else is going to talk about it, then the 30-something group is going to step up and implement an agenda and talk about the agenda that is going to make this country better.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Let me just say that it is important that we realize the time that we are in now. I think the gentleman is 110 percent right.

I was in my district recently and I went to New Shiloh Baptist Church. One of my local pastors was celebrating his third pastoral anniversary of the church. And I went over and worshipped with him and some parishioners. When I was there, a couple of folks came up to me and said, It is really something that is going on in Washington right now. Are you not shocked? And I am, like, I am not. Oh, no, I am not. No. Not only did I see it coming, but some more is to come.

How do you know that? Well, I am not a prophet, but I am your Congressman. And when we are not doing our job as Members of Congress, not individuals. Folks make sure to keep the district offices open, respond to con-

stituent mail, return phone calls, this, that and the other, not the individual policing of our own districts, but the policing of the Federal budget, the policing of having oversight over all the Federal agencies. When we are not doing that, then that means we are not doing our job. When we are not doing our job that the Constitution calls for and that the rules of the House calls for of how we do our job and conduct our job and we violate the rules of this House, then we have issues.

When we violate the spirit, I must add, of the rules, then we violate this country. When we violate the spirit of the rules of this House and we violate the spirit of fair play and also our oversight responsibilities through a lack of governance or the lack of oversight, then we will see what we see now.

Now, I am here to say that I think it is very, very important, we have talked and covered a lot of ground here this evening, but I can tell you that there is so much more to be covered. There is so much more work to be done. I wish, because it gives me no pleasure to come to the floor and to just point out the obvious of what is not happening and what is happening to a certain group of people, and guess what, that certain group of people are the American people.

It is not like you start saying, well, there is something happening to the folks over in Iowa. No, it is not. It is happening to the American people. It is happening to your constituents. It is happening to my constituents. It is happening to the Member's constituent that sits right there, and the one that was here a minute ago, and the one that is back in their apartment and the other that is back in their office right now; it can either be a he or she. It is happening to them.

So when the historians start looking at what happened and how did we get to the point where we are now when someone turns the lights on here in the Congress, I mean, the real lights, and that ember starts to hit the floor and they start to look and say, goodness, how did this happen, then we want to make sure that there were Members of this House, need it be those Members that put together reports in minority committees of what is happening and should be happening; need it be our friends on the other side of the aisle that are lathered up enough that will stand up to the majority and that will say, you know something, we are doing this wrong and I will use my voice the best way to use it. And I want to say as an American, I thank you.

The gentleman talked about religion a moment ago. I talked about this article about where we will make these off-sets here in The Washington Post: \$50 billion, how are we going to find it?

The first thing mentioned is Medicaid. The second thing mentioned is reducing free lunch for poor children, for Head Start and small farming programs. Yes, let us go for those. How are we going to get there?

This is just in today's Washington Post. It is not an article found just the other day. It is important. And we talked about sitting in church or a synagogue or a mosque or whatever the religion may be of policymakers here in Congress and you hear about the ills of our society. You hear about the tragedies and the tough times that parishioners are going through. The only difference between the average American that goes to those institutions of religious practice, the only difference between them and the rest of the American people is that they could have done something about it. That is the bottom line.

Now, that is not about how I feel about it or how you feel about it. Because I could walk into any religious institution and say, you know something, we are here to govern on behalf of the American people. Period. Dot. If given the opportunity to do more we will do more.

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Matter of fact, we want to do more. You need us to do more. But I feel for that Member that goes into these religious institutions in their mind knowing that they could have done more and they could have stood up at such a time as this.

So there is a spiritual component to what we do. We cannot get religion on certain things and not have it on others. That is what my colleague pointed out when he said where is the faith community when it comes down to dealing with issues such as this. For openers, we will start with the poor. That is what we are going to do, we are going to start with them first.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Where is the outrage? Where is the outrage? They are outraged about Harriet Miers? Wait a minute, here is a woman who has a distinguished legal career. And I do not want to give the whole Supreme Court thing here, because that happens on the other side of the Capitol, but here is a distinguished lawyer. Now, I am not so convinced that she may be the best Supreme Court Justice pick, but, my goodness, to be outraged at that? How about being outraged at both? How about that? Be outraged at both. Be outraged about Harriet Miers, and be outraged about this too. My goodness.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Let me just say this. There are faith-based groups that are very concerned about cuts to Medicaid and will speak out, that will come to Washington and will talk to the appropriators and to some of the individuals who want cuts; but those individuals that have relationships with the President of the United States, those very high individuals within the very, very conservative groups should go and say this is wrong, in my opinion.

