

It is critical that Houston residents receive the tools they need to reverse the high rates of job loss and the skyrocketing mortgage foreclosure rates leaving many families helpless in our region.

Any economic stimulus bill will need to increase unemployment benefits by \$25 to seriously address the economic crisis and ensure that Americans have money to live and pay their creditors. It will help families survive and put food on the table while they look for work. It is also our duty to provide up to 33 weeks of additional unemployment benefits. It will buy our citizens more time to find employment during this grim economic climate.

Retaining the House version of the increased Earned Income Tax Credits, and increased credit for the refundable portion of the Child Credit will give families some much needed tax relief to make it through this economic climate.

Children are the forgotten victims of our economic times. The Economic Stimulus Bill will help create jobs for our educators. Schools in my district in Houston are old and in need of repair. Some are at risk of being shut down. Our children are our future. They not only deserve to learn in buildings that are up to standard, but the schools also need to be modernized with high tech tools to help them compete in 2009 and beyond. We cannot forget about our children.

The House version of the stimulus bill sets aside 79-billion dollars for our Nation's schools. The money will go towards repairing and modernizing the buildings that will shape the future leaders of this country. An additional amount was set aside for school construction. School construction is critically important because it will create jobs and allow Americans to invest in the future of our children. The Senate Stimulus Bill only provides 39-billion dollars for our schools. That is almost half of the funds proposed by the House Stimulus Bill. Our children deserve better.

The story of my constituents in Houston is also the story of Americans throughout the country who are desperately trying to care for their families and make ends meet.

Last month, the U.S. lost more than 500-thousand jobs, bringing the total to 21.6 million unemployed Americans. The economy is expected to hit record lows in 2009.

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, America's unemployment rate rose to 7.6 percent in January. Houston's unemployment rate is not as high yet, but any amount above 4 percent full employment is a bad sign. That is unacceptable.

The Economic Recovery and Reinvestment Act is critical to avoiding an economic disaster. The Senate Bill cuts additional funding to basic public safety such as Federal aid to firefighters, the Coast Guard and officers with the Transportation Safety Administration. These are hardworking men and women who watch over the security of our homeland. They keep our families safe.

The House Stimulus Bill provides additional dollars to programs such as Head Start and Violence Against Women. The Senate bill takes dollars away from women and children, by cutting funds to these programs. As Members of Congress, there is no justification for taking dollars away from our most vulnerable citizens—none.

The Senate bill cuts federal aid to NASA, one of Houston's main employers. That means

more loss of employment. We need to start creating jobs, not cut them.

This recovery package needs to become a reality with as much funding as we can spare to help our citizens. It should address the mortgage foreclosure crisis. We need to invest federal dollars into our country's infrastructure projects, particularly Houston Metro.

The Economic Stimulus Bill in both the House and Senate is not simply a wish list or an appropriations bill. It is a necessity. I am fighting to ensure that Texans get the Federal dollars needed to get citizens out of the unemployment office and back into the workforce.

HONORING DR. JEANA BRUNSON

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) for 5 minutes.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize the life and work of Dr. Jeana Brunson. Dr. Brunson was born and raised in Mobile, Alabama, a city located on the resplendent coast of the Gulf of Mexico which is best known for being the home of the first and true Mardi Gras in the Americas.

Dr. Brunson would remain in Mobile until she earned her bachelor's degree in studio art from the University of South Alabama. She then moved from her beloved Mobile to the University of Texas in Austin where she earned her certification as a teacher. Her pursuit of academia then took her to Lubbock, Texas, where she would earn her master's degree in museum science from Texas Tech University while also serving as a research assistant for the costume and textile division for the Museum of Texas Tech.

Her work in Lubbock earned her a position of cataloger and curatorial assistant for the Kansas Museum of History in Topeka, Kansas, and then on to the curator for the Camden County Historical Society in Camden, New Jersey.

The position of registrar for the Museum of Science in Tallahassee, Florida, finally brought her to the place which she has been calling home for the past 20 years. She quickly moved up the ranks as she proceeded from registrar to curator to senior curator. During her time as head of research and collections, she earned her Ph.D. in historic costume and textiles. Finally in 2001, she was able to enjoy the fruition of her labor and the realization of her dreams when she became the director and chief curator for the Museum of Florida History in Tallahassee, Florida.

