

stimulus bill that we heard about earlier. So when you heard about this stimulus, the American Recovery Act and how evil it was the Republicans didn't vote for it, remember where a lot of that money went; it went back into the government. It didn't go out into middle America. It didn't go out into rural America. Some of it did, certainly, but it did not go very far outside of Washington.

So here is the final tally: The omnibus spending bill I just referenced brings new spending for nondefense, nonveterans discretionary programs to a level 85 percent higher than 2 years ago.

Mr. POLIS. Will the gentleman yield for a procedural motion?

Mr. WALDEN. I will be happy to yield to my colleague.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION WAIVING REQUIREMENT OF CLAUSE 6(a) OF RULE XIII WITH RESPECT TO CONSIDERATION OF CERTAIN RESOLUTIONS

Mr. POLIS, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 111-379) on the resolution (H. Res. 973) waiving a requirement of clause 6(a) of rule XIII with respect to consideration of certain resolutions reported from the Committee on Rules, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

JOBS AND THE RECOVERY— Continued

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Oregon may proceed.

Mr. WALDEN. Mr. Speaker, I assume that that is the rule coming out of the Rules Committee that provides for same-day consideration of four pieces of legislation. Would that be correct?

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. WALDEN. Could I ask a parliamentary inquiry?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman will state his inquiry.

Mr. WALDEN. Does clause 6(a) provide for same-day consideration of the bill?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman is correct that clause 6(a) of rule XIII addresses same-day consideration of a rule.

Mr. WALDEN. Thank you.

So what you've heard there is a procedural action that has importance because it comes right in the point I'm talking about with the omnibus, where we had 2 days to consider a bill that costs American taxpayers half a trillion dollars.

What is coming up next are the four "go home" bills. These are the four bills we've got to pass in order to wind things up before Christmas, and they will take these up tomorrow. I haven't seen them, have you? Have any of you? Nobody here has seen them. Maybe they have in the Rules Committee which just apparently has finished its

work, but we haven't seen them. They will raise the debt. They will spend—well, I don't know. I'm told one of them is going to spend tens of billions of dollars; I don't know how much, don't know where.

There will probably be a continuing resolution to fund the government because the Democrats, who control the House by a huge 40-vote margin, 41, the Senate with 60 votes, and the White House, even with that massive, overwhelming, powerful control, couldn't pass the budget bills by the time the fiscal year ended.

Now, in America, in real America—that's the area outside the Beltway of Washington—if you don't pay your bill on time, what happens? What happens? You get an interest penalty. What happens? Somebody says, hey, you're behind on paying your bill. When it happens here, nothing happens—except it will come November of 2010, I predict, because I think Americans have had enough of what's happened here.

But what happens here is they didn't do their work, they didn't finish the process, they didn't pass the budgets, they didn't meet the deadlines. So now we've punted into 2010 for the budget year we're already in. Both parties have done this. That's why we need to reform the process. But, hey, they control 60 in the Senate; that gets you past any filibuster, 60 votes. They control the House with a huge margin, and the White House, and not even with those margins, with single-party powerful control of both Chambers of Congress and the White House could they pass the budget bills. That's why you had the omnibus at the end of the week where they lumped six of them together and jacked up the spending by 10, 12 percent.

So here's the final tally: The omnibus brings the new spending for non-defense, nonveteran discretionary programs to 85 percent higher than just 2 years ago; 85 percent higher spending by the Federal Government. You want to know where your money is going? Out of your paycheck, into this body, and out into the bureaucracy.

So it should come as no surprise during this time—which tracks with the recession that has eliminated 2.9 million American jobs—the salaries of government bureaucrats have exploded. According to a story in USA Today, Federal employees making salaries of \$100,000 or more jumped from 14 percent to 19 percent of civil servants during the recession's first 18 months. And you wondered where the money is going.

Let's go back to the Republican plan because, once again, when it came to the deficit, a lot of us came out of the private sector, small business. Every business that makes jobs is a good thing, frankly, in America these days, but I happen to come out of small communities and represent a district that's 70,000 square miles of gorgeous country, high desert plateaus, forested mountain ranges, wonderful agri-

culture. We believe in renewable energy—hydro, wind, solar, geothermal. Renewable energy matters. It's a good thing. And Republicans actually have supported renewable energy—I have and will continue to as long as it's reasonable and doesn't jack up rates.

But you look at what's happening right now with the Speaker taking a government jet over to Copenhagen with a whole bunch of Members of Congress. They're going to go to that climate change conference.

