

he currently serves as the chairman. He is also the current Chair of the Floyd County Public Works Committee.

In addition to his commitment to improving his home county, John also dedicates much of his time to strengthening the health care community in Floyd County, serving on both the Floyd Medical Center Hospital Authority and Management Board and the Floyd County Board of Health.

Despite his heavy involvement in county and city government, John still finds time devote to philanthropic activities, founding Camp Uncle John, a private retreat designed to reach out to area youth, and serving as the director of community organizations such as the YMCA.

In 2007, John Mayes was honored by Rome residents for his selfless community service with the prestigious Heart of the Community Award.

I ask my colleagues, please join me in thanking John Mayes for his service to the people of Rome and Floyd County and his commitment to the betterment of his community.

REGULAR ORDER SHOULD BE THE RULE OF THE DAY

(Ms. KAPTUR asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I rise to express the opinion that in the recent vote on H.R. 1106, which had to do with mortgage foreclosures and so-called enhancement of mortgage credit availability, it would be incumbent upon leadership of the institution to follow normal process and to allow the membership, if they wish to offer amendments before the Rules Committee, to be afforded that opportunity.

The challenges we face in the mortgage market are enormous, and regular order should be the rule of the day here. You know, we wouldn't have all these difficulties in our country if we would be properly using the normal institutions to resolve loans, loan difficulties, the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation and the Securities and Exchange Commission. When you don't use those, and you begin to try to tinker at the edges of a really large problem that the country faces, and the implosion of the mortgage market itself, you can make a lot of mistakes.

Members deserve respect. We deserve due diligence by the respective subcommittee and committees, including the opportunity to amend and include ideas in the manager's amendment. If that does not happen, we don't serve the American people well.

I think every Member here deserves that respect. And I would hope that, as next week begins, we will have the opportunity to perfect this legislation, if it can be perfected or, more properly, to meet with the Secretary of the Treasury and the economic leaders of the new administration to perhaps shape a different path forward.

Well, here's another Housing bill, claiming to be a nostrum for what ails us with housing foreclosures.

Last August, the same committee, with no hearings and no opportunity for amendment pushed through a landmark bill called Hope for Homeowners. It was supposed to help workouts, to bring assistance to counselors, to prevent foreclosures. To this date this program has worked out on 25 mortgages only. Twenty-Five—not 250, 2500, 25,000; just 25.

We have seen more foreclosures, not enough workouts, no Wall Street firms or their hired gun servicers coming to the table. The money for the communities engaged in counseling arrived late, and people lost their homes. The next batch of money did not arrive to allow cities to buy homes, and now out of state individuals or companies own the homes and these new owners have no vested interest in the properties. They are looking at the profit they will receive. The communities lose. The people lose. Even those homeowners who are paying their mortgages, keeping up with their bills and being overall good economic citizens are paying because their neighbors fell on dire straits, property values are plummeting. The money that did reach communities sometimes only reached certain communities—others suffered. In northern Ohio, Cleveland got the majority of the money and Toledo suffers with little or no money available to help people. I myself attended an auction run by a company in Dallas, TX, that sold away my constituent's homes to far away people and the communities are struggling and some neighborhoods are even dying.

Then, the last Administration shoved TARP at us. Crisis was coming or at hand and it was the only way to stop it. Those that voted for it thought that they were going to prevent more foreclosures—they wanted to help the people.

They found out Hank Paulson took all the money for Wall Street banks that didn't do workouts, and are not doing workouts. But the last Congress held them up, saved them, and paid them taxpayer dollars. To what end?

It's a new Congress and a new President. Foreclosures are still rampant. The economy is oscillating and the recession is deepening rather than stabilizing.

Now we are told: we've got another idea we want to sell you.

Let's go the bankruptcy route.

Of course, this won't deal with the millions of pending subprime foreclosures and achieve workouts. It will only address people filing for bankruptcy and about 20% of them might have a home involved in that process. These people could be helped, but we are not helping all the other people who are not turning to the last, absolute last resort of bankruptcy.

