

failure, and all the outrageous spending that our Democratic colleagues have been doing here in the Congress.

Beyond all these things, not passing a budget signals to the American people that we are not going to be held accountable. We are not going to deal with the Nation's spending addiction that Congress has, the deficit challenges that this government has.

We have got to stop it.

Families all over this country are balancing their budgets. My State of Georgia and many States have to live under a balanced budget. I believe the Federal Government should live under a balanced budget. But we are not even having a budget.

Mr. CARTER, what do you think we are going to do? Are we going to continue spending? I yield.

Mr. CARTER. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

These are serious times, and we have serious issues to deal with.

Recently, I was privileged to be in a meeting with some conservative economists, and I say that because I want to make sure that we are pretty clear they are conservative. They gave us a whole bunch of projections of spending and projections of debt-to-income, both government debt and private debt to GDP and bank deposits. And they said, but cutting through the chase is, if we continue the policies of the Obama administration into a second term, if he wins a second term, in the third year of his second term we will be Greece. That is pretty serious.

And, you know, you talked about the middle class. I bet if you questioned everybody that lost their job and is out of work and what class they were in, they would all tell you they were in the middle class, because we all consider ourselves to be middle class in this country. We are sort of proud to be middle class.

So these concepts require work, and that means a budget.

I yield back.

Mr. BROWN of Georgia. Thank you, Mr. CARTER.

Just in closing, in the last minute that we have, Americans know that you can't manage what you can't measure. If you don't have a budget, you can't measure anything. You can't set out spending priorities. Failing to enact a budget blueprint just doesn't allow Congress to measure any spending priorities that we see coming forth, and just see big spending after big spending bills.

Democrats are purposefully deciding to not pass a budget bill blueprint to hide the fact that our country's financial picture is in terrible shape and we are going down the same road that Greece is going down.

American families know that this is irresponsible. Congress needs to get its house in order and lead. It can start by passing a responsible budget resolution. American people need to ask: Where is the budget?

REBUILDING THE ECONOMY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MAFFEI). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. PERRIELLO) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. PERRIELLO. Mr. Speaker, Americans are sick of it. They are sick and tired of hearing excuses and finger-pointing. They are sick and tired of other people not having to play by basic rules of decency and fairness. They are sick of it, and they should be. They want Wall Street to play by the rules. They want Washington to play by the rules.

One of the most important moves we can make right now is for the Senate to see through to completion their efforts to clean up the financial system so that those who work hard and play by the rules, save up a little, put it into their home values, put it into their 401(k), know that other people aren't able to gamble away their retirement security and their future. Basic rules of decency and fairness.

We need those similar rules in Washington. That is why many of us have fought hard to make sure that we reinstate PAYGO legislation that the other side of the aisle let die a few years ago that simply says, anything you do, you've got to pay for it. These are the rules of everyday Americans back home on Main Street, and it is time for those Main Street values to apply to Washington and to Wall Street.

But Americans are also sick and tired of those who put slogans ahead of solutions. They want us to solve problems, and none is greater than that of the jobs crisis we face in this country.

On Wall Street, and maybe with our friends in the Senate, there is a sense that this recession has passed and the urgency is gone. But every weekend we go home and we talk to business owners who can't get credit. We talk to people who have been looking for job after job after job just so that they have the dignity of knowing that they can support their family; hardworking people who are willing to go back and get that additional degree or certificate but need to know that there is going to be a job on the other side. What they ask us to do is to come here, play by rules of decency and fairness, and focus on solving problems.

We have an opportunity here before Memorial Day to make the most of the summer construction season, to make this an opportunity to rebuild America, but specifically, to rebuild America's competitive advantage in the world.

This crisis didn't begin a couple of years ago. It began a couple of decades ago, as we saw more and more borrowing from the financial institutions, overleveraging, and the consumer market with consumer credit to cover for falling wage rates, and in the government sector. That cannot go on forever. But at its core was an issue of whether we can continue to compete in

the world with a living wage and middle class incomes and jobs.

The answer is to reward innovation and stop bailing out failure. This solution that both parties have had at times of bailing out failure will not succeed. We must begin again to reward innovation, research and development, and creativity so that we can be building the jobs of the future here in the United States.

Many of us have worked hard day and night here to focus on pragmatic solutions, like the HOME STAR program that will help thousands, hundreds of thousands of people renovate their homes and their offices. It will help reduce pressure on an electric grid that is way out of date, and it helps put people back to work in construction and in manufacturing, the insulation, the double-paned glass, the window films that are manufactured right here in the United States.

