

if you chose government to be the stimulus, would it be fast enough? Could the government bureaucracy and the Federal Government move the money through fast enough? Clearly we have been able to see that it hasn't been able to get the money out the door to make a difference to the economy.

Mrs. LUMMIS. I wish to thank my Republican colleagues this evening, the gentleman from Ohio, the gentleman from New Jersey, and the gentleman from Colorado. We are hoping that in the next year we will see a bipartisan effort to address this problem.

JOB CREATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. SUTTON) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Ms. SUTTON. I am pleased to be here with my colleague from New York, Representative PAUL TONKO. I am BETTY SUTTON, and I proudly represent the 13th Congressional District of Ohio.

I am a member of the Task Force On Job Creation of our caucus and, in fact, I am the co-Chair. Mr. TONKO serves on that committee, and we are here today to talk about just that. We are here to talk about the need to create jobs, jobs, jobs in this country, both in the near term and for the long term that will be sustainable for our constituents and people across this great country.

As we move forward, we have to make sure that we secure an economy that will work for and with ordinary Americans, because we may recall that before the Bush recession began, the Republican recession began, the reality of it was we had an economy that wasn't working for many Americans already before it went off the cliff.

As we revitalize our economy, it's incredibly important that we don't just go back to the old ways where Wall Street ran rampant and Main Street suffered, but that we create and—facilitate, I guess, is a better word—facilitate an economy that will work for and with ordinary Americans, and that the prosperity of this great Nation and the promise of a middle class will be restored. That is what America is at its best, where the promise of a middle class is vibrant and well and thriving.

□ 1945

So before the recession, before the Republican recession hit, the reality is productivity and profits were up, and as I said, Wall Street was reveling. And ordinary Americans, what was happening to them? Their wages were flat, at best.

So the task force is here to say enough is enough. We need an economy that offers economic opportunity to people who live in neighborhoods across this country, who live in rural areas across this great country, not just those who make a living on Wall Street.

So, though the actions that we've taken already, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, have been helpful to many, and, in fact, the CBO has estimated, actually found that it has already created or retained 600,000 to 1.6 million jobs, we still have an unemployment rate that is staggering at 10 percent and nearly 16 million Americans out of work. So, far too many Americans across the country are without a job and far too many more are concerned about what tomorrow will bring. Forty percent of those who are unemployed have been jobless for at least half a year.

So we know, Representative TONKO and I, that we have to put people back to work, and it is not a simple task but it is an ongoing task. In fact, I'd say it's a mission because, you know, I have heard it said that we're in a jobless recovery.

Have you heard that, Mr. TONKO?

Mr. TONKO. Yes, I have. And that certainly doesn't cut it with the American public, with middle class working families across the country. It simply does not cut it.

But, Representative SUTTON, I do want to commend you for the leadership as co-Chair of our task force on job creation. And I found your introductory comments to inspire a thought: Let's really look at how this started.

We went from a record surplus under the Clinton administration to a record deficit. Had we stayed the course, the deficit reduction plan of President Clinton would have been completed. It would have completed its mission this year. We haven't seen deficit wipeout except for one Presidency, that of Andrew Jackson. So this could have been an historic year if we had stayed the course. What we found was that people will talk about the deficit, which the deficit has driven this recession which went longer and deeper than any forecasted, and now it's the daunting task of all of us who serve here in Washington to stop the bleeding. And great indicators out there suggest, many key indicators suggest that that has happened, as you alluded to, with 1.6 million additional jobs coming into the picture, direct and indirect measurement. We have also seen corresponding to that a .3 to a .9 percent reduction in unemployment. That at least is welcomed news that we could stop the bleeding. But now the overwhelming task, the challenge, is to grow this economy. And how are we going to do that?

There are a lot of needs out there that require us to create those jobs, to funnel the resource to those jobs so as to improve America's competitiveness. We are asking our businesses and our workers to function in a global economy, and there are investments that we can make, Representative SUTTON, that will take us out of this economic catastrophe and allow us to climb back.

But the last 8 years have been devastating. They have put us into a deep

financial hole. And as we cleaned up the mess, as we put the war in Iraq online in the budget, as we took the doughnut hole that was created that has hurt our seniors who are Medicare eligible as they have had to reach into their pocket to work with Medicare part D's doughnut hole, that was not put online in the budget in a way that really reflected the costs of these programs. So now we have truth and honesty in our budgeting, but that has produced an even deeper deficit because we're doing it with fairness and frankness.

Now, with the task force and many Members in a bipartisan bicameral way, we hope, we can then get to the picture of job creation. And that's what it's about right now in Washington. How can we create the programming that will allow for the increase of jobs, be it in the energy-related field, in manufacturing, in our parks, in our municipal levels of government with public safety, fire, and police numbers, teachers in the classroom? All of these efforts need to be brought in and built, if we can, and we must build an innovation economy that will be sparked by our growing the competitive edge for our businesses so that we can win and retain and grow jobs.

