

WARNING TO TEXAS STATE LEGISLATORS

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the Texas Department of Public Safety has issued a stern safety warning to members of the Texas legislature living near the southern border: Remove your car license plates that say "State official" on them. Texas legislators were warned to remove their identifying car license plates because of threats from Mexican drug cartels. Based on intelligence estimates from information they have received, law enforcement cautioned that the drug cartels may target members of the Texas legislature for assaults and kidnappings, especially those living on the border region. Some of the members and their staffs have removed those "State official" license plates and some are seeking concealed carry permits. There have been earlier reports of Mexican officials being assaulted and kidnapped by the cartels in Mexico. Now the threats have crossed to our side of the porous border region.

Now it seems to me the National Guard is probably better suited to deal with the violent narco-terrorists than a bunch of legislative staffers with concealed weapons—even in Texas.

And that's just the way it is.

ESOP PROMOTION AND EXPANSION ACT

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. This week, representatives from employee-owned S corporations from around America will be on Capitol Hill, giving a chance for Members and staff to hear directly from these employee owners how their investment and hard work facilitated by this unique ownership helps create jobs and helps their employee owners prepare for retirement; how they expanded jobs here in America, even in this difficult environment.

In 2008, for instance, ESOP increased employment 2 percent, while our economy overall shed almost 3 percent of the jobs. Employee-owned business wages increased at twice the national average. Each company is a unique American success story. That's why I hope you will join me in cosponsoring H.R. 3586, the ESOP Promotion and Expansion Act, to protect and enhance employee-owned corporations.

CONGRATULATING ALLEN AMERICANS HOCKEY TEAM

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

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Today, I'd like to congratulate the players and coaches of the Allen Americans Hockey

Team for capturing the Southern Conference championship title. This is the first time a first-season team has accomplished this. After a stellar inaugural, winning season, the minor league hockey team earned a slot in the playoffs. They won two playoff series against Laredo and Odessa. Their final postseason game against the Rapid City Rush ended in a double overtime battle. It's no surprise they sent four players up to the American Hockey League.

The Allen Americans play at the Allen Event Center, and folks should be proud to have such an accomplished, dedicated team representing their community. I've seen them—and they're good. I had the privilege of cheering on the Americans last season and I look forward to attending more games in the future.

I wish the team and its players all the best. Congratulations. God bless you. I salute you. As the fans like to cheer: Dread the Red!

ECONOMY TRENDING IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION

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

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, this is a chart prepared by the Joint Economic Committee, which I call the V chart—not for victory, or total victory, but it certainly shows success and that we're trending in the right direction in our economy. The red bars on the chart represent the job losses under the prior administration. The last month of the Bush administration, this country lost over 770,000 jobs. The blue bars represent the record of the Obama administration as we recover from the depths of an inherited economic disaster.

There is still much left to do as we recover from the great recession. Millions of Americans still suffer. But if we wish to avoid repeating history, we should first remember and understand it. The policies of the past drove our economy down. The policies of this Congress have begun to lift it up. You can see it here very clearly in a V and in red, white, and blue.

OPTING OUT OF ANOTHER GOVERNMENT MANDATE

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

Mr. FLEMING. Mr. Speaker, last week, Governor Bobby Jindal announced that Louisiana, along with 16 other States, would not participate in the government takeover of health care's temporary high risk pools. I commend Governor Jindal on this decision and for having the foresight not to put Louisiana on the hook for yet another tax-increasing, job-killing, unfunded mandate, and subjecting our citizens to more Federal inefficiency and bureaucracy.

While I have always supported the concept of high risk pools, this effort

will thrust the burden onto the backs of Louisiana taxpayers, eventually saddling them with another federally mandated program they can ill afford. Louisianans have made it clear that they are sick and tired of carrying the water for an ever-expanding Federal Government. I commend our Governor for doing the right thing for our State and our country.

END KARZAI'S WAR IN AFGHANISTAN

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

Mr. KUCINICH. Afghan President Karzai is in Washington this week seeking another \$33 billion to keep the war going, meeting with the White House to present his so-called "peace proposal" to allocate \$160 million from international donors to fund new government bodies, pay off insurgents who agree to stop fighting, and to undermine efforts to establish local governance.

Ranked the second most corrupt government in the world, only behind Somalia, Mr. Karzai's blatant government corruption, his ties to Big Oil, and his ties to Afghanistan's most notorious drug pushers, including his own brother, is no secret. While he's being treated as royalty in Washington, millions of dollars shuffle through Kabul Airport, unaccounted for, as Mr. Karzai builds villas in Dubai. Meanwhile, I have constituents in Cleveland who are struggling to stay in their homes.

The longer this charade of nation building and counterinsurgency strategy in Afghanistan continues, the more U.S. soldiers and innocent Afghan civilians die. He wants \$33 billion for war to continue in Afghanistan. Here at home, Americans need jobs and access to education and health care. Billions would be better spent rebuilding America than sending it to Afghanistan to continue a war.

Bring our troops home. End the war.

NETWORKS SHOW BIAS ON ARIZONA IMMIGRATION LAW

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

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, television network news stories about Arizona immigration enforcement law have been overwhelmingly negative, according to a new analysis by the Media Research Center. From April 23 to May 3, negative news reports on ABC, CBS, and NBC outnumbered positive reports by a margin of 12 to 1. This kind of extreme bias is a danger to democracy. And nowhere is it more evident than in reporting about immigration.