From this post in Tallahassee, Madam Speaker, she has been able to collect political materials, women's suffrage materials, garments, and assorted other pieces of historical significance for a new exhibit to be produced in 2013 honoring the accomplishments of the women of my home State of Florida.

Among the honorees will be another great woman of Florida and a person

whom I have always admired, a constituent of my congressional district but a person who belongs to our entire State and to our Nation, Roxcy Bolton. Roxcy Bolton is a pioneer among Florida's women. She was inducted into the Florida Women's Hall of Fame for forcing police and prosecutors to make rape crime a priority as well as illustrating to health departments the need for rape treatment centers. In fact, the rape treatment center in our public hospital in Miami-Dade Florida is named after Roxcy Bolton.

Dr. Brunson also has traveled across the country earning prestigious positions and meritorious accolades for her fine work. Each stop has had its pitfalls and its windfalls, but she has never succumbed to the temptation of acquiescence in the face of adversity. The lessons that the good doctor learned on this long road have been to the benefit of our entire Nation. As the director and chief curator for the Museum of Florida History, Dr. Brunson has become the steward of Floridian culture. She has worked tirelessly to preserve the work of courageous women, like Roxcy Bolton, so their stories can be preserved for the benefit of our next generation.

I pray that we may all learn from the examples set by Dr. Jeana Brunson, that we may never let our passions be eroded by our difficulties, and that we may persevere and never falter in the pursuit of our dreams.

Congratulations, Dr. Brunson.

A POLICY THAT DOESN'T WORK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCLINTOCK) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Madam Speaker, Benjamin Franklin warned us that "Passion governs, but she never governs wisely."

As the Congress and the President rush to enact the latest in a long line of mega-spending bills, I think we would be well advised to spend a little more time on the dispassionate math of the matter.

The Congressional Budget Office issued a report last week that warns us, as reported by the Washington Times, that the spending bills may "help in the short term but result in so much government debt that within a few years they would crowd out private investment, actually leading to a lower gross domestic product over the next 10 years than if the government had done nothing."

We are already running a \$1.2 trillion national deficit this year with a spending bill racing back toward this House to add another \$800 billion on top of that.

Let's put that in perspective: a \$2 trillion deficit, that is 150 times the size of the annual deficit that has brought the State of California to the brink of bankruptcy. That is \$6,500 of new debt for every man, woman and

child in the United States, \$26,000 for an average family of four. And that is not a theoretical number. That family will have to repay that \$26,000 plus interest from their future taxes just as surely as if it appeared at the bottom of their credit card statement this month.

This is all being done in the name of stimulating the economy, but the supporters of this policy have not been able to cite a single example in all of recorded history where massive government spending has actually stimulated an economy. There are plenty of examples where it ruined economies and brought down great nations.

The supporters of this policy have not been able to explain how the government can inject a single dollar into the economy that it has not first taken out of that same economy. They have not been able to explain how we strengthen our economic future by leaving the next generation with an unprecedented debt that will take them decades to pay off.

What the President told us last night, and my friend from Texas said just a few moments ago, is that by spending another \$800 billion, they can create or save up to 4 million jobs. That sounds good until you realize that comes to more than \$200,000 a job by their own numbers. By their own numbers, we could literally send those 4 million lucky families a check for \$100,000 and save half of what they plan to spend.

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If this policy worked, we would already be enjoying a period of unprecedented economic expansion. The bailouts and spending and loan guarantees already issued now total \$9.7 trillion. As Bloomberg pointed out this week, that is enough to pay off 90 percent of all of the home mortgages in America. Not 90 percent of the bad mortgages, 90 percent of all of the mortgages.

We have not seen prosperity from these policies because these policies don't work. They didn't work in Japan in the 1990s, as my friend from California just mentioned, they didn't work in America in the 1930s. The unemployment rate in 1939, after nearly a decade of New Deal spending, was the same as it was in 1931.

Madam Speaker, history tells us that bankrupt nations don't last very long. Before we can secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, the Nation's finances must first be solid. So I beg the majority to pause and consider carefully what they are doing. I beg the President to pause and consider what kind of legacy he wants to leave the Nation. And, I beg the American people, while there is still time, to rise up and to demand a return to fiscal sanity.

