

stem cell lines. Ethically, that is not something that I am comfortable with. It is not something I think a majority of our people are comfortable with, or you can go through what we have just gone through, take a single cell from this blastomere here and implant the remaining cells, let them develop, implant them and then develop a stem cell line from this single cell, then the altered nuclear transfer that we talked about.

This kind of summarizes the potential from those two techniques, and again, what we have done to make this ethical is altered nuclear transfer. We have shut off one of the genes in the cytoplasm so that the nucleus now cannot be induced to make all of the tissue necessary to produce a baby. It produces all of the tissues necessary for baby, but not the tissue necessary for growth of the baby in the womb, the amnion and the chorion.

The important thing, Mr. Speaker, is, and I want to be politically correct for just a moment here. It is not just that we want to do things that are politically popular. We certainly do not want to do things that are politically unpopular because we all like to get re-elected and return here, but we want to do things which have medical meaning.

The Senate, I believe, very shortly is going to vote on the Castle bill. The President has said that he will veto that. Many people, and they come to our offices, these children with diabetes and so forth, people who have relatives who have Parkinson's disease or any one of the wasting diseases of the nervous system that might be treated with this, and they are incensed we are not doing something about this and using their money to develop what they think is enormous potential from these stem cell lines.

The President will veto because he is devoutly pro-life for which I respect him. He will veto the Castle bill. We need to have on the President's desk not just for political purposes, although I think that is important, but because of the enormous potential from embryonic stem cell lifelines, we need to have a bill on his desk that will permit the use, the ethical use, of Federal funds to produce these stem cell lines from which we might get enormous good.

The miracles of medicine have increased lifelines. I just passed my 80th birthday. I am wondering when I am going to enter mid-life. My grandfather would have never thought of entering mid-life after his 80th year, but we have really miracles of medicine today, and this provides miracles greater than we have seen.

Now we have enormous potential here, and I hope, Mr. Speaker, we have the political courage to do the right thing for the American people and get this bill, along with the Castle bill on the President's desk so that the President has a bill which promises the miracles, potential miracles of embryonic stem cell research ethically.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO THE LATE MANNY CORTEZ

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SCHWARZ of Michigan). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Nevada (Ms. BERKLEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. BERKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the late Manny Cortez.

I am profoundly heartbroken by the untimely loss of my dear friend who passed away last Sunday. I adored Manny Cortez and will be forever grateful for his help, his support, his love and his friendship. He was a wonderful human being and a true gentleman.

Manny was more than just family man and a dedicated public servant. He was a visionary who helped shape southern Nevada as we know it today and who worked tirelessly to turn Las Vegas into the world's most famous travel destination.

Manny earned worldwide respect as a leader for Nevada's tourism and hospitality industry. Under his leadership, the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority became the gold standard against which all others in the business are judged. His lasting legacy will shape southern Nevada as it continues to grow in the 21st century.

Whether as a public servant or as a private citizen, Manny was dedicated to making southern Nevada a better place to raise a family, run a business, or just to visit. Las Vegas would not be the city it is today without the hard work, vision and dedication of Manny Cortez.

My deepest sympathies go out today to the Cortez family. I know I speak for countless others when I say our community has lost not only a remarkable man, but a true leader who left his unique mark on southern Nevada and its top industry.

I am truly blessed to have been able to call Manny Cortez my friend.

More than any of his truly remarkable accomplishments that Manny could claim over the course of his political and professional career, I know that his family meant more to him than all the accolades or money in the world.

Come this November, I know he will be smiling, knowing that the same call to serve and the same desire to give back to the community that motivated him to seek and serve on the Clark County Commission was at the very heart of his daughter's campaign, Catherine's campaign for Attorney General of Nevada.

Manny Cortez was born on April 29, 1939, in Las Cruces, New Mexico, the oldest of two children of Edward Cortez, a baker, and the former Mary Tapia.

The Cortez family moved to Las Vegas in 1944. As a youngster, Manny attended St. Joseph's grade school and graduated from Las Vegas High.