Ms. SUTTON. Representative TONKO, I know this is your first term, but it's hard to believe. I have to tell you, we are very inspired to have you here, and you didn't arrive a moment too soon.

The point that you make about the deficit, turning the surplus that was well established under President Clinton into such an extraordinary deficit under the last administration is a point that is a reality and, unfortunately, is one that we have to deal with; right? Because, you know, fighting two wars that weren't paid for and, as you point out, a lot of the costs done offline that weren't budgeted for.

But it wasn't just an economic deficit that was created; it was this jobs deficit that was created that we also are here to deal with not only tonight but until we resolve it. It has to be our mission.

Mr. TONKO. Right. Some were shipped off into a foreign economy. Others simply evaporated. And we saw in record numbers the losses that were out there because they simply could not compete and stay effective.

I meet people every day in my district, and I represent a capital region in New York State so that we have the benefit, the buffer, of public sector jobs. But our unemployment numbers are hanging near in excess of 9 percent. This is unacceptable. We need to do much more work as we go forward. And we applaud the efforts to date to take that surplus and apply it as a downpayment. But that's as it's seen, as a downpayment. There are many more installments to come in order for us to build hope in the lives of people, and that's what it's about.

You hear it. We've talked about it. I hear it in my district. The fear with

which people speak, the uncertainty of their tomorrow, the need for us to provide jobs for the youngest in society who are being released from higher ed who are in search of employment. Those who have been chronically unemployed, as you point out, before this recession hit and as it hit, chronic unemployment in many of our neighborhoods. All of this has to be taken into a full-picture view and create those situations that allow us to be competitive. And I think we can do it.

For instance, in the energy-related areas, we can grow jobs of the green collar variety. We can reduce demand for energy in this country. We're the most gluttonous society as it comes to use of our energy supplies. We send hundreds of billions of dollars into the treasuries of unfriendly nations, those who inspire terrorist activities in our country and around the world. We're sending hundreds of billions of dollars there. And do you think we could move forward with an energy security agenda, growing our energy independence, providing for energy audits, creating energy teams that can go into neighborhoods, allowing jobs for those who have been chronically unemployed or those recently unemployed, training, retraining programs through our community colleges to advance those energy audits and then to do the implementation of the audits as they're developed? These are great jobs that reduce our demand of energy through an energy efficiency program, allow us to create American jobs as we generate our supplies locally through embracing our intellectual capacity as a Nation, inspiring investments in R&D, research and development, and that will also deploy these ideas that are coming from public and private sector R&D centers, put those into working capacity for our Nation's people.

It's the cleverness. It's standing back and having a heart and a soul for our working families. And you know we can do it. You know that we have the capacity here as a legislative body, as the two bodies of the Capitol here in Congress, in working with the White House. We can make it happen, and the will must be there because we have the way and the means to make it happen.

Ms. SUTTON. Well, Representative TONKO, you put it well, and I know that you speak for your constituents and so many people out there in America who are feeling what we're speaking to and about. And you're absolutely right. They know that they cannot wait any longer, that we can't have inaction because inaction is far too expensive. It's far too expensive in not only lost wages, in, of course, being held hostage to foreign regimes that are unfriendly to us in the area of energy.

We need to pass measures, some of which we already know are tried and true and are necessary. We need to invest in things like our infrastructure, because we know that investment in infrastructure puts people to work right away and also is accomplishing the creation of real value.

You know, one of the things that was pointed out by you and is such an important fact about how we got to this level of a jobs deficit in this country was the loss of manufacturing and the loss of this country's investment in creating real value, and, instead, so much was put on Wall Street. Wall Street took hold of the opportunity, with very little hindrance on greed being the operative way of proceeding, and as a result, they ran rampant, creating pretend value, trading and pretend value. And as a result, in Ohio, for example, bad trade policies and this reckless way on Wall Street, the lack of attention to manufacturing and its importance to the strength of our Nation and, in fact, the national security of our Nation, Ohio, since 2001, lost hundreds of thousands of jobs. That was long before the recession began.

So we know that there are certain things that will help us, and, of course, the job creation task force supports this idea, that we have to build and strengthen our Nation's crumbling infrastructure. And I'm inspired by your words about the innovative spirit and all the potential that exists in this Nation. Well, some of that potential needs to be applied to our legislation, because while some of the ways that we have pursued things in the past are tried and true and we need to move forward in those veins that work, we also need to think creatively.

