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Mr. AKIN. Thank you, Congressman HENSARLING and Congressman POSEY. And I thank you, also, Congressman BISHOP, for joining us tonight.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think that concludes our hour.

A REDUCED ROLE FOR THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT IS NEEDED

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker’s announced policy of January 6, 2009, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. HOEKSTRA) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Mr. Speaker, tonight I come to talk about a variety of issues.

You know, clearly the country faces tough times, clearly our States face very, very difficult times. And over the last few months we have had the opportunity to go and to listen to our constituents at the State level talk about some of the issues that are important to them.

My home State of Michigan is struggling today with 15 percent unemployment—the highest unemployment rate in the country. And one of the things that we consistently hear about is, you know, Washington made us do this. I hear people talking about, you know, our State needs to raise taxes. Why? So we can get the Federal highway dollars. And what we forget is that those are our dollars to begin with. Those aren’t Federal highway dollars. Those aren’t Michigan highway dollars.

As a matter of fact, for 53 years, a State like Michigan has received 83 cents on the dollar—83 cents for every dollar that we sent to Washington for our gas tax. And now Washington tells us in tough times, to get that money back, you have to put up a State match. That is wrong.

In 2001, President Bush passed—with this Congress’ help—legislation calling for an improvement in K–12 education. It was called No Child Left Behind, and it put the Federal imprint on our K–12 education system across the country and across the State of Michigan. That’s wrong.

Why? Why do we need the Federal Government telling us how to run our schools at the State and at the local level? It’s a community issue. It’s a family issue. It’s not a Federal issue. It’s also not very efficient.

Just like in the highway bill, the Federal Government forces a State like Michigan to build things we don’t need. We build overpasses, but they’re for bicycles. We build fences not to protect motorists but to protect turtles.

You wonder and say, why are we doing this? This is our money. This is not the priority for our State to get our State moving.

So you have got issues with highways, you have got issues with education.

And it’s not only that the money is being spent unwisely, but it’s also being spent inefficiently.

Let me talk about No Child Left Behind, K–12 education.

I see my friend is going to join me. I welcome him. And, you know, I am talking a little bit about the bureaucracy and the need to return to federalism, and let me yield.

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Mr. AKIN. If it’s all right, if you take a look at what’s happened, over the last 50 years, this government here has just grown like Topsy. For a while, you and I were in the majority. We passed some conservative bills, and we did the best we could. They were mostly blocked by Senators. But I think what the public really wants is I think they want something different out of this city. I think that what they really want is for the Federal Government not to threaten them anymore. I think they want us to deconstruct. You mentioned the No Child Left Behind.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Let me reclaim my time for just a second. I want to make it clear to the people in the Chamber, and I want to make it clear to the people around the country and the people in Michigan, No Child Left Behind was a bill that I voted against because I believed in parental control, I believed in local control, and I believed in State control. I just want to make that clear because I might not have done that as I was describing what this Congress was doing.

I had voted to get rid of the Federal highway program or to basically deconstruct it. I want to deconstruct the Education Department and return the rights back to the States so the States can focus on what they need to do, but more importantly that the Federal Government can focus on what it needs to do, trade policy, national security and those types of things. I will yield back.

Mr. AKIN. Congressman, I really respect you for that vote because what I think a lot of people listening this evening might not understand is Congressman HOEKSTRA took the very first House bill of a Republican administration, it was their pet bill, and you had the guts to stand up, as a Republican, to the Republican administration, and say, no, because I believe education is a local control kind of issue.

Now I have to relay an amusing story because I voted “no” on it too, and some staffer made a mistake and invited me to the bill signing ceremony. So I actually sat in the bill signing ceremony for No Child Left Behind after having voted “no” the same way you did.

And I think that is precisely what the public wants. They want to take this place apart. Education can be done fine at a State level, and in my opinion, as a former State representative, I would say it ought to be done at the local level. But certainly we don’t need a bunch of Washington bureaucrats telling us how to educate our kids. I

couldn’t respect you more for that independence of thought and the clarification understanding that that is just not a Federal priority.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Reclaiming my time, I think you and I have had a discussion about this. But I really do believe, and I want to build off the thought that you had, is that our constituents want us to deconstruct Washington. They don’t want us to tear it down. They want us to constructively go through the process and shed the things that are not Washington issues, move them back to States, move them back to communities, and move it back to individuals. And if we don’t do that, they want to be able to hold us accountable.

You and I sat through much of 2009 where we saw an abomination probably much bigger than No Child Left Behind, the health care bill, which was going to take from you and from me, from our doctors, our hospitals, and our States the right to set our own health care agenda. And we were going to probably construct, not deconstruct, but construct a new building here in Washington, D.C., probably several new buildings, filled with bureaucrats, who were then going to make the decisions that you and I historically made about our health care. I will yield.

Mr. AKIN. You are going to wonder where I’m going with this perhaps. Here is what I’m thinking about. I’m a guy that was an engineer. I like geology. And they talk about earthquakes. And they have a scale of how bad an earthquake is. And if you use a Richter scale, an earthquake of about 7 or 8 or 9 is one whale of an earthquake. And if you were to rate how bad legislation is in Congress, the one that you chose to talk about, that health care bill, I would rate that as probably the worst bill I have seen in 22 years. And it is high enough on that Richter scale that when it got done, American civilization would have been shaken so badly, there wouldn’t have been much of it left. That was really a bad one.