I think that those voices on a spiritual level need to be worked on, and also in this House. We need to be worked on about making the right de-

isions as it relates to the masses of Americans who need us the most. That is just where it is. So that is where the responsibility is.

But guess what? Ultimately, we make the decision. They do not. We are elected to make the decision; they are not. And I do not want to put this on an outside group saying it is their responsibility, but as it relates to what people are reacting to here in Washington, DC, as it relates to the leadership and what the leadership is reacting to here in Washington, DC, we just may need that intervention.

We may very well need that intervention on behalf of individuals who cannot fight for themselves. And they have a lobbyist. It is supposed to be Members of Congress. All Members of Congress. Not folks that are saying that, well, we care more about our philosophy and we are going to start with the individuals who cannot protect themselves, because I am their lobbyist. They have the power to elect or unelect individuals, but they do not have the money to send a lobbyist knocking on my door saying, No, I know you want to start offsets, but do not start with us. Matter of fact, do not even look at us. Do not even come this way.

They do not have that. We are here as Members of Congress to make sure they have lobbyists, because we are their lobbyists. We sit at the table. We come to the floor on their behalf. So when we back out, when we see the majority side and this philosophy being pushed onto the front page of the local paper here and other papers throughout the United States that this is where we are going to start, and we are the individuals that are supposed to be here blocking on behalf of the folks that need us most, then we are in trouble.

So we need to start talking about leadership and standing on behalf of every American. We need to start talking about oversight. And tomorrow, if we can, I want us to talk more about this oversight committee, talk about House Resolution 3838 that has this commission that is looking at fraud over contracting. I have a report here that has been put together by the minority side on the committee dealing with the whole issue of protecting against contractor fraud, making sure the American taxpayers are not made victims due to a lack of oversight.

One thing I do know is that the majority, not the White House, not any other group here in Washington, DC, has the ability to oversee the Federal tax dollar in an administrative no-bid contract scenario. They do not have it. They are not moving fast enough to be able to protect the Federal tax dollar.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. I want to just go back, and I think this week, whenever we get our next hour to come this week, I think that is a great idea, to talk about that. As you were going through the poor and the middle class that is getting squeezed harder and

harder, you made a great point that it is our job as Members of Congress to advocate on behalf of those people. I think that has a moral component to it. I want to set that moral component aside. I want to talk for 2 minutes, because we are wrapping up here, about economics.

We talked about who is investing in the United States. Not many people. We are talking about even the government now is cutting programs that would invest in these young people and these poor middle-class people that we need economically, like the 30-some-things are calling for a million new scientists and engineers over the next decade in the United States of America to generate our economy again. That is what we are saying. That is investment into human capital here in the United States.

We need these poor people to turn into with health care, education, and we are going to talk a little this week or next week about the arts programs that we believe if started at an early age, afterschool programs, will increase math and science scores. And we are going to bring some third-party validators and some studies that have been done to back up that argument and why the arts are a good component of feeding into this math and science goal that we have.

We have to recognize that investments into Medicaid, with reform, and we need to reform the system too, do not get me wrong; but investments in Medicaid, and investments in Head Start, and investments in the No Child Left Behind, and investments in the Pell grants are going to lead to more wealth in the United States of America. We are going on the field right now with half of our society not eligible to play in the game.

All these poor kids that we saw down in New Orleans, it is the same in Miami, it is the same in Youngstown, Cleveland, Akron, Canton, Toledo, Cincinnati, and Columbus. There are core pockets of very, very poor people in our country. And all we are saying is, invest in those people so that they can go out and create wealth for the United States of America.

The Ohio State football team would not go on the field with five players. It does not make sense. You need to have everybody on your team. And quite frankly, our country is only 300 million. We are competing against over a billion Chinese citizens and over a billion Indian citizens. If you are going to compete with them, you better have every single player on the field prepared, conditioned, and ready to move forward.

So when we talk about Medicaid, Head Start, No Child Left Behind, and Pell grants, we want reform on these systems because we want to make them better and convert them into the 21st century, but we have to make the proper investments into our people. That is the bottom line.

There is the moral component that we talk about, hopefully not just on

Sundays, but there is also this economic component too that I think is going to help stimulate the economy in the 21st century if we make those investments. But today we are not making them. So we cannot expect something to happen when we are not doing anything. It just does not make any sense.

I will let my colleague make a final comment or two and then we will wrap it up and give out the e-mail address.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Well, I want to thank my colleague for bearing with me.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. I hope you feel better. My colleague from Florida was down last week, sick as a dog.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Down last week, but came back in on behalf of the country. The fact is we have to continue to do what we have to do as Members of Congress. I think that it is very, very important that we continue to pay very close attention to these issues.