Now, let's look at what happened here in this Congress when they passed the climate change bill, the global warming bill. I was on the committee that dealt with that legislation and it passed in pretty record time. It's a \$700, \$800 billion cost. But what does it mean to you as an individual American out there? Well, let me tell you. If that becomes law, it means the loss of probably 2 to 5 million American jobs because companies will look at all requirements and say either, I can't afford to continue to operate and I'm closing my doors, or I found a cheaper place to manufacture my product than the good old USA, so I'm going to go and open a factory in China or India that doesn't play by the same rules that this law has and I'm going to move my jobs over there. Sorry. Just one too many things.

So for the average American, it means the loss of a couple million jobs. This is being done intentionally. They are passing this knowing what the estimates show from the National Association of Manufacturers, the Black Chamber of Commerce, and other organizations that have looked at this legislation, this cap-and-tax, cap-and-trade legislation. They've said, we've run the numbers; this is going to cost us a lot of jobs, puts new taxes on it. It is a huge, big Federal involvement in everything you and I do in this economy.

But what else does it mean? If you're a consumer and you happen to live in the great Northwest and are a customer of Pacific Power, they've reviewed this legislation, they've run it through their power production model and out comes the data. The data on what the cap-and-trade that the Democrats passed, Speaker PELOSI's bill, would do to a Pacific Power customer in Oregon and the rest of their region is, in the first year your electricity rates, as high as they are today, will go up 17.9 percent. You know, maybe this is the year you do want coal in your stocking. 17.9 percent is what your electricity rates will go up.

Now, that's bad enough. Maybe you have put in the fluorescent lights—and I think Oregon has been a real leader in that effort—to reduce your energy consumption, maybe you've weatherized and caulked, done all the things to reduce your energy consumption, maybe you just crank it back down to 67 instead of 68 degrees in the winter and not run air conditioning in the summer. You do everything you can.

Maybe you can adjust for that. But here's what it does when you go to the gas station. There are estimates out there that say the cap-and-tax bill that Speaker PELOSI and others in this Chamber passed will drive up the cost of gasoline in America by 50 cents, 60, 70—some say as much as \$1. Nobody really knows for sure until it takes effect.

Explain this to me. This is like bad Santa. Explain this to me. This isn't the present I want. I don't want higher gasoline prices. Don't you think that had an effect on our economy? It certainly did on the families I talked to at Grants Pass and Medford and John Day across my district that commute great distances.

You know, if you're a farmer or a rancher, you saw what it did to the price of your fertilizer when natural gas went up. You saw what it did when diesel went up to \$5 a gallon. We should be accessing America's great energy resources, not importing them. We should be working toward new fuel-efficient vehicles and backing up that research. I actually drive hybrids on both coasts. I'm fortunate in that respect. I want to reduce my fuel intake and consumption, and I just don't like sending the money overseas where we get a lot of our fuel, frankly. I want to do my part. I am fortunate and able to do that now. A lot of people aren't; they're stuck. They can't buy a new car right now. They might not even have a job. My State is like the sixth highest unemployment in the country. I've got five counties that are lingering right at 20 percent unemployment. This is tough.

Rather than access our great oil and reserves that—by the way, there are estimates that at the peak price of gasoline in this country, that America's great oil and gas reserves, if not blocked off by the Congress, the Democrat-controlled Congress, if we had access to those, it would produce a value of \$60 trillion. Now, that was at the peak of the value of gas and oil, certainly, but let's say it's off by half and it's only \$30 trillion. Remember that debt I talked about earlier, the debt that could be \$20 trillion? What if we actually developed our own oil and gas resources in America, became less dependent on Hugo Chavez and Venezuela or some of the other countries that frankly aren't real friendly to us? What if we stopped funding some of the things they do that actually work against our way of life by not spending money on oil? What if we developed our own resources? And they will say, well, it will take you 10 years. Well, let's get started. That's my view. Let's get started. While we work on a transitional vehicle that doesn't have to use oil and gas, which I'm all for; but in the meantime, there are a lot of working Americans that have to take that pickup, hook up that horse trailer and go out and do their work on the cattle ranch. There are a lot of people hauling things back and forth so that our econ-

omy functions; \$3, \$4 and \$5 diesel about killed them economically.