My rating number two, and I just want to see where you are on rating these things, whether you are the same scientist that I would be, and I would say that that cap-and-tax bill was another one that would be not quite as bad but still a real mess of a bad bill. What do you think?

Mr. HOEKSTRA. I have seen this up close and personal in Michigan. And you may have remembered over the last 18 months that as President Obama was developing his economic strategy, he had the Governor of Michigan sitting next to him quite frequently. And I thought that’s a good strategy because he could then ask and say, Governor, did you try this in Michigan? And if the answer was “yes,” he would say, well, we won’t do that at the Federal level.

But it seems to be that whether it’s cap-and-trade, cap-and-tax, whether it is health care, what we have seen is in

Washington, we have adopted many of the same policies that our Governor in Michigan adopted, and the end result is we have seen unemployment grow, we have seen huge deficits that at the end of the year are fixed but they are cut, they are massive cuts in the size of government, we are losing population, so we are seeing our citizens leave.

And now we are starting to see that at the Federal level. We are going to have a whole set of massive new tax increases that the President and the Democrats in Congress are going to let the tax cuts expire, meaning it's an effective increase in taxes. Was it 41 new taxes in the budget? I don't remember what the number was. Do you know?

Mr. AKIN. Well, there were quite a number of them. Some of them were small. But you add the whole thing together, you're talking about trillions of dollars in tax increases.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Trillions of dollars. And you and I at the beginning of 2009 we saw unemployment at just under 8 percent.

Mr. AKIN. But if we didn't pass that stimulus bill, we might see unemployment go over 8 percent is what we were told.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Right. And we are now at?

Mr. AKIN. Ten-something, and that's not counting the people that have given up looking for a job.

Now what you're talking about is it used to be said that America was a great experiment. And to a degree, we could be an experiment, because different States could try things, and if it was a lousy idea, if you had any brains, you wouldn't repeat a dumb idea. And so we tried this kind of government control of health care in Massachusetts and Tennessee, and here we turned around, and it didn't work worth a hoot for them, and we're trying to do this at the Federal level. And you're saying that in the case of Michigan you have a governor that seemed to have majored in some bad ideas, and you're saying, why in the world are you going to perpetrate ideas that don't work?

Mr. HOEKSTRA. I want to talk with you briefly about an experiment. You and I have had the opportunity to briefly discuss this idea. What is happening right now in grass-roots America is very, very healthy. People are engaged. And as they have gone through the last year, they saw the passage of a stimulus bill, \$787 billion, then they saw a cap-and-tax bill passed in the middle of the night where they added 400 pages in the middle of the night at the last minute.

Mr. AKIN. Three hundred pages at 3 o'clock in the morning. And we are sitting here in this Chamber trying to find a copy of the bill, and a copy of the bill doesn't exist as we are debating it. Now that's a new record, I suppose.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Then they give us a 2,000-page health care bill, and it gets over to the Senate and they give the Senator from Louisiana \$300 million.

Mr. AKIN. Is that the "Louisiana purchase"?

Mr. HOEKSTRA. The Louisiana purchase. Then we have the deal for Nebraska which says even though you're, as a State, you're pretty healthy—you only have an unemployment rate of under 5 percent—but you don't have to pick up this unfunded mandate that the other 49 States are going to get. As a matter of fact, those other 49 States, including the State of Michigan, are going to pay for your unfunded mandate because I need your vote. So you get your deal.

Mr. AKIN. What do you think the public thinks about that kind of thing?

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Well, we know what they think because we saw it a couple of weeks ago in Massachusetts where they said this is absolutely wrong and we're going to stop it. And effectively what the people of Massachusetts did, in that momentous Tuesday night, they had the opportunity to change history, because after watching this House, this Senate and this administration for 12 months, they said, No more. They effectively recalled their Democrat Senator and replaced it with someone who they believed would listen more closely to their demands and their desires and to start deconstructing Washington.

That's the proposal that I have in that I said I've been through this before. I was through this in 1993 and 1994. I introduced legislation back then. I called it a voters' bill of rights. And as I was sitting with constituents in my district, and I heard them say, Congressman—most of them call me PETE—and they said, PETE, we call our Senators. We talk to them about the stimulus bill. We talk to them about health care. We talk to them about cap-and-trade. We talk about them bringing Gitmo to Standish, Michigan, and we always get the same thing. They answer, they are rude, and then they hang up. And then they said, PETE, there's nothing we can do to hold these folks accountable. The earliest we can do anything is 2012 and these bad things may happen.

And as I've been listening to them, I asked my staff to go back and get these voters' bill of rights, because I introduced them, we thought through them. It's populism. My colleagues here on the floor don't like it. But one of the lead things that we proposed in 1994, 1995, and 1996 was a bill that said one of the keystones of the voters' bill of rights says that when you call your Senator or your Representative, and they arrogantly answer the phone, are rude, then hang up, and then vote wrong, which traditionally means they are voting for bigger government and taking rights away from the individuals, rights away from the States, you now have an option.

