

New York was boosted by a total of 141,000 jobs through the fourth quarter of 2009 by the investments we made through the Recovery Act. It also shows that real per capita personal income in New York was 43,000 in the third quarter of 2009, down from 45,000 in the third quarter of 2007.

There is also useful information on housing for each State, and it too varies enormously. For instance, the median price for single family homes in New York was \$290,000 in 2008, compared to \$250,000 nationwide. And in New York in November, housing starts increased by 52 percent over October to a total of 18,000 units at a seasonally adjusted annual rate.

You can review the report online at www.jec.senate.gov. The majority staff will continue to update the data throughout the year in order to track the progress our economy will be making month by month. But from this first edition, it is abundantly clear why this Congress is so focused on job growth. Americans are demanding, and rightly so, that we must do all we can to grow the economy and help create new private sector jobs. The hard facts and real-life consequences of the economic policies of the prior administration don't make for a very pretty picture right now.

Mr. Speaker, stay tuned. The American spirit of innovation is on the way and individual resilience are ready and raring to go.

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DON'T LET DEBT DEFEAT A GREAT NATION

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

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, soon the Congress will be asked to raise the debt limit of this Nation. This actually happened under the previous administration, and now it's happening under the new administration.

I have not voted, from the time I have been in Congress, to raise this debt ceiling because all this really does is permit our government to borrow more money from foreign governments. I think we all know that we are what is called a debtor nation. We don't pay our bills anymore. We have to go to the Japanese, the Chinese, the UAE, and to many other countries to buy our debt so we can spend more. That is the reason I wanted to come to the floor tonight.

Before we broke for Christmas, FRANK WOLF had sent out to each Member of the House a little pamphlet that says, "Don't Let Debt Defeat a Great Nation." He and JIM COOPER, in a bipartisan way—FRANK WOLF being a Republican; JIM COOPER a Democrat—have introduced H.R. 1557, the SAFE Commission Act, and I want to talk about that in the little bit of time I have.

And I am reading from his publication, Mr. WOLF's publication. "We have amassed massive unfunded 'promises' to guarantee future entitlement benefits that when added with liabilities like the debt, total nearly \$57 trillion. That means every man, woman and child in America owes \$184,000."

I have used this back in my district, and I like to say it this way, Mr. Speaker. When that beautiful baby is born, the first cry out of his or her mouth is a cry of, "Do I owe \$184,000?" Yes, baby, you do owe \$184,000. Every American does.

This could, according to the information from FRANK WOLF, skyrocket to \$21 trillion by the year 2020. How do FRANK WOLF and JIM COOPER, in a bipartisan effort, try to deal with this out-of-control spending? They have introduced, again, H.R. 1557, the SAFE Commission Act. And the actual title on it is the Securing America's Future Economy—SAFE Act.

How does this function? This would create a SAFE Commission. This would be made up of 16 bipartisan appointed people to be on this SAFE Commission Act, and it would be their responsibility to go through how government spends its money, from the entitlements to the spending on education, transportation, health care, national defense, tax policy, and other items. This commission would come back to Congress, if this should become the law, and then Congress would be required to vote up or down on the panels's proposal.

Now, how this panel would come up with this proposal is they would go around this country and they would hold hearings and listen to the American people—something we have not been doing, either party, quite frankly. We are not listening to the American people. Yes, we are now, and after what happened in Massachusetts a couple weeks ago, the American people are being heard and they've been heard by many of us when we go back home and do our own town meetings. But this commission would have the authority, should this become the law, to say to the Congress, You can't duck these votes. You're going to have to vote up or down. I think this is critical.

I would love to hear the President tomorrow night—I hope somebody has made him aware of this bipartisan effort known as the SAFE Commission, and I hope he would say tomorrow night that he would endorse this legislation and encourage the Democratic leadership in the House and the Republican leadership in the House to get behind this bill.

At this present time, Mr. Speaker, we have 109 Members of Congress who have cosponsored this legislation. I hope my other colleagues will look seriously at what Mr. COOPER and Mr. WOLF have done to try to bring to the American people hope that we can meet our obligations based on the Constitution and deal with this out-of-control spending here in Washington, D.C. that both parties are responsible for.

