

spree will be, I fear that even greater damage will come as a result of the utter disregard for the traditions and precedents of this great body. Looking back at that historic debate on the Bill of Rights 220 years ago this summer, it's so instructive because it illustrates just how far we have digressed from the high-minded example that James Madison laid out for us.

The civility, the respect for opposing views, the intellectually rigorous and open debate, the deep belief in the importance of building consensus, all of these elements, Madam Speaker, all of these elements that characterized the debate led by Congressman James Madison 220 years ago have been gradually hollowed out, leaving us with little more than empty, partisan rhetoric.

Perhaps most troubling of all is how quickly this has become, and it really saddens me to say this, the new normal. More than a quarter of this entire body has served less than two terms. For over 25 percent of the House of Representatives, limited debate and bills written in the dead of night appear to be standard operating procedure. A closed appropriations process is just the normal way of doing business. Rancorous debate and demagoguery is simply the way we operate now.

If we do not urgently consider our history and our traditions as an institution, if we do not make an effort to come together very soon and work to restore civility and open debate, these traditions will be lost forever.

Of course there will always be significant divergence of opinions. We were meant to have a great clash of ideas here in the Congress. Our Founders very intentionally designed a system in which we would hold ourselves accountable by this very divergence.

Benjamin Franklin wrote very famously in 1789, "A plural legislature is as necessary to good government as a single executive. It is not enough that your legislature should be numerous; it should also be divided." Franklin went on to say, "Numbers alone are not a sufficient barrier against the impulses of passion, the combination of interest, the intrigues of faction, the haste of folly, or the spirit of encroachment. One division should watch over and control the other, supply its wants, correct its blunders, and cross its designs, should they be criminal or erroneous."

Madam Speaker, we certainly have seen a great deal in recent weeks of the haste of folly and spirit of encroachment that Franklin spoke of.

When debate is stifled, these checks and balances that the Founders envisaged are drastically diminished, and the result is both a poisonous atmosphere and, sadly, reckless public policy. In fact, the latter inevitably follows the former. A bad process begets bad legislation. And the respect, civility and comity that used to govern this body are destroyed in the process.

Madam Speaker, my fear is that irreversible damage has already been done.

But I'm standing here today to remember history. By remembering history, by honoring our tradition, by looking back to our Founders and the example that they gave us 220 years ago this summer with that rigorous, open debate, I believe we can begin to restore our institution. We can once again engage in great debates, in a clash of ideas, and do so with respect for our adversaries and a sincere desire to ultimately reach consensus.

This is the model, this is the model that James Madison presented in one of the most important debates in Congress' history. The great challenges we face today are no less deserving of this kind of debate.

If we are going to effectively and appropriately deal with the economic, energy, health care, environmental, national security and other issues that are before us, we must immediately reverse the very dangerous course on which we have embarked.

Madam Speaker, I urge the Democratic leadership to restore deliberation in this body. This body is known as the greatest deliberative body known to man; and, sadly, we are losing that. I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to once again engage in exchanges characterized by what Madison described as the "principles of amity and moderation," to once again act the part, act the part as Madison said on June 8, 1789, act the part of wise and liberal men.

We must do this, Madam Speaker, if we are going to successfully address the great challenges of our day.

ISSUES IMPORTANT TO AMERICANS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. KIRKPATRICK of Arizona). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. HOEKSTRA) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. I thank the Speaker for the opportunity to talk about issues that I think are not only important to my congressional district, are not only important to the State of Michigan, but are also important to the people of the country.

I was struck this morning when one of the first newspapers that I saw said: "Democrats Out of Sync." I didn't read the article because what really caught my attention was the headline at the bottom that said: "Michigan Lawmakers look to Gitmo for Stimulus."

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Now this is a story that has been out there now for a couple of months, but it looks like my colleagues on the other side of the aisle again believe that the stimulus package for the State of Michigan should be moving the people from Guantanamo—the radical jihadists, the individuals who are identified as being members of al Qaeda, some of whom have been identified as members of al Qaeda—and say-

ing we ought to move these individuals to the State of Michigan. This is our economic stimulus package.

Now I understand why they believe that Michigan needs help. As I take a look through my counties, I see unemployment rates of 10.9 percent, 13 percent, 12.5 percent, 19.1 percent. Roughly one out of every five people are out of work in at least two of my counties. You have 16.8, 15.3, 16.7. Those are the counties that I represent. And, as a State, we have an unemployment rate that is now 15.2 percent, which I expect will again be the highest unemployment rate in the country.

But believing that Michigan's stimulus package and the way that we are going to rebuild the State of Michigan is by opening Gitmo North, I think is a terrible idea. I'm the ranking member of the Intelligence Committee. I've had the opportunity also to serve as the chairman of that committee. And we get some special insights into who these folks really are and what the impact of having these people in your community may be.

I have no doubt that we can move these folks into a prison in Michigan. We can move them into a maximum security perhaps anywhere around the country. There's no doubt in my mind that we could probably contain them and hold them and they wouldn't escape. But there is a reason that they are in Guantanamo.

Guantanamo is a difficult place to get to. We have constructed a facility specifically to match the needs and the challenges of the prisoners that are held in Guantanamo. And those facilities don't exist in other parts of the country.