So why don't we access our great oil and gas reserves? We should. And we generate revenue to the government that, if you had a fiscally responsible Congress, would use to pay down the debt and pay down the debt before our kids come of age and our grandkids come of age. That is the Christmas present I would like to see. That actually would be like sort of good Santa as opposed to bad Santa. Bad Santa says, we're taking away everything we have. We're going to rely on foreign imports for oil and gas. We're going to jack up your electricity rates. That's not Christmas like I know it.

I want a real Christmas, where we put people back to work in the private sector, not trying to figure out something about Viking era pollen in Iceland—that's where some of your stimulus money went—or jobs that last a day or two or a week or two and then go away and get counted as if they're permanent. I want permanent, family-wage jobs. This country can get back on its feet if we get this Congress out of the way.

But as I talk to business people, I hear time and again, I can't keep pace with the change coming out of Washington. You're changing everything related to energy. I don't know what those costs are going to be, I don't know where you're headed, I don't know how I'm going to deal with that.

And then health care takeover by the Federal Government, same sort of thing. Is the government going to run all this? Am I going to run all this? What's that going to cost me? Am I going to pay a penalty? There's another couple million jobs projected to go away with the government takeover of health care.

And the debt. People who do have some money and want to invest in a start-up company are sitting on the sidelines because they don't know what is going to happen on tax policy. Do the tax reductions that spurred a very strong economy go away or do they stay? Do people who have some level of wealth lose it all to the Federal Government on New Year's Day of 2011?

□ 2115

Do their kids get to continue the family farm or family business, or does the tax man show up with the undertaker? That's the choice. That's the choice.

It doesn't have to be that way. We can create real jobs in this country.

Let me tell you about the other real jobs you can create, and that is in the great Northwest woods. Now, you have heard me on this floor before advocate for bipartisan legislative changes, changes in the law that have achieved broad support in this Congress to allow us to go out and be good stewards of our Federal forests. Teddy Roosevelt created these forests in 1905. He began that process with the great forest reserves.

He said in a speech in Utah that the purpose of these reserves was twofold: to make sure that we had good clean water for agriculture, and that we had timber for homemaking, homebuilding. Now, those are the two purposes he outlined in a speech in Utah at about that period. Those are the purposes. Now, we know we have evolved since then. Clearly, though, we have not evolved from wanting good, clean water, healthy green forests. We do need lumber.

The choice that the liberals have made in this government and in this Congress is away from active management to locking things up and calling it management, calling it preservation. As a result, you have forests across the West that are overgrown and choked. They can't breathe. You are standing on their air hose.

Meanwhile, you have all this ladder fuel building up underneath them because for 100 years we have suppressed fire. Smokey Bear worked, convinced us we can go stop forest fires. We spend tens of millions, hundreds of millions of dollars, whatever the figure is every year to fight fire. It's over half, I believe, of the Forest Service budget now goes to fight fire when we should be doing the work on the ground to prevent fire. We should get these forests back into balance, get that ladder fuel out of there.

It used to burn up naturally, but we started fighting fire, we allowed it to grow up, and we quit managing. The outcome is like your yard when you never prune or clean or weed or mow or do any of that. It just becomes a mess and out of balance until something catastrophic happens. The catastrophic thing that happens is fire.

Fire is the great equalizer of the forest. It is the biggest clear-cutter out there, and it is devastating when there is such a fuel load as exists today. The fires burn and they release enormous amounts of carbon, not only carbon dioxide but also all kinds of pollutants into the atmosphere, including particulates that are equivalent to vast volumes of automobiles on the highways.

Now, you are not going to stop every fire. Nature has a wonderful way of continuing to participate in the management process. We can get out and protect our watersheds and we can put people back to work, because this reality is about jobs, jobs in the woods.

In my district, where we have 20 percent unemployment or nearly so, and it is probably actually higher than that in some areas because people have given up—we are sixth in the country with unemployment—the policies of the Federal Government on Federal land have been so over the top that we have lost the jobs. We have lost the mills. In some communities, they are close to losing hope. Nothing this Congress has done has helped them in a measurable, sustainable way.

Last week, my colleague from Washington State, BRIAN BAIRD, who, unfortunately, just announced his retirement from this body, he and STEPHANIE

HERSETH SANDLIN from South Dakota, WALT MINNICK from Idaho, CATHY MCMORRIS RODGERS from Washington State and others who care about our great forests, offered up legislation to take a successful law we passed in a bipartisan way and expand it out over what they call condition class 2 and 3 forestlands and allow our professional scientists, biologists, geologists, hydrologists, all the people involved in forest management to get out there, get unshackled from the courtroom and the computer, get away from the lawsuits and, well, the litigation, the lawsuits, and get out and actually do what they were trained to do. Get our forests back in shape. Protect the watersheds and the environment. Put people to work.