The option is that when you leave the meeting where you're talking about this and someone gives you a piece of paper that has a few lines on it and you say, get some voters to sign those lines, and then at the top it says, this is a recall of Senator so-and-so, or a recall of Representative so-and-so, it

allows the voters to exercise accountability throughout the process. I wrote an op-ed that hopefully we are going to get published soon. What it does is it allows the people to take back ownership of their government.

Michigan is a recall State. I had a mini-town hall meeting yesterday, and I ran into a township official. She is being recalled. It's very, very tough for people when they're recalled. But it clearly humbles people when they recognize that the voters can come back and if they don't like what we are doing, the voters can stand up and say, no, it's time for you to come home because you no longer understand who you work for, and it's time for us to have an opportunity to send someone to Washington that will listen to us.

Mr. AKIN. That's an interesting proposal. It shows a lot of imagination on your part. It doesn't make you popular with the establishment here; but then again, a bunch of us have been pretty establishment from the beginning because we understand that you do need to deconstruct. As you say, it's not to destroy all of government but to carefully prune out all of these things that have grown like Topsy through the years.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. It's about making it more efficient. You and I know that with No Child Left Behind, when the taxpayer from Michigan, the taxpayer from Lansing, the taxpayer from Detroit, the taxpayer from Holland and the taxpayer from Sault Sainte Marie sends a dollar to Washington for education, it goes through the bureaucracies. It goes through the State bureaucracies. And at every juncture, a PacMan comes out and takes a piece and takes another piece; and by the time it gets to the classroom, there may only be 60 to 65 cents left.

Mr. AKIN. Now you're starting with the assumption that the 65 cents is actually going to do some good and is not possibly harmful. And I would even bet that some of the programs coming out of Washington just in and of their nature are harmful.

One of the things that I think particularly the Washington establishment has misunderstood and perhaps some of our national media, they would like to write off a whole lot of Americans as, well, they are just a bunch of crazy TEA party people or something. What I have seen of that movement to me it seems like it defies party labels. And it is a very broad spectrum of Americans who are saying, enough already and this idea of deconstructing. I think they get sick of, we talked about 300 pages of amendments at 3 o'clock in the morning.

Here is another thing that sort of bugs me—and tell me what you think about it. We have this deal called a farm bill. It's really not a farm bill. It's this deal that is made between food stamps and farmers and this and that, and it's all put together, and it's set up from a political point of view to pass.

But what has happened is, if you really looked at the individual component parts, most people would say, I don't like it. And yet by packaging this stuff up, we end up with that much more Federal spending, and I think it's that kind of thing that those Americans are starting to pay attention to. I will tell you what should spook the people down here in the establishment: they are starting to read some of the legislation. And that's a scary thought.

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Mr. HOEKSTRA. That's a scary thing, and that is exactly the type of process that people don't like. And they don't like the fact that when the President comes out and says during a campaign, when we get to the health care negotiations, it is going to be on C-SPAN so that we can see whether the gentleman is arguing for his voters, fighting for his constituents, or whether that person over there is fighting for the insurance companies or fighting for the unions or whatever. And it is kind of like, we get to there and you are watching C-SPAN at 11:30 at night, and someone walks up to the microphone and says, Hey, we have got a deal.

Mr. AKIN. What deal? Transparency?

Mr. HOEKSTRA. It is like, you are announcing this at 11:30 at night and there is only a few of us that have nothing better to do and we are watching C-SPAN so we know, but nobody else will, and they'll find out in the morning?

But that is the transparency. That is where I think this concept of recall gets real power. Recall says I think two things. It says to Washington, stop the midnight deals.

The other thing I think that provides a tremendous amount of power and authority is it tells Washington, stop the power grab. Stop taking the stuff away from the States and away from us as individuals.

We need to put something back in the process so that the "rights of States" has real meaning, has real teeth. Right now, we go through the appropriations process, the States are all at the pig's trough, the feeding trough, trying to get as much money as they can, get more than the next guy. It is kind of like, no, don't send the money here, ever. And if we have the opportunity for citizens to potentially recall their Representatives and their Senators, it creates potentially a whole new dynamic of putting States' rights back at the forefront.

Mr. AKIN. Let me ask you a question, because I know you are a proud resident of Michigan. I just want to say, speculatively, what would happen if you were the Governor of Michigan and somebody came to you with this health care bill, and the Congressional Budget Office, because it had been carefully written, said it was a \$1 trillion bill, but when you looked at it, you said, "Well it is \$1 trillion to the Federal, but it has got unfunded mandates for the State of Michigan"? And you have probably got a balanced bud-

et in some sort of amendment in Michigan. Wouldn't that make you frustrated if we are dumping the real cost of something down onto the States?

Mr. HOEKSTRA. You are exactly right, and this is where Governors need to stand up and say no. I think with the health care bill, I think wasn't there a movement in like 29 States or something where State legislators were saying, No, we don't want it.

And why? In the State of Michigan, we calculated, or Heritage or someone calculated that the unfunded mandate for Medicaid alone was \$700 million.

Mr. AKIN. That is a huge amount for a State budget.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. It is a huge amount for a State budget. But it happens every program. You know, we promise health care for all. No child left behind. No worker left behind. Everybody has a job. We put a little bit of money into the pot and then we pass it down to the States, and then the States get it and they say, Whoa, we thought you were going to pay for all of this.