The other reason that we have them there is we recognize that by the very fact of putting them in the United States and putting them into a community, they present an increased threat to those communities, to the people that work in those facilities, and to the region itself.

This is a really bad idea. To my colleagues from the Michigan delegation, let's not do this. Let's not promote this. Let's make sure that we keep Guantanamo open, and let's make sure that we don't move these people to Michigan, and let's make sure that we don't move them to other parts of the United States. Keep them in Gitmo and let's make sure that we deal with this threat in the most appropriate way.

I also found it interesting that as we talk about economic development—you know, we've got a model for economic development. We did it in the 1990s. We did it with a Republican Congress, and we did it with a Democrat President. It began in January of 1995.

It was relatively straightforward. We are going to cut taxes, we are going to reform government, and we are going to freeze spending.

The end result is that during the 1990s we saw unprecedented economic growth, and we balanced the budget for 4 years in a row. I wish that my colleagues here from Michigan and my

colleagues in the State of Michigan would have recognized that formula. Because instead of cutting taxes, reforming government, and freezing spending, what we are doing in Michigan today is we are increasing business costs by piling on more mandates, and there's no plan to create jobs.

They want to raise the minimum wage to perhaps the highest minimum wage in the country. They want to put more mandates on businesses in Michigan. And we will end up with the most mandates on our businesses for any one State save one, which is California.

Right now, I don't think Michigan really wants to go down the path of California. We've seen what California looks like.

If you want to take a look at the State of Michigan, this is my State. The counties that are in pink have an unemployment rate of between 10 and 15 percent. The darker purple, that is 15 to 20 percent. And we now have two counties now where the unemployment rate is over 20 percent. More than one out of every five workers.

And the response from the other side of the aisle and from Democrats in the State of Michigan is to open Guantanamo North, put more mandates on businesses, and provide no incentives for economic growth in the State of Michigan.

Michigan is a whole lot better than that. We could cut taxes, we could reform government programs, and we could freeze spending, and we could become a model and an engine for economic growth. Michigan has tremendous strengths that we could build off of.

Sure, there's a lot of focus as to exactly what's happening with the automobile industry today, but think about the people that have lost their jobs in the automotive industry—the skills, the talents that they have that can be applied to other industries and other opportunities. It's happening each and every day.

I have a situation in my congressional district right now where the people coming out of the automotive industry have developed some very innovative products for alternative energy. They have been ideated in Michigan—the ideas came out of Michigan. They have been created, they have been engineered, and developed in the State of Michigan.

A relatively small number of jobs, but as this particular product is now moving into production, which is where the real jobs are and where Michigan has a tremendous number of strengths in terms of manufacturing skills and manufacturing facility, it appears that those jobs will go to some other State. Not some other country. They're not going offshore. They will go to some other State that has created a more inviting environment for job creation and business investment than the State of Michigan, even though we have got all of those manufacturing skills and all of those talented manufacturing people.

We can build things in the United States. It appears that right now we just can't build them in the State of Michigan because we have put up too many barriers to job creation in the State of Michigan.

We're also doing some of that same thing here in Washington that sometime in the future may force those types of jobs offshore.

What kind of things am I talking about? Well, if the model is to freeze spending and to cut taxes, what are we doing in Washington, D.C.? Well, we're spending. We're spending much more than we have ever spent before.

When President Clinton came into office and we were in a recession, he proposed, I believe, an economic stimulus of around \$25 billion to \$40 billion, primarily on infrastructure. When this President came into office, he too proposed a stimulus package. \$787 billion. \$787 billion, which is starting to slowly work its way through the system but is having very, very little impact because of the types of things that it is being used for. It's not being used significantly for long-term infrastructure investment.

If you were looking at the State of Michigan, where could we be building or what could we be building, and what could we be using those dollars for? For real stimulus, meaning we would be building infrastructure that our kids would benefit from.

We need a new train tunnel between Windsor and Detroit. Sounds like a good idea to build that tunnel with stimulus dollars. It is a long-term investment. Right now, Detroit and Michigan, we are the main link between Ontario and the United States. That traffic comes through the State of Michigan. Goes through that tunnel that we currently have.

The problem is, if you take a look at the trains coming through, the trains coming through the tunnel, they're stacked too high with the containers. They get to the tunnel, they've got to take the top one off, set it aside, take the train through, put the container on another carrier, take it underneath the river. When they get to the other side of the river, they put the container back on.

It's not a very efficient way to move goods from Canada into the United States. We need a new train tunnel. Build a new train tunnel that will accommodate a double-decker to make sure that Michigan and the Midwest stay competitive, because we have got an efficient transportation corridor.

We need a new bridge between Detroit and Windsor. Build a new bridge. It will last a long time. We have a lot of minerals that we take out of the UP, that we take out of Minnesota, that go through Lake Superior and go down to the lower Great Lakes. We need a new Soo Lock.

If we're worried about stimulus, and we're going to have Federal stimulus dollars being spent, let's use it on things that make a real difference and

will provide us a competitive advantage and strengthen our economy and will benefit our kids and our grandkids, rather than spending it on projects that don't have much of a long-term benefit.

What are some of the things that we're going to be building in Michigan with our stimulus dollars? \$500,000 to renovate a facility which may house yoga or children's movement classes. \$6.9 million to put in 29 intelligent transportation system signs in four west Michigan counties. I'm assuming that these big electronic signs will be put up to warn the motorists about the potholes that are ahead because we're building signs instead of repairing the roads.

