

points to that effort as one of his “biggest disappointments,” it was that debate that kept the issue of universal coverage alive for the past 16 years. We are now poised with JOHN DINGELL once again serving as the lead House negotiator to work with President Obama to make health insurance for all Americans a reality in this Congress.

Mr. DINGELL and I share a passion for oversight. When I first came to Congress, and particularly once I became a member of the Commerce Committee, Mr. DINGELL provided valuable mentorship that has enabled me to continue his tradition of aggressive oversight through the Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee. Mr. DINGELL not only understands the role of Congress to oversee the executive branch, he, perhaps more than anyone else before him, used this authority to uncover abuses of power including corruption, waste and fraud that jeopardized not only taxpayer dollars but also the health and safety of the American people.

JOHN DINGELL has proven that investigations can accomplish as much as legislation. As chairman of the Energy and Commerce Committee and the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, Mr. DINGELL used broad jurisdiction over the committee to effect changes on issues such as defense contracting, insider trading, Superfund cleanup, medical device safety, unfair foreign trade practices, food and drug safety, blood banks and pipeline safety.

In an age when State legislatures are quick to enact term limits, JOHN DINGELL is a shining example of how valuable tenure can be. The perspective and knowledge he brings to the table after 53 years of service is a critical part of the legislative process that allows us to avoid repeating past mistakes and continue to push for longstanding goals such as universal health care.

Whether it is battling in committee or on the floor, teaming up in an investigation or relaxing with JOHN and Debbie Dingell on Mackinac Island, I have valued Mr. DINGELL as a colleague, mentor and friend.

Our country is a better place, and Congress is a stronger institution because of the contributions of JOHN DINGELL.

TAKING CARE OF OUR NATION'S VETERANS: A MOTHER'S LETTER

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

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, while our Nation faces many serious issues, from the economy to health care, there is one important issue we must not forget. That is the issue of American servicemembers who are returning from Iraq and Afghanistan with mental health challenges.

Earlier this month, I received a letter from the mother of a marine who is stationed in my district at Camp

Lejeune. This mother is very concerned about how the Marine Corps is treating her son. And I would like to read from her letter.

“Congressman Jones, my son joined the United States Marine Corps while still in high school. I remember him as a little boy looking in awe at his grandfather in his Marine Corps uniform and telling me that was what he was going to be when he grew up.

“Growing up, he was the son every parent could be proud of. He never got into any trouble in school, was always there to help with his younger siblings, held a job after school and was extremely active in the Boy Scouts. He earned his rank of Eagle Scout at the age of 16 and held many positions within the Boy Scouts.

“Because of his Eagle Scout status, he entered the Marine Corps as a PFC and quickly rose to the rank of sergeant within his first 3 years in the Marines. He was an exemplary marine and an exemplary young man.

“If you review his military record, you can plainly see that he had no problems with behavior or performance prior to his deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan.

“He has had a very difficult time readjusting to life after conflict. He came home to a ‘Dear John’ letter, had several friends injured and killed and has seen more destruction than most of us will see in a lifetime. And having no one to turn to for help because of the stigma and the fear of losing his career, he started drinking to self-medicate so that he would be able to sleep.

“Congressman, do you know what it is like to listen to your once-strong son cry like a baby at 3:30 in the morning three to four times a week because he can't handle what he has been through? Wanting to kill himself because he doesn't feel he is worthy to live because his brothers were shot down?

“Do you know what it is like to be 1,500 miles away and not have the ability to help him through this? All the while wondering and asking why the Corps he served so proudly and willingly has written him off as worthless and weak and offer no help to prevent him from faltering further?

“I am so sadly disappointed in the way the Corps has treated my son. My son left for the Marine Corps 100 percent intact. He will be leaving the Marine Corps with two feet that are fractured, back and knee problems, decreased hearing and decreased vision and PTSD that will carry a lifetime burden for him.

“And yet, according to the Corps, he has disgraced them by his behavior and he is no longer worthy. The way I see it, they used him, abused him and now will discard him and find some fresh young man who ‘isn't tainted’ and they will mold him and ask him to sacrifice himself for their cause. And when he is no longer of use to them, they will discard him, as well.

“I hope with all my heart that the Marine Corps will find the moral cour-

age to do the right thing when it comes to not only my son, but all those other young men and women who need their help and guidance.”

Mr. Speaker, this letter may tell the story of just one marine, but this is not an uncommon tale. An April 2008 study by the RAND Corporation found that nearly 20 percent of the Iraq and Afghanistan veterans who were surveyed have symptoms of PTSD or other major depression. The study also found that many servicemembers say they do not seek treatment for psychological illness because they feel it will harm their careers.

While Congress has implemented some positive reforms in funding increases to improve veterans' health care in recent years, more must be done to ensure that our veterans are receiving adequate care and compensation.

Promises made should be promises kept. And our Nation must never forget the servicemembers and veterans who have gone to war for this country.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I want to put into the RECORD that I have been talking with the Marine Corps. They have promised me they will try to help this young marine. And I must close, Mr. Speaker, for all those serving in Afghanistan and Iraq and all those who were killed and all of those wounded both physically and mentally, that God continue to bless our servicemen and God continue to bless America.

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

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

THE TRUE COST OF THE STIMULUS PACKAGE

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, we hear a lot about the economy, as we should, but I would like to focus on the cost of all of this money that the government says it needs to spend. The front page of today's USA Today is headlined, “Trillions Aimed At Financial Recovery,” and here we see a photograph of the Treasury Secretary, Mr. Geithner, scratching his head as he is talking to Members of Congress when he testified yesterday.