But we also know that the key of this new job creation, this new competitiveness revolution that we must have in this country, is an understanding that two out of every three new jobs created in this country are created by small business. Small business is the engine of job growth even as big business is too often the engine of our politics.

We must make sure that we are getting those Main Street values and those Main Street businesses back into the equation that have too often been choked out, rolled out by big business for photo ops and by politicians for photo ops, but forgotten when it gets down to policy.

Well, we have been hard at work on programs to get direct lending to small business, get support to our community banks that still tend to support those small businesses, the homegrown businesses that stay in our community, where the CEO still knows the name of every worker, the name of their spouse and their kids, wants to give them a decent wage and help them be able to support their family. These are concrete solutions that make sense back on Main Street instead of the kind of bomb-throwing that goes on here.

And one of the great freshmen in our class who is also focused on the solutions-oriented approach, this pragmatic approach, what I would call a postpartisan approach that doesn't focus on how we can bring everyone together by watering things down but how we can leave our partisan divisions behind by getting better ideas that help create that competitiveness revolution, JARED POLIS, who has been successful in the private sector, in the nonprofit sector, as well as the government, to talk some about these solutions-oriented approaches that we have.

Mr. POLIS. I thank the gentleman from Virginia.

Like many Members of Congress, I listen to, I visit the small businesses in my community in Colorado. Small businesses are really the backbone of our country. When I visited one of our

small towns like Lyons, Colorado, last month, I did what I call a Main Street tour where I stop and introduce myself at many of the local businesses. I have a small business advisory council.

I am not alone as a Member of Congress in hearing from the businesses in our district that one of the biggest impediments to their growth and allowing them to hire people is the lack of credit that they have from their banks. Their traditional borrowing that they have been able to do to fund their activities, whether it is against accounts receivable or future revenue flows, they find themselves cut off and unable to access those credit lines because of the tightening of credit.

There is a swing in the pendulum. Credit was, in all honesty, too loose 3 years or 4 years ago. It has now swung to the other extreme, as it tends to do, and has become too tight. That has become an impediment to job growth. There are businesses in my district that, if they had access to credit, they would be able to grow and expand and hire more people.

Now, when you talk to the banks, the banks in my district and everywhere, they say there is a number of reasons for this. One is increasing capital requirements that the Federal Government is imposing to reduce the rate of bank failures, a very legitimate policy interest. Others include other regulatory reasons that the banks feel that they are having to reduce the amount of money they are effectively able to lend out. But it is something that we need to solve, Mr. Speaker, because it will create jobs for Americans, small and midsize businesses across our country.

There are a number of solutions that people are talking about in this body. It includes the Federal credit facility to small businesses through the banks, includes some actions on the regulatory front, and it includes an idea, a bipartisan idea that I have introduced, H.R. 4877, which would provide an incentive for private money to flow into the equity line of these community banks to get them lending again.

Now, a bank, like any business, has many kinds of capital. So when you deposit your money with a bank, they can certainly loan against that money, but it is not as leverageable as equity capital. If a bank actually sells its shares, they get money in that they can lend against with much higher leverage.

So what we can do is provide an incentive for people to invest in community banks; for community banks to go back out to their communities, to their boards, to say, You know what? We need to sell some more shares of our community bank to raise some more capital. And that capital can be deployed in a very powerful way in lending to our small businesses.

So for any investment in the community bank under H.R. 4877 during an 18-month period when we want to incentivize this investment—and much

of it will occur very quickly, I might add, 1 month, 2 months, 3 months, and held for 5 years, then the investors would not have a capital gains tax. There would be an exemption from capital gains on that investment in the community bank.

What will this do? It will get the attention of the people that we want to get the attention of, existing investors at banks, private equity funds, and others who could be doing anything with their money. They could be sitting on the sideline with their money. They could be investing in businesses of any sort. This will get their attention to say, Hey, there is a special incentive, because of the public good that comes from a robust community banking sector and the lending that will help stimulate the demand for a whole host of businesses and help businesses grow, to put your money into community banks.

□ 1830

Many community banks will recapitalize. By the way, this might even prevent some bank failures by allowing community banks on the margin to recapitalize within the bounds of solvency rather than becoming insolvent or having to be bailed out.