Only 10 percent of network reports acknowledged that a majority of Americans support the Arizona law and that

9 out of 10 say it is important to reduce illegal immigration. The networks should give Americans the facts about immigration, not just give them one side of the story.

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BUTLER COUNTY UNITED WAY AND LABOR COMMUNITY SERVICE

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

Mrs. DAHLKEMPER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to express my gratitude to the United Way of Butler County, Pennsylvania, and their partners in the labor community for their annual service program Butler County Labor Month of Caring. The Butler County United Labor Council and the Butler County Building and Construction Trades are working with the United Way to help make homes safer in Butler. Safety equipment like smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors save lives. Yet many homes, particularly those of senior citizens, don't have these devices installed and working. Every Saturday throughout the month of May in Butler County, volunteer workers will install smoke and carbon monoxide detectors in homes whose residents cannot do so themselves due to age, health, or income limitations.

On behalf of the United States House of Representatives, I thank the Butler County labor community and United Way for their generosity in giving the gift of safety.

VALUE-ADDED TAX

(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, consumer spending is critical to creating new jobs, and the last thing we want to do during a recovery is discourage it. Unfortunately, we are hearing whispers and rumblings that the President's debt commission could recommend a new value-added tax before the end of the year, a VAT tax. Close advisers to the President such as Paul Volcker and John Podesta have publicly supported this tax which is already widely used in Europe.

The problem is that European taxes mean European unemployment and European levels of job growth. From 1982 to 2007, the U.S. created 45 million new jobs, compared to only 10 million in Europe. VAT taxes raised the price of goods, directly reducing consumer purchasing power, and this means fewer jobs.

I think we need to make it clear to the debt commission that a VAT tax is no solution to our fiscal problems. The real solution is to restrain Federal Government spending that has far outstripped its traditional boundaries. I'm circulating a letter for signatures to

the commission opposing the VAT tax, and I hope all my colleagues will stand with me against the VAT tax.

WORKING TOGETHER TO REBUILD THIS COUNTRY

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

Mr. KAGEN. Mr. Speaker, this past weekend, I met with people in Appleton, Shawano and Green Bay, Wisconsin, listening to their concerns. And what did they ask me to do? They asked me to cut their taxes and to help small business owners grow the jobs that we need to work our way back into prosperity.

Well, you may not have seen it on television or heard it on the radio, but President Obama and the Democrats here in Congress have already delivered the biggest tax cuts in American history. In USA Today 2 days ago, it said: "Tax Bills in 2009 at Lowest Level Since 1950." But don't stop there. Let's take the word of President Reagan's domestic economic adviser Mr. Bartlett: "Federal taxes are very considerably lower by every measure since Obama became President. According to the JCT, last year's \$787 billion stimulus bill, enacted with no Republican support, reduced Federal taxes by almost \$100 billion in 2009 and another \$222 billion this year."

But we all know that helping small business must be a top priority as well. And that's why we passed the bipartisan HIRE Act which will generate jobs. That's why we worked together with Republicans and Democrats to pass the HOME STAR Act. We're working together to rebuild this country.

PASS THE SHORT LINE RAILROAD TAX CREDIT

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

Mr. SCHOCK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the extension of the Short Line Railroad tax credits that have recently expired. Because this credit has not been extended for 2010, the Illinois & Midland and Tazewell & Peoria Railroads in my district have not been able to perform much-needed maintenance to their infrastructure. These companies depend on the extension of this credit to keep their track laborers working and to continue to invest in their track which is necessary to serve local businesses in my district. Companies like Caterpillar, Exelon, Midwest Generation, Reed Minerals, Aventine Renewable Energy, and many others may lose their connection to the national freight rail network.

The problems facing these companies in my district are not unique to the rail industry. The uncertainty of all of these expiring credits leave businesses in a state of flux, unwilling to make the necessary investments and long-term planning to expand their busi-

nesses and put people back to work. Over 250 Members of this body have already signed legislation which extends this credit. I urge the Speaker to call this bill and to pass the Short Line Railroad tax credit today.

WALL STREET REFORM

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

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of Wall Street reform and ask, Which side are you on? In my opinion, the debate on Wall Street reform is straightforward. There are those who support hardworking American families and small businesses against those who wish to protect the status quo and big Wall Street banks which are to blame for the current recession.

For example, last year this House passed the Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act. None—that's right, zero—of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle supported that bill. The other side can no longer ignore American families who have worked hard and played by the rules, only to see their homes foreclosed on, their retirement savings lost, their business destroyed, or their jobs wiped out.

We need commonsense reforms and stronger consumer protections to ensure that a crisis on this order of magnitude never happens again. It is time we streamlined government and put a cop on the beat of Wall Street to protect American families and businesses. Absent this cop, Wall Street will regulate itself as it did under the previous administration. The American economy cannot afford to live through real-life tragedy again and neither can her families.

REAUTHORIZE THE AMERICA COMPETES ACT

(Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the reauthorization of the America COMPETES Act. Fifty years ago in Dallas, Texas, at Texas Instruments, Dr. Jack Kilby invented the microchip. This ground-breaking technology is arguably the catalyst of the information age and the entire field of modern microelectronics. At that time, this technology was unimaginable. If not for Dr. Kilby, it is feasible that sophisticated high-speed computers, large-scale semiconductors may cease to exist.

The example Dr. Kilby set proves it is the American people that will create the next technological feat. In order to become energy independent, create new jobs and exports, and develop the next great technology, we must invest robustly in scientific education and innovation. This is the goal of America