We're going to be spending \$983,000 dollars for streetscaping. We're going to be spending \$1.3 million for construction of a wastewater treatment plant for which there may be no plan and little community support.

Of course, every time, whether you're in Michigan or in some other State around the country, you're going to see these wonderful signs that say: This project was brought to you by the stimulus package.

These signs cost anywhere from \$300 to \$1,000 apiece. They don't fill one pothole, they don't pave 1 increment of road. Yet, we're spending on those to remind you that your money that came to Washington, D.C.—actually, the money that Washington, D.C., is borrowing for the stimulus package, you ought to thank us for borrowing this money, so we put up the sign to remind you where it came from.

But we don't say: This road or this project is brought to you by your kids and your grandkids. We seem to think that it's brought to you by your Congress, and you should be thankful for the stuff that we've done.

We've just approached and gone over a trillion dollars of deficit spending for this fiscal year—and the fiscal year doesn't end until September 30. So we've still got July, August, and September to go, and there are many that are saying the deficit for this fiscal year will probably exceed \$1.5 trillion. That is something that our kids will not be thankful for, and it's something that they will carry long into their future.

But in addition to that kind of spending—again, if the model is cut taxes, freeze spending, and reform government, where are we headed today in Washington, D.C., in regards to cutting taxes? We are not going to cut taxes. We are actually going to increase taxes on the American people.

It is estimated by some accounts that the cap-and-trade, the cap-and-tax bill that we passed through this Chamber a few weeks ago is going to cost the average American family about \$3,100 per year.

Now you may not see this as a tax bill that you will have to write a check to the Federal Government for, but what you will see in it is increased cost

for electricity, for gasoline, and any other product that, when you consume it, has a carbon emission. It's a carbon tax. And so you will see the cost of goods, the cost of services increase for every American family.

□ 1630

It will also make it more difficult for American businesses to compete, to invest and to grow our economy. Again, in Michigan we are a heavy manufacturing State. What does cap-and-trade do to the State of Michigan? What does it do to the Midwest? It hammers the Midwest. We have a lot of coal-fired plants. They do have carbon emissions. They will be heavily taxed, heavily regulated; and the cost of producing energy out of those plants will increase significantly. I've got a lot of foundries in my district. What do foundries do? They melt steel. They melt aluminum. They pour them in a mold. They wait for them to cool. They take the mold out, and you've got a piece of metal that has been molded and shaped and then will be machined. It will become part of a car, or it will become part of another product. That consumes a tremendous amount of energy. What do we think will happen to that business if cap-and-trade becomes the law of the land and that business sees its energy costs go up by 50 to 70 percent? Remember, this is a large input cost to this business. It's a cost of production. They will start looking for alternatives. And where will those alternatives be? Will they be someplace else in the United States? Probably not because these facilities and the similar facilities in the United States will all be experiencing these kinds of cost increases. Where will they begin looking? They will begin looking in places like China. They will begin looking in places like India and Mexico, the countries that do not have these types of regulatory burdens placed on them. So again, it is an indirect tax on jobs and businesses; and the result will be that more and more counties in my State and more and more counties around the country will start changing these pink counties from being pink to being purple, meaning that the unemployment rate is going to continue to increase. We see it both at the State level and at the Federal level.

The model that my counterparts on the other side are using to—in their belief—grow the economy is to increase taxes, to grow spending and, really, to reform nothing. I'll give you one example of where we're not seeing a lot of effective reform. There's a couple of things that you ought to know about this chart. Number one, the Speaker of the House and counterparts on the other side have said, This chart is unapproved for public use. Actually, it's unapproved for us to send to our constituents under the franking process. So if someone calls my office, and they say, Congressman HOEKSTRA, we'd like a better understanding of how this new health care proposal is going to work

or what the structure is going to be for that new plan—that's another new tax that's coming as well. But as the President proposed and as my colleagues on the other side of the aisle proposed a new plan for health care, what does that system exactly look like? I don't know if this chart is right, but we had some really bright people come together and read the thousand pages of rules and regulations of the new health care bill. As they read it, they tried to put an organizational structure to it to say, Here's how it's going to work. This is the process, and these are the different kinds of organizations that are going to be necessary or are identified by name in the legislation. This is it. At least this is what they thought it looked like, as they put the pieces together and how the different pieces of this related to each other. This is the organization that will stand between my constituents and their doctors. This is the organization that will say, If you're sick and you want to go to a doctor or you want to go to a hospital, this is the organization that will decide whether that is permissible and then what the doctor may or may not be able to do. At least this is our understanding. But the franking board, the organization that determines whether we can make copies of this and send this out to our constituents, has decided that this is inappropriate to send to our constituents because they say it's inaccurate. So now the Democrats here in the House are starting to control what Members of Congress can send back to their constituents when their constituents ask for information. The interesting thing is, as we talk about this, we may ask and say, Well, if this chart isn't right, could you lay out for us the chart that is more accurate and the chart that you would use to explain to your constituents exactly how this process would work? We are still waiting for that chart.