There is, rightfully so, great frustration with what has been seen as collusion between the government and big banks; what has been seen as a bailout and what is a bailout of bad behavior. Why not incent a private investment in these banks before we start talking about using taxpayer money for this or that or the other? Let's see what investors out there are willing to do when given the chance to invest in our communities, invest in our banks, and help them extend credit widely to the small businesses.

This is truly one of the highest leverage areas that small businesses have come to me and other Members of Congress and said, If only we can get the banks lending again. Well, we can, Mr. Speaker. With H.R. 4877, we have the opportunity without the use of taxpayer money to get an infusion into our community banks and get them lending to our small and medium businesses, commercial property across this country, to help get the economy going and create good jobs for Americans.

I yield back to my friend from Virginia.

Mr. PERRIELLO. Thank you so much for your work in this area. We do understand that small business is a lifeline for our communities, a huge job creator, huge engine of that, but it's also an area where we have not seen the kind of behavior that got us into this mess. Our community banks, our credit unions, have often been more solvent through these situations. Didn't see the huge upside, but also continued the old-fashioned tradition of looking someone in the eye and doing their due diligence. In fact, if you look at the people who saw the

crash coming within the markets, it was actually people who went out and did old-fashioned due diligence. Going and looking at where these subprime mortgages actually were. Sometimes there's no replacement for old-fashioned hard work, due diligence. And we know that community banks do this.

So a program like this tries to get private-sector solutions to this problem. Help incent that investment in our community banks. Our community banks in turn can invest in our small businesses and our small businesses in turn invest in our families—our working families—and in our communities. This is the sort of thing that can move us forward, as has another thing that we worked on in the House, which was a 1-year freeze on capital gains taxes for small business. Again, something that doesn't say we're giving you free money. It just says we are going to encourage this kind of small business innovation. We know this tends to lead to job creation. It's a good thing. So these pragmatic, private-public partnerships like the Home Star program, like Rural Star, where we're helping to make our country safer, more efficient, and rebuild manufacturing.

The gentlemen on the other side were talking about all the post offices we've renamed today. And we did some of that. They failed to mention that we also had the America COMPETES Act up today, which is actually to support research and development and rebuilding some of the manufacturing base and investment in efficiency technologies and job creation that, too often, they've tried to take down with poison pills about child pornography and this sort of thing. And the American people look at that and say, You've got to be kidding me. We're in the worst job crisis in two generations, and you're up there scoring cheap political points when you have an opportunity to do something both sides of the aisle know we need to do, which is figure out how to reinvent America's competitive advantage. When we can do that, particularly with these public-private partnerships, like your efforts with the community banks, like the capital gains, these are engines not just of short-term job growth, but of rebuilding America's competitiveness and getting us back to work.

With that, I want to yield to one of our newest Members from California.

Ms. CHU. I rise today to urge the quick passage of H.R. 4213, the American Jobs, Closing Tax Loopholes and Preventing Outsourcing Act. This bill is such a comprehensive approach to improving our economy by providing important tax breaks and to spur innovation and create jobs. But one reason I'm extremely enthusiastic about it is that it extends and expands an extremely successful employment program that is called Jobs NOW, which has created over 156,000 jobs, and in my district alone, 400 jobs.

In Palmdale, California, Jobs NOW helped Jody, a single mother of two,

find a job at a local coffeehouse working as a barista. The regular paycheck puts food on the table and is helping her get through a rough patch. Her boss is extremely impressed with her work and plans to permanently hire her and three other subsidized employees that they brought on. It's this kind of success story that makes Jobs NOW such a good model for job creation. Without it, the coffeehouse would not have been able to grow its business or take on new employees. Jody would not have had a chance to learn these new skills and support her family.

Now I came across this innovative program because it's in my district, Los Angeles County. One of the Los Angeles County supervisors, Don Knabe, created a program which provided over 11,000 jobs, all in 1 year, using stimulus funds to create these subsidized jobs. How does it work? Eligible participants are placed into subsidized jobs in all sectors of the economy, from small business to nonprofits to the government sector, and they're matched with jobs that complement their employment goals. The employer must provide supervision equal to 20 percent of the cost of this job and they must ensure that the job will not displace an existing employee or someone who is to be promoted.

What this means is that the county then is paying for 80 percent or more of the payroll costs through Recovery Act funds. Some examples of these jobs are park rangers, receptionists, teachers' assistants, dental assistant trainees, customer service clerks, and child care workers. Workers get paid \$10 per hour for up to 40 hours per week.

