

housing crisis. Faced with the worst recession in a generation, this Congress took unprecedented action in an effort to end our economic slide and turn our economy around.

First was the recovery package that invested in needed infrastructure and provided tax relief to 95 percent of working Americans. And now, with a budget that calls for health care reform, job creation, clean energy and investments in education, we will grow our economy while cutting the deficit by two-thirds over the next 5 years. By providing real oversight and honest accounting and with a commitment to fiscal responsibility, we are changing the way business is done in Washington.

NATIONAL ENERGY TAX KILLS JOBS

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, it is troubling that with so many other strategies to move our country to a cleaner energy future, there are still some advocating that we impose a national energy tax. This tax will attack the budgets of American families, costing an extra \$3,000 each year. And it will drive businesses and the jobs they create overseas.

The administration and Democratic Congress who claim to be opposed to offshoring of American jobs are encouraging companies to leave America. This Nation does not need to impose new taxes on its citizens to achieve the common goal of a clean energy future. We have the natural resources here that can provide the revenue and the bridge to that future. We have the scientists and entrepreneurs that will create the next generation of energy resources. And we have the citizens who understand the benefit to their lives and to their budgets of commonsense conservation. We should explore, innovate and conserve, not tax and eliminate jobs.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th and the global war on terrorism.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO CLAUDINE WILLIAMS, A TRUE LAS VEGAS PIONEER

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

Ms. BERKLEY. I rise today to pay tribute to a dear friend and a true Las Vegas pioneer, Claudine Williams, who died last week at the age of 88. Claudine was a smart, savvy, tough businesswoman with a heart of gold and a true commitment to the community she helped shape into the 21st century, Las Vegas, known around the world. As the first woman to own and run a casino on the Las Vegas Strip,

the famous Silver Slipper, Claudine redefined Nevada's gaming industry and in the process opened the doors for countless others to follow in her footsteps. She was a generous philanthropist, contributing millions of dollars to local charities. And while she had very little formal education herself, she was a major contributor and supporter to the University of Nevada Las Vegas.

Claudine was a gracious hostess for the millions she welcomed through the doors of her successful hotel casinos. Claudine was truly one of a kind. She is irreplaceable. She will be missed. But her charitable contributions and the many lives this fabulous woman touched both inside and outside the gaming industry will continue to enrich Las Vegas for decades to come. I loved her. She is truly a dear woman. And I will miss her terribly.

NATIONAL SMALL BUSINESS WEEK

(Mrs. DAHLKEMPER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. DAHLKEMPER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today during National Small Business Week on behalf of the millions of small businesses across the country.

As a family business owner and chairwoman of a Small Business subcommittee, I know firsthand that these small firms are the driving force behind job creation and our economic recovery. Therefore we have an obligation to assist these hardworking Americans during these difficult times.

The Recovery Act was an important first step generating \$21 billion in new lending and investment opportunities for entrepreneurs. However, we must go further and relieve the pressure small businesses experience from the skyrocketing cost of health insurance. Finally, we must help small businesses get the resources they need like those found in the Job Creation Through Entrepreneurship Act that the House will take up this week.

Mr. Speaker, small businesses are critical both to job creation and our Nation's recovery. During National Small Business Week, Congress should renew our commitment to giving them the assistance they deserve.

CONGRATULATING AVERETT UNIVERSITY IN DANVILLE, VIRGINIA

(Mr. PERRIELLO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. PERRIELLO. Mr. Speaker, yesterday the House unanimously passed a resolution I was pleased to introduce in recognition of Averett University's 150 years of service and leadership to the Commonwealth of Virginia and the Nation. Averett University stands at the center of knowledge and innovation in southern Virginia. Founded in historic Danville in 1859, Averett stands as a testament to the virtues of progress and opportunity.

It began as a school for young women at a time when educating women was an unconventional notion. Continuing in this spirit, Averett was among the first colleges in Virginia to give tangible meaning to the terms "lifelong learning" and "career education" by creating an accelerated program of higher learning for working adults.

Today Averett has an enrollment of over 2,500 students and offers 32 major academic fields of study. The university was recently recognized nationally by U.S. News and World Report as one of the leading baccalaureate-granting colleges in the South. For over 150 years, Averett University has contributed to the strength of our Nation by providing men and women with the tools of thought and the spirit of service.

I congratulate them on this accomplishment and look forward to their next chapter.

HONORING THE REVEREND JOHN PRATT

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

Mr. TOWNS. I rise to talk about the passing of Rev. John Pratt of the Zion Shiloh Baptist Church in Brooklyn, New York. He pastored that church for 30 years. John Pratt is going to be missed in the Borough of Brooklyn. He was the kind of person that was always involved in community efforts. Whatever you needed to have done, John Pratt was a person that you could count on. Not only that, he was unusual in many ways, because you could talk to him and, of course, he wouldn't call a press conference on you. You just could have a discussion with him and then he would do whatever it was, and you didn't have to worry about him calling a big press conference to let the world know that you had asked him to do something.

He was the kind of person that was able to pull people together. He was a coalition builder. We are going to miss John and his coalition skills because he could talk to anybody at any point in any time. And that was the thing that he was able to do so well.

I will never forget that when my mother passed, how John was there on behalf of my family. So let me say to the Pratt family that you have my support in every way. If there is anything I can do, just let me know. I would be delighted to do it, because he was there for me, and I want to be there for you.

FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY

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

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Speaker, I want to talk this morning about a matter of

great importance to the American people. As this new Congress and President Obama begin to repair and reshape our economy, I think it is critically important for Americans to know and remember how we got into this mess we find ourselves in today.