That has been the biggest complaint about No Child Left Behind. Right? All of these mandates, and you didn't give us the money to implement it. Give us more money. It's kind of like, No, don't give us more money. Let us keep our money. Get rid of the mandates, and we will run our own schools.

Mr. AKIN. That is a novel idea.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. It is a novel idea.

Mr. AKIN. You know, it was interesting. When we were looking at that No Child Left Behind, it was my first kind of introduction to insider ball in Washington, DC, and the Department of Education. And there were all of these programs in the Department of Education, and each one was funded.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Over 600. We counted them. Across the government, there were over, I think, 650 different education programs, and you say, Why?

Mr. AKIN. What we attempted to do, and I think you were part of negotiating, trying to get this bill to be something that we could be proud of. And I think the deal was, How about we do this? How about we let the local superintendent of his school take a look at all 600-something of these programs, take the money that he could get for all of them, and if he wants to, direct it all to one or two of his favorite programs that meet the needs of their individual schools instead of having the red tape of 600 different Federal programs?

And that seemed like a pretty logical thing, because each superintendent could take a look at their school and their own needs, and they could take the money and channel it in an effective way.

Guess what the establishment down here said?

Mr. HOEKSTRA. No. We don't trust them.

Mr. AKIN. Exactly. We know more what they are doing than they do.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. So what we do is we tell Ypsilanti, we tell Midland, we tell Traverse City. At least a portion of the

money that you get from Washington, you will all run it the same way. And it is kind of like, Wow—

Mr. AKIN. Whether the program works or not.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. These are three very, very different communities with very different needs and challenges right now. Why are we trying to put them all into one straitjacket? Don't we really trust the local officials? And, more importantly, are you telling us you don't trust local parents to take ownership over their schools?

Dick Arme, our former colleague, used to say, The people that I want running my schools are the people who know the names of my kids. That is the local folks.

Mr. AKIN. That paints a picture. Doesn't it?

Mr. HOEKSTRA. It paints a picture. Because if you come to Washington and you ask, Do you know the kids in the fifth grade at South Middle School or West Middle School? And it is kind of like, What town?

Well, in Holland.

No, I don't. And they have gone through consolidation and all of that.

The names of the schools aren't that important. What is important is, Do you know the names of the kids at Muskegon Heights? in Bay City? in Mackinaw? And the answer will be, No. As a matter of fact, I can't even find some of those places on the map if I have to look, is what you will get from the Education Department.

I have always wanted to go to the Education Department and start with the Secretary, say, Mr. Secretary, what State are you from? Well, I know he is from Illinois. He is from Chicago. He is not far from Michigan. He actually probably understands the Midwest and he understands large, urban school districts.

Okay. Do you have anybody in your office, the secretariat or whatever that is from Michigan?

No, I don't think so.

Then you go to the undersecretaries. And, Do you have anybody that is from Michigan?

How far do I have to go down before I find somebody in the position of authority that is maybe from my State that may have a little bit of understanding of my State? Now, we have over 9 million people living in Michigan, so that person might understand a piece of Michigan but not the whole State.

And then you kind of go through and say, I wonder how long it would take me to find somebody from the Second Congressional District. Then, I wonder how long it would take me to find somebody from my hometown who understands that right now the community is facing a \$2 million shortfall, that we have got issues with our public schools. The public schools are asking for a \$70 million bond issue, and that they would understand the challenges. I don't think I will find anybody from Holland.

To Washington, our kids are a number at best. In Holland, it is "Aaron." They know the names of the kids.

Mr. AKIN. Of course, that whole discussion suggests the Founders were a little smarter than we gave them credit for. There is nothing in the Constitution that justifies the creation of a Federal Department of Education in the first place. It was, I think, more of a concession to the NEA teachers union. And I am not sure if they got a very good deal anyway.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. I can tell you, we worked with the NEA, the National Education Association. We worked with them, BARNEY FRANK and I. BARNEY FRANK, one of my colleagues from the other side of the aisle, we fought this issue, and he came at it from a very different standpoint than where I did.

Mr. AKIN. I would assume.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. We came at it from the right and the left. But we came together because we both saw the inherent problems with this bill, and we had an amendment that we were hoping that if the NEA, if the National Education Association had joined with us and supported it, I think we would have passed our amendment and we would have a very different No Child Left Behind framework than what we have today. But they were kind of neutral. They didn't take a position, which also tells something to our constituents: If you are not involved in the process, someone else will decide the future for you.

What the NEA found out is that they didn't participate actively in fighting this bill. And now, I just talked to a group of students, I think it was Monday morning, or they were at one of the lunches. There were 18 students there. They were there with their teacher. They were advanced AP students, out of school. They were there at lunch in Wayland, Michigan.

I said, I voted against No Child Left Behind. And that always surprises a lot of the teachers in my district, because they thought that I was just lockstep with the President. Of course HOEKSTRA voted with the President. No, I voted against the bill. And the loudest applause comes from the NEA member, the teacher, because he has seen what it has done to his local schools. And we have just gone through, and we are in the process of duplicating exactly what happened with No Child Left Behind with this new program called Race to the Top.