Jobs NOW allow small businesses to succeed and the employee to succeed. I've spoken to countless people in my district about this program and I keep on hearing about how this program is truly a win-win for businesses and workers. This program works because they do both benefit. Workers benefit beyond the paycheck by getting hands-on experience in a setting where they can earn wages and make sure that they put food on the table. They are also developing their skills. Small businesses benefit by getting the help they need to grow or expand while temporarily reducing payroll costs. Companies may ultimately desire to hire these subsidized workers permanently as the economy improves. The jobs generated by the program can help businesses expand in these difficult times by reducing their economic risk and the need for expensive loans.

In April of this year, over 7,000 people were enrolled in the program in Los Angeles County, and 1,100 employers were improving their productivity and putting someone to work with this extra help. These are companies like Punch Television Network in Carson, California. Punch TV is a fledgling channel that is trying to build a new nationwide television network, and they needed quality employees to truly expand. They hired six subsidized em-

ployees using Jobs NOW and they recently moved into a new large production center to handle all their new work. They even want to hire these new, highly motivated workers permanently. So now, not only do these employees have hands-on experience, they are going to have a permanent job.

But this great program isn't just putting people to work in my area. It's employing people all across the Nation in 29 States across the Nation. They are using Jobs NOW to keep their residents working, paying taxes, and purchasing groceries that's fueling local economies. In Tennessee, the State focused on rural Perry County, which was hard hit by a plant closure. The unemployment rate had risen to 27.3 percent. Tennessee brought local workforce development and human service agencies and the business community together and developed a subsidized employment program for over 500 individuals. The effort cut local unemployment down to 18.6 percent. Because of successes like this, more States want to join. And if we pass H.R. 4213, Jobs NOW can expand and help thousands more people.

But we can't delay. Already, States are stopping their subsidized jobs programs because the funding will expire at the end of September. Companies aren't as interested in taking on new employees and training them, just to lose them again in 4 months. In my district, Los Angeles County will stop placing participants in new jobs in June, and soon many more counties and States will do the same. Yet, the full amount of funding has yet to be claimed by the States. The Recovery Act authorized \$5 billion for Jobs NOW's employment program, but less than \$1.5 billion has been accessed by the States, and the program really actually can still expand across the country. That's why H.R. 4213 is so crucial. It not only extends Jobs NOW for another year, it lets the unspent funds for this year pay for next year's salaries for workers hired in 2010.

If we don't act now, 60,000 Americans across the Nation will lose their jobs when this program ends and endless more will not have the opportunity to get the jobs that they need. This bill will keep Americans employed and will create thousands of necessary jobs.

I yield back.

Mr. PERRIELLO. Thank you so much for those remarks and bringing back to the kitchen table those individuals that are involved in this.

With that, I will yield to Mr. POLIS of Colorado.

Mr. POLIS. There are many issues before Congress, both great and small—all of tremendous importance. One of the issues that there's an outcry among the American people for us to deal with is immigration reform. Whether people are conservative or liberal, left or right, Republican or Democrat, we agree that what we are doing now does not work. We have a large population living, working here ille-

gally. We don't have adequate enforcement of our borders, verification of who can work.

Now, within our efforts to solve immigration, to replace our broken immigration system with one that works and reflects our basic American values of, if you follow the law and learn English, you're welcome here, within the comprehensive House immigration reform bill that I'm a cosponsor of there's a provision to create jobs for Americans to help make immigration work for us rather than immigration be a cost for us.

Today, there are investors and foreign entrepreneurs who raise venture capital, ready to start their companies, who can't get the visas to come to this country and start their companies here. And then we wonder why these businesses in China and England and India are so successful. Well, some of them actually wanted to set up shop in this country. The House comprehensive immigration reform bill contains a startup visa provision that would allow an entrepreneur, be they a French entrepreneur, an Indian entrepreneur, that is backed by an investment that has raised several hundred thousand dollars, we would allow them to come here and start their company here as long as they hire five American citizens. This bill will likely create at least 50,000 jobs. And that's just a start. Because, you know what? Some of those companies hiring five people today could be the next Google, could be the next Yahoo of tomorrow, and employ tens of thousands of Americans.