With that, Mr. Speaker, before I leave, as I do every night on the floor, I ask God to please bless our men and women in uniform, to please bless their families, and I ask God to hold in his arms the families who've given a child dying for freedom in Afghanistan and Iraq.

And, Mr. Speaker, three times, I ask God to please, please God, please God, please God, continue to bless America.

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

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

CONGRESSIONAL JOBS NOW CAUCUS

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

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, the single most important concern for Americans throughout our Nation is the vast and growing rate of joblessness. This is not difficult to understand. Bob Herbert asked in a recent New York Times column, "How loud do alarm bells have to ring?"

More than 15 million Americans—more than 1 in 10 people—are out of work. Another 15 million people are underemployed or have quit looking. That means that over 30 million Americans want to work but cannot find the job they want. More people join their ranks every single day. Worse, 4 in 10 unemployed workers have been jobless for 27 weeks or longer.

Yes, we have a jobs crisis in our country, and it's everybody's number one issue. That's why I joined with colleagues on both sides of the aisle to form the Congressional Jobs Now Caucus, to keep the focus where it needs to be. That's why I sponsored bills to create jobs in America to stem our rising trade deficits and to bring justice to Wall Street, which has shut down normal lending across this country, contributing to the jobs crisis.

Job creation is not a Republican issue or a Democratic issue. We are all in this together. Last month, Toledo, a city I represent, lost an additional 1,200 jobs. Added to the yearly tally, more than 38,600 individuals, or 11.8 percent of the city's population, are without work.

The unemployment rate in the adjoining rural Ottawa County, also in our district, is now over 17 percent. Again, these are official numbers which did not include those who have part-time jobs and need more hours or those who have simply given up because there are no jobs to be had.

Job creation is not just an urban issue. The damage has spread to the suburbs of our country, and no one is safe from the jobs hemorrhage. In fact,

a recent study by the Brookings Institute, as examined by Mr. Herbert in his article, found that the largest and fastest-growing population of poor people in the United States are in the suburbs.

The number of poor people in our country grew by 5.2 million when President Bush was President between 2002 and 2008, and more than 90 million Americans—90 million; that's a third of our country—are living on less than \$21,834 for a family of four. The alarm bells are roaring.

At the same time, the basic goodness and generosity of the American people remains one of our greatest strengths. Through it all, the American people remain compassionate and caring. Last weekend, a local television station in our region organized a telethon for relief to Haiti. Even with double-digit unemployment and great economic uncertainty, the people of our community opened their hearts to the people they've never seen in a country most of them have never visited and donated tens of thousands of dollars to that end.

For our community and our country, the first alarm bells started ringing with the empty promises and rapid failure of NAFTA as it outsourced jobs everywhere, certainly to Mexico. The next alarm bell rang every time another trade deal came down the pike that took more of our jobs that used to exist in this country and doled them out to every undemocratic place in the world.

You can't make televisions in our country anymore—not a single one is made here—or clothing, or cars, or electrical parts, or even toys. More and more, even our food is being imported. You mean we are falling behind in even that?

There was plenty of warning, but big business and big money insisted on the right to seek out the lowest common denominator in the most undemocratic places, and they found it in China, in Mexico, in Bangladesh, in Pakistan, in Guatemala and every poor, undemocratic place where penny-wage workers are treated like the expendable pieces of equipment that they work with.

In our country, now we need those jobs because people without jobs can't pay mortgages. They can't pay their health insurance. They can't buy cars. They can't plan for their children's future or even get enough food and clothing to meet their families' needs.

Unemployment also means our Federal deficits rise as people can't pay their way forward. Unemployment and COBRA benefits are running out. State funds are depleted. Our private charities are overwhelmed. The American people need work and they need good jobs. It's really that simple. We simply can't rest until we get our economy back on track and create jobs for everyone who wants to work. I hope it is to this subject—the economy and job creation—that President Obama will direct his address tomorrow night.