What does Race to the Top do? In Michigan—and I just kind of laid back a little. If people asked me, I would say, If I were you, I wouldn't go for the money. But the State went for the money because you had to do some reforms. The reforms were good. But if the reforms were good, we should have done them anyway. We should not have waited for Washington to bribe us to do this, because now that we are involved in this Race to the Top process, we are also finding out, well, this is No Child Left Behind all over again. Because

what Race to the Top does is the same thing as No Child Left Behind. It promised a pot of gold at the end of the rainbow.

And now local school districts are starting to take a look at this and they are saying, This isn't so good. No one told us that we are going to get X amount of dollars, but that to implement the mandates that come with Race to the Top it is going to cost us more than X. So, actually, we are going to get this Federal money and we are going to get the mandates that come along with it, and now to implement these mandates it is going to cost us extra money to do it when we are already being squeezed.

Sounds like No Child Left Behind. Sounds like health care.

Mr. AKIN. The thing that surprises me, because I was a State legislator in the State of Missouri for 12 years. It seems like the States never seem to catch up to the scam.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. It is kind of like Charlie Brown. How many times are you going to pull the football away?

Mr. AKIN. It is kind of like Lucy with the football and Charlie Brown trying to kick the football. There is always a string on the piece of cheese, and they say, Come on, mouse, get the cheese. Then they reel the string in. And they have been doing this for I don't know how many years.

If you were Governor, wouldn't you think it would be smart in some States to say, I have seen this before. I really don't want you telling me how to run our schools. I don't want you telling me how to do the things that our State knows how to do for ourselves far better. You can just keep your money down in Washington, D.C. It is not a temptation to us anymore, and we are going to run a clean and efficient State where we really do things. Our objective is going to be one of the top performing States all across America, and this is a competition where we are going to start right now by saying no to a whole lot of government red tape.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. And what you will see again is the States becoming incubators of ideas. Missouri or Michigan, we will compete, and you will get some great ideas, we will get some great ideas. You will have some bad ideas and we will have some bad ideas. We will try them. Some things will work, some things will not. And then we will be looking around at the other States and saying, Hey, what are you doing that works? And when we find something that says, Your community is not exactly like ours, but if we kind of take what you have done, there is a lot of good stuff there, and if we put that into place in Grand Rapids, with a few tweaks, we think that is going to help us; we think that is going to help make our schools in Grand Rapids better.

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Mr. AKIN. You know what is exciting is you are talking about that spirit of ingenuity that Americans have. One of the things people down here in the in-

stitutional part of our government, they think everybody has got to have a Ph.D. and be an expert in this or that. And what I have seen so often in Americans, you use just a little bit of common sense, and as you are saying, you take that ingenuity and that can do spirit and just get the red tape and the government chains off of them and let them start to solve their problems.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. The other thing that we will see is we will see that at a State level you can respond. When something doesn't work, you change it. You and I are both very familiar that there is a key component of No Child Left Behind that does not work. What is it? It says we are going to measure this year's first grade class and their performance, and we are going to compare it to last year's first grade class and their performance.

I say, well, you know, this could be 27 kids and this could be 27 kids, but they may be very, very different kids. And as a matter of fact, I was looking at that. And right after No Child Left Behind passed, I went to one of my schools, because they invited me to come in. And I knew where the school was, and I thought that this was in a relatively stable neighborhood. And they were explaining to me some of their issues. And they said Congressman, you know, we don't even have these 27 kids all year. We have 27 kids when we begin the year, we have 27 kids in this class when we end the year, but there may be 20 to 25 kids that have come in and out of this class. And you kind of look at them and say I thought this was a pretty stable neighborhood. They said you don't understand. We have got these types of things in the neighborhood, and this is a very transient population.

Mr. AKIN. How in the world could any statistics mean anything when you have got the situation you are talking about?

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Right. But the standard has been in place for 8 years. Everybody knows it is wrong and it doesn't work. Technology has moved to the point where it says we can track Johnny individually. And if he moves from one school to another, we can track his specific performance. We ought to be tracking the specific performance of every kid in the classroom versus a group of kids that is in and out and all of that.

But after 8 years, what is the measurement? The same one that passed in 2001 that everybody agrees doesn't work. But it is what, it is implemented in all 50 States, and it is the criteria that determines whether you are a good school or you are—only Washington can use these terms—a failing school.

For the teachers that are in this school that have a 70 percent turnover of kids in their classroom during the year, you know, they may not measure up very well to the arbitrary standards that were put in place here in Washington, D.C., but they may be some of

our most committed and talented teachers because they are dealing with different kids in the classroom.

You know, every couple of weeks a new child comes in, a couple leave, and it is like, wow, this kid has different skills than the two that have left. I have got to figure out exactly, you know, is this kid excelling in math? You know, he has got great math skills, but I got to help him in reading. You know, you got to do a whole assessment. But the current model doesn't allow for those kinds of differences.

Mr. AKIN. Is that current model something that could be changed? Let's say you were to, a State were to basically say hey, we are going to start over again. We are going to do a different approach. Is that the kind of thing a State could really be innovative on, or has the Federal Government just got them locked down?

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Absolutely. What you want to have happen is you and I both want accountability. But as technology changes, and as teaching changes, and as practices in the classroom changes, you know, I want Missouri developing an accountability model, I want Michigan developing an accountability model, I want Illinois developing an accountability model. And then every year I want to get together and say, you know, here is what is working for us, but we got some problems in this area. We just don't appear to be getting it right. What are you doing?