Manny Cortez attended Nevada Southern University, which later be-

came my alma mater, UNLV, and received an honorary degree from Community College of Southern Nevada.

Elected in 1976 to the Clark County Commission, he served four remarkable terms. During his tenure, he served as chairman of that body, as well as chairman of the Clark County Sanitation District and the Clark County Liquor and Gaming License board.

Manny was also on the governing boards of the University Medical Center, Las Vegas Valley Water District and on the Fiscal Affairs Board of the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department.

Prior to his election as a county commissioner, Manny served as administrator of the State of Nevada Taxicab Authority. His background included employment with the Clark County District Attorney's office and the Clark County public defender's office.

Manny began his service on the Las Vegas convention and Visitors Authority board of directors in 1983 and would go on to lead that agency at a time of the most rapid growth for southern Nevada, the Las Vegas strip and for our tourism industry.

By 1991, Manny had earned the title of president of the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority, the largest convention and visitors organization in the United States. That year, southern Nevada welcomed more than 21 million visitors. By the time of his retirement, that number had grown to 37 million visitors annually.

Travel Agent Magazine named Manny the United States Person of the Year for 1999, calling him "one of the most astute marketers in the tourism industry."

During his tenure as president of the convention authority, the organization came to be regarded as the travel industry's leading destination marketing organization.

Manny was a participant in the White House Conference on Travel and Tourism, and in 2003, the United States Department of Commerce appointed him to the then-newly created U.S. Travel and Tourism Promotion Advisory Board. His role on the board included representing Las Vegas and the United States travel and tourism industry.

Manny, and perhaps this is the most important thing, he is survived by a wife, Joanna, who was his beloved helpmate and friend for 45 years; daughter Cynthia Cortez Musgrove; and Catherine Cortez Masto; a sister, Patricia Snider; and two grandchildren, Andrew and Christina, all of Las Vegas.

There will never be another Manny Cortez, but every time I return home to Las Vegas, his legacy will be on display for the entire world to see and admire.

On a very, very personal note, there is not anybody that was more important to the travel and tourism industry in Las Vegas Nevada than Manny Cortez. He was a dear friend and a mentor to many, many of us who are now serving in public office and have made a

contribution to Las Vegas. His untimely death was a surprise to all of us. We will mourn him, we miss him and we love him.

30-SOMETHING WORKING GROUP

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MEEK) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to come before the House once again and the 30-Something Working Group, as you know and the Members know, we come to the floor day after day to share with the Members what we are doing right and what we are doing wrong.

So many times we focus on this side of the aisle on the plans that we have here on the Democratic side of the aisle in helping Americans to continue to prosper, need it be they are in small business or they wake up and go to work every day, educating our children, making sure that we have a healthy and prosperous and safe America.

Before I get started, I know Mr. RYAN will be joining me momentarily, Mr. Speaker. I just want to share with the Members a few plans that we have on this side of the aisle that we would like to implement. The only thing that is stopping us from bringing these plans to the floor and implementing action, well, we are moving in the right direction with great force, is the fact that we are not the majority here, Mr. Speaker, to be able to bring these issues to the floor.

As you know, in the past, I have talked about energy. I encourage Members to go to housedemocrats.gov to pick up a copy of our energy agenda, talking about alternative fuel, talking about bringing about flex vehicles in the industry to be able to allow more Americans to purchase vehicles that are flex vehicles that they can use E-85 and gasoline.

Real security plan, it is there dealing with homeland security. We have already said on this side of the aisle if we are in the majority that we would implement all of the 9/11 recommendations to make America safer. This is a bipartisan commission, as the Members know, that was appointed, and this House was part of it, and they did outstanding work. Those recommendations have still not been fully implemented to protect America.

We have our initiative that we have been trying to promote for the last 3 to 4 months in a very forceful way, which is allowing working Americans to be able to earn more money. It has been 9 years, Mr. Speaker, since the American people have received an increase as it relates to the minimum wage. It is very, very unfortunate that we have Americans that are working for \$5.15 an hour. The minimum wage has been the same since 1997, which is now approaching 10 years.