Yes, America has an immigration challenge on a whole host of issues, but we also have an immigration opportunity—the opportunity to attract the best and brightest from around the world to help make America more competitive and provide jobs for America here at home. It's insourcing instead of outsourcing. Our current immigration code works against us and forces companies that want to hire Americans and be based here to instead set up shop overseas. Through comprehensive immigration reform we have the opportunity to change that. In the House bill there's a startup visa provision. Senator KERRY has introduced that as well in the Senate.

We need to encourage not only financial capital to flow into our country, but also human capital to create jobs for American citizens here at home. And that's an important lens to look at any piece of legislation through. I, for one, am thrilled that the House comprehensive immigration reform bill will create tens of thousands of jobs for American families. And that's one of the reasons that I'm a proud cosponsor.

I yield back to the gentleman from Virginia.

□ 1845

Mr. PERRIELLO. Thank you.

The gentleman talked some about the next Yahoo! or the next Google. I

just want to talk for a minute about something that's a little more old fashioned than that—construction. We actually do still need to build things in this country. We need to put down asphalt and concrete. We need to build roads and bridges. The infrastructure of the last century needs to be rebuilt. But we also need to be thinking in terms of leapfrogs in infrastructure. We need to be laying the broadband that is the highway system of the future. We need to be looking at a modern electric grid because our current one is not only so vulnerable to attack, but it's full of inefficiencies. The amount of energy we lose between where we produce the energy and where we consume it is astronomical. It is incredible how inefficient.

So here we have businesses that are trying to compete against very low-cost countries around the world who are still using an electric grid essentially from the 1930s. This is a moment where we need to have the boldness to rebuild our competitive advantage by doing some building again. And construction should certainly not be a Republican or a Democratic issue. We all have construction needs in our districts. We have construction companies in our districts. Ninety percent of construction companies are small businesses, and we are already into the summer building season for many parts of this country. But from Memorial Day to Thanksgiving, it's going to be an important moment.

We've lost 1.6 million construction jobs since this recession began. We have a 25 percent unemployment rate among skilled construction workers, 1.6 million in losses in construction jobs, 25 percent unemployment, yet we cannot get bipartisan support for the investments in our 21st century infrastructure that could put people back to work in construction, so that instead of receiving an unemployment benefit, they're receiving a paycheck; and we are getting a more efficient, modern infrastructure system. This is common sense. This makes sense back on Main Street. It just doesn't make sense in Washington, where we score points by preventing the other side from doing something smart instead of by solving the problem. We know we need these construction jobs. We know it's where some of the biggest losses have been. We know it's something that exists in every one of our communities, and we know we are well nigh at the beginning of that construction season.

We passed in December through this House a plus-up of some of the infrastructure that's needed. It's desperately needed here in this area. Just try to drive from D.C. to Richmond sometime and see whether we have an infrastructure worthy of the year 2010, worthy of the kind of growth and competitiveness of the Commonwealth of Virginia. Head out 66 and down 29. We need it on the roads and the bridges; we need it on the freight; we need it on the passenger rail, the energy and electric

grid as well as the broadband technology. These are important leaps, and we have made some leaps. We are going to be able to wire every public school in central and southern Virginia through some of the stimulus grants. That's going to put people to work now, putting that in place; but it's also going to be creating businesses of the future that people can run out of their homes, out of a small business hub, making sure that the children going to through our school system have the education to be able to compete in the 21st century.

Construction. It may not be the most dramatic thing to talk about, but it is vital. It's where an enormous amount of the job losses have been, and many of us have been trying to get that construction going again in time for the summer building season.

We have bills sitting in the Senate, ready to move as soon as they're done with this Wall Street reform. I hope they will pick up the job initiatives that we have passed here because they are pragmatic; they are powerful; they are effective; and they can put people back to work in areas like construction where we have had some of the biggest losses. I mentioned the Home Star program where we can put people to work immediately, retrofitting and renovating the building stock of this country. The payback, 12 months, 18 months before you're immediately saving money for decades to come, increasing the home value and value of that commercial building stock, putting Americans to work manufacturing the insulation, the double-paned glass, the wiring and other things that are part of that. It's just common sense. It saves the consumer money. It makes the business more efficient. It's being manufactured here. It's something that makes us more competitive. It protects our environment, and it makes our country safer because we're less dependent on foreign oil—and even domestic oil, as we've seen the costs of that recently.