You talked about the environment. Representative TONKO, you're well aware that I was the sponsor of the CARS Act, which became known, affectionately, I hope, as the Cash for Clunkers bill. But the thing about Cash for Clunkers was it shot down the old paradigm that it's either about jobs or the environment. It was about jobs and the environment. And we shored up the jobs in the auto and related industries that people across this country depend upon for their livelihood and the ramifications and the ripple effects, taking people off of unemployment, giving them the dignity and the opportunity to work a job, and at the same time achieving improved environmental integrity and helping consumers to get something that they need during these difficult economic times, and it went right to them.

So it matters where you aim. No more just aiming at Wall Street, because we can't have a jobless recovery. There is no such thing, in my view, is there, Mr. TONKO, as a jobless recovery that's meaningful?

Mr. TONKO. Not at all, Representative SUTTON.

Again, I applaud your efforts with Cash for Clunkers. You were a leader in making that happen. And you talk about the merit that that brought, but let's talk about the ripple effects that it inspired. Dropping that pebble into the pond and having those ripple effects reach into the auto industry, not only did it inspire people to trade in an energy-inefficient automobile, but they were now purchasing an efficient auto-

mobile and they were sparking additional production for our auto industry, which is absolutely important.

□ 2000

So some of these actions that we take have positive follow-up actions. There are direct and indirect hits, and all of that grows jobs, grows opportunity and speaks accordingly—favorably—to an energy plan, to an environment plan, and to an economic recovery plan. So, across the board, all of these plans are responded to in a progressive fashion.

The same is true, as you made mention, of the infrastructure issue. We think traditionally of roads and bridges. Well, many of those bridges that are measured "deficient" need to be addressed for public safety purposes. It also responds to the ironworkers across America who will have to provide for the supplies, and it responds to all of those who work in the industries, in the trades, who are connected to the ordinary transportation construction projects out there. It is the cement manufacturers and those who are providing all of the resources that are required. All of that produces more than just construction jobs on the scene. There are many ancillary industries that are favorably bolstered simply by this investment.

When we talk about infrastructure, we can't stop just with roads and bridges. We need to look at the most efficient form of travel, that being rail, and we need to look at building into that today's ahead-of-the-curve sort of responses with high-speed, energy-efficient rail. Again, that requires embracing R&D so that our brightest science and tech minds can create efficient braking systems and efficient cars that can be utilized in the rail transportation corridors. All of that inspires progress, and it allows us to take some of the brightest minds who can help us with the intellect and with the discoveries that we require, but it also involves a full spectrum of employment—from trades individuals over to the Ph.D.'s. So we cover the full spectrum of jobs out there, and we provide, again, hope for American families.

You know, I think it is important also for us to look at the measures that we can inspire and encourage that find us working with the deployment of these wonderful innovative and ingenious measures that are used now by other nations.

Recently, the SEEC Coalition in Congress, of which I'm a founding member—and it's a brand new vehicle this year, the Sustainable Energy and Environment Coalition—has been bringing in guest speakers. We had the most recent former Energy Minister of Denmark in to speak to the group to talk about the innovation that Denmark was doing with its economy on energy-related matters. Afterwards, I spoke to him. Representative SUTTON, what he said to me was so telling.

I asked him, What was the inspiration? Where did you reach to get these

ideas that transformed the energy outcomes for Denmark?

He smiled broadly and said, Many of them are American patents.

We have not provided for that funding mechanism to take the whiz-kid ideas in the lab and in the R&D centers—both public and private and at academia. We have not provided the funding to deploy those into manufacturing or into retail use so that we can get the return on investment that was made. The Angel Network, the venture capitalists—that “valley of death” as it is labeled—needs to be addressed. If we do that, we are providing more jobs, not just in R&D, but by inducing wiser manufacturing operations.

You know, you talked about manufacturing and the heyday of which we all know of the manufacturing that was here. I represent a series of mill towns, which is a necklace of communities along the course of the Erie Canal and the Mohawk River. They were the Westward Movement. They were the epicenters of invention and of innovation, staffed many times by immigrant labor that created those ideas, which allowed us to rule the world. We created the Westward Movement with that sort of canal activity and those mill towns. Today, those mill towns have gone rusty, but we can save manufacturing in America if we do it smarter. We don't have to do it cheaper. We need to do it smarter.

With the emergence of nanoscience in this country, there is a nanoscience center in the capital region of New York, which I represent, that just 2 days ago introduced an investment that will allow them to provide for precision characterization and inspection of product line development and manufacturing. This will take us a long way to being the best and the smartest, and that's the sort of investment that American workers deserve. America's families can have that hope brought into the fabric of their families simply by the wisdom that can be inspired with sound public policy here and by the investment of resources that can make things happen.

Ms. SUTTON. That's exactly right, Representative TONKO.