The other thing that we found out that was kind of interesting is that it appears that the Speaker's Office has determined that it is inappropriate to say "government-run health care." So even though we're putting an organization in place like this to manage the health care system in America, something that the Congressional Budget Office says will add about \$1 trillion to our debt over the next 10 years, even though we're creating all of these different agencies, it is inappropriate to tell our constituents that this is government-run health care and that we cannot use those words to describe this system to our constituents. So rather than reforming government, what we are doing is we are growing government. We are growing this bureaucracy in health care. We are also growing this bureaucracy in the energy area. So we are seeing a massive expansion of the role of government and an erosion of freedom for American citizens today. The model is, cut taxes, reform government and freeze spending. Whether you are in the State of Michi-

gan and perhaps many other States around the country or you are in Washington, D.C., if you're asking, Where are the jobs and why is there not any economic recovery?, the answer becomes fairly clear. We've got the wrong model in place because rather than cutting taxes, we are going to be increasing taxes. Whether it's in cap-and-trade, whether it's in health care or whether it is allowing many of the tax cuts that were implemented in the previous administration to expire, we are going to grow taxes rather than reforming government. We are going to grow government. And rather than freezing spending, we are going to increase spending. We're going in exactly the wrong direction for economic growth. The model that you are seeing here in Washington—and I remember a couple of months after the election, President-elect Obama was sitting at a conference in Chicago and had a lot of his economic advisers and a lot of his future cabinet with him. They were talking about what to do with the economy. I saw that the governor of Michigan was sitting next to the President. I thought part of the reason for this would be for the President to learn from our governor about some of the things that we had tried in Michigan that clearly hadn't worked. That increasing taxes had not grown Michigan's economy, that it had been detrimental to our economy; that more regulations and more bureaucracy had been detrimental to our economy; that increasing the size and the scope of Michigan's government had been bad for our economy and bad for job creation; that the President would be able to understand that and say, Maybe we ought to take a different look at what we're going to be doing in Washington. But he has followed the same formula of increasing taxes, forgetting to reform government and increasing spending. In each of these cases, as we move through that direction, as we move down that path, when we grow taxes, who gets more control of America's future, and who loses freedom? When we grow taxes, it means that America's families, America's individuals and America's businesses, they lose control, and they lose freedom. When we grow government, when we put this system between you and your doctor, who gets control and who loses freedom? This system guarantees that control moves to the Federal Government. Who loses freedom? America's families, America's individuals, and America's businesses.

So when we grow taxes, who loses freedom? The American people do. When we grow government, who loses freedom and who gains control? America's people lose freedom. The government gains control. When we grow spending, who gets control? The Federal Government. Who loses freedom? The American people. Which means that a lot of this debate now in Washington, D.C., is about control and it is about freedom.

Let me give you a couple of examples. This week the President announced a new education program, \$4 billion, one more education program. We counted all the education programs that were out there a few years ago, and we came up with a number of 659 different education programs, and now we've got one more. In other parts of this education bill, I agree with the themes and the objectives. It says, We've got to open up our education system to more K-12 systems and to more charter schools. It's kind of like, Yes, I like charter schools. I think they work. But then this is how the Federal Government's saying, If you want a piece of the action, if you want some of this \$4 billion, these are the things that you're going to have to do to compete for those \$4 billion. Charter schools may be appropriate for Michigan; but they may not be appropriate for another State. So why's the Federal Government saying that with charter schools, that is now the way it's going to be nationally, and we're going to take your money to incent you to do things that the Federal Government wants to you do? Who loses control, and who loses freedom? The Federal Government gets control, using your money to bribe you to do things they want you to do that may or may not be appropriate for your State or your community. Who loses control? Local schools, local families and the States.

Of course the most massive expansion and best example of this in education is the passage of No Child Left Behind in 2001. The goal is a goal that I think every American agrees with, no child left behind. Every child is a unique gift to us. It's our responsibility. As a parent, it's my responsibility to try to do everything that I can to raise up that child and to make sure that that child is given the background, the values, and the education necessary that will enable them to have a fruitful and productive life. I want that responsibility as a parent. I want the freedom to raise my child. What does No Child Left Behind do? No Child Left Behind says, we're going to move responsibility for K-12 education. We're not going to move it from a parent and a family to the local school board, to the State. It says, Man, we're going to grab K-12 education, and we are going to move it not only from the local community; but from there, we're going to move it all the way to the Department of Education. Who gets control? Who now has control of your local schools? We send to your local school about 10 to 12, maybe 15 percent of the money that they spend every year. The majority of that money is raised at the State or the local level. But ask your teachers and ask your superintendents as to who is controlling what is going on in your local school. They'll tell you very clearly and very quickly. They'll say, It's that bureaucracy in Washington, D.C. It's called the Department of Education.