And then Missouri may come back and say, well, you know, we had those same kinds of issues 3 years ago, and here is what we did, and this appears to make our accountability system better. But you know, here is where we are running into a problem right now. So you have that learning going on, and then you get together and you say, you know, well, what is the best way to put in performance pay for teachers? How do you recognize the differences in a classroom where you begin the year with 27 kids in the classroom and at the end of the year they have the same 27 kids? You know, how do you measure teachers' performance in a classroom like that versus the teacher who is in a classroom where they have got the 70 percent turnover? You can't treat them the same. You can't have the same kind of measurement. You know, how do you deal with that? That is the kind of ingenuity and creativity that we need to be seeing going on across the country.

Someone sent me an email message tonight talking about the video learning, the high-tech learning and those types of things. And there are people that are experimenting with that at higher level, at the community colleges, our high schools and all that. You know, it is like somebody ought to really try that and see what works. Do a little experimentation.

Mr. AKIN. I couldn't help thinking about what you are saying and getting me excited a little bit about this. If I

were in Missouri, I think it would be a Show Me Progress or something. They call us the Show Me State. And I think one of the ways that would really be pretty interesting and might change the paradigm quite a bit would be if you really want to give bonuses to teachers, why don't you let the parents of the students have a say in how their performance would be?

Because I will tell you, if you think back about all of your teachers that you have had, I can't remember too much stuff the teachers taught me, but I can sure remember the people and the characters that I respected because of the way they lived their lives. And there were some that were just really, really treasures. They were like State treasures. They were such wonderful people. And I still remember them to the day. And I think sometimes I am guilty, I should have gone back and thanked them for putting up with a little brat like me.

And if the parents have some chance to direct those bonuses, I am sure that would probably politically knock the train off the track. But there is an idea. Because those parents know whether their kids are getting the real stuff or not.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. And I am not saying that bonuses for teachers are the way to go. But we ought to be working with teachers, with parents, and with others to have these laboratories around the country. And that doesn't mean that every class is a laboratory and you are trying the whole thing brand new. It means what you are saying is every year, every month, every week we are going to be focused on having continuous improvement. That if we can learn from other States, if we can learn from other schools, if we can learn from other countries we are always going to be on the cutting edge of improving our schools.

Right now where are we? Where do our superintendents look? Where do our State education bureaucrats look? Now they have to look to some old bill that was passed in 2001 that tells them how to run their schools. You won't find that in business anymore. You won't find businesses operating on a model that was in place in 2001. If they were still operating in the same practices, the same technology and all of these kinds of things that they were operating on in 2001, guess what, in 2010 they would be out of business. They could no longer compete.

So whether it is education, whether it is infrastructure, you know, the whole gamut. You want to do the same thing with job training. You know, as a starter, I have got bills to do this. It is kind of like highway money goes back to the States, the gas tax money. It doesn't need to come here. Send a penny out of every dollar, let the 435 of us here fight over one penny of gas tax, not a dollar of gas tax.

All right. Then same thing with K-12 education. Send us the money back. We will get 35 cents more of every dollar to put into the classroom. And then it is

really a win-win. You know, send me 90 cents of every education dollar. You save 10 percent, I get 25 cents more going into the classroom. It is a win for all of us. Get rid of the bureaucracy and the paperwork. Put the emphasis on the kids. And then do it with job training. I have got bills on all three of those areas. And the bottom line is if you don't do it, recall.

Mr. AKIN. Recall. You know, if you take a look at what the Federal Government was like when it was originally created, as I recall there were really only four laws. One of the laws was against piracy on the high seas. One of the laws was against counterfeiting, because the Federal Government printed the money. There was a law against being a traitor or a spy to your country. All of those laws had in common that it was really a Federal authority, as opposed to something that could be handled by the States. But the States had all the laws that hang him if he steals a horse or whatever the different State laws were. All of your laws almost were at a State level.

Where now what has happened is people somehow think that all of the intelligence moved to Washington, D.C., and they have got all of these Federal laws, statute books full. Then you have got all of these bureaucracies full of rules and regulations. Somehow we have got to start taking this place apart and sending that authority to the State level. And with all due respect, gentlemen, a lot could go to the local and the parental level as well.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Absolutely. You know, because you take a look at a State like Michigan, and I think it is probably the same in Missouri, and you take a look at the State and you say, well, my State this year is starting the year off with—or they are looking at their next budget year and they are saying we are going to have somewhere between a \$1.2 and a \$1.4 billion deficit for the next budget year, which they got to get done later this calendar year. And you look at it and say, well, you got a \$47 billion budget. You know, finding \$1.2, finding \$1.4 billion in savings, you know, 2, 3 percent? That shouldn't be that hard.

And then you start looking at the reality and say, well, out of that \$47 billion, 19 of it is direct money from Washington, D.C. All right. Well, that is off the table. Then you take a look at it and say, well, but you know, with that highway money we get that is part of that \$19 billion, it requires that we have the State match. And this money that we got for K-12, you know, that comes from No Child Left Behind, it controls some of the spending of the rest of the budget.

And you start looking at it and saying, well, now all of a sudden I have got a \$1.2 or \$1.4 billion deficit and I have got maybe \$10, \$11 billion that I can work with. And it is like, no, there are

efficiencies that we can find in all of those areas if that money never left the State and we were given the authority.