As you point out, these initiatives have massive effects for the good of the whole. You get the benefit of the R&D jobs, and you get the benefit of all of the spinoffs and the manufacturing. I mean, that is what built this country. That is what built this middle class that we aspire to.

I'm the youngest of six kids from a working class family. My dad worked in a boilermaker factory his whole life. Somehow, from those roots, in this great country, I was able to come to the House of Representatives of the United States. I take that responsibility so seriously because I know it's an unlikely story. It's an unlikely story that someone not born to wealth and privilege can sometimes come, in this great country, to a place like this to be a voice for people out there who

only want a chance to do a hard day's work for a fair wage. We've gotten away from that in this Nation.

As to manufacturing, though, we might not make all of the things we used to make, but we will make other things—green energy products. We used steel to build the windmills, but right now, we're not using steel or our ingenuity, but there are so many out there in the United States with the capacity to do it and the desire to do it. They're just looking for a government that will work with them. That's what we're about—finding ways to work with them to accomplish these goals, to create the opportunity and to build the potential of this country that we all know that it has and that it shall always have.

So it is really a pleasure in the sense that the challenges are hard but that the potential is greater. The potential that we have before us outweighs the difficulties that we face, and we have to make that the case. That is our job here in Congress.

So I am glad to be down here tonight to talk about these issues with you because, among all of the highest of high priorities, in my view right now, as a Member of Congress, for the people whom I represent, it's jobs, jobs, and jobs.

Mr. TONKO. Well, Representative SUTTON, anyone who knows you picks that up as the mantra. You share that vision of a renewable form of energy in wind turbines that could be established.

You know, we don't have the luxury to sit around and let this opportunity pass us by. We will have failed generations of Americans if we do not advance a sound agenda for jobs in the energy arena and across the board with all of these aspects and dynamics of job creation. It's not like someone else isn't going to take over, because we are now seeing robust activity in India, in China, in Japan, in Germany, and in other centers around the world. So we have no choice. We cannot be lulled into a false sense of security. As if the recession, deep and long as it is and was, isn't enough and as if the job loss was not enough, we now are challenged by the actions of others who are moving past us.

So, for many, many fair and just reasons—and maybe it's something we don't want to acknowledge—we need to move forward aggressively with a sound jobs agenda that will speak to the heart and soul of this Nation: the working families of this country.

Now, when you talk about energy transformation and jobs that can be created, isn't it ironic that we will hear on this floor debates about whether carbon emission is a reality in our lives, all while these job opportunities are passing us by? Delay here is costly, perhaps into the millions and billions of dollars. Carbon emission? Let's talk about job emission. Let's talk about the job loss because, as we go forward, it will be critically valuable if we can

put that focus onto this job package as well as the infrastructure.

While we are talking about energy, water/sewer systems and water treatment centers, I would also say that, in my former life just before Congress—after my years of service in the legislative body of the New York State Assembly—I went over to NYSEERDA and led that authority. It is the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority. NYSEERDA had many problems it had worked on with energy-efficient water treatment centers. So here are ways to help local communities. Water is the commodity. They say, in the next 30 years, it will be transportation, water, and energy. We need to invest in that infrastructure. Let's do it in a state-of-the-art fashion where we are creating energy-efficient water treatment centers. Let's invest in these centers, and let's help local governments grow their job opportunities. One of the marketable strategies is to have an abundant and up-to-date water supply, a sewer treatment center so that you can have these facilities, that infrastructure, in your midst. I think that is so very important.

As you talk about the American Dream that your dad allowed you to dream that took you to noble levels, it began with education and higher education. So investing in the human infrastructure of education, investing in green schools and in improved schools at the school infrastructure, all of this needs to be part of our package. We know that leadership is responding to that jobs agenda. We know that, as a task force, there is a lot of homework to do.

You have rolled up your sleeves as co-Chair with Representative HASTINGS. The two of you are leading us, along with the chairman of the caucus, JOHN LARSON, and along with many of our standing Chairs, like GEORGE MILLER and, certainly, Speaker PELOSI. All of us working together can make this happen. There are great ideas that every Member is feeding this body, and we need to move forward aggressively but effectively and intelligently so as to create the package which is the greatest pronouncement of economic recovery that we can imagine.

Representative SUTTON, it is great to work with you. I am inspired because of the sort of intellect that you bring to the discussion, and there are many people with whom we have partnered who have it within their hearts and souls and minds to make a difference.

Ms. SUTTON. Well, I am humbled by your words. You are very generous.

I have to say that there are those out there who, on the other side of the aisle—and sometimes we hear about how bad things are and, Oh, my goodness, but we don't hear solutions. You know what? It doesn't take a lot to identify the problems. The American people know what this recession has brought us. They know what happened as the deficit skyrocketed under the

last administration and when the Democrats took over from the Republicans, who were in control of everything for many, many years. Now all we hear sometimes is just about how bad it is. Well, how do you think we got here?