When I chaired the Oversight Committee on the Education and Workforce

Committee and had the opportunity to have oversight over the Department of Education, I always had a great time. Me and a colleague, we would walk over to the Department of Education. We would just walk in. We'd walk into some offices, and people would look at us and say, Who are you? And we would say, "Well, I am Congressman Hoekstra, and this is Congressman Schaffer, and we're here to help." To help, we'd really like to understand what you do and how you help my kids in my local schools. So you kind of say, This is my congressional district. Here is Ludington, Michigan, and I am very concerned about what is happening with the schools in Detroit. There are some rural school districts up here. But this is my congressional district. Can you tell me if there's anybody from Ludington, Michigan, that works here in the Department of Education who might understand the needs of Ludington, Michigan? What about Pentwater? What about Muskegon? What about Holland? What about Zeeland? What about Jenison? I couldn't find anybody from west Michigan at the Department of Education. Then you'd say, Well, if we really don't have anybody there from west Michigan—it was even hard to find people from Michigan. As we went through, we would say, Do you guys know where these towns are? Do you know the differences in the needs of schools in Ludington versus the kids and the challenges and the opportunities that we have in Baldwin or Cadillac or Sparta? Do you understand that? These are just names to them. They're just little pushpins on a map to these folks. They don't know the differences and the unique characteristics of each of these communities. Then you would ask them and say, You know, all of my school districts in the State, they prepare a mountain of paperwork that they send to this place in Washington, to the Department of Education. Can you tell me where this paperwork comes in and to what office it goes to?

□ 1645

They said, Well, you know, not really. Who reads this stuff? And does anybody ever read it and then send a letter back to the kids at Muskegon or the superintendent at Muskegon Heights and say, We've read your material, we've analyzed it, and here are some ideas as to how you may improve your schools?

But at the same time that these folks in Washington really don't understand the kids or the communities that they are managing, they have a tremendous amount of control over what goes on in these schools. And how do you know?

Every year now, what does this Department of Education, in conjunction, or mandated through the States do? Think about it. You have a Department of Education here in Washington that is dictating the standards that identify whether your school is a good school—and they don't call it a "not so

good school" or a "school in need of improvement." What do they call it? They call it a "failing school."

You have the Department of Education telling you whether your school is a good school or a failing school. They'll tell you the same thing about your teachers. We put in all kinds of mandates. And I spend a lot of time going through these schools and talking to these different classrooms, and after we passed No Child Left Behind, I started going back to some of the schools that I had been at, and they'd bring in the kids and the government teacher would come in.

And I said, Well, what happened to Mr. Smith? Well, Mr. Smith wasn't a highly qualified teacher. He didn't meet the requirements that some bureaucrat in Washington said you needed to have to teach government under No Child Left Behind, so he retired or he or she is not teaching government anymore. And I said, Wow, I didn't know that they didn't have necessarily all the class background. They've got a teaching degree and all of those types of things.

But these persons, really, when I had been there before, they appeared to have a genuine passion for the kids. They understood the subject matter. They must have found out about it some way, and they appeared to be doing a really good job with the kids when I was there. But now what you find out is that because they didn't check every box on a form that came out of Washington, D.C., they no longer could teach the subject that they loved, and perhaps they had taught for 10 or 15 years.

Control came to Washington, D.C., and parents and local school boards lost the freedom to run their schools the way that they felt was most appropriate for their kids and would give them the best learning. And we now have a school system that, across the United States, is getting to look a lot more bureaucratic rather than innovating and being creative as we're moving forward.

I'll give you another example as to where States lose freedom. Think about it. Every time you go to your local gas pump, a good portion, 10 to 15 percent of the price that you pay comes to Washington, D.C. In the history of the transportation bill, a State like Michigan has gotten, historically we have gotten 83 cents of the dollar back. So for every dollar that we send to Washington, D.C., under the highway trust fund, we have gotten 83 cents back. That's not a very good return. It may be one of the reasons we don't have the greatest roads.

There are other people around the country who ought to be thanking Michigan because Michigan dollars are paving their roads. But the interesting thing is, when this money comes back, when the money comes back to Michigan, it comes back with a lot of strings and mandates attached to it saying, You are going to build these signs that may be expensive.

In the northern part of my district, a few years ago they were going to build a turtle fence along the expressway. It goes through a wetlands area maybe a mile, mile and a half long, and we found out about it and said, We are not going to build a turtle fence. And so we were effective in the delaying of that turtle fence for about a year. We came back a year, a year and a half later and saw that there was construction going on along the road there. And we said, Man, they are going to build this turtle fence.

For those people who don't know what a turtle fence is, you don't need to have much of an imagination. A turtle fence is a fence that you put alongside the highway to make sure that turtles don't cross the road. And that's really good for the turtles, except when you build the turtle fence and you build it along the river so a turtle can't sneak into the river, swim under the bridge and then get into the median by getting up on the bank there. They put the turtle fence there so all they can do is get in the river, swim under both bridges and then get up on the other side of the other fence. For the turtles that are on the outside of the fence, they are really thrilled about this fence because they can't get hit by a car again. But I have gotten a significant number of complaints. The turtles inside of the fence are really unhappy because the only place that they can hang out is in the median or on the roadway, and they can't get back to the road.

But the bottom line here is, I talked with the Governor about this, and she said, Pete, let's not get into an argument about the turtle fence. I'm just telling you that the Federal Government, that money came in a funnel. We had to use it for road beautification or enhancement projects, meaning we had to build things like turtle fences.

Well, for those of us that live in the State of Michigan, we have a lot of potholes, and a turtle fence was not a priority for us. But it was \$318,000 for the turtle fence. Before that, we had spent about \$80,000 to \$90,000, I believe, doing a study as to whether a turtle fence was absolutely essential.

In Florida, they have done us one better. They have not only built the turtle fence, but they have also built turtle tunnels. They now have tunnels under the roadway so that the turtles can go and get from one side of the road to the other side of the road, and they go through tunnels. I'm not sure whether they have built turtle tunnels as well as alligator tunnels, because they don't want both of them in the same tunnel. That, again, is a bad place for the turtles to be.