President Obama and this Congress inherited a fiscal mess from the Bush administration, including a record deficit and soaring unemployment. Since taking control of the House in 2007, Democrats have committed to restoring fiscal responsibility, taking steps to cut waste, fraud and abuse. The President's budget slashes the deficit by nearly two-thirds in 4 years. The budget also calls for health care reform, job creation, clean energy and energy efficiency, and college affordability.

We will continue to work to repair the damage of the last 8 years of irresponsibility.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote incurs objection under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken later.

ENHANCED OVERSIGHT OF STATE AND LOCAL ECONOMIC RECOVERY ACT

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2182) to amend the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 to provide for enhanced State and local oversight of activities conducted pursuant to such Act, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2182

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Enhanced Oversight of State and Local Economic Recovery Act".

SEC. 2. REQUIREMENTS FOR FUNDING FOR STATE AND LOCAL OVERSIGHT UNDER AMERICAN RECOVERY AND REINVESTMENT ACT OF 2009.

(a) FEDERAL AGENCY REQUIREMENT.—Section 1552 of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Public Law 111-5; 123 Stat. 297) is amended—

(1) by inserting "(a) FEDERAL AGENCY REQUIREMENT.—" before "Federal agencies receiving";

(2) by striking "may," and all that follows through "reasonably" and inserting "shall, subject to guidance from the Director of the Office of Management and Budget,,"; and

(3) by striking "data collection requirements" and inserting "data collection requirements, auditing, contract and grant planning and management, and investigations of waste, fraud, and abuse".

(b) STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT AUTHORITY.—Such section is further amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

"(b) STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT AUTHORITY.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, State and local governments receiving funds under this Act may set aside an amount up to 0.5 percent of such funds, in addition to any funds already allocated to administrative expenditures, to conduct planning and oversight to prevent and detect waste, fraud, and abuse."

(c) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The heading for section 1552 of such Act is amended to read as follows:

"SEC. 1552. FUNDING FOR STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT OVERSIGHT."

SEC. 3. AUTHORIZATION FOR ACQUISITION BY STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS THROUGH FEDERAL SUPPLY SCHEDULES.

Section 502 of title 40, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

"(e) USE OF SUPPLY SCHEDULES FOR ECONOMIC RECOVERY.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator may provide for the use by State or local governments of Federal supply schedules of the General Services Administration for goods or services that are funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Public Law 111-5).

"(2) VOLUNTARY USE.—In the case of the use by a State or local government of a Federal supply schedule pursuant to paragraph (1), participation by a firm that sells to the Federal Government through the supply schedule shall be voluntary with respect to a sale to the State or local government through such supply schedule.

"(3) DEFINITIONS.—The definitions in subsection (c)(3) shall apply for purposes of this subsection."

SEC. 4. DEFINITION OF JOBS CREATED AND JOBS RETAINED.

Section 1512(g) of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Public Law 111-5; 123 Stat. 288) is amended by adding at the end "The Director of the Office of Management and Budget shall issue guidance to ensure accurate and consistent reporting of 'jobs created' and 'jobs retained' as those terms are used in subsection (c)(3)(D)."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. TOWNS) and the gentleman from California (Mr. ISSA) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

I rise in support of H.R. 2182, the Enhanced Oversight of State and Local Economic Recovery Act. H.R. 2182 will help ensure efficient and effective use of the taxpayers' money provided to State and local governments for stimulus projects. This legislation grew out of a hearing the Oversight Committee held on the Recovery Act. Many State and local officials responsible for overseeing spending of stimulus dollars

pointed out to us that in these troubled economic times, they are under tremendous pressure to conduct their normal oversight work, let alone cope with the increase that the Recovery Act requires.

Our hearings, Mr. Speaker, made clear, that State and local governments need additional resources to monitor the large infusion of funds the Recovery Act directs. H.R. 2182 will provide State and local governments with the flexibility to set aside a portion of their stimulus funds for auditing, contract and grant planning and management, and investigations of waste, fraud and abuse.

The bill also permits State and local governments to use the Federal supply schedules of the General Services Administration for stimulus projects. The GSA schedules are prenegotiated Federal contracts for a range of common goods and services.

This is a win-win situation because it will allow State and local governments to acquire certain items without engaging in time-consuming contracting procedures while guaranteeing the lowest rate price for them.

Lastly, H.R. 2182 requires the Office of Management and Budget to give detailed guidance to State and local governments to ensure consistency in their reporting of job creation data. Our State and local governments are on the front lines of the efforts to fight mismanagement of Recovery Act dollars. Their success is vital to making the stimulus work for the American people.

Let me pause here and thank Ranking Member ISSA, who has worked very closely with me in crafting this legislation, and I want to thank him for that. I would also like to thank Representative KUCINICH, who has worked with us, Representative PLATTS, and Representatives WELCH and CONNOLLY for working with me on this bill.

I should note that the legislation incorporates part of H.R. 1911, which was introduced by Representative CONNOLLY from Virginia. H.R. 2182 is a strong bill. I urge all Members to support this critical oversight and accountability measure.

And I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1230

Mr. ISSA. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I join with the chairman in urging all Members to vote for this important correction piece of legislation. I say "correction" because, in fact, we in Congress make mistakes. It wasn't out of malice that we spent \$800 billion without asking the question of where would the money for oversight come from. These kinds of things happen in every organization where you're in such a rush to do one thing that it's not until later on in the light of the next day, or in the case of Chairman TOWNS and myself, it's when we held a field hearing in his district in Brooklyn