So we are about solutions, and we are about continuing to work on it until we accomplish what we need to for the American people, because nothing ever gets done just by identifying problems. We have to make things happen because we get the results that we create.

Right now, we are living and are trying to fix the results that were created, not by the party of “no,” as sometimes people refer to those on the other side of the aisle—because they weren’t the party of “no.” They were the party in control. They were in control when wages were flat for the American people, when productivity was through the roof and when the GDP was rising as well. So people were working harder. They were working longer, and they were getting less.

In fact, Representative TONKO, I’m going to go down to the well here because I have a graph that will show exactly what was going on.

Mr. TONKO. It’s rather dramatic, and to think of what was happening with productivity on a curve and as to what was happening with GDP and with its curve and then contrasting that with the average American incomes, with the household incomes, it is a very painful but telling story.

Representative SUTTON, now that you are by the chart, explain for the American public, if you will, just exactly what was happening through this time frame. Again, there was a lot of work to be done to stop the bleeding. People ask, Well, what are you doing about jobs? What are you doing about the recession? Wait. This took a while to clean up, and now it is time to move forward with the Progressive agenda.

Describe for us, please, where this great recession began and just what the curves tell us on that chart.

Ms. SUTTON. Representative TONKO, last year, when the so-called “melt-down” occurred, there were a lot of people where I live, as they listened to the experts say, Oh, we didn’t see this coming, who were all saying, What? Are you kidding me? Because we’ve been living this for quite some time in Ohio.

Part of the reason they felt that way is that, if you look at this chart which is right here, it is entitled: Everyday people were struggling before the great recession began. Productivity, GDP, and median household incomes are reflected on this chart.

□ 2015

And what you will see is that while we saw for many, many years, while here is where our recession hits in a big way, according to the experts, what was happening as we built up to our big recession? Productivity and GDP were going through the roof, and this line

down here with this big gap in between these two, this is what household incomes were.

Mr. TONKO. If you will suffer an interruption, if the gentlelady will yield, I think in simple terms what that is saying is some people were doing quite well and maybe perhaps realizing a bonanza and others were asked to live with what they’ve got and they stayed flat-lined.

Is that perhaps an easy way to place it?

Ms. SUTTON. That’s a very descriptive way of explaining what happened. Wall Street was having a party and the American people were in many cases in the position of using credit even to pay for their most basic needs. Then, of course, we know what happened. There were a lot of people in this country who also were subject to ever-escalating fees and all kinds of issues that they faced as those credit issues mounted or they, for goodness sake, got hit with a health issue. Even those with insurance, we know so many were forced into bankruptcy. Why? Because their wages and everything were way down here. As productivity and GDP, somebody was making a lot of money, but it wasn’t the American people.

Mr. TONKO. And whose pocket was it coming out of but the American working families. And so when we think about this, the work that we have to do, you know, somebody approved that there be no regulator, no watchdog over the financial sector. Somebody approved that. Somebody said, Let’s create a doughnut hole and let people make a record bonanza on the pharmaceutical needs that our American seniors require. Somebody said, Let’s give a tax break to the upper income strata and that will trickle down. Somehow that chart is telling us that was a fairy tale; it was fiction, not truth.

A number of these elements now come to haunt us. So bringing about regulatory reform in the banking industry, in the financial sector, a step done just a few days ago; making certain there was a tax cut for middle-income America in the stimulus package, an historic, largest tax cut for middle-class America, part of the stimulus package; making certain that we now start putting down payments onto those issues like our energy infrastructure, which failed miserably in 2003, where we didn’t invest in a domestic agenda; ending this off-line, off-budgeting of a war in Iraq that now is finally brought on-budget, to have truth and honesty in the budget.

All of this hit at once. And then investing in a stimulus to stop the bleeding. We had to bring things under control and now talk about the progress that needs to be made, needs to be struck, in not only bringing about jobs but inspiring an innovation economy, those meaningful jobs that will be uniquely American or provide for America’s needs through her own workers and allow us to clean the environment, respond to a favorable pro-

gressive energy agenda and make smarter outcomes, the outcome at our manufacturing centers, and inspire investments in our public safety workers, our firefighters, our police, and bring back a strength in our education process that won’t deny our future workers; our children are our present and our future.

All of this needs to be brought into one intelligent package, as you lead us, along with Representative HASTINGS, Representative LARSON and the leadership of the House under Speaker PELOSI. As we go forward, this will be very important now to create a smart investment out of what was a huge catastrophe where we went again, to repeat myself, from the largest surplus to the lowest deficit, the greatest deficit, and where we could have, had it stayed on course, reduced the deficit to zero in this given calendar year. What a tragedy for all of America, and now the task of building a smart response has begun through the task force and through the leadership of the House.