Because you know, the other thing that we talk about, the money comes from Washington, but what then happens? That is not the end of the line. If the money comes from Washington, then—actually, Washington collects the money.

Mr. AKIN. It came from your and my taxpayers.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. You and I paid it and our constituents paid it. All right. And it is gone. It comes to this place here. We then decide what we are going to do with it.

Now, if our people in our communities or our States want to get the money back, a lot of times what do they have to do? What do they have? All of my school districts have what they call grant writers, somebody they pay \$30 to \$35,000 to, and there is a very good performance measure.

Mr. AKIN. Do they get the grant?

Mr. HOEKSTRA. You know, we are paying you \$35,000 a year. If you get \$36,000 in grants coming back to the school district, you have been a good investment. So they have to apply for the money. And they may not get it. But you know, a lot of times it is a competition to get the money. So a lot of the application money is wasted. The money then comes back to the State, goes to our local schools, we lose 35 percent. Once it is in the classroom, once it is being built to build a turtle fence or build a bike overpass that we don't need, then we have to send a report back to Washington telling them what we did with the money. I have always wanted to find the person who reads it. Okay. Does anybody really read the report?

And then every once in a while, and perhaps too often, you will find the next thing. You will find the auditor going back to a local school district or a local government agency and say, "Prove it. Prove that you spent the money the way that you applied for it and the way that you developed and moved it forward."

Mr. AKIN. I tell you there is plenty of work to do. And it just needs some energy, some innovation both in Washington, D.C., but also at the State levels. What is the situation in Michigan in terms of unemployment? Do you have the same kind of problems there that other people are facing?

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Actually, we don't have the same kind of problems. Our problems are much more severe than anybody else's. We lead the country in unemployment. And we have done that for a number of years.

□ 2030

I think the last unemployment number in Michigan was 14.8 percent. But for the last 12 to 18 months we've been in the 14, 15 percent unemployment. Well above any other State. That really doesn't include the people that have stopped working. It doesn't include the

people that are underemployed. It also doesn't include the number of people—when I come here to Washington every week, I'm always amazed by the number of people who are on the plane, or as I'm talking to the people in my district, the number of people who I run into and say, Pete, I'm in Michigan. I'm committed to Michigan. But I'm gone 2 weeks at a time from my wife and my kids because the only place I can find a job is somewhere else. I'm working somewhere other than Michigan. Some of them stay because they're so committed. Others stay because, obviously, in a State that has declining population, by definition you have a housing surplus, meaning that it's hard for them to sell their homes.

The vision that we have for Michigan is to bring Michigan back. Michigan is a great State. Missouri is a great State. This is a great country. I think you and I are committed to believing that with the right kind of leadership either at the Federal level or at the State level, there's no reason we ought to be enduring 10 percent at a national level or 15 percent at a State level. Go back to the principles that we employed back in 1994. It's accountability back to the people. That's what the Contract with America was all about. I tried to get recall as part of the Contract with America. I wish we had. I wish voters today had the opportunity to recall their representatives and their senators.

But what we did in 1995 and 1996, we didn't increase spending, we didn't do a stimulus bill like that, we didn't do cap-and-trade, we didn't do health care. We didn't do all these massive government spending programs. We basically froze spending. We cut taxes. We reformed government. We reformed welfare. And we did it with a Republican Congress and a Democrat President. We were able to focus on what the American people wanted, what they needed, and we had an era of prosperity that helped a lot of people. But the formula is simple: Give more money back to the American people, reform government, and control spending.

Mr. AKIN. You know, your simple little phrase—sometimes a simple phrase is very effective. You talked about, bring Michigan back. Or, bring Missouri back. The tragedy is that what you just said in a few sentences explains how to do it. It's not like this is that complicated. You don't have to be too bright to say, If you want jobs, you've got to have some company that's going to provide the jobs. And you don't have to be too bright to say that if you tax the hide off of the guy that owns the little business, he is not going to have any money to build a new wing or to buy a new machine tool or to add the new process to create the new jobs. It's not that complicated.

But the trouble is we get these people down here who are so institutional, and they think we know what to do. We're going to tax the rich guy and redistribute the money. And somehow that makes the economy better.

I mean that stimulus bill, the whole logic behind it was totally flawed. Yet, what you have just said in a sentence or two, gentleman, you put your finger on exactly what has to be done. And it's got to kill you to go back to Michigan. You love your State, you love the people in the State. And you understand what it takes to make it work. And people are just tone deaf.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. I don't think people are tone deaf. I think people in the State sense that—

Mr. AKIN. The Federal Government is tone deaf.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Just like the gentleman demonstrated in Massachusetts, the people are not tone deaf. They think we are. And they know Washington is.

Mr. AKIN. That's what I meant.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Gentleman, that's the problem down here. Washington, D.C., as an institution has become tone deaf. And you've got solutions. You know what the solutions are. You can fix the problem in Michigan, you can fix the problem in Missouri. It's as simple as what JFK did, what Ronald Reagan did, what Bush did, and that is get off the spending, get off the taxing, and give the American public a chance.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Here's how we start our op-ed. I like our title. Of course, I helped write it. We call it "Storming the Castle." On January 19, the people of Massachusetts stormed the castle of the political elite and toppled it to the ground. After months of abuse and neglect and being shut out of the lofty parapets of the U.S. Senate, they took a stand and sent a strong, undeniable message to the Democrat-controlled castle of American politics. Enough is enough.

