

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.

□ 1415

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

care to the state of our schools, from the need to revolutionize how we power our economy to our crumbling infrastructure, policymakers in Washington have chosen temporary fixes over lasting solutions.

The time has come to usher in a new era—a new era of responsibility in which we act not only to save and create new jobs, but also to lay a new foundation of growth upon which we can renew the promise of America.

This Budget is a first step in that journey. It lays out for the American people the extent of the crisis we inherited, the steps we will take to jumpstart our economy to create new jobs, and our plans to transform our economy for the 21st Century to give our children and grandchildren the fruits of many years of economic growth.

It is true that we cannot depend on government alone to create jobs or to generate long-term growth. Ours is a market economy, and the Nation depends on the energy and initiative of private institutions and individuals. But at this particular moment, government must lead the way in providing the short-term boost necessary to lift us from a recession this severe and lay the foundation for future prosperity. That's why immediately upon taking office, my Administration worked with the Congress to pass the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. This plan's provisions will put money in the pockets of the American people, save or create at least three and a half million jobs, and help to revive our economy.

This moment is one of great paradox and promise: while there are millions of Americans trying to find work, there is also so much work to be done. That's why the Recovery Act and our Budget will make long overdue investments in priorities—like clean energy, education, health care, and a new infrastructure—that are necessary to keep us strong and competitive in the 21st Century.

To finally spark the creation of a clean energy economy, we will make the investments in the next three years to double our Nation's renewable energy capacity. We will modernize Federal buildings and improve the energy efficiency of millions of American homes, saving consumers and taxpayers billions on our energy bills. In the process, we will put Americans to work in new jobs that pay well—jobs installing solar panels and wind turbines; constructing energy efficient buildings; manufacturing fuel efficient vehicles; and developing the new energy technologies that will lead to even more jobs and more savings, putting us on the path toward energy independence for our Nation and a cleaner, safer planet in the process.

To improve the quality of our health care while lowering its cost, we will make the immediate investments needed to computerize all of America's medical records within five years while

protecting the privacy of patients. This is a necessary step to reducing waste, eliminating red tape, and avoiding the need to repeat expensive medical tests. We also will fundamentally reform our health care system, delivering quality care to more Americans while reducing costs for us all. This will make our businesses more competitive and ease a significant and growing burden middle-class families are bearing.

To give our children a fair shot to thrive in a global, information-age economy, we will equip thousands of schools, community colleges, and universities with 21st Century classrooms, labs, and libraries. We'll provide new technology and new training for teachers so that students in Chicago and Boston can compete with kids in Beijing for the high-tech, high-wage jobs of the future. We will invest in innovation, and open the doors of college to millions of students. We will pursue new reforms—lifting standards in our schools and recruiting, training, and rewarding a new generation of teachers. And in an era of skyrocketing college tuitions, we will make sure that the doors of college remain open to children from all walks of life.

To create a platform for our entrepreneurs and workers to build an economy that can lead this future, we will begin to rebuild America for the demands of the 21st Century. We will repair crumbling roads, bridges, and schools as well as expand broadband lines across America, so that a small business in a rural town can connect and compete with its counterparts anywhere in the world. And we will invest in the science, research, and technology that will lead to new medical breakthroughs, new discoveries, and entire new industries.

Regaining our economic strength also is critical to our national security. It is a major source of our global leadership, and we must not let it waver. That's why this Budget makes critical investments in rebuilding our military, securing our homeland, and expanding our diplomatic efforts because to provide for the security of the United States we need to use all elements of our power. Moreover, to honor the service of those who have worn our military's uniform, we will make the investments necessary to take care of our veterans.