In Michigan we have been forced to spend about \$400,000 on a turtle fence. We also have a rest area. It looked like a perfectly good rest area to me, but we ended up tearing down the rest area, and we ended up building a new rest area for about \$3.6 million. And remember that this is the State where we

have the eighth worst road system based on overall performance in the country.

The \$400,000 for the turtle fence and the \$3.6 million for the rest area we could have spent on other things and invested that on the things that we really need those transportation dollars for, and that is to repair our roads, to build bypasses, and to build new on and off ramps so that we can facilitate the movement of goods and services throughout our State so that we would enhance our ability to compete, not only in the United States but on a global basis to enhance our transportation system.

Again, when we send that money to Washington, when we send that dollar to Washington, Washington gets control, and Washington uses its control by saying, Michigan, you're sending a buck here, and we're only going to send you, over the life of the program, we have only sent you 83 cents back. We've got that improved now. I think this year we're going to get 93 cents back. Still it's not good enough.

But Washington says, We're going to exercise control by taking some of your money and siphoning it off and giving it to other States, and then when you get the money, we're going to force you to spend that money on things that you otherwise perhaps would not have wanted to do.

And what does Washington, D.C., what does the Department of Transportation know about whether we ought to be building a turtle fence, a rest area, or investing it in basic infrastructure? Those are the decisions that should be made and could be made at the State level. Again, Washington exercising its control, the residents and the citizens of Michigan losing the freedom to set their own destination and to set their own priorities.

The same thing happens with all kinds of other spending. It comes here to Washington, D.C., it goes back to the States, but it comes back with all kinds of strings attached to it.

Michigan's budget is about a \$44 billion budget. I think it's roughly two-thirds, somewhere between two-thirds and three-quarters of that budget comes back to the State with strings attached to it by the Federal Government, and "strings" means control by the Federal Government and it means a loss of freedom for the people in the State of Michigan.

There is one other area that is a very, very different area. Let me just change focus for a minute here. But before I do that, let me just reinforce, what we are talking about here, if we want to get back to economic growth, what we need to do is we need to move in a direction of cutting taxes, reforming government, and freezing spending. We need to empower individuals. We need to empower families and businesses, the job creators and the movers in our economy, and take control away from Washington, D.C. and devolve it back to States, local governments and

individuals. That is how we will get economic growth; not by raising taxes, not by growing government, and not by increasing spending.

The thing that I wanted to talk a little bit about is one other area of freedom. A year and a half ago, a friend of mine came to me and said, Pete, we need to do a constitutional amendment. I'm very cautious about amending the Constitution. I think that's something we ought to take very, very seriously. And he said, I've got an idea that we need to do a parental rights constitutional amendment. And I said, Parental rights? What are we doing with parental rights?

The parental rights constitutional amendment is very simple. It is less than 50 words, and it basically says that parents have the right to raise and educate their kids or lead in the direction of raising and educating their kids. The government has the responsibility to step in if there are cases of abuse or neglect with the children, and the third part is that this constitutional amendment takes precedence over any treaty.

You ask, Well, why would we need to do that? We understand that, and it is clear. That is an implied right in our Constitution, meaning, if you read the Constitution, most people would say, Yeah, we understand that to be true, that parents have the right and the responsibility to raise and educate their kids. But what we have found so often in the last 40 to 50 years is that the things we took for granted slowly eroded and changed and got to a point where we didn't expect that it would ever go.

Fifty or 60 years ago, if people had said, We need an amendment to protect an unborn child, people would have said, People understand that that is a life. Obviously, we found out that that is not true. We have moved to a different place. Twenty or 25 years ago, if someone would have said, we need to define "marriage" and put a definition of "marriage" into the law or into the Constitution, people would have said, everybody knows what that is. And we have now found out that no, we have broad disagreements as to exactly what that is.

That's why we are doing this parental rights amendment, where we understand that it is an implied right, that parents have the right to raise and educate their kids. But what we are now seeing is that that right is starting to be eroded. It is being eroded by our courts. It is being eroded by what we are doing here in Congress and those types of things. So what we want to do is take this implied right and make it an explicit right in the Constitution, just like the Bill of Rights, which guaranteed explicitly what the rights and privileges were, the right to free speech, the right to practice religion, the right to bear arms and those types of things.

The spirit of this amendment is to explicitly put into the Constitution the

right of parents to raise, educate, and direct the upbringing of their children, because that right is being eroded and being questioned and challenged in the courts and in this building each and every day.

The third piece here is, why put in that it takes precedence over any treaty? Well, under the U.S. Constitution, loosely interpreted by a marketing guy and not an attorney, under the Constitution, if the United States signs a treaty, the treaty takes precedence over the Constitution unless it is expressly stated in either the treaty or in the Constitution what takes precedence. And right now, moving through the U.N., and the President has said we ought to ratify this treaty; the Secretary of State has said that it is a disgrace that we have not yet signed this treaty or ratified this treaty.

□ 1700

And BARBARA BOXER, a colleague in the Senate, has said that she is going to make it a priority of hers to move this through her committee and bring to the Senate. And this is the treaty on the U.N. Convention on the Rights of a Child. And if this were ratified by the United States Senate, it would totally change the relationship and set in place a framework to alter the relationship between a parent and their child, and put the government in a potentially critical role in directing the upbringing of our kids.

