

friends as General Mik, for his lasting commitment to our Nation's military and veterans.

After 27 years of active duty in the Air Force, General Mik returned to Charleston, where he served as chairman of the Charleston Chamber of Commerce's Military Affairs Committee. In 2005, he was diagnosed with ALS. At that time, the disease was not recognized as a service-connected disorder by the VA. Because of the high incidence rate among veterans, General Mik worked tirelessly with me, the entire VA Committee, and General Peake to change VA regulations to make ALS a presumptive disease. He also played an instrumental role in the establishment of the National ALS Registry.

Because of his valiant efforts, no veteran will ever have to fight for disability after they have been diagnosed with ALS. General Mik always put service to our country and his fellow countrymen first, and he will be greatly missed.

FINANCIAL REGULATORY REFORM

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

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, when I recently visited a restaurant in my rural district, a gentleman approached me to say that he was a Republican and had never voted for a Democrat, but he voted for President Obama. He stated his appreciation that the President was standing up to greed, that he was standing up to Wall Street and corporate America. He felt that corporate greed is among the greatest challenges facing our Nation, and he is absolutely correct.

The first day President Obama took office, the country was at the brink of economic ruin triggered by financial deregulation and banks that pursued reckless investments to produce quick profits. Wall Street was acting more like casinos than banks, taking big gambles, and when they lost, forcing the taxpayers to pay. They got rich, everyone else got squeezed.

Democrats have a solution. Wall Street doesn't like it, but we have a solution. We want transparency, we want accountability, and we will not stop until that happens.

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WE CAN DO BETTER

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

Mr. GINGREY of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor this morning with a simple message: we can do better. Just look around.

What has been accomplished under the Democratic leadership? A takeover of our health care system, otherwise known as ObamaCare, which spends money we don't have, without lowering

the cost of health care. A cap-and-tax energy bill which would cost the average American family an additional \$3,000 annually for the energy. And, of course, the failed stimulus legislation costing \$861 billion that has yet to create a single non-government job, leaving our unemployment rate at an abysmal 9.7 percent.

Now the Senate is considering a permanent bailout for Wall Street, and the President's top economic adviser is pushing for a European-style value added tax on top of our current tax system.

Mr. Speaker, the American people deserve better than they're currently getting, and House Republicans have a commonsense solution that will create jobs, lower the tax burden for American families, and stop spending money that we don't have.

HONORING EARTH DAY

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

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, this week we celebrate Earth Day. Since its inception following the tragic oil spill off Santa Barbara, Earth Day has become a call to action on behalf of the environment.

As one who represents this coastline, one of the most beautiful and sensitive areas in America, I know that every day is Earth Day. But the important thing about this year's celebration is that it marks a turning point for our Nation. Under Democratic leadership our country is finally poised to begin addressing our longstanding energy issues.

Through the Recovery Act, for example, we've launched a clean energy economy that's creating millions of jobs, reducing our dependence on dirty energy sources, and, through efficiencies, lowering energy costs for American families and businesses.

Now is the time to seize the unprecedented opportunity before us. The clean energy legislation we've passed in this Chamber will be the legacy we leave for our children and our grandchildren. To protect them and all who come after us, we must continue making these smart investments and meet the challenges of the 21st century.

STOP THE ENDLESS BAILOUTS

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

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, beginning in the fall of 2008, Congress approved, and the Bush and Obama administrations began to hand out taxpayer money freely to banks and, eventually, auto companies, with little transparency and, in some cases, little hope that the money would be repaid.

Now, the Senate is set to consider legislation that will create a perma-

nent culture of bailouts on Wall Street. The legislation moves us away from sending failed companies into bankruptcy and toward government-managed bailouts. There would be a different set of rules for the largest firms, rules that create a perverse incentive for these companies to take risks, rules that encourage lower rates for the largest firms because of the implicit government guarantee. Ultimately, we would be creating a dozen new Fannies and Freddie's, not reforming a broken system of government oversight.

I think the American people have had enough of bailouts. The Dodd bill creates an endless cycle of failure where Wall Street bankers are the only ones who come out ahead. It should be stopped.

AN INJUSTICE TO AMERICAN WORKERS AND TAXPAYERS

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

Mr. INSLEE. Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor to speak against a significant injustice to both American workers and the American taxpayer, and that is the decision by the Air Force to extend the deadline for offering bids for the Air Force's new imperative tanker, which has allowed an illegally subsidized competitor, the EADS Company, which has now taken advantage of that, to the disadvantage of American workers and the disadvantage of American taxpayers. It is inconceivable to me that we have extended this deadline to allow a competitor to offer a bid that will be illegally subsidized by European governments.

If this travesty is allowed to happen, we could lose thousands of jobs. The taxpayers would have been suffering seeing these illegal subsidies, and a great injustice will have been perpetrated.

This cannot stand. We should continue to fight this grave injustice.

RESTORING U.S. COMPETITIVENESS

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

Mr. BOUSTANY. Mr. Speaker, our country is on an unsustainable path with trillion-dollar deficits annually, continued massive government spending, and an atmosphere of uncertainty as President Obama and congressional Democrats have enacted \$760 million in gross new tax increases since 2009, with more tax increases planned. It's no wonder that unemployment remains stubbornly high and economic growth is sluggish. These policies are a threat to U.S. competitiveness.

We need a commonsense policy to promote growth. We need to cut government spending and adhere to a balanced budget. We need to increase U.S.

exports by implementing the three free trade agreements that we've already negotiated. That way, we show that America keeps its commitments. And we need to lower the corporate tax rate so that our U.S. companies can compete against foreign competitors.