I think that sums it all up. That's where the American people are today. That's where grassroots America is today. That's where they were in 1993 and 1994. In 1993 and 1994, they got involved. When I meet with these folks, I do ask them the question: How different would this country be today if the involvement that we saw in 1993 and 1994, the insightful, knowledgeable involvement—I mean these people understand the issues. They know where they want to go. If that involvement we saw in 1993 and 1994, and the involvement that we're seeing in 2009 and 2010, how different would this country have been if they had stayed involved through that whole timeframe?

And that's partly our responsibility by not motivating them enough and inviting them into the process. But if they would be involved in the process, we wouldn't be talking about whether we should be passing legislation or passing a constitutional amendment that would give them the authority to recall their Federal elected officials. We'd already have it. It would now be working its way through the States. I think it's so healthy to have these people involved in the process

and involved in a knowledgeable way, because they do recognize that if they don't show up, someone else will run this country. They recognize that government is run by those who show up on election day.

Mr. AKIN. You know, the interesting thing is, as you make government bigger, it makes the citizens smaller. And it's gotten to the point now where that government has got to be trimmed. And I think people are ready to do it. I would like to just say that I appreciate your leadership these years that I've shared in the Congress with you, Congressman HOEKSTRA, and for the fact that you have consistently, before it was popular, you have always been in this position of trying to deconstruct the unnecessary elements of the Federal Government. And I think that in a sense that you and I have seen a time where more voters are going to think, Boy, I wish there were more Congressmen Hoekstras in the way that they vote and the way they keep taking the tough choices, regardless of political party, to do what is right and send that decisionmaking back to the local citizens. Send that tax dollar, let him keep it in his pocket, and keep the government small.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. I thank my colleague, Congressman AKIN. This is a time where we've got the great State of Michigan, the great State of Missouri, the Show-Me State. It's now time for this Congress to show the people of Missouri, to show the people of America, and to show the people of Michigan where we're headed. And if we don't do it, guess what? They will show us on election day. And they will storm the castle by saying, Enough is enough.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

CORRECTION TO THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD OF FRIDAY, JANUARY 29, 2010, AT PAGE H427

**DISCHARGE PETITIONS—
ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS**

The following Member added her name to the following discharge petition:

Petition 5 by Mrs. BLACKBURN on the bill (H.R. 391): Edward R. Royce.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN (at the request of Mr. HOYER) for today on account of medical reasons.

SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. QUIGLEY) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Ms. WOOLSEY, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. DEFAZIO, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. SESTAK, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. KAPTUR, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. QUIGLEY, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. POE of Texas) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. REICHERT, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. POE of Texas, for 5 minutes, February 10.

Mr. JONES, for 5 minutes, February 10.

Mr. GINGREY of Georgia, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. CASSIDY, for 5 minutes, February 9.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. GOHMERT, for 5 minutes, today and February 4.

Mr. BROUN of Georgia, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. MORAN of Kansas, for 5 minutes, February 10.

Mrs. BACHMANN, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. SHIMKUS, for 5 minutes, February 9.

(The following Member (at his own request) to revise and extend his remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts, for 5 minutes, today.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 8 o'clock and 39 minutes p.m.), the House adjourned until tomorrow, Thursday, February 4, 2010, at 10 a.m.

**EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS,
ETC.**

Under clause 2 of Rule XXIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

5934. A letter from the Administrator, Risk Management Agency, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule — General Administrative Regulations; Subpart X-Interpretations of Statutory and Regulatory Provisions received January 7, 2010, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

5935. A letter from the NRCS Acting Farm Bill Coordinator, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule — State Technical Committees received January 7, 2010, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

5936. A letter from the Director, Defense Procurement and Acquisition, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's final rule — Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement; Business Systems-Definition and Administration (DFARS Case 2009-D038) (RIN: 0750-AG) received January 11, 2010, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Armed Services.

5937. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting a report pursuant to the National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2010; to the Committee on Armed Services.

5938. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Administrator, Office of Diversion Control, Department of Justice, transmitting the Department's final rule — Changes to Patient Limitation for Dispensing or Prescribing Approved Narcotic Controlled Substances for Maintenance or Detoxification Treatment by Qualified Individual Practitioners [Docket No.: DEA-275F] (RIN: 1117-AA99) received January 7, 2010, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

5939. A letter from the Program Manager, NRDAR Program (DOI Office of the Secretary), Department of the Interior, transmitting the Department's final rule — Natural Resource Damages for Hazardous Substances (RIN: 1090-AA97) received December 30, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

5940. A letter from the Office Director, Office of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Alternate Fracture Toughness Requirements for Protection Against Pressurized Thermal Shock Events [NRC-2007-0008] (RIN: 3150-A101) received January 11, 2010, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

5941. A letter from the Assistant Director, Executive & Political Personnel, Department of Defense, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5942. A letter from the Assistant Director, Executive & Political Personnel, Department of Defense, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5943. A letter from the Assistant Director, Executive & Political Personnel, Department of Defense, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

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