We know that under President Bush we were hemorrhaging 734,000 jobs

when he left at the end of his term, and though we haven't been losing as many jobs, now is the time during this fiscal year where we need to do more for our people to put them back to work, to use that productive energy to help pull our country forward rather than allow her to continue to fall behind, and that begins with work for every single American who needs a job.

PRESIDENT OBAMA'S BUDGET FREEZE

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

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I listened to my colleagues, and I think we are all of one accord when we say we want to see jobs created in this country and we want to see the unemployment rate go down. But the way you do that is the way Ronald Reagan did it when he was President. And he came in when we had 12 percent unemployment and 14 percent inflation. He came in and he cut taxes across the board. What are we doing instead?

Well, since January when the President took office, we have spent \$73.3 billion that we didn't have on one program. We spent \$1.6 trillion, including interest, on the stimulus bill; the omnibus spending bill, \$410 billion. If you add interest, that's \$625 billion. In June, we spent \$106 billion, with a lot of pork in it, on the defense supplemental; and then on the consolidated appropriation bill, the mini-omnibus bill we passed in December, it was \$3.5 trillion.

And then you include the things that we passed in this House which have not been enacted into law like cap-and-trade. That's \$846 billion in new taxes. And the proposed government-run health care program, if it were to pass, it would cost between \$1 trillion and \$3 trillion.

Now, since the opposition party, under Speaker PELOSI, took control of this body, the Federal deficit has increased from \$162 billion the first year she was Speaker in 2007 to \$459 billion in 2008. And then it went up by a huge amount to \$1.42 trillion in 2009. This is just an unsustainable growth rate.

And over the last 3 years, we have increased the debt ceiling five times since she took office as Speaker. This is something that's unbelievable. It went from \$8.97 trillion in January of 2007 to \$12.39 trillion today, which is an increase of \$3.4 trillion, or 38 percent, in just 3 years. Now you're talking about spending \$3 trillion a year—more than half of that borrowed money—and we are talking about how we are going to get control of it.

Tomorrow night the President is going to be speaking from right there just below the Speaker's lectern, and the President is going to try to address our economic problems. And as I understand it from some of the reports that have come out, he is going to talk

about freezing spending, or a partial freeze, over the next 3 years that would reduce the budget by less than 1 percent, or \$15 billion, in the first year.

Now, don't get me wrong. I am for freezing spending. But when you look at what has happened in the last year or two, especially during the last year, it's unbelievable. We had an 8 percent boost in spending in the omnibus bill the President signed into law in March and a 12 percent boost that he signed in right at the end of last year in December. We're spending money like it's going out of style.

Now, what is the answer? The answer is that we get together and realize the way to create jobs is to stimulate the private sector, and that is by cutting taxes, cutting personal income taxes, cutting corporate taxes, cutting capital gains taxes. That will give business, industry, and individuals more disposable income for investment and to buy products. If the government continues to spend like we're doing right now, we're digging ourselves into a deeper and deeper hole, and it is not going to solve the unemployment problem.

I heard some of my colleagues down there talking about how things are getting better. We just had 10½ percent unemployment. Now it's at least 10 percent unemployment. And when you add in those who are working part-time who want a full-time job, it's probably more like 17 or 18 percent of the people that are either out of work or have given up.

□ 2000

It's just terrible. So what do we do? We ought to do what has been done by John F. Kennedy in the past and what Ronald Reagan did when he was President. And that is to say, let's cut taxes. Let's give a shot in the arm to the private sector. They create jobs. Government cannot and will not create jobs by spending, spending, spending.

Tomorrow night when the President speaks, he will get a lot of applause from probably both sides of the aisle when he says some of the things he is going to say. But the thing that concerns me the most is the "spending freeze" he is talking about. It's not really anything but a drop in the bucket. It's not even a drop in the bucket when you talk about a 1 percent spending freeze over the next 3 years, when you're talking about a multitrillion-dollar deficit that goes on and on and on, and you're talking about a spending freeze that is going to save maybe \$4 billion or \$5 billion. It's just nothing.

So I would admonish the President, or suggest to the President, that he start moving toward cutting taxes, stimulate the private sector and cut the huge deficit spending we are facing.

A PACT WITH THE DEVIL

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