As you know, many Americans have suffered under the low minimum wage that we have now, that is throughout for individuals that are working every day, and I have a few facts here.

Of the last 50-years, I mean, this is the lowest it has been in the last 50 years. Also, 6.6 million Americans will benefit from an increase in the minimum wage, and something that I must add, the Republican leadership has said that they vow not to raise the minimum wage again this year or next year. So I think that is something that the American people need to pay very close attention to.

Three-quarters of the minimum wage workers are adults that are over the age of 20, many of whom are responsible for over half of the family's income. One day of work, it takes an entire day's wage for an earner to buy a tank of gas.

Also, studies have shown, Mr. Speaker, that zero jobs have been lost when the minimum wage has been increased.

Eighty-six percent of Americans do support an increase in the minimum wage. Twenty-one States have moved in the direction of increasing the minimum wage. I do not know what is going on here with the Republican majority in not moving in that direction to allow more American people to have money in their pocket to be able to provide for their families.

We have talked many times on this floor in the 30-Something Working Group about the new weight that has been placed on the heads of the American people as they start to send their young people to college.

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Just yesterday we had a town hall meeting downstairs in this building, in HC5 here in the Capitol Building, with some young people who are third-party validators with the student loans they have out now, Mr. Speaker. And this is very serious, because now people are starting to prepare their young people to go off to college in the month of August and late July, many of whom are now having to take out these student loans at a very high interest rate. They are going to end up paying almost \$100 more a month in interest to pay for their college, and I think that is something we need to pay very close attention to.

It is very unfortunate that on the majority side, Mr. Speaker, on the Republican side, all due respect to all the innovation that one tries to come up with on the other side of the aisle, it is costing the American people more, and it is putting our young people in debt in this country even before they can grab their college degree and earn a living. They are already, on average, somewhere around \$25,000 or \$30,000 in debt when they step across the stage. That is very, very unfortunate.

We cut student aid here. We increase student loan rates here. The States in turn have to cut, and the cost of college is increased. It increases on these

individuals. It is an increase on these individuals.

I think it is also important, Mr. Speaker, for us to talk about the fact that we have the will and the desire on this side of the aisle to move America in the right direction. I talked about this last week, Mr. Speaker, and I think it is very, very important to bring this up here again today; that we are willing to move this country in the right direction, in a new direction, making sure that Americans have more opportunities.

I think it is important for us to point out the fact that on this side of the aisle we have committed again to raising the minimum wage. We have committed to helping this country become energy independent, investing in the Midwest versus the Middle East within 10 years. We have also committed on this side of the aisle, I mentioned it earlier, to implementing all of the 9/11 recommendations.

But one of our major commitments on this side, Mr. Speaker, and also to the American people, is that we have said that we are willing to bring this budget back into balance within a reasonable time; not that we are going to cut the deficit in half, or we are going to balance the budget, but we are going to be able to bring us out of this deficit spending that the Republican majority has led us into with record deficits as far as the eye can see.

We have the resume. On our resume we have the accomplishment of being able to do that. We have accomplished that before in the past, Mr. Speaker, and I think it is something that one needs to pay very close attention to.

When we say a commitment to making sure our fiscal house is in order, it is not a slogan. It is not something that someone says, well, the polls say you need to say you are going to bring spending under control. We have actually attempted to do that.

You have seen this chart before. We can't talk about it enough, because the facts are in. Regardless of the floor speeches that may go on on the Republican side of the aisle, I think it is important for us to outline the fact that we have put our legislation where our mouths are.

We have said that we want to see this House say that if you are going to spend, then spend in a way that almost every American family has to spend. If you are going to buy something, you have to know how you are going to pay for it. You can't put everything on a credit card. And what is unfortunate is that we have allowed other countries to be a part of our country financially not because the American people have made a bad decision, but it is because the majority and the White House have made some bad decisions.

Here I have, Mr. Speaker, a PAYGO rule that on this side we have adopted; that we are willing to pay as we go. If you are going to buy it, you have to show how you are going to pay for it. It is not that you spend or you buy and