STIMULUS BILL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. PENCE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. PENCE. Madam Speaker, we gather on this floor at a time just a few moments after the United States Senate has passed by a sufficient majority a spending bill, the intention of which is to stimulate this economy. But careful examination shows, and more Americans every day are realizing, that the only thing the Democrat stimulus bill will stimulate is more government and more debt.

Let me say emphatically: House Republicans know two things to a certainty. Number one, we are in a recession; American families are hurting; millions have lost their jobs, and millions more worry that they will be next. But, number two, Republicans also know this Congress must do something.

Despite the fact that the President of the United States last night told the Nation's media and the American people that he disagreed with some in Congress who believe we should do nothing, let me say, with great respect to our President, I know of no Republican member of the House or Senate who believes that in these difficult times we should do nothing. I would be prepared to stand corrected if the administration would like to provide names, but a casual survey of Republican members of the House and the Senate should instruct the American people that Republicans believe we should do something, but we also believe we should take time to get it right; that we should create a stimulus bill that is not, as the bills that have passed the House and Senate now are, a stimulus bill that actually is not a long laundry list of worn-out liberal spending priorities but actually is, at its center, a bill that will give working families and small businesses more of their hard-earned dollars to spend.

At the President's invitation, Republicans brought forward a Republican alternative which would give the average married couple a tax break this year of some \$3,400. We would let small businesses write off up to 20 percent of their profits this year. This kind of tax relief, Madam Speaker, is precisely the kind of tax relief that John F. Kennedy advanced to stave off an economic downturn in the 1960s; that is what Ronald Reagan did to turn back an even more serious recession in the 1980s; and, after the towers fell in New York City and the Pentagon was struck on 9/11, it was what this Congress did in a bipartisan way to turn around a downturn in our economy.

Tax relief, when combined with some modest investment in infrastructure that I believe Republicans in the main would support, is precisely the kind of stimulus that the American people want to see happen, and it is not what has passed out of the House or Senate.

But I rise today with a hopeful note that, after some tough partisan rhetoric in recent days, this Congress now with the conference committee will come together and will again embrace President Obama's call for bipartisan

input on this bill. Conference committees, for people looking in, are really the time when the House and Senate reconcile differences. But sometimes they can be a fresh start in legislation; and our hope is that now we will be able to bring forward these time-honored, time-tested efforts for growing our economy. And I believe the American people are with us.

Yesterday, in Indiana, I held a town hall meeting a little bit south of where the President was. Three hundred Hoosiers gathered at Donner Center in Columbus, Indiana yesterday. And I have to tell you, Madam Speaker, I sensed, as was reported in the local paper today, a tremendous amount of skepticism about the idea that we can borrow and spend and bail our way back to a growing economy. There was tremendous support in that room for tax relief for small businesses and working families.

But a little girl named Hillary rose and touched my heart. She said to me: Congressman PENCE, my dad is raising me and her sibling as a single parent. Little Hillary told me he just got his hours cut from 40 hours a week to 24. She said, "Is there anything in this bill that they just passed that will get my dad his hours back?" And I looked at her with no small amount of emotion and I said, "Hillary, because I can't answer yes to that question, because I can't tell you that something in the Democrat stimulus bill will help your dad get back to full time, I can't support this bill."

The American people are on to it. We need to come together in a bipartisan way and do what history teaches will get this economy growing again.

TARP: A TROUBLING INVESTMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida (Mr. STEARNS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. STEARNS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to address the troubling results of a report that was just released last Friday by the Congressional Oversight Panel on the Troubled Asset Relief Program, TARP.

In summary, the 50-page report indicates that our United States Treasury has overpaid by about \$78 billion in order to implement the largest private sector bailout in American history. In fact, the study directly states that, "Treasury paid substantially more for the assets it purchased than their current market value." How much more? Our Treasury purchased assets worth about \$178 billion for \$254 billion. That is a direct and unnecessary transfer of our taxpayer dollars to private financial institutions that utilize reckless investment strategies.

Thus, the Treasury has essentially shortchanged taxpayers to the tune of \$78 billion and has not acted as a good steward of our taxpayers' funds. To be sure, former Secretary Paulson looked the American people in the eye and assured us that the taxpayer investment