

MOVING IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION

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

Mr. BACA. These are tough times for our Nation, but the American people can take heart that with the leadership of President Obama, we are headed in the right direction.

When the President took office, he inherited a \$1.2 trillion deficit, two wars, the recession, mounting job losses, and disasters like Katrina that pushed our economy to the brink.

Since then, with his guidance we have passed the American Recovery Act that saved jobs; the expansion of SCHIP, to provide health coverage to 11 million children; the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act, the equal pay act for women in the workplace; the Credit Card Bill of Rights; and the historic health reform that finally makes quality, affordable coverage a right for every American. Soon we will enact financial reforms that give us the oversight and accountability to prevent another economic collapse.

The President continues to move us in the right direction and is doing all the right things. Unfortunately, our Republican colleagues continue to have no plan and no direction.

 TRIBUTE TO PEARL REX-HARTZELL

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

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Mr. Speaker, I come before the House to pay special tribute to Pearl Rex-Hartzell, who passed away recently.

Pearl's life was dedicated to serving others. She said once, "As long as I live I have to serve." Living up to her motto of service, she could be found constantly smiling, dancing and participating in numerous organizations. Pearl believed that "we can't just sit back and enjoy freedom. We must work to preserve it." This remarkable woman had a deep love of God, country, and family, and she selflessly dedicated her life to helping all those in need.

Pearl represents the reality that a single person can make a positive difference in the lives of those around her by smiling, serving and standing by their principles.

It is appropriate that we honor her accomplishments, her example and her lifelong dedication to community service. I wish nothing but the best to her family and hope they feel the deep gratitude of Utah and truly remember this remarkable woman. She has served our community well, and we will miss her.

DON'T BE FOOLED BY RELEASE OF POLITICAL PRISONERS BY CUBA

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

Mr. QUIGLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today because we cannot be fooled by the Castro regime's announcement to release 52 political prisoners. That would be 52 out of approximately 5,000.

The release of these prisoners, held only because they disagree with the government, would be good news if they were actually being released, but only five to 10 prisoners will be released immediately. The rest will be let go over the next three to four months. Why does it take months to release a group of prisoners when it only took one night to arrest them? We cannot be fooled.

The Castro regime has released prisoners many times before in exchange for lesser sanctions, but these temporary releases never result in permanent reforms.

The regime is unilaterally releasing 52 prisoners, but what is to keep them from simply arresting hundreds more? We cannot be fooled. And above all, we cannot alter our sanctions or policies towards Cuba based on this one superficial gesture.

 □ 1010

DEBT

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

Ms. JENKINS. For the past 18 months, the leadership in the House has ignored the impending fiscal crisis, acting like they know best and that the economy would recover if we simply spent more money. They're wrong. And today, I'd like to remind them of one number that should get their attention: \$166 billion. A few years ago, that was more than the annual budget deficit. Now, that's how much the debt increased on June 30 alone. The President's fiscal commission said this debt is a cancer "that will destroy the country from within." As a daughter of two cancer survivors, those words are strong. But as a CPA that knows how debilitating debt can be, I couldn't agree more. It's time for the majority to stop ignoring reality. It's time to stop the reckless spending and get the \$13.2 trillion debt under control.

 FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY

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

Mr. SCHRADER. As a member of the fiscally conservative Blue Dog Coalition, I would like to bring attention to my district's growing concern about our national debt. Oregon's Fifth Congressional District has been severely impacted by the recent economic

downturn. Like Oregon families throughout my State, Congress must start learning to live within its means. I put a high priority on financial responsibility, which is why I've introduced H.R. 5363, the Preventing Waste, Fraud, and Abuse Act of 2010. The Act encourages the Federal Government to make strategic investments to eliminate waste, fraud, and abuse in our entitlement programs. For every dollar we put into the program, we get \$1.50 to \$8 back.

Today, we will be voting on the Improper Payments Elimination and Recovery Act of 2010. By passing this bill, we will expand the process of identifying programs and activities susceptible to improper payments. Identifying these programs will eliminate fraud. I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

 MOB VIOLENCE

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

Mr. COBLE. Mr. Speaker, mob violence serves no good purpose. Last week, a California mob violently disagreed with the jury verdict in a high-profile case. I have no opinion if the verdict is inconsistent with the facts of the case, but I do have an opinion that mob violence offers no solutions. I do not embrace all jury verdicts, but when I am not in agreement with jury verdicts, I do not resort to violence. I do not promote the smashing of plate-glass windows. I do not promote the stealing of goods behind those windows. I do not promote the inflicting of injury upon innocent third parties.

Mob members taking the law into their own hands, Mr. Speaker, is opposed to all that is good about America, yet few people have spoken out against it. Surely, the majority of Americans are opposed to mob violence. I reiterate: Mob violence serves no good purpose and should be deterred and rejected.

 FIGHTING FOR SENIORS

(Mr. MURPHY of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MURPHY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of seniors across upstate New York. Since coming to Washington, I have fought to strengthen Medicare, protect Social Security, and ensure that our seniors can retire with dignity. As a founding member of the Seniors Task Force, I was proud to help introduce the Seniors Bill of Rights to guarantee the dignity and independence of all older Americans. We need to ensure that they have access to quality, affordable health and long-term care. We need to provide protection from scams, abuses, and exploitation. And we need to provide safe and livable communities.