Ms. SUTTON. Representative TONKO has put it very well in identifying that there are many facets to what we have to do to provide the economic opportunity that the American people need and deserve.

What we see here is that even before the recession, they weren’t getting the economic opportunity that they need and they deserve, because their wages were flat, while those at the top were, as I say, reveling in the process and their productivity, the productivity of the American worker.

Mr. TONKO. If I can just ask you to point on the chart what year where we’re starting to see the dip for the average household income for Americans. It’s in the year 2000, 2001, where it really begins to dip and just continued to decline throughout that 8-year period or so that really inflicted pain upon American households.

Ms. SUTTON. The gentleman from New York is right. It goes completely flat before it falls off the cliff. It has been a struggle for a long time, in no small part because of what you point out. I have heard it said that there was no sheriff and so people robbed the banks. Well, then there was no sheriff and the banks robbed the people. We saw some of that in recent times.

And the American people are smart. They know what was going on, and they know how the economy was working for them. Now it was working a little better than it is for a lot of people now, but the reality is they still deserve better. And so we don’t really want to necessarily go back to this place where there’s a big gap and all the wealth is concentrated necessarily up here with the American people still not able to get by working two or three jobs.

But it doesn’t have to be that way. We want people to make money in this country. We want capitalism to flourish in this country. We want to facilitate that. But people who work and

contribute should be paid a fair wage, and they need to know the security of a job that is going to be there, that opportunity will be there for themselves and for their families, that they will have access to the health care coverage that they need.

That's a point I will yield on.

Mr. TONKO. Representative SUTTON, I will say this. Interestingly in that flat-lining of the red curve on your chart is that period, that 10-year stretch, where we saw health care insurance premiums more than double while that income, that average household income, remained flat. What a painful experience.

And then we all know through anecdotal evidence of the many stories of catastrophic situations where people were hit with—I can think of an example quickly—a 37 percent increase in insurance premiums over 2 years, and left with now one wage earner in a married couple household where they have to pick up \$18,000 in medical expenses.

This recovery requires bringing health care into a reformed situation, where there's affordability, accessibility, quality health care, making certain that our Nation's employers and the families are all benefited by flattening and then bending that health care insurance premium curve. There are so many pieces to the puzzle that are coming into play that this House, this majority, has advanced as high priorities: energy reform, health care insurance reform, job creation and retention, making certain that services are provided in our communities, relief to State governments. All of this is part of a package that will be put together in a very academically, sound manner.

And when we do that, I think the working families will be inspired by the sort of attention that they will get because they have not received that degree of empathy, that sensitivity to their struggle and we have allowed this to go far too long. Finally now the recession, we hope, has stopped, the bleeding has been stopped, and we go forward now with the act of rebuilding, rebuilding an economy, but we need to do it cleverly. We need to do it in a way that responds to many of the policies out there that will drive this Nation in terms of smart outcomes, smarter manufacturing investment, stronger energy outcomes, a better and more sustainable health care insurance program. All of these underpinnings of support, along with the job creation, are essential so that the jobs we develop are going to be there for generations and where they will be cutting-edge jobs that have not yet been on the radar screen. If we can do that with the traditional mix of job sector out there, job elements that will be available for our families, then we will have responded in most wholesome fashion. Then we can step back and say that we have begun the process that now will bring a sustainable outcome, a recov-

ery opportunity, and a strong sense of hope that we can build into the fabric of this country.

I think that we're onto the start of a long process. I chuckle when I hear people say, What have you done? The unemployment rate is so high. The people losing jobs are at this count. Where have you been?

I'm a new arrival. You have been working on these issues for the last term and a half. We have witnessed a major collapse that, as you indicated, was very predictable. All the indicators were telling us what was going on. But turning our backs to a situation does not offer comfort to America's jobless or even those who hold a job with great trepidation that they may not have that job much longer.

So, Representative SUTTON, your leadership in this regard, Representative HASTINGS, working with Representative LARSON and Speaker PELOSI, Chairman MILLER and our Majority Leader STENY HOYER, everyone coming together, working through the committee structure, putting this together in a forum that allows us to share openly and with great sense of vision, keen vision, we're going to make this happen. We're going to have a wonderful comeback, I believe.

Ms. SUTTON. I thank the gentleman again for his generous words and his points that are right on the mark.

You started out by talking about the costs of health care and how they've been just skyrocketing as the American workers' wages and American families have been flat; the burden that that has placed on people and the fact of the matter has led so many into bankruptcy. We all know these stories. We all know about those who can't get the care they need when they need it, and it is because of cost.