I mention that we use lumber in this country. This is a carbon sink right here, this podium. This is wood, you know that. This is wood. This is a carbon sink. This was a tree once. What we do now is we put off limits our Federal forests for active management and harvest, for the most part. Instead, we import wood from countries that have virtually no environmental, enforced environmental rules. As a result of that, we just shift the problem and make it worse somewhere else. Rather than responsibly managing our forests, we let them go up in smoke. We have catastrophic, destructive wildfire that does terrible damage to our watersheds and habitat, kills firefighters, kills people in their homes, burns up their homes.

There is so much we could be doing if we got an economic model that works. It's not just because we don't spend enough Federal money. You know, one of the things that drives me over the top, over the edge, off the cliff, is when people say to me, If I just had more government money or more government employees, I could solve that problem.

We are at a debt load that is unsustainable. Not every problem demands a government solution from Washington, D.C. In fact, we should be more creative than that. You know, spending somebody else's money isn't that hard. In fact, you can throw it away, as we have seen with a lot of the stimulus money. Throw it away, the causes and programs that study in pollen from Vikings. I have got to find out about those Vikings with pollen. I don't know if they used Claritin or not, but something was going on there.

You can throw money out the door, flush it away. Those of us who have been in the private sector, small business, know that every dollar is hard to get. Making a profit ain't easy; it's tough. That's why you are so tight with your funds.

You know that the good times come and the good times go. If you are successful enough, you try and set aside a reserve for those bad times. Yet, in this Congress, oh, my gosh, it is out of control in terms of the spending and the deficits.

You know, the omnibus that passed last week, the bill that spent a half a trillion dollars, we had 2 days to even think about it. It's just not the way to legislate. It's not responsible. It's not becoming of this body. It is not how we should operate, regardless of which party is in control. Right now, the Democrats are in control, so they get the glory and they get the responsibility, and it needs to change in terms of how we operate.

My colleague, BRIAN BAIRD from Washington State, and several Members on both sides of the aisle supported an effort to get it some reform that said we should change the rules of how this House operates so that the American people, the Members of Congress, and the press could see legislation on the Internet, the great equalizer of information, on the Internet at least 72 hours before it comes up for a vote on this House floor. We are talking 72 hours. Now, I think it ought to be 2 or 3 weeks, by the way.

Remember, this omnibus spending bill was 2,500 pages. Nobody in here read it before they voted on it. I voted against it, by the way, because I think it's irresponsible. I wasn't alone. I think every Republican voted against it, just like we did against the stimulus. This stuff is not responsible, folks. There are alternatives we have offered, not on that one, because I don't think we were allowed to, but certainly on the others. On health care and on energy and on creating jobs, we have offered real alternatives, and we will talk more about those in subsequent evenings.

This notion that we should have 72 hours should be bipartisan. I say to my colleagues, I guarantee you, if that resolution to change how we operate in this assembly were to come up for a vote and it said we get 72 hours, these bills go on the Internet for 72 hours so the whole world can read them and understand them—and, by the way, give us input of what may be wrong in them before we vote on them. That's a concept that's novel. If that resolution were brought to this floor and the yeas and nays were called for, I doubt there would be a dissenting vote. Does anyone in here think there would be a dissenting vote? Nobody would want to go back to a town hall and say, No, you shouldn't have 72 hours to read the bills.

You know, I began to ask this question when we were taking up the cap-and-trade bill, cap-and-tax bill, the global warming and climate change bill in the Energy and Commerce Committee, the administration Cabinet secretaries who came before us to tell us the great, wonderful nature of this legislation. I asked a simple question of every single witness that came before us: Have you read this bill? Have you read this bill? With one exception, and that person was right at the last hearing we had the last day and I think maybe saw it coming, everyone said, Well, no. Well, no, I haven't really read the bill, but I know the concept.

We ought to have at least 72 hours to read the bills. That ought to change.

