

Business that found that half of the small businesses that tried to get the loans last year were either denied the loans or they were not given the money that they needed.

We found that small businesses in the Joint Economic Committee report have been badly hurt by the tighter lending standards that resulted from the financial crisis. That is why passing the Small Business Lending Fund Act last week was such an important step forward and sending it to the Senate.

Where is the money is an important question to ask, and the answer is, it is on the way. We hope that the Senate will act quickly and pass this important legislation.

IN RECOGNITION OF JOHN BRUTON

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor for me to thank John Bruton for serving the 2nd Congressional District with distinction. For the past 2 years, John has ensured South Carolina residents receive timely and accurate updates about the happenings in Congress. John has also been a key adviser on issues of science and technology, postal issues, and welfare. John's dedication and creativity will certainly be hard to replace as he heads off to law school at the University of South Carolina.

John Bruton is the son of Jean and John Bruton of Columbia, South Carolina, two parents who have been instrumental in their son's success. He is the grandson of the late judge J. Bratton Davis, a legend of integrity and competence for the legal profession.

I am confident that John's education at my alma mater, Washington and Lee University, his experiences as a Sigma Alpha Epsilon, and his dedication as a congressional staffer have made John prepared for success in the field of law. He is a credit to the people of South Carolina. I wish him Godspeed.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September 11th in the Global War on Terrorism. Congratulations to primary victors Nikki Haley, Ken Ard, Alan Wilson and Mick Zais.

KEEP THE DURBIN AMENDMENT IN THE WALL STREET REFORM BILL

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

Mr. WELCH. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. SHUSTER) and I are speaking to you today about credit card relief for small businesses and merchants, and as we are, credit card lobbyists are roaming the halls trying to water down a very key provision in the Wall Street reform

legislation. They know that if the conferees keep the Durbin swipe fee amendment in the bill, small business and consumers will gain, and the monopoly pricing of the credit card industry will lose.

Just yesterday, several Vermont small business owners told me how much the credit card and debit swipe fees are hurting their business. Katy Lesser, who owns Healthy Living Market in Burlington, told me her business paid \$250,000 in fees last year. This year it will be \$350,000. And Sheryl Trainor, who runs a Mobil station in Queechee, told me she could plow the money she spends on swipe fees into better wages and more jobs.

I call on my colleagues in the conference committee to put small businesses before the credit card industry and maintain the Durbin amendment in the final package.

SUPPORT THE DURBIN AMENDMENT

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

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I want to associate myself with the gentleman from Vermont's remarks and urge my colleagues not to be swayed by the lobbyists from the credit card companies that are trying to eliminate the Durbin amendment from this important legislation.

Let me make this point clear. The compromise reached in the conference committee does not eliminate the interchange fee or allow the Federal Government to set the interchange fee. The amendment simply creates a level playing field for banks and small businesses to negotiate interchange fees like any other business contract.

The Sheetz Corporation, which has 363 stores in 6 States, is headquartered in my district, and last year, the Sheetz Corporation paid twice as much in interchange fees as they took in in net income after tax. Their second largest expense after payroll is the interchange fee. That means that for Sheetz, the interchange fee eclipsed the company's cost in rent for their 363 stores, and they are paying 1½ times the cost of providing health care to their nearly 13,000 employees.

The compromise reached by the conference committee benefits merchants, retains flexibility of small community banks and credit unions, and ultimately benefits the American consumer.

I urge the conference committee and my colleagues to support the Durbin amendment.

□ 1010

CAPPING CARBON DIOXIDE

(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, we now are at a critical juncture to determine whether or not we will respond to a terrible problem in the oceans, and that is not just the oil spill in the gulf; it is the acidification of the oceans now caused by carbon dioxide that comes from the oil and gas industry and some other fossil fuel industries.

I would suggest Members may want to take a look at a new report. It was in Science magazine, published 2 days ago by the American Association for the Advancement of Science. This is their conclusion: "The world's oceans are virtually choking on rising greenhouse gases, destroying marine ecosystems and breaking down the food chain, irreversible changes that have not occurred for several million years."

We have a chance to restrict and restrain this pollutant, carbon dioxide, in a bill now pending in the U.S. Senate. We hope that in conversations with the President next week we come out with a firm, clear cap on carbon dioxide so we can stop what will otherwise be irreversible changes in our oceans.

PROMOTING SAFE AMERICAN ENERGY PRODUCTION

(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, I rise to applaud the Federal District Court ruling yesterday overturning the administration's job-killing moratorium on American energy production in the deep water of the Gulf of Mexico. This moratorium on drilling will ship thousands of good-paying jobs overseas. It will also make us more dependent on foreign oil. And finally, it's contrary to and in fact distorts the recommendations by a panel of independent scientists and engineers that the administration put together. It distorts their whole view that this industry-wide moratorium will in fact hurt safety by pushing the most experienced workers overseas and actually shipping all of our most advanced drilling rig technology overseas. It will hurt safety.

I urge the administration to back down from this ill-conceived, job-killing, arbitrary moratorium on American energy production.

HONORING THE SISTERS OF ST. JOSEPH

(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 today to honor the Sisters of St. Joseph of Northwestern Pennsylvania.

This year marks the 150th anniversary of service to the Diocese of Erie by the Sisters of St. Joseph. Since 1860, the Sisters of St. Joseph have cared for the people of Erie. They have provided quality education for our children, including establishing schools like my

alma mater, Villa Maria Academy. To care for the sick and elderly, the sisters founded St. Vincent Hospital in Erie and the St. Vincent School of Nursing.