Probably another bureaucracy just like this bureaucracy that is going to potentially get between you and your doctor, you could very easily envision this kind of bureaucracy getting between you and your children. And that's why we've done that amendment.

And finally, let me bring up an issue that we're working through right now in the Intelligence Committee. Earlier this year, the Speaker of the House indicated and made a statement along the lines of, I believe that, loosely stated, that the CIA lies. They lie all the time. More recently, the chairman of the Intelligence Committee has made a similar statement, that the CIA lies and lies consistently. Seven members of the Intelligence Committee have written to the Director of the CIA asking him to retract some statements that he made back in May about the CIA and the honorable men and women in the CIA and their service and their intent to always fully brief Congress and to be truthful in their testimony to Congress.

And these seven members said that he should retract that statement and, basically, implied that they believe that he had now misled the Congress and the Intelligence Committee. And remember, this is all Democrats, the Speaker saying, the CIA, this CIA lies, now under the direction of Leon Panetta, a former Democrat Member of this House. The seven Democratic members of the Intelligence Committee saying that Leon Panetta, a

former Democrat Member of this House may have lied to the committee, the President of the United States, as we were considering, or we were hoping to bring an intelligence bill to the floor for a debate, the President coming back and saying that he—putting a veto threat on that bill because of the language that was in that bill.

But the bottom line is that, as we've gone through this process, and coming out of this briefing where Director Panetta had briefed us, some of my colleagues on the committee have now said, well, we're going to bring in the Vice President. We need to bring in Vice President Cheney, and we have to investigate a program that was very clearly stated yesterday in USA Today. They want to investigate a program that they never told Congress about, that never happened, meaning they planned it and they did some work on it, but they never executed the program.

And so, it's kind of like, what's going on here? The program, sure there was some planning done on it. There might have been some training dollars that were expended on it. Yeah, you're right; they didn't brief Congress, but they never did the program. And then USA Today said, you know, and guess what? This was in the immediate aftermath of 9/11, and it's alleged that the program and the deliberations within the CIA were about how to disrupt, contain, and perhaps, kill the leadership of al Qaeda.

And you kind of step back and think, you would think that our national security apparatus in the months after 9/11, in the years after 9/11, that they would have been considering different ways to contain, disrupt or to kill the leaders of al Qaeda. And, in reality, according to press reports, much of that has happened over the last 8 years, guess what? In many of these cases, the American people are very grateful that we've disrupted al Qaeda, that they've not been able to carry out another attack against the United States.

And according to press reports, in the last few months, one of the top leaders of al Qaeda, one of Bin Laden's sons may have been killed in an attack. But he's part of the leadership that still wants to attack U.S. troops in Afghanistan, to kill our troops in Afghanistan and, if possible, to attack the United States again.

But it's just amazing to me that you have the men and women of the CIA who have been aggressively going after the threats and the enemies of the United States, and they've done it successfully for 8 years. We haven't been attacked again. And the thanks that they get now from this administration and the leadership of this Congress is that they are called liars and they're called liars repeatedly, and they are now being threatened by the Attorney General that they are going to be investigated and they may be prosecuted. That's the wrong way to go.

These are all points that were raised in the editorial yesterday in USA

Today, saying it's wrong to go down this path because, number one, there's nothing there to be investigated. What it appears that some want to do, what it appears they want to do is they want to move and they want to focus back on the previous administration. And what we need to be doing is we need to be looking forward. The threats to America are real. We need to be focused on containing and defeating the threats that we face as a country today, and we need a strong intelligence community and a strong military to make that happen, and we need to demonstrate to the men and women of the intelligence community and in the armed services that we stand behind them.

And sure we recognize that they may make mistakes. They will recognize that, and that when they do, they will be held accountable. But when they do the job that we have asked them to do, when they do the job that we have funded them to do, it is amazing to me that many of the programs that are now being criticized that have kept us safe are the same programs that many of the Members of this House knew about, they supported them, they funded them, and they asked the intelligence community to carry them forward and to do them.

They are now criticizing the intelligence community for—they are calling them liars, and they're saying, we may prosecute you. And the bottom line, as it was pointed out in the USA Today editorial, is they are destroying the morale within the intelligence community. These are people who risk their lives to keep America safe, and they're saying, this is the thanks that we are getting from America's elected political leadership for the risks that we have taken and for the results that we have gotten. It is just plain wrong for us to be doing this to the men and women of the intelligence community.

And, like the USA Today, I think the message has to be very simply: Stop. Stop. There's not any evidence that you need to go down the path that you're going down, and all you're going to do is hurt the community that has kept America safe. America has great strengths. We've got great people in the State of Michigan. Yes, we are struggling, but Michigan is going to come back because we've got great people. We've got great resources. We have got the opportunity to rebuild the State, we've got the opportunity to rebuild this country, but the solutions for rebuilding America and rebuilding Michigan are not going to come from Washington, D.C.

They are not going to come from Lansing. They are going to come from Washington, D.C. and Lansing giving up control and giving more freedom back to the people of America, to the people of Michigan, to let them get some of their sovereignty back, let them get some of the freedom back and to free them from some of the burdensome mandates, rules and regulations.