These are commonsense policies that will lead to U.S. competitiveness, job growth, and economic growth.

BATTLE OF SAN JACINTO DAY

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

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, on April 21, 1836, 174 years ago today, Texas forces led by General Sam Houston dealt a decisive blow to General Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna and his oppressive government.

Several weeks after signing the Texas Declaration of Independence in March of 1836, roughly 900 members of the Texan army overpowered a much larger Mexican Army in a surprise attack. Some 700 Mexican soldiers were killed and 730 captured, while nine Texans died.

The Texas army quickly and silently moved toward Santa Anna's camp. They were able to get very close because General Santa Anna was still pleased with his victory at the Alamo and failed to post men to watch the Texans' actions. At close range, the "Twin Sisters" drawn by rawhide thongs, were wheeled into position to begin unloading shells at the napping Mexican Army. The cannons were gifts from the people of Cincinnati, Ohio.

Texas soldiers followed the bombardment and yelled and shouted "Remember the Alamo" and "Remember Goliad" stopping only a few yards from the Mexican soldiers to open fire in a surprise attack.

The Mexican soldiers were better trained than their Texas opponents. They were caught off guard. It was a bold attack in broad daylight.

Texas General Sam Houston, former Member of this Congress from Tennessee, future President of the Republic of Texas, future U.S. Senator and Governor of Texas, had two horses shot out from under him and was shot and his ankle was shattered.

Santa Anna was captured that day and held prisoner and signed peace treaties to give Texas independence.

The battle is memorialized along the San Jacinto River with a monument in our district in La Porte, Texas. A panel on the side of the monument states: "Measured by its results, San Jacinto was one of the decisive battles of the world. The freedom of Texas from Mexico won here led to annexation and to the Mexican War, resulting in the acquisition by the United States of the States of Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, Nevada, California, Utah and parts of Colorado, Wyoming, Kansas and Oklahoma. Almost one-third of the present area of the American Nation, nearly

one million square miles, changed sovereignty."

That's what we're commemorating today.

NATIONAL DAY OF SILENCE

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

Mr. FARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in observance of the National Day of Silence. April 16 was the 14th year we've commemorated the National Day of Silence, a time when students across the country remain silent for the whole day to draw attention to discrimination toward their LGBT peers.

Every day students who are lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered, as well as those who are perceived to be LGBT, are subjected to harassment, bullying, intimidation and violence. These actions are incredibly harmful to students, and they also damage our educational system.

In addition to supporting the National Day of Silence, I'm also proud to be cosponsor of H.R. 4530, the Student Nondiscrimination Act. This act is necessary because bullying and discrimination are the norm for so many LGBT young people. These youth face unique challenges in their physical and mental health. Last weekend a group of constituents hosted a Queer Youth Health Summit in Santa Cruz, California.

This group also works to identify mental and physical health needs and promote safe and healthy lifestyles for queer and questioning youth in the region. It's unfortunate a summit like this is necessary, but I commend these students for responding so compassionately.

Though many lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender advocates and their straight allies were silent last Friday, we in Congress should never be. Our job is to speak for those who cannot speak for themselves.

BRAZILIAN COTTON ISSUE

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

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. Speaker, April 6, 2010, marks the date that our farm subsidies—these are programs that, on a good day, are out of step with reality—took an unprecedented leap into the absurd. On that day the administration hatched an agreement on Brazil trade litigation that includes the U.S. paying Brazil \$143.7 million a year for "technical assistance and capacity building." Because our subsidies violate WTO rules, we're now paying millions to subsidize Brazilian agriculture.

Let's think about that for a minute. Our subsidies for U.S. farmers are out of step with the WTO. So what do we do in response? We subsidize our trade partners elsewhere in the world. So your tax dollars are not only going to pay subsidies for U.S. agriculture, but

now to pay subsidies for our trade partners in other countries.

We have got to stop this, Mr. Speaker. It's Congress' responsibility to reform our cotton program and our agriculture subsidies.

WALL STREET REFORM

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

Mr. HARE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of Wall Street reform. With 8 million jobs lost at the hands of Wall Street tycoons recklessly gambling on the financial futures of our constituents, enough is enough.

This Democratic Caucus has made great progress in pulling our economy back from the brink of disaster, yet the hard work remains. It's my hope that we, in a bipartisan manner, can see that reforming Wall Street is not a political issue. It is an issue that will shape the financial security of all Americans and prevent future economic disasters.

When we enact this bill, it will end bailouts by helping ensure that taxpayers never again are on the hook for Wall Street's risky decisions. It will protect families' retirement funds, college savings, home and business financial futures from unnecessary risks, protect consumers from predatory lending abuses, fine print and industry gimmicks. It will inject transparency and accountability into the financial system which has run amuck.

Mr. Speaker, I say to opponents of this bill, enough is enough. It's time to vote in favor of Main Street all across this great country and against the Wall Street that has run roughshod over the future of too many American families.

WE MUST REIN IN WALL STREET BANKS

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

Ms. TITUS. Mr. Speaker, 2 years ago our Nation suffered one of the greatest economic meltdowns in history when the financial markets nearly collapsed and sent the country into the deepest recession in a generation, one that my State of Nevada is still working to pull itself out of.

The hardworking people of southern Nevada have paid a steep price for the greed and dangerous under-regulation of Wall Street that created a foreclosure crisis resulting in far too many families losing their homes. Seniors lost their retirement nest eggs, and parents lost their savings to pay for their children to go to college.

It's time to ensure that the proper safeguards are in place so that we can prevent a crisis of this magnitude in the future. We must rein in Wall Street