We hear people out there, some of the same people who brought us the Republican recession and this economy where wages were so flat for ordinary Americans, and they talk about how we shouldn't do this health care reform. The reality of it is, well, you know, no health care reform really wasn't working for the American people whose costs continue to skyrocket; and if we do nothing, the costs are going to continue to skyrocket.

The same is true about energy. There are those who may argue about the merits of what we do, but to do nothing is going to result in the same results that we've gotten from doing nothing, or not taking aggressive action, that brought us the Republican recession. And energy costs are going to go up and up and up while this economy has remained down here.

The good news is, as we take action to fashion this mission of job facilitation for the ordinary American families in this country that are its great strength, that it doesn't have to be this way, that we can all prosper, those who make the most as well as those who are in the middle and those who aspire to the middle class. That's the great promise of this great country.

You've pointed out a lot of the things that we need to do, in investing, research and development and innovation and infrastructure. You've pointed out how other countries in the midst of this global recession are doing that. That, too, is a factor that we can't ignore. We cannot stand still in these days. And to those who participated in bringing us the Republican recession that ended not only in such an increase in the deficit in this country but also resulted in the jobs deficit in this country, some of those same people, Representative TONKO, will stand here and say that it should be all about jobs, that we should be working on jobs.

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Well, we are working on jobs. And I know that the CBO has said that through the ARRA, that we have saved or created 600,000 to 1.6 million jobs. And I say to those who have been complaining about jobs, who didn't vote for the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, who brought us the skyrocketing deficit and the jobs deficit of the Republican recession, you didn't vote for the ARRA, so how many jobs have you delivered or saved for the American people in this short time as we pursue, as Americans, not as Democrats and Republicans, but as Americans, a path to recovery for ordinary families who need and depend upon us?

Mr. TONKO. Representative SUTTON, you're on to a very key factor. The third quarter of this calendar year saw most of the growth, if not all of it in our economy, as something related to the stimulus, inspired by the stimulus, not as great as we would like, some 3 percent, perhaps growth, with a reduction of .3 to .9 percent in unemployment. But it's a start. And I think that when we talk about the transformation that we can do with our energy agenda, with generation, with reduction, efficiency should be our fuel of choice, what we can do to reduce demand. All of that inserted into a sector like the manufacturing sector allows more jobs because we can reduce the cost of production which, again, the company is competing in a global marketplace.

We hear the stories. We hear the sad tales that are difficult. One in five children lives in poverty in this country. That is driving pain in the lives of so many families. When you hear stories like people having a job for 15 years in the manufacturing sector, now losing it; when I hear a dairy farming couple tell me that they don't think they can afford their daughter's high school graduation ring. We need to address all sectors of the economy, including our agriculture as a sector. The dairy industry needs to be responded to in a way where we provide those who work 24/7 a fair return for the market, for the product, the produce they bring to the market. There are so many challenges that behoove us to be at our very best. And now is the time, after all of this neglect, all of this destruction that was allowed to happen, it's a

huge mess to have cleaned up. And now we go forward and, inspired by the many stories that are real in the lives of people that will inspire our process to respond to people, I think is so key, is so elemental. Elementary statements out there that are made about various factors that drove job reductions in certain communities can be addressed simply by doing it in a wise and sensitive manner.

There are the tools at our fingertips. We are creating that package that will respond to it. This will not be, if we have our say as a majority, I believe, a jobless recovery that is not going to render any sort of hope for people. It resonates with a flatness, with a pain more than a flatness. And so the charts tell it all. The American workers tell it even better when they are left without a job, the dignity of work. We need to be inspired by the past history that spoke to us, the years of Franklin Roosevelt, when a CCC and a works program, a WPA were developed, and they built this Nation and it responded infrastructure-wise to the needs of communities across this country, coast to coast. We have a pioneer spirit of which I spoke that was centered in the mill towns along the stretch of the Erie Canal that gave a westward movement, that brought itself first to Ohio, our neighbors to the West, and then inspired an entire world. We created product designs and invention and innovation that drove a wonderful agenda.

Our hearts are full of the pioneer spirit. It's the American way to solve problems. That's truly the American spirit, and we can do it with the great agenda here.

Representative SUTTON, it has been so wonderful to be able to join you this evening and to work with you side by side on the task force for creating jobs. We have a voice that will resonate on behalf of the working families in this Nation, and we will talk about taking that curve and swinging it upward so that it's not a flat line in the lives of people, because while that red line looks painful, it's even more painful in the pocket when people realize that the job lost and the dollars lost and the opportunities lost are simply so real in their lives that they're counting on us to do our job and do it with tremendous sensitivity. I thank you for your leadership. It's been a pleasure to join you this evening.