Do I understand this—no Wall Street big bank has been asked to go bankrupt and its assets distributed to more responsible community banks. But instead of bringing discipline to the banks, now we're going to ask the American people to file bankruptcy first. And, we're going to provide money to pay the fraudulent servicers.

If you're not sure how to vote on this, think what happened before. Think about the solutions we were told would work. Look around your community. Are they working?

I can tell you in my district they are not.

Here are some questions that ought to be answered before we move forward:

1. Does a family have to declare bankruptcy before qualifying for a "workout/refinancing"? Why do families have to do this but not the banks?

2. What % of troubled loans would this plan rescue—less than 10%, . . . up to 90%?

3. Are eligible loans only "subprime" ones, or any loan?

4. In Title 1, why do lenders need financial incentives to modify loans? They've got TARP \$.

5. What % of appropriated funds for this program will go to lenders? Why? How @ servicers? They're not licensed or certified. Why let them qualify for anything? They've been awful.

6. How will the government recoup its money? Is there a shared appreciation provision that reimburses government for its investment?

7. What happens to credit union financed mortgages? They did no subprimes. Are their loans eligible for workouts? What happens when a reduction in principal wipes out their annual profits?

STOP MEDDLING IN THE MORTGAGE INDUSTRY

(Mr. FLEMING asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. FLEMING. Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak also about H.R. 1106, the so-called mortgage cram-down bill which, I am afraid, is being crammed down the throats of the American citizens.

There are families in this country seriously hurting in these tough economic times. They're looking for ways to keep their homes from going into foreclosure.

I would support a targeted measure to help those who didn't overreach when they purchased a home, but this broad stroke cram-down bill we have been given allows the court system to modify home mortgages, including reducing the loan principal. This would leave responsible homeowners to pick up the tab for the mistakes of others. Also, it would further encourage folks to file bankruptcy, rather than working out their financial problems. Giving the judges the power to arbitrarily change the terms of a mortgage is not the direction we need to go in this country. Home buyers will be forced to pay higher interest rates and downpayments if lenders face the risk that a judge could change mortgage terms in the future.

It was the meddling in the mortgage industry by Congress that helped start this economic mess in the first place. Why should we continue meddling?

Continued efforts by Congress to reward unwise financial decisions will keep the dream of affordable home ownership unattainable for many responsible citizens for years to come.

PROTECT OUR CONSTITUTIONAL LIBERTIES

(Mr. BURTON of Indiana asked and was given permission to address the

House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, we're not supposed to talk to the American people here. We're supposed to address our colleagues, so I will not talk to the American people. But if I could, I would say to them they ought to be very concerned about their constitutional liberties because they're being challenged and some of them may be done away with very quickly.

People who are members of companies, who work for companies, are going to be forced to do an open vote on whether or not they want to join a union if the Card Check Bill comes and passes this body or is passed by the administration through regulation. And this is something that would take away the right of these people to have a secret ballot on whether or not they want to join the union. That, in my opinion, is a violation of the first amendment.

And then also we have what's called the Fairness Doctrine they're going to try to pass, which would kill talk radio. The liberals in this body and the other body want to stop people like Rush Limbaugh and Sean Hannity from talking about the issues that face the American people because they're conservatives and they're making their points to the American people and the American people listen to them. They don't listen to the liberals, and so they're going to try to shut them up with the Fairness Doctrine. That's unconstitutional, and we should do everything we can to stop it.

DOVER POLICY

(Mr. HUNTER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Speaker, I had the privilege last night to meet with Angelia Phillips. Her son, Specialist Michael Phillips, was killed in Iraq on February 24, 2008, with the 1st of the 502nd, 101st Airborne. She was adamant, Mr. Speaker, when she was talking about the Dover Policy. That's the policy that we have right now that does not allow the media to take pictures of our soldiers, marines, sailors and airmen coming home from Iraq and Afghanistan. She said that that return of her son, Specialist Phillips, his returning to America, that was him coming home and to her, that was more important than the actual funeral because that was finally her son coming home to his country that he loved so much and that he gave his life for.