For these initiatives to lay a foundation for long-term economic growth, it's important that we not only change what Washington invests in, but how Washington does business. We must usher in a new era of responsibility in which we empower citizens with the information they need to hold their elected representatives accountable for the decisions they make. We need to put tired ideologies aside, and ask not whether our Government is too big or too small, or whether it is the problem or the solution, but whether it is working for the American people. Where it does not, we will stop spending taxpayer dollars; where it has proven to be

effective, we will invest. This is the approach, for example, we have begun in allocating funds to education, health care, and national security. And as we continue the budgetary process, we will identify more cuts and reallocations for the full Budget presented this spring, and undertake efforts to reform how the programs you fund are managed so that overruns are avoided, waste is cut, and you get the most effective and efficient Government possible.

In the little more than a month my Administration has had in office, we have not had the time to fully execute all the budget reforms that are needed, and to which I am fully committed. Those will come in the months ahead, and next year's budget process will look much different.

But this Budget does begin the hard work of bringing new levels of honesty and fairness to your Government. It looks ahead a full 10 years, making good-faith estimates about what costs we would incur; and it accounts for items that under the old rules could have been left out, making it appear that we had billions more to spend than we really do. The Budget also begins to restore a basic sense of fairness to the tax code, eliminating incentives for companies that ship jobs overseas and giving a generous package of tax cuts to 95 percent of working families.

Finally, while we have inherited record budget deficits and needed to pass a massive recovery and reinvestment plan to try to jump-start our economy out of recession, we cannot lose sight of the long-run challenges that our country faces and that threaten our economic health—specifically, the trillions of dollars of debt that we inherited, the rising costs of health care, and the growing obligations of Social Security. Therefore, while our Budget will run deficits, we must begin the process of making the tough choices necessary to restore fiscal discipline, cut the deficit in half by the end of my first term in office, and put our Nation on sound fiscal footing.

Some may look at what faces our Nation and believe that America's greatest days are behind it. They are wrong.

Our problems are rooted in past mistakes, not our capacity for future greatness. We should never forget that our workers are more innovative and industrious than any on earth. Our universities are still the envy of the world. We are still home to the most brilliant minds, the most creative entrepreneurs, and the most advanced technology and innovation that history has ever known. And we are still the Nation that has overcome great fears and improbable odds. It will take time, but we can bring change to America. We can rebuild that lost trust and confidence. We can restore opportunity and prosperity. And we can bring about a new sense of responsibility among Americans from every walk of life and from every corner of the country.

BARACK OBAMA.
THE WHITE HOUSE, February 26, 2009.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

THE IMMIGRATION OVERSIGHT AND FAIRNESS ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Mr. Speaker, I rise to introduce the Immigration Oversight and Fairness Act, which will help address the shameful state of immigration detention in our country.

It is unconscionable that our government holds families in conditions reserved for hardened criminals, forces children caught on their own to spend harrowing nights in border jails and incarcerates in bare cells asylum seekers who came to these shores in search of freedom. These inexcusable abuses should never have happened, and Americans never should have tolerated them.

By strengthening existing regulations and giving them the force of law, the Immigration Oversight and Fairness Act will help ensure that the Department of Homeland Security does not violate its own detention standards.

□ 1430

My bill ensures that all detainees can communicate with their lawyers and obtain needed medical care. It will also help to expand legal orientation programs so that detainees understand their rights and the likelihood of winning their cases.

The Immigration Oversight and Fairness Act also protects vulnerable children who are arrested on their own and held in DHS custody at border stations. A recent report by the Women's Refugee Commission found that the Border Patrol continues to hold unaccompanied immigrant children in inappropriate conditions. This bill increases training for the Border Patrol officers and facilitates speedy transfers of children to safer, better-equipped facilities.

In addition, the bill expands the use of alternatives to detention. It costs the American taxpayer nearly \$2 billion a year to house detainees, yet the vast majority of detained immigrants pose no threat to their communities or our country. This legislation will make it possible for vulnerable populations—including asylum seekers, torture victims, families, pregnant women, and the elderly—to be released using secure, proven methods of supervision that come at a fraction of the cost of incarceration.