The dedication of the Sisters of St. Joseph has no bounds. They serve as nurses, teachers, social workers, ministers, and community leaders. As a former student of the sisters, I am eternally grateful for their love and guidance.

Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to honor the Sisters of St. Joseph of Northwestern Pennsylvania today, and I thank them for 150 years of service to our community.

VAT TAX IS ONE TAX AMERICA CAN'T AFFORD

(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, we've heard a lot lately about the need for a European-style value-added tax in the U.S. to solve our budget problem. And just yesterday, the ruling coalition in Britain announced that it wants to raise their nation's value-added tax from 17.5 percent to 20 percent. It's estimated that this increase would cost 163,000 jobs and reduce consumer spending by \$5.3 billion in the United Kingdom.

It's not a surprise that the VAT tax is creeping up in Britain. The average rate in Europe is now around 20 percent, and Greece raised their VAT rate to 21 percent as part of their bailout agreement. This is yet more evidence that the VAT taxes are easy for countries to raise during times of fiscal crisis.

With so much discussion about an American VAT, we have to be aware of what the true cost of such a tax would be to our own job growth and consumer spending. Early proposals might call for a 5 percent VAT tax, but in truth, the seemingly easy revenue would make it all too easy for the U.S. Government to quickly raise taxes to European levels. This seemingly easy tax revenue would have a great cost—American jobs. The VAT tax is one tax we can't afford in America.

HONORING MARNA DAVIDSON

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

Mr. KLEIN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor Marna Davidson, a great educator and leader in our community. Marna has worked in the south Florida office of the United Federation of Teachers for many years and has helped to run an extraordinary program for retired teachers in our community. After a total career of 45 years, Marna has decided to retire this year, and I would personally like to thank her for her service and wish her a wonderful retirement.

People like Marna are what make south Florida the best place to live in the country. Her lifelong dedication to teachers and her tireless dedication and commitment have had a real and lasting impact in our community. Of her decision to retire this year, Marna said she wants to "leave while I'm still in love." That sentiment truly captures Marna's spirit. And while the Boca Raton-based UFT office will surely be sad to see her go, we all respect her wise decision and wish her the very best in the next phase of her life.

Thank you, Marna.

AMERICA SPEAKING OUT

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

Mr. FLEMING. Mr. Speaker, from the bailouts to the failed stimulus bills to the government takeover of health care to the failure to prevent and respond timely to the BP spill disaster, Americans are sick and tired of being ignored by their government. Republicans have heard this outcry and believe it is time to let Americans lead the way, so we've launched a new initiative aimed at giving every American a voice in Washington.

America Speaking Out was created as a platform for Americans to share their priorities and ideas for a national policy agenda. In addition to open forum town halls held across the country, we've launched Americaspeakingout.com, an online tool where Americans can go and express their opinion about what issues they believe government should be addressing regardless of party affiliation.

Through initiatives like America Speaking Out, Americans can make their voices heard in Washington. Now is your time to speak out, America.

JOB CREATION

(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 to discuss a very important matter, job creation.

2010 has shown that America is slowly getting back to its feet in terms of recovery. The newest job numbers indicate that over 419,000 jobs were created last month. According to a recent Associated Press release, Texas has the greatest amount of job creation in 2010.

Texas employers expanded payrolls by 43,600 during the month of May, making it the State's largest monthly gain in more than 3 years. Companies like American Airlines, AT&T, and Texas Instruments are creating jobs in my district because north Texas is a good place to do business.

As a country, we are getting stronger and stronger, but we still have a long ways to go. We must continue to invest in American businesses and in the American people. I urge my colleagues

both in the House and Senate to come together to enact policies that create and encourage job creation.

□ 1020

WHY DOES THE ADMINISTRATION WANT TO PURPOSELY AND PUNITIVELY DESTROY JOBS?

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, a Federal judge stated yesterday the administration's ban on deepwater drilling was improper and illegal. The government imposed a 6-month moratorium after the BP disaster. Non-BP oil-related industries sued, saying the ban would put them out of business and cost thousands of jobs.

The government tried to justify the ban, but the judge said, "The government's explanation abuses reason and common sense." The government claimed its engineers supported the ban, but that's just not true.

The judge granted the injunction, stating the ban was "arbitrary", "capricious" and "punitive". In other words, the administration had no scientific basis for this absurd moratorium. The judge stated the oil-related industries "would suffer irreparable harm" by the moratorium. Of course, the administration doesn't care. Determined to stop deepwater drilling, the administration is going to appeal and issue another moratorium.

Mr. Speaker, why does the administration hate the energy industry in the gulf? Why does the administration want to purposely destroy American jobs? President Reagan was right: "The government is the problem."

And that's just the way it is.

DISCLOSE ACT

(Ms. EDWARDS of Maryland asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. EDWARDS of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, I rise with regret today to express my concern about proposed changes to the DISCLOSE Act that I cosponsored. One particular change is deeply troubling—both on the politics and the policy. Having worked on campaign finance and ethics reform for many years, I didn't come to this conclusion lightly or uninformed. I was among the first to say that the Supreme Court decision in Citizens United was both wrong and shouldn't have given corporations a blank check in our elections.

As an early cosponsor of DISCLOSE, I am dismayed that, in order to gain passage, we have fallen prey to bullying and threats from one of the most powerful special interest lobbying organizations in the country. Carving out an exception on behalf of one big group like this is just not the way to do reform. Shame on us.

I proposed an amendment that would treat all of these organizations the