For years, credit card companies have taken advantage of our seniors by

doing things like changing the terms of their agreements without telling them or advertising one rate and giving another. Last year, we saw a bipartisan effort with the Credit CARD Act to prevent these kinds of scams. We also worked this year to close the Medicare part D doughnut hole. Last month, our seniors started receiving \$250 checks to close that hole. And by 2020, it will be gone entirely. No senior should have to choose between purchasing drugs and medicines they need or putting food on their table. And no senior should be scammed by credit card companies.

TRIBUTE TO GEORGE STEINBRENNER

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

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, as the owner of the New York Yankees, George Steinbrenner was known for his bravado. But to the people of my district, he was known as a gentleman horse farm owner and community leader. He had a tremendous impact on north central Florida. In 1969, he bought the 850-acre Kinsman Stud Horse Farm in Ocala. He was an active horse breeder and a successful local businessman. He also owned the Pin-stripes Ramada Inn in Ocala. In addition, Mr. Speaker, he became one of the largest benefactors in the University of Florida's history. He built the George Steinbrenner Band Hall, and he helped found the large animal and equine programs at the University of Florida veterinary school.

While most of the tributes to George Steinbrenner rightfully focus on his ownership of the New York Yankees, the people of north central Florida feel we have lost a great friend and a good neighbor.

EXTEND UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS

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

Mr. SCHAUER. Mr. Speaker, I ran for Congress to support ideas, no matter whose they were, to get our economy going. Well, unemployment rates across my district in Michigan are gradually falling. There are 23,000 people that I represent that will lose their lifeline by the end of the year unless the Republicans end their filibuster in the Senate.

Let's be clear: Our economy will worsen and our deficit will worsen if unemployment benefits aren't extended. I repeat that: Our economy will worsen and our deficit will worsen if unemployment benefits aren't extended at this critical time. Don't take my word for it—economists of all political stripes agree. Even JOHN MCCAIN's economic adviser, Mark Zandi, said, No form of the fiscal stimulus has proved more effective during the past 2 years

than emergency unemployment insurance benefits providing a bang-for-the-buck of \$1.61 for every dollar of unemployment benefits.

It's time for us to act to provide a lifeline and help our economy.

MORE DELAYS ON TROOP FUNDING

(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, before Congress adjourned for the July 4th recess, I stood at this spot with a plea to Democratic leadership to do the right thing and bring the military supplemental bill forward as a clean bill for quick passage. My request and those of many of my colleagues went unanswered. The result? Our troops at risk do not have the funding they need. It is a shame that Congress could not get this troop funding bill passed before the Pentagon's deadline. By not passing or debating a budget—another travesty—Congress certainly has had plenty of time to get this done.

As a veteran myself, with four sons currently serving in the military, I know we have brave men and women in uniform around the world who shouldn't have to worry about Congress' failure to fund their programs and missions. We have counterinsurgency operations right now in Iraq and Afghanistan that should not be interrupted or held up by lawmakers so they can add billions of additional dollars in unrelated pet projects.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

WHY GO BACK?

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

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Republicans, sadly, apologized to BP and call Wall Street reform an ant being hated by the U.S. Government. Meanwhile, they continue to say "no" to Democratic Party attempts to extend unemployment insurance benefits for the next 6 months. They're calling these benefits an "entitlement" and say that they're being abused by folks who can't find a job. And this despite an analysis by the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office suggesting that extending unemployment benefits is the most cost-effective and fast-acting way to spur the economy.

Congressional Republicans support the special interests that benefited from George Bush policies and created the worst financial crisis since the Great Depression. A decade of Republican rule nearly doubled our national debt. Why would we go back to that?

□ 1020

AMERICA SPEAKING OUT

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

Mr. REHBERG. Thousands of Montanans are joining millions of Americans speaking out. I have heard from them at seven listening sessions across Montana just last week. And thanks to an innovative House Republican initiative called America Speaking Out, they can join people around the country online at americaspeakingout.com.

Unfortunately, this majority has not been listening. When emails and phone systems were overwhelmed by the opposition to the stimulus, they turned off their phones. When town hall meetings were overrun by angry constituents, they stopped holding public meetings. When the opposition to their health care takeover got too hot, they held closed-door meetings and capped it off with a 1 a.m. vote. Americans deserve better.

We deserve a government that listens first and then acts. We deserve a government that remembers who it works for. That's what I'm doing in Montana, and that's what House Republicans are doing online. Please join me today by logging on at americaspeakingout.com. Together, we will make a difference.

CUBA CONTINUES TO OPPRESS ITS PEOPLE

(Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in protest of the Castro regime's intention to forcibly deport 52 political prisoners under the guise of release. Historically, the Castro regime has used political prisoners as pawns to extract international concessions and ease criticism. But as The Washington Post pointed out in their reporting on this story, this gesture does not represent fundamental political change. As more political dissidents die of hunger strikes in Cuba, we cannot allow this hollow gesture to blind us from the reality on the ground.

In Cuba's authoritarian dictatorship, every dollar that flows into the country props up the Castro regime. In the meantime, Alan Gross of Potomac, Maryland, arrested for distributing cell phones and laptops to Cuba's tiny Jewish community, continues to sit in prison with no hope of release.

A relationship with the United States must be earned. Banishing political dissidents from their homeland hardly meets that test. This cheap political trick is surely of no solace for Gross and others still in jail.

CUBA'S POLITICAL PRISONERS

(Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)