Addressing the problems that plague our detention facilities will require a new commitment to openness and transparency. This bill, therefore, has oversight and accountability provi-

sions which will shine a much-needed light on a system that, for too long, has operated in the shadows.

Because it introduces sensible reforms to correct the many failings of immigration detention in this country, the Immigration Oversight and Fairness Act has garnered broad-based support. More than 100 faith, human rights, civil liberties, immigrant and community organizations have signed a letter endorsing my bill. I would like to specifically thank the Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service, the American Immigration Lawyers Association, and the National Immigrant Justice Center for the important role they played in formulating this legislation and for the tireless work they do every day on behalf of immigrant detainees.

Mr. Speaker, the detention system in which thousands of detainees languish daily—frequently denied access to loved ones, legal counsel, and medical care—is incompatible with our laws and inconsistent with our American values.

The Immigration Oversight and Fairness Act will ensure that our government honors its most sacred obligations: to respect our laws and to protect the children entrusted to its care.

I look forward to working with the Obama administration to fix America's broken immigration system, and I ask my colleagues to support the Immigration Oversight and Fairness Act.

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

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

COMMISSION WITH TEETH: FORCING CONGRESS TO ADDRESS ENTITLEMENT ISSUE

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

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, today the President released his budget request which projects a \$1.8 trillion deficit this year and a \$533 billion deficit for 2013. Yet, the Congressional Budget Office ran a deficit projection using a baseline which assumed the policies in the President's budget request contends that the FY 2013 deficit will be a staggering \$715 billion.

President Obama's pledge of cutting the deficit in half is important, but it will still be at record levels. In this morning's Washington Post, Maya MacGuineas, president of the bipartisan Committee For a Responsible Federal Budget, said she would like "To see them [the Obama Administration] go much further in terms of fiscal responsibility in actually closing that deficit gap."

More to the point, Brian Riedl, budget analyst for the Heritage Foundation,

says, "It is easy to cut the deficit in half after you've quadrupled it."

Today's Politico features an article titled, "Arguments Lost in Blizzard of Billions," which contends—and I agree—that Congress is so desensitized to numbers that "a billion here, a billion there, pretty soon you're talking about—well, pretty soon no one has a clue what you're talking about."

Have we forgotten that we have over \$56 trillion in unfunded obligations through Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid—already saddled on the back of future generations—\$11 trillion of debt? Do elected officials know that Standard and Poor's Investment Service predicts the loss of America's triple-A bond rating as early as 2012?

When Secretary of State Clinton was in Beijing last week, she asked the Chinese—who now holds the paper of about 1 of every 10 American dollars—to keep buying our debt. I never thought I would see the day when the United States was forced to hold a tin cup in China mortgaging the future for our children and our grandchildren to some of the worst human rights violators in the world.

We are in a crisis today. Main Street is suffering. Americans everywhere understand our country is in serious trouble—we are sinking—and it is on this Congress' watch. The 111th Congress is doing nothing.

Confidence. The definition of "confidence," according to Webster's Dictionary, is "faith or the belief that one will act in a right, proper, or effective way." "Act" being the key word.

Americans are under the belief that elected officials will work together to solve the Nation's most pressing problem. But if Congress is paralyzed by partisan bickering, what happens to the word "act"?

Entitlement spending and the massive debt we're leaving to our children and our grandchildren are pressing issues of economic and moral—this is a moral issue. The Tenth Commandment says, "Thou shalt not steal." Well, this generation is stealing from the next generation. Every day the canyon of debt widens and deepens, and yet elected leaders—many hiding behind the mantra of regular order—seem to think the problem will magically go away. The fact is, congressmen give speeches and say, "I'm all for this. I'm concerned. But let's go through regular order."

When it goes through regular order and it goes through the Budget Committee, when it goes through regular order and it goes through the Ways and Means Committee, it is dead. This Ways and Means Committee this year will not act unless they're forced to act by changing the process.

With that, Mr. Speaker, we have to act to get control of our debt for our children and our grandchildren.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.