We do that by cutting their taxes, by reforming government, allowing for innovation and creativity at a grassroots level, at a local level and by freezing spending here in Washington.

I think, with the mad dash that we've done here in Washington on spending, we ought to be looking at cutting spending here in Washington and shrinking the size of this government and unleashing the potential of America's people and Michigan's citizens to rebuild our State and rebuild this country. Give them the freedom, give them the freedom to grow their business, to start a business, to hire a few more people, to try things, the freedom to grow a business, the freedom to fail, and the freedom to be successful, the freedom to succeed in a dream that they may have.

Michigan was built on the creativity and the innovation and the ingenuity of a whole range of people over generations. Michigan's future was never built or created by a government in Lansing or a government in Washington, D.C. We need to reform this government here in Washington. We need to cut taxes. We need to reform government and we need to reduce spending.

And when we start setting up the tone here in Washington and start moving that money back, and just think, if we could get 5 or 10 percent efficiency of the money that goes back to the States, a lot of our States wouldn't be facing the financial challenges that they face today. They'd have more money coming in. And if they experienced and implemented the same kinds of practices of cutting taxes, lowering spending and getting rid of burdensome government programs, we would see a real rebirth at the local level, at the individual level, and at the business level in this country.

We've done the model before. We didn't do enough of it in the 1990s. We need to do it again, and we need to do more of it because only, you know, during the last 8 years and now going into the last 9 years, what we've been doing is we've been growing this beast in Washington. We've been taking control here in Washington and we've been stripping freedom away from people at the local level and moving the control, moving the freedom that they had and been moving the control to Washington, and that's exactly the wrong thing to do.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed without amendment a bill of the House of the following title:

H.R. 2632. An act to amend title 4, United States Code, to encourage the display of the flag of the United States on National Korean War Veterans Armistice Day.

The message also announced that the Senate has passed bills of the following

titles in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 151. An act to protect Indian arts and crafts through the improvement of applicable criminal proceedings, and for other purposes.

S. 1513. An act to provide for an additional temporary extension of programs under the Small Business Act and the Small Business Investment Act of 1958, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the Senate agreed to a concurrent resolution of the following title:

S. Con. Res. 35. Concurrent resolution authorizing printing of the pocket version of the United States Constitution.

SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. BLUMENAUER) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Ms. WOOLSEY, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. SALAZAR, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. KAPTUR, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. DEFAZIO, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. BLUMENAUER, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. GOHMERT) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. POE of Texas, for 5 minutes, July 31.

Mr. JONES, for 5 minutes, July 31.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana, for 5 minutes, July 27, 28, 29, 30 and 31.

Mr. GOHMERT, for 5 minutes, July 24, 27, 28, 29, 30 and 31.

(The following Member (at his request) to revise and extend his remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. KINGSTON, for 5 minutes, today.

SENATE BILL AND CONCURRENT RESOLUTION REFERRED

A bill and concurrent resolution of the Senate of the following titles were taken from the Speaker's table and, under the rule, referred as follows:

S. 151. An act to protect Indian arts and crafts through the improvement of applicable criminal proceedings, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources; in addition, to the Committee on the Judiciary for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

S. Con. Res. 35. Concurrent resolution authorizing printing of the pocket version of the United States Constitution; to the Committee on House Administration.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Madam Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 5 o'clock and 13 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the

House adjourned until Monday, July 27, 2009, at 12:30 p.m., for morning-hour debate.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of Rule XXIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

2805. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — S-Absciscic Acid; Temporary Exemption From the Requirement of a Tolerance [EPA-HQ-OPP-2009-0189; FRL-8427-3] received July 22, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

2806. A letter from the Assistant to the Board, Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, transmitting the Board's final rule — Truth in Lending [Regulation Z; Docket No.: R-1364] received July 22, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

2807. A letter from the Chief Counsel, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Changes in Flood Elevation Determinations [Docket ID: FEMA-2008-0020] received July 16, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

2808. A letter from the Chief Counsel, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Suspension of Community Eligibility [Docket ID: FEMA-2008-0020; Internal Agency Docket No. FEMA-8079] received July 1, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

2809. A letter from the Chief Counsel, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Final Flood Elevation Determinations [Docket ID: FEMA-2008-0020] received July 1, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

2810. A letter from the Chief Counsel, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Final Flood Elevation Determinations [Docket ID: FEMA-2008-0020] received July 1, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

2811. A letter from the Regulatory Specialist, LRAD, Department of Treasury, transmitting the Department's final rule — Risk-Based Capital Guidelines; Capital Adequacy Guidelines; Capital Maintenance; Capital-Residential Mortgage Loans Modified Pursuant to the Making Home Affordable Program; Correcting Amendment [Docket ID: OCC-2009-0007] (RIN: 1557-AD25) received July 20, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

2812. A letter from the General Counsel, National Credit Union Administration, Department of Treasury, transmitting the Department's final rule — Procedures To Enhance the Accuracy and Integrity of Information Furnished to Consumer Reporting Agencies Under Section 312 of the Fair and Accurate Credit Transaction Act (RIN: 3084-AA94) received July 21, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

2813. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; State of Hawaii; Update to Materials Incorporated by Reference [HI-126-NBK; FRL-8916-9] received July 22, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C.