Now, I know when I filed a discharge petition, and that goes in a box over here—or, actually, not in a box. They keep track of it over here on a ledger. All it takes is 218 Members of the House, which is a simple majority, to go sign that petition and then it comes up for a vote. But the Democrat leadership in the House has made it very clear to their Members not to sign the petition. Only six of them have. I commend those for standing up for what's right for this body and this process and for the American people, those six who signed it. The others have buckled at their knees, apparently, and refused. They have walked away. It's available today to be signed, tonight, tomorrow, when we come back in January. The American people are watching. They know that this would be a good thing. They know that this would be a good thing.

I see we now have the omnibus which has arrived. When we talk about 2,500 pages of spending, this is it. This puppy is 2,500 pages of spending. This is what the Congress was given 2 days to work its way through. This is half a trillion dollars. Have you ever seen half a trillion dollars? This is it, right here, half a trillion. Come on down, we will get it half price, half a trillion dollars.

Do you wonder why the deficit is so big? No time to consider this thoughtfully, thoroughly, rush it through. Rush it through, 2,500 pages.

The stimulus, the Recovery Act that spent \$787 billion. You know, I told you we had 2 days to consider this omnibus spending bill, 2 whole days, count them. When the stimulus bill passed in February of this year, the House was given 12 hours to review it, 12 hours. It was 1,073 pages, 1,072 pages, spent \$787 billion. Remember, that's where that Viking pollen study in Iceland comes from, or the sidewalk around a casino or sending casino workers to sort of sensitivity training. Don't be so rough on the slot machine. Be nicer to the craps table. I don't know.

Cap-and-trade, passed in June; \$846 billion is the cost of that bill, according to the Congressional Budget Office, 1,428 pages, 1,428 pages, 16½ hours to consider it. Oh, by the way, they dropped a 309-page amendment at 3 o'clock in the morning. Now I am going to tell you, nothing good happens at 3 o'clock in the morning. Nothing good happens at 3 o'clock in the morning. You can get hit with a golf club at 3 o'clock in the morning, 309-page amendment, 3 o'clock in the morning, 16½ hours for consideration.

The health bill, introduced July 14, 12:51 in the afternoon, \$1.28 trillion. Remember, we are talking T's now. Forget hundreds, thousands, millions, billions. We are now, in this Democrat-controlled Congress, talking trillions. With 1,026 pages in the committee upon which I serve, the Energy and Commerce Committee, we were allocated a whopping 14 hours and 9 minutes before

we started voting on that bill. Remember, I am including the all-night hours, all-night hours.

According to a newspaper here on the Hill, actually, The Hill, Democratic leaders have waived transparency rules at least 24 times to rush votes this year alone, 24 times. Twelve of those bills were available for less than 24 hours.

□ 2130

This omnibus bill back here, half a trillion in spending, just this last week passed 221-201, no Republicans voting for the bill. Increased funding for Federal agencies, 12 percent. Some as much as 33, some as much as 21. The final tally for this omnibus new spending for nondefense, nonveteran discretionary programs took it up to a level of 85 percent higher than 2 years ago. Eighty-five percent higher than 2 years ago. The debt up \$1.4 trillion. The deficit this year, \$1.4 trillion, in 1 year. It wasn't that many years ago, and, of course I'm getting older, I think it was in the eighties; so it's been some 20 years, I think our whole national debt was only a trillion dollars, which was an enormous amount then. Now it's going up by more than that annually.

This is a freight train without brakes. This is a runaway train that's headed off a cliff, and it's going to take Americans with it if we don't put a stop to it. You cannot continue down this path. You cannot continue down this path.

We tried to figure out how some of this money has been spent. The press is doing its job. The New Orleans Times-Picayune. Details: Louisiana has seven congressional districts. So Louisianans visiting recovery.gov, that's the Web site where all this stuff is posted so there's great transparency and accountability. Remember, this was the Web site the President and the Vice President, JOE BIDEN, said by golly, you're going to see it all out there. So Louisianans visiting recovery.gov found themselves just skeptical but truly puzzled to see nearly \$5 million was listed as headed to Louisiana's Eighth Congressional District. There are only seven. Not eight; seven. That site also listed the 12th, the 26th, the 45th, the 14th, the 32nd, and, my favorite, 00. I don't know if that's 007 or if it's—I don't know.

According to Ed Pound, Director of Communications for recovery.gov, the site relies on self-reporting by recipients of the stimulus money.

This is oversight? This is transparency? I mean, this is a government that can't figure out who's going to the White House for dinner that's spending your money, and this is transparency. Pound said information from FederalReporting.gov has been simply transferred to recovery.gov. And no one checks to verify its accuracy or to take note of the fact that Utah doesn't really have seven congressional districts; it has three. South Dakota has one, not 10.