The Home Star program could put 168,000 people to work. Even before home construction starts to pick back up again, which will vary regionally around the country, we know we can renovate the building stock that we have. Concrete, pragmatic ideas, public-private partnerships. We have the Rural Star program which is going to help rural electric co-ops to forward-fund those sorts of renovations in some of our hardest hit rural communities that are much more likely to have inefficient housing stock, where people are paying a much higher percentage of their very low income sometimes on that electric bill because that housing stock is so inefficient. But it's also costing our electric co-ops and others because there's so much power on our electric grid that we can't even meet that challenge.

This is a moment where we need to look not just at what got us into this mess for the last 2 years but the last

two decades. How do we rebuild America's competitiveness? And we must do it by joining forces across the aisle. We must do it by looking for ideas that are pragmatic but bold. The answer can't be to water it down to be so small that it has no chance of making a difference. When you go to Main Street in this country, they're furious at us, they're furious at Wall Street because no one's playing by the same rules they have to play by. We have to get that sense of decency and fairness back into play. We need to play by those rules. That's why we've put PAYGO back into place. That's why we're increasing transparency. But they also want us to focus on pragmatic solutions, Home Star, Rural Star, efforts to get equity and investment going into our community banks. Why would we put all this emphasis into the five or six huge banks that helped get us into this mess in the first place? It makes no sense.

We have to stop bailing out failure and start rewarding innovation, research and development. That's how we get out of this. We can still out-innovate and, therefore, out-compete any country in the world. But we can't do it by looking backwards, and we can't do it by rewarding and bailing out failure. We have to do it based on innovation. We have concrete, pragmatic things right now that the Senate can move on and, in some cases, that we need to move on here. Home Star, Rural Star, green energy jobs, getting that capital gains tax cut to our small businesses, getting the incentive to invest in our community banks.

If two out of every three jobs come out of small business, this is an area where we can and must put more emphasis, and construction is part of that. Here people may not think it's a big deal to go out and have a small construction company working a couple of crews. Here maybe too many people are focused on the Goldman Sachs of the world. But for those construction companies, for those crews, going out and working is rebuilding America, and it's putting food on the table and knowing they can support their family. And all of us benefit from the efficiencies and quality of that infrastructure investment. We have a building season right now. This town is way too insulated from the urgency of this job crisis back home.

We, just last week, had the announcement of over 500 jobs lost in the town of Martinsville at the Stanley Furniture factory. Tens of thousands of furniture and textile jobs have been lost in southern Virginia over the last 20 years. This was really one of the last, down to a few jobs that have been kept. The unemployment rate in the city already I think is at 22 percent. It could pop up to 25 percent or above. And each one of I think 535 jobs lost represents not just an individual and not just an income but a family and its economic security.

At this time when millions have lost their jobs, when millions feel that they

might be next, the American people are sick and tired of us playing games up here. We have concrete solutions on the table that will create real jobs in the construction sector, the manufacturing sector, and the agriculture and forestry sectors. These are things we can still do and do better than anyone in the world, but we are being choked off by the kinds of games being played in Washington and on Wall Street. It is long past time for people in this town to understand the urgency of this job crisis for working-class and middle-class Americans who not only live in fear of losing that job but are getting nicked and dined by the credit card companies, the electric utilities and others as they try to make ends meet day after day, week after week.

We have to be bold right now in rethinking America's competitive advantage. There is no quick fix. We must in the immediate term not miss the summer construction season. I see too many trucks parked in the driveways, in the parking lots of our construction companies at a time that we need to be rebuilding. Not overbuilding in some of the housing and speculative areas that helped get us into this mess, but building in the areas that reinvent and reinforce America's competitive advantage. Whether that's on the high-end R&D and intellectual property of those areas or whether it's old-fashioned infrastructure, these are areas that mean real business for real working families. Part of how we do that is by putting a solutions-oriented approach over a slogans-oriented approach, and the way we do that is to come together.

In this town, too often bipartisanship means cutting a good idea into half to the point that it means nothing at all, or simply adding one side's support to the other side's support. What Americans want is post-partisanship. They want us to answer the question, What solves the problem, and not, What is the halfway point between the Democrats and the Republicans? Start with the question, What solves America's energy independence? What rebuilds America's middle class? What makes sure that we have basic stability in our financial institutions so that people who have worked their whole lives, saving up money in the value of their home, in their 401(k), know that someone isn't off gambling with that money in ways that are unthinkable and unimaginable.