The Dover Policy is good policy. The American public does not need to see the flag-draped coffins of those who carry the burden of freedom for this country. It's up to that family because that's a special solemn moment, Mr. Speaker. The Dover Policy is good policy. We should not reverse it.

THE APPROACHING FINANCIAL HURRICANE

(Mr. CULBERSON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CULBERSON. Mr. Speaker, the American people need to know that this Congress in less time has spent more money than any Congress in history. At a time in American history when we are at war worldwide with terrorists, at a time when we face financial crisis of unprecedented proportion, we, as Members of Congress, have a very special duty to protect the Treasury of the United States, to be careful, thoughtful and deliberative and an open process.

And I want to thank my colleague, Congresswoman MARCY KAPTUR of Ohio. She's exactly right. We need to follow the committee process, absolute transparency, an opportunity to offer amendments, an opportunity for public hearings. Let the public see what bills we are considering.

The stimulus, \$800 billion, was only filed on the Internet 13 hours before the vote. And this Congress, in 21 days, has increased the annual budget of the United States by 110 percent, counting the President's budget today.

Congressman FRANK WOLF is going to speak for 5 minutes in just a minute. We must address the approaching financial hurricane. Congressman WOLF's commission deserves the attention of this Congress in a careful, thoughtful and deliberative way. Let the sun shine in, Mr. Speaker.

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ADMINISTRATION SHOULD LISTEN TO THOSE WHO SERVE IN THE ARMED FORCES

(Mr. WOLF asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WOLF. I just want the Members to know that the son of former Congressman Duncan Hunter, now currently Congressman DUNCAN HUNTER who just spoke here about the flag drape policy with regard to our fallen soldiers who return to Dover Air Force Base, served in Iraq in combat and served in Afghanistan in combat. I think that the Obama administration ought to listen to people who serve.

A NEW ERA OF RESPONSIBILITY—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 111-19)

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KISSELL) laid before the House the following message from the President of the United States; which was read and, without objection, referred to the Committee on Appropriations and ordered to be printed:

Throughout America's history, there have been some years that appeared to

roll into the next without much notice or fanfare. Budgets are proposed that offer some new programs or eliminate an initiative, but by and large continuity reigns.

Then there are the years that come along once in a generation, when we look at where the country has been and recognize that we need a break from a troubled past, that the problems we face demand that we begin charting a new path. This is one of those years.

We start 2009 in the midst of a crisis unlike any we have seen in our lifetimes. Our economy is in a deep recession that threatens to be deeper and longer than any since the Great Depression. More than three and a half million jobs were lost over the past 13 months, more jobs than at any time since World War II. In addition, another 8.8 million Americans who want and need full-time work have had to settle for part-time jobs. Manufacturing employment has hit a 60-year low. Our capital markets are virtually frozen, making it difficult for businesses to grow and for families to borrow money to afford a home, car, or college education for their kids. Many families cannot pay their bills or their mortgage payments. Trillions of dollars of wealth have been wiped out, leaving many workers with little or nothing as they approach retirement. And millions of Americans are unsure about the future—if their job will be there tomorrow, if their children will be able to go to college, and if their grandchildren will be able to realize the full promise of America.

This crisis is neither the result of a normal turn of the business cycle nor an accident of history. We arrived at this point as a result of an era of profound irresponsibility that engulfed both private and public institutions from some of our largest companies' executive suites to the seats of power in Washington, D.C. For decades, too many on Wall Street threw caution to the wind, chased profits with blind optimism and little regard for serious risks—and with even less regard for the public good. Lenders made loans without concern for whether borrowers could repay them. Inadequately informed of the risks and overwhelmed by fine print, many borrowers took on debt they could not really afford. And those in authority turned a blind eye to this risk-taking; they forgot that markets work best when there is transparency and accountability and when the rules of the road are both fair and vigorously enforced. For years, a lack of transparency created a situation in which serious economic dangers were visible to all too few.

This irresponsibility precipitated the interlocking housing and financial crises that triggered this recession. But the roots of the problems we face run deeper. Government has failed to fully confront the deep, systemic problems that year after year have only become a larger and larger drag on our economy. From the rising costs of health