Now we hear about the billions spent for this program and the trillions spent for this program all in the name of helping the economy. I would like to focus on the cost of all of this. If you add up all of the bailout packages from last year, the so-called stimulus packages, and the bills yet to be passed but promised to be passed this year, plus the debt that it will cost Americans yet to be born, it is \$9,700,000,000,000.

Now that is the biggest number I have ever seen in my life. And \$9 billion, it is hard to relate to what 9 billion or \$9,700,000,000,000 is. Well, let's try to focus on how much that really is in terms maybe we can understand. If you add up all of the major wars that the United States has been involved in since we were a country, and you put 2009 dollars to those figures, this amount of money still would not cover the cost of the American Revolution, the War of 1812, the War Between the States, the Spanish-American War, World War I, World War II, the Korean war, the Vietnam war, the Iraqi wars and the Afghanistan wars. We would still have enough money left over in 2009 dollars to pay for the Louisiana Purchase in 2009 dollars, the Gadsden Purchase in 2009 dollars, and Alaska in 2009 dollars with money still left over. Now that is a lot of money.

It has been estimated also that this amount of money would pay for 90 percent of all of the home mortgages in the whole United States. Now we're talking about real money. Or looking at it another way, if you divided this money up with all the people on the face of the Earth, each one of them would get about \$1,500. That is a lot of money. And yet, this is the amount of money we are going to try to spend all in the name of saving the economy and saving the country.

I question, first of all, whether or not it will work. But more importantly, where are we going to get the money? We don't have the money. So we are going to have to borrow the money. And probably we will borrow the money from our good friends over in China. Oh, they're ready to lend us money and let Americans pay interest on it.

The Congressional Budget Office has done some work, it hasn't been publicized much, about the new stimulus bill, the \$835 billion bill that just passed the Senate that is coming back to the House in a conference bill maybe tomorrow, Friday or whatever. And they said even if you spend that money, that is not going to help the economy. So now we've got two problems. One, we don't have the money. And the stimulus bill may not even help the economy.

This country has done the stimulus bill thing before. This is not the first stimulus bill. It was tried right after World War II. In fact, we now have a total of eight stimulus bills that one Congress or another has passed all in the name of trying to stimulate the economy.

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And history has shown, basically, they just didn't work. They weren't as effective as they were expected to be. So, although we have philosophical differences between this side and the other side about how to help the economy, I would submit maybe we need to step back and rather than say government's the answer in spending money

that we don't have, taking money from taxpayers who are paying their taxes and working, taking it and giving it to the government and letting the government dole it out to different special interest groups throughout the country in the effort to stimulate the economy, rather than follow that philosophy, why don't we let Americans just keep more of their own money? Do something really remarkable, tell the American public, everybody that pays taxes is going to get a tax deduction. Everybody, including corporations and small businesses.

Then, when Americans have more of their own money, they will be able to stimulate the economy by spending it the way they decide, rather than the way we decide how to spend that money. And that will give small businesses, when they have more capital, the ability to hire people to come work for them. You see, businesses, especially small businesses, are where jobs are created. They're not created by the Federal Government; they're created by the private sector. I submit we ought to try the tax cut approach.

And that's just the way it is.

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

(Mr. PAUL 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 Indiana (Mr. PENCE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. PENCE 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 Nebraska (Mr. FORTENBERRY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

THE AMERICAN PEOPLE KNOW WHAT THE BOTTOM LINE IS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. KLEIN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. KLEIN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to be here this afternoon as I get together with a number of the members of our class of 2006. We've now finished our first 2 years, and we're beginning the third year of our service here in Washington, and it's truly an honor and a privilege to be serving on behalf of the American people, particularly at a time when the challenges are so great.

Just to boil it down very simply, all you have to do is go home, talk to your neighbors, talk to your friends, talk to the people you go to church or synagogue with, see people at the grocery store. And what you're hearing in Washington is quite different and the people that come before our committees, that represent large banks, or people that are even coming up before this Chamber. We have a respectful difference of opinion. But I think the American people know what the bottom line is. The bottom line is they are hurting, and they are hurting in numbers like we haven't seen in our lifetimes.

I spoke to my dad the other day. My dad is 80 years old. He just had his birthday, we celebrated. It was a wonderful opportunity for our family to be together. And he grew up, he was born in 1928, so he was born right at the beginning of the Depression, but he certainly lived through the 1930s and '40s, and told me what it was like and how their family had to make do, and what it took to save for that last thing that they needed, the clothes, the hand-me-downs, all the other things they did to make do.

Well, we don't live like that today, by and large. But more and more people are forced to make very, very difficult decisions about how they're going to put food on the table, pay for their mortgage, pay for their insurance, put their kids through school, buy medicine, all the most basic things.

And I'm just going to take a quick showing of a graph here that was prepared, very interesting graph. It's from our United States Bureau of Labor Statistics. And it talks about recessions, the last few recessions we had. One was in 1990, one was right after September 11, and unfortunately, the aftermath of that, and now we have the current one.

If you just look at the lines, here's the beginning of the recession. They all start at the same place, and that's zero, at the point in which there are no new jobs created but no jobs lost, what they call the beginning of the recession. And if you take a look at the blue line, that was the one from 1990, it basically, after 10, 11 months it began turning around, actually it was 9 or 10 months, began turning around; and within about 2 years it was back to normal and on its way up in a very nice steep incline, the way we like to see growth in this country. And the people that create the growth are the people that have small businesses. These are the people we're focusing on.

The one after September 11 went on a little longer, but still you saw this big increase after a period of time, a nice spectacular increase.

Well, now we take a look at this green one. This is the one, unfortunately, we're in right now. This is the recession that started a number of months ago, and it is a line that's going almost straight down. That's the level and the depth of which we're at