There is 25 percent unemployment in our skilled construction. Americans are ready to build. They are ready to go to work rebuilding, whether that's housing or infrastructure or building stock, whether it's renovating, whether it's manufacturing here in America the materials that go into that. We need to put that sense, the urgency of the American economy first. We need to remember that small business is the engine. We need to understand that our community banks played by the rules through this crisis, stayed solvent, and still continue to get that lending out

to so many of those in our communities.

I look forward to continuing to fight for a jobs agenda and an agenda of decency and accountability. I hope that those in the Senate on the other side of this building will complete a solid reform in the financial sector and turn to these jobs bills we've produced. There are five, six of them now, pragmatic, often private-public partnerships to reward innovation, to get us building again, to get the lending going through our community banks again, through a smart combination of investments and tax credits. I hope the Senate will turn to that and understand that back home, people are desperate for jobs, for economic security, for growth and that they will get some taste of that urgency and move from restoring those basic rules of decency and accountability to Washington and Wall Street and get these jobs bills passed so that we can get America working again, rebuilding America's competitive advantage again, and that is a fight I look forward to.

ISSUES OF THE TIMES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the privilege to be recognized here on the floor of the United States House of Representatives and have the opportunity to address you and hopefully illuminate some of these arguments that come before the American people, that come before this Congress and that reflect down that hallway to the United States Senate. And, Mr. Speaker, I long heard from over on this side in the 30-Something group that for years—actually they went from their thirties to their forties—stood over here, two, three, four, sometimes five or more, and they would make the argument that, if we would just give them the gavels, everything would be all right with the world; that if we would just let them be in the majority, they could fix the problems of America and the world. And they constantly harangued against the Republican majority that existed until the end of 2006, constantly promised that they would fix all the problems that we have, and constantly attacked then the President of the United States.

It's so interesting to me, Mr. Speaker, to have watched the transformation over the last 3-plus years, 3½ years now; and we are almost halfway through and probably, by business days, more than halfway through this Congress and on to the next election in November here of 2010. It's pretty interesting to me, Mr. Speaker, that the people who made all those promises about what was wrong with the world had to do with George Bush and the Republican majority, that were going to fix the problems, now I haven't heard any of them step forward and say, You

gave us the gavels. The American people trusted us with the majority—they, not me—and by golly, we've fixed these problems for America. Look how great it is, now that the people who clamored for the gavels were handed the gavels on January 3, 2007, some almost 3½ years ago.

The problems that they were going to fix seem to be worse, not better. The problems we had with our economy got a lot worse, not better. The problems we had with energy got a lot worse, not better. The problems that we have with this society and the understanding and human nature seem to be getting worse, not better. I haven't yet heard the 30-Something group, those that are left of them, come to the floor and do the mea culpa, nor have I heard them point out that they've succeeded in the policies that they said that they would enact. And, in fact, Mr. Speaker, if you look back on the record, it is the exact opposite.

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This Pelosi Congress, when we came in by Constitution on January 3, 2007, there was a great ceremonial and factual passing of the gavel that went from the hand of JOHN BOEHNER to, at that moment, Speaker NANCY PELOSI. And we saw actually right in the aftermath of the election in November of 2006 when that majority was won by the Pelosi Democrats, we saw a shift in the policy of the country. We watched as the, let me say heir-apparent at the time became chairman of the Ways and Means Committee, Mr. CHARLIE RANGEL of New York, go on the talk circuits all over the country, national television, program after program after program, booked solid. And they asked him over and over again, which of the Bush tax cuts would you want to preserve and which would you want to provide that they go away? What will be the burden on capital, and how costly will capital be for business, especially big business, moving forward from that period of time after the election in 2006 and the inauguration, let me say the installation of Speaker PELOSI in January 2007, and that period of time after that as the new Chairs of the committees, their new staff and the new members of the committees were seated and they began to assert their will on American policy.

What I heard from the apparent and future Ways and Means Committee chairman, CHARLIE RANGEL, that he would repeal or work to repeal any of the Bush tax cuts, it simply was by a process of elimination. He was asked over and over again every way that the news pundits could ask him, what would you do with the Bush tax cuts, the May 28, 2003, Bush tax cuts. Because the answer wasn't definitive, but there was a process of elimination. The smart capital in the country concluded that there were none of the tax cuts that CHARLIE RANGEL would like to preserve.

That was in November, December, January, and partway into February of