Pound: "We're not certifying the accuracy of the information. We know

what the problem is and we are trying to fix it," he said. Asked why recipients would pluck random numbers to fill in for their congressional district, Pound replied, and this is my favorite, "Who knows, man. Who really knows. There are 130,000 reports out there."

Somebody should know. It's your money. Well, again, it's not really your money yet because we borrowed it. Congress borrowed it from the Chinese, the Japanese, all kinds of lenders, oil-producing nations that we pay exorbitant prices to for the crude oil because we don't access our own resources here. They're the ones doing it.

Talladega County, Alabama, claimed to have saved or created 5,000 jobs from only \$42,000 in stimulus funds. That's 5,000 jobs, \$42,000 in expenditures. Now they're efficient. That would be \$8.40 a job. Now there are some cheap places to work, but I don't even think Alabama is paying their people \$8.40 a job, though; so there's something wrong there.

Belmont Metropolitan Housing Authority in Ohio reported 16,120 jobs saved or created for \$1.3 million. Now, that is efficient too. So congratulations to Belmont. That's \$80.64 a job.

Folks, the government is not the creator of jobs, not jobs that are sustainable, because you have to take money away from those who have it to redistribute it, and it's not being done very efficiently, affordably, transparently, or with accountability.

And how long do these jobs last? I want jobs created out in the private sector that fund the government, and by that I mean if you have a vibrant private sector, people are paying taxes. If businesses are making a profit, they're going to pay a tax, pay a lot of tax. Individuals earning a salary, earning a wage, they're paying tax. Ask them. That's what funds government. It's not the other way around. And that's the difference between many of us in this body is there are those who believe every problem needs a Federal solution regardless of what it costs now or in the future. That's why you need a balanced budget, a requirement in the Constitution to keep both parties in check.

We need to get this house back in order, and I mean the global house, the U.S. itself, how money is spent, how it's allocated, what we do with it. This is obscene. It really is. All I see is just one government takeover after another.

Now, is there room to do more oversight where it's necessary, fix markets where they're broken? Yes. Will we debate how far you go in that? We should. But we should do that in an open and thoughtful manner. I've served on some nonprofit boards, a hospital board, a business association board, and we'd have vigorous debates, but we always did it with the notion of common good. We'd bring what we had to the table, and we would try to find a solution.

I thank you, my colleagues, for letting me share those comments with you tonight.

EDUCATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, the gentlewoman from Wisconsin (Ms. MOORE) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, it's such a privilege to stand in the well of the House of Representatives.

Each time I stand here, I just shiver and shake and think about just how I got here and the unusual circumstances that have allowed me to be here. Really coming from a very poor background, parents who had very, very meager means. But it was because of an educational opportunity that I'm able to be here with you and to speak with you here this evening.

You've heard it all from the well of the House of Representatives, Mr. Speaker. You've heard about all of the problems that we have in our economy. And this evening I want to talk to you about the importance of reestablishing ourselves in the world as a nation that is graduating students from college and producing the next generation of innovators and engineers and doctors and scientists and teachers so that we can reestablish ourselves in the world and continue to enable our economy to grow. But, of course, you've heard about all of the problems that sort of crowd out a really important discussion about the importance of funding educational opportunity.

You've heard about the two wars and the escalation, which is going to cost us \$30 billion. You've heard about the war spending. Between 2001 until 2009, we've spent just under \$950 billion for Iraq and Afghanistan, and we've just included another \$139 billion for both wars. In July, the DOD was spending \$11 billion a month on both wars. And CRS projects that we're going to be spending another \$400 billion to \$900 billion in the next 10 years.

You've heard about the entitlement programs, Medicare and Social Security, and how they're in danger and how we have to fund that. You've heard about the escalating health care costs consuming 20 cents of every consumer dollar in the so-called takeover by the government of health care. You've heard about the great recession where as many as 700,000 jobs were lost in a single month in the last 15 months. You've heard about the financial systemic risk that threatens the economy not only of the United States of America but of the world, requiring countries, including this one, to develop billions of dollars in stimulus funding. You've heard about various proposals to right ourselves and to justify our economy. You've heard proposals to just simply reduce spending. You've heard proposals to give tax breaks to the wealthy and that these tax breaks will somehow trickle down to support those workers and small businesses. And you've even heard whispers of raising taxes. And very few people raise as a solution to this problem at looking hard at what we're doing in terms of