Ms. SUTTON. Representative TONKO, we thank you for your leadership of all those you represent in New York and all those you speak for across the country. This is something that we can do in this great Nation, and we can do it together. We can do it. All of us within this Chamber have an interest in seeing our country prosper, and that's what the job creation task force is all about. And we will be back. We will be working in the meantime to make sure that we realize and we do our part to put forward the economic opportunity that the people that, as I said, we're so

very honored to serve and represent, what they need and what they deserve.

JOB AND THE RECOVERY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MAFFEI). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. WALDEN) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. WALDEN. Well, it's that season. The Christmas season is upon us. And I sort of felt like I must have been at the Nutcracker, because I haven't seen that much spin since the sugar plum fairies in the Nutcracker.

Let's talk about jobs and the recovery. Let's talk about fact and fact. When the American Recovery Act, the stimulus, was raced through this floor on a totally partisan move, we were told to expect that with the stimulus, as you can see here in this chart to my left, that this is what would happen to unemployment.

Now, remember, when the year started and President Obama took office and the Democrats claimed control of the Senate with a 60-seat margin, that can overrun any filibuster—60 seats—and a 40-seat margin here in the House means they are unparalleled in their power and control and ability to pass anything they want anytime they want and sign it into law.

When the year started, unemployment was at 7.6 percent in January of this year. High, by national standards. No doubt about it. Highest it had been in many years. We were headed into a recession. No doubt about it. We'd been through unprecedented times. But we were told if the American taxpayers would just go out and loan the Congress, actually it's not the American taxpayers yet, it's our kids and grandkids that get to pay it back later. Right now we're going to the Chinese and the Japanese and the oil-producing countries and saying, Can you loan us the money? But that's the dirty little secret here. If you'll loan us that \$800 billion, whatever it was, here's where unemployment will end up. It's going to just barely go up and come out at about 8 percent. Oh, and by the way, we were told by some of the Democrats who were all for this that if we didn't pass the stimulus into law, that unemployment would go clear up to here.

Now let's look at what really happened. Many of us on the Republican side of the aisle said, That isn't going to work. Just throwing more taxpayer money you don't have, borrowing more money from foreign countries that already have loaned us more than they want to, and throwing that out in rapid succession may create a few jobs, but the long-term implications are dangerous for the future of this country because of debt. And you're not going to create that many jobs. Sure, in a year or two you can't help but create jobs, and we'll talk about some of those because a lot of them are created right here in the Washington, D.C. area, not out in real America, and are not sus-

tainable. But we were told if we pass it, here's where we'll be with unemployment, at about 8 percent. If we don't pass it, gosh, we'll end up almost at 9 percent.

So they rushed it through here. The stimulus rushed through here. And now what are we at? We're over 10 percent unemployment. That's the red line. You see, some of us on the Republican side of the aisle actually come out of the private sector. We actually have signed the fronts of payroll checks like I have and my wife has. For 21, almost 22 years we were small business owners. We took over a very small family business, got it out of debt, on its feet and we grew it in 20 years. We employed 15 to 17 people in small communities in Oregon. I know what it's like to be a small business owner and comply with the heavy hand of government regulation and the burdens of taxation and all the things that you all in government think ought to happen because you know best how to create jobs. What a farce that is.

So we see what happens when you throw money at a problem: You waste it, and you don't create jobs. You see, Republicans did have an alternative. My friends and colleagues who were on the floor here earlier said that we had no alternative. Well, they know that's really not the case at all. In fact, the Congressional Budget Office evaluated both of our plans and said the Republican alternative would create twice the jobs at half the cost.

Now, there are a lot of smart Christmas shoppers out there. Boys and girls, men and women, come closer. There are a lot of smart shoppers out there who look for bargains, and they say, If I could get twice the product at half the cost, that's a bargain. Unless you're the Democrat majority in the House and the Senate and downtown, then you want to spend twice as much and get half as much. You want to tell the American people, Pass my plan and I'll get you no more than maybe 9 percent unemployment, somewhere in the upper 8s. Actually, no, they said it wouldn't go above 8. That's right. They said it wouldn't go above 8.

Whoa. It was at 7.6 and now it's at over 10. And let's talk about what happened to that stimulus. So how did they spend the money? There was an interesting report out in The Hill—\$6 million borrowed from your kids and grandkids, actually borrowed from the Chinese, the Japanese, the oil-producing countries that buy our debt, and our kids and grandkids will get to repay this with interest. Six million of those dollars went to now Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's pollster.

I'm not making this up, folks. This is not a fairy tale. Two firms run by Mark Penn, current Secretary of State Clinton's former Presidential campaign pollster, received a total of \$5.97 million in taxpayer funds from the Democrat stimulus that you heard created all these jobs, solved all these problems. Burson-Marsteller, a public relations and communications firm run by