I want to commend many of my colleagues on this side of the aisle for standing up in ways that are unprecedented in this institution and trying to change the tide of not only thinking but also making sure that we get back to governing this country of ours and that we stand up on behalf of those Americans who need us to stand up for them. I can tell you right now they come in all ages and all economic backgrounds, and some of them are even children. It is important that we work on their behalf in an honest way.

If anything comes out of this, I would be happy if the leadership on the Republican side was to say, you know, I think there are some points that have been made and I think we need to implement some of those things; or at least have a fair discussion on some of those issues to make sure that we will govern in a way that does not violate the spirit of our existing rules. That would be a victory.

Or if the American people were to say enough is enough, it has affected my household personally, and make other decisions based on the representation here in Washington, D.C. And this will not be a discussion; it will be action on what we are talking about. So there is a long time before that happens, because the election is not up until 2006.

But on behalf of the country, there are some things that just cannot wait that long, and there are some issues that need to be brought to the forefront and hopefully change will come out. So my spirit is the American spirit and dream that things will get better and should get better because it is the right thing to do.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Well, we are going to do our best. If you are not watching baseball tonight and you were watching the 30-something Dems, our e-mail is the 30somethingdems@mail.house.gov. We have been getting a ton of e-mails lately, so do not be afraid to drop us an e-mail. We appreciate everybody who is listening and

watching, and I appreciate my colleague fighting through a cold to be down here with us.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. FOXX). Members are reminded that their remarks are to be addressed to the Chair and not to the television audience.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. BECERRA (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of official business.

Mr. CARDIN (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today.

Mr. GRIJALVA (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today and October 18 on account of official business.

Ms. KILPATRICK of Michigan (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today.

Mr. REYES (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today.

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today and the balance of the week on account of illness in the family.

Mr. SCHIFF (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today and October 18 on account of attending a soldier's funeral in California.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of official business in the district.

Mrs. BIGGERT (at the request of Mr. BLUNT) for today on account of official business.

Mr. KING of Iowa (at the request of Mr. BLUNT) for today on account of illness.

SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

(The following Members (at the request of Ms. WOOLSEY) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mrs. MCCARTHY, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. DEFazio, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. KAPTUR, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. WOOLSEY, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. EMANUEL, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. CUMMINGS, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. OWENS, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. MORAN of Kansas) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. BISHOP of Utah, for 5 minutes, October 19 and 20.

Mr. MORAN of Kansas, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. OSBORNE, for 5 minutes, today and October 18 and 19.

Mr. POE, for 5 minutes, today and October 18.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana, for 5 minutes, today and October 18 and 20.

Mr. PAUL, for 5 minutes, today and October 18 and 19.

SENATE ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

The SPEAKER pro tempore, Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia, announced his signature to an enrolled bill of the Senate of the following title:

S. 1858. An act to provide for community disaster loans.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Madam Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 59 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Tuesday, October 18, 2005, at 10:30 a.m., for morning hour debates.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 8 of rule XII, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

[Omitted from the Record of October 7, 2005]

4443. A letter from the Counsel for Legislation and Regulations, Office of Housing, Department of Housing and Urban Development, transmitting the Department's final rule—Multifamily Accelerated Processing (MAP); MAP Lender Quality Assurance Enforcement [Docket No. FR-4836-F-02] (RIN: 2502-AI01) received August 4, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

4444. A letter from the Acting Director, OSHA Directorate of Standards and Guidance, Department of the Labor, transmitting the Department's final rule—Updating OSHA Standards Based On Natural Consensus Standards; General, Incorporation by Reference; Hazardous Materials, Flammable and Combustible Liquids; General Environmental Controls, Temporary Labor Camps; Hand and Portable Powered Tools and Other Hand-Held Equipment, Guarding of Portable Powered Tools; Welding, Cutting and Brazing, Arc Welding and Cutting; Special Industries, Sawmills. [Docket No. S-023A] (RIN: 1218-AC08) received September 21, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

4445. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Employee Benefits Security Administration, Department of Labor, transmitting the Department's final rule—Amendment to Prohibited Transaction Exemption (PTE) 84-14 for Plan Asset Transactions Determined by Independent Qualified Professional Asset Managers [Application Number D-11047] received August 23, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

4446. A letter from the Director, Office of Workers' Compensation Programs, Department of Labor, transmitting the Department's final rule—Regulations Implementing the Longshore and Harbor Workers' Compensation Act and Related Statutes (RIN: