

this group and help develop future leaders and innovative thinkers of tomorrow.

To the families who have opened their hearts and homes to these children we celebrate you and your efforts to change the lives of these children. As the rest of us enjoy and share the company of our children and extended family members, let us not forget those children who will not have the same opportunity to do the same. Let us not forget the children who will not be able to celebrate the holiday season in a warm, loving, and happy home they can call their own. Let us remember these children and work towards positively affecting these children's lives and securing their success in the future.

THE NEED TO PROTECT PROGRAMS FOR SENIORS

HON. MIKE ROSS

OF ARKANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 18, 2011

Mr. ROSS of Arkansas. Mr. Speaker, earlier this summer, Congress passed a bipartisan, compromise agreement—known as the Budget Control Act of 2011—to raise the debt ceiling in two stages by 2013. The new law cuts spending by more than it increases the debt limit and it does not raise any taxes.

Specifically, the Budget Control Act will reduce the deficit by more than \$2 trillion over the next 10 years. To do so, it directly specifies \$917 billion in deficit cuts now and requires at least an additional \$1.2 trillion in savings by December 23, 2011. Tasked with finding these deficit cuts is the 12-member, bipartisan and bicameral Joint Committee on Deficit Reduction, also known as the “Super Committee.”

According to the new law, the Super Committee must recommend a plan to Congress by November 23, 2011, that cuts the deficit by at least \$1.2 trillion in ten years. Then, Congress has until December 23, 2011, to pass the plan on a straight up-or-down vote, meaning no amendments and no filibusters allowed. If Congress fails to pass the plan or comes up short, then across-the-board spending cuts would automatically take effect, split evenly among defense and non-defense spending.

As we are approaching the November 23 deadline, I continue to believe that we need to make serious changes to our budget that will provide necessary savings to help stabilize our long-term financial security. However, any changes that take place over the long run must not be at the expense of our seniors. We absolutely cannot reduce the deficit by cutting seniors' benefits or jeopardizing the stability of programs that they rely on. This is not what I want and this is not what the American people want.

Over 20 million Americans aged 60 and older are economically insecure—living at or below 250 percent of the federal poverty level (FPL). The FPL does not account for the rising cost of living seniors experience as they age, which can include illness, loss of a spouse, or care for a disabled spouse, adult dependent child, or grandchildren.

Many seniors rely on fixed incomes, receiving on average \$1,081 in Social Security benefits, \$401.70 in Supplemental Security Income, and/or \$297 in public assistance each

month. Women fare worse than men, with 56% economically disadvantaged compared to 30% of men. Weekly earnings vary by age and gender. Men aged 55 and older have the highest average weekly earnings at \$965, while women earn \$744.

In August 2011, 1.7 million Americans aged 55 and older were actively seeking work. The unemployment rate for mature workers in this age group is 6.6 percent. The average duration of looking for employment is 44.6 weeks.

These are only a few statistics highlighting the economic difficulties many of our nation's elders face.

I believe that reducing the federal budget deficit is important to our nation's economic future and will require difficult choices and shared sacrifice. However, spending cuts cannot be made at the expense of economically disadvantaged seniors. Due to the recent economic downturn, more seniors than ever need assistance and support to make ends meet.

The Super Committee and Congress must be mindful of this as any possible changes are made to senior related programs and benefits.

BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT FROM NOVEMBER 18TH

HON. DAN BURTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 18, 2011

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Madam Speaker, today the House, as required by the Budget Control Act, voted on a Balanced Budget Amendment (BBA) to the Constitution. It is disheartening that we could not get the required two-thirds votes needed to pass the BBA. With the National Debt topping \$15 Trillion this week and our country continues to reel from the effects of irresponsible government spending, now more than ever, Congress needed to take bold action to permanently stanch the bleeding.”

Unfortunately, the BBA was dead on arrival in the House after President Obama announced his formal opposition to the legislation. Today's vote proves that Washington is not serious about solving our Nation's spending problem. Forty-nine out of fifty states have set an example for Washington by passing BBA's of their own. As Hoosier families continue to struggle to live within their means, the President and House Democrats clearly believe those same rules shouldn't apply to Big Government. Washington continues to borrow 40 cents of every dollar it spends, robbing Peter to pay Paul in a vain attempt to perpetuate the existence of the federal government's bloated bureaucracies. The system is broken and they simply refused to see the reason in this common sense measure. The President and his like minded cronies instead have chosen to reduce this debate to election year scare tactics by falsely claiming to seniors that the BBA will kill Social Security and Medicare all the while continuing to stoke the coals of their burgeoning class war, rather than work with their colleagues across the aisle to stave off out of control spending and get American's back to work. In defeating the balanced budget amendment they have made their priorities clear.

MILFORD HIGH SCHOOL STATE CHAMPION CROSS COUNTRY TEAM

HON. THADDEUS G. McCOTTER

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 18, 2011

Mr. McCOTTER. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to acknowledge Michigan's Division 1 State Champion Cross Country team from Milford High School. On November 5, 2011 the Milford Mavericks outran the Hartland Eagles to claim the title, placing three runners among the state's top five finalists.

After a season that saw great success in both dual meets and invitationals, Milford won the West Division of the Lakes Conference in the Kensington Lakes Activities Association with a record of 5-0. The Eagles placed 2nd in the talent laden Lakes Conference meet behind Hartland. Moving on to the undeniably toughest MHSAA Regional, the Eagles' 55 point total topped conference rivals Hartland and Lakeland with 83 and 94, respectively.

Head Coach Brian Salyer's harriers were determined to take the state title as the starter's pistol sounded at Michigan International Speedway. The Kensington Lake Activities Association Lakes Conference placed an incredible four teams in the top five state finalists. Milford avenged the stinging conference loss to Hartland by legging out a 1st place finish of 128 over 2nd place Hartland's 172. Waterford Mott took 3rd with 177 and Lakeland finished 5th with 188.

Mr. Speaker, the 2011 Milford Mustangs deserve to be recognized for their determination, achievement and spirit, and I am very proud of their fortitude and effort. I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating the Mavericks for obtaining this spectacular title and in honoring their devotion to our community and country.

ON THE OCCASION OF DANIEL BENTON'S RETIREMENT FROM THE BERKLEY CITY COUNCIL AFTER FIFTEEN YEARS OF SERVICE

HON. GARY C. PETERS

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 18, 2011

Mr. PETERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mr. Daniel Benton for his fifteen years of leadership in the Berkley, Michigan community as a City Councilman.

A resident of Berkley since 1979, Dan has been an active member of the community, working to improve the lives of its residents. With his wife, Carol, he raised their three sons, all of whom attended Berkley Public Schools. Outside of his own family, Dan's values are evident in his support of local Park and Recreation programs like Hoops Basketball and Dad's Club Baseball, which promote athletic programs that help local youth make healthy life choices. And, as a dentist, Dan also operates his own practice within Berkley, providing area residents with important healthcare services.

One area of particular focus for Dan's activism has been the Berkley Public Library, which he has supported in many different capacities over the years. He served the library

both as an elected board member and then later as a member of the Friends of the Berkley Library. Dan was also on the Library Building Committee which oversaw the expansion of the library and the acquisition of new materials. Thanks to his work and those of his colleagues, the newly renovated library opened in 1998 and has continued to be a valuable resource for the community.

Beyond his advocacy and support of the Berkley Public Library, Dan is involved in many other local organizations and projects geared toward strengthening the community. As a concerned citizen, prior to his election to the City Council, Dan served on the Planning Commission, working to secure continued future prosperity for Berkley residents. In furtherance of that goal, Dan also helped establish the Woodward 5, a local association of surrounding communities and school districts along the Woodward Corridor dedicated to promoting the region to prospective businesses and residents. As a Berkley resident passionate about the health of his city, Dan has also organized annual sweep operations, which bring Berkley residents together to clean up the city's downtown area.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me today in recognizing Dan's positive impact on the Berkley community and wish him well in his retirement from the Berkley City Council. As a true advocate for building a strong community, I know Dan's work on behalf of his city and its residents will be felt far into the future. I wish Dan many years of happiness and trust he will continue to advocate for the brightest future for Berkley and its residents.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JUDY BIGGERT

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 18, 2011

Mrs. BIGGERT. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 856 I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea".

RECOGNIZING NATIONAL EDUCATION WEEK

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 18, 2011

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize National Education Week, which was established 90 years ago, and is taking place from November 14–19, 2011.

I ask all of my constituents to please join the National Education Association (NEA) and myself in celebrating National Education Week. It is a wonderful opportunity for us to honor the hard work of our students, dedication of our teachers, educators, and all those in our community who help our students to succeed.

Providing high quality education to every student in our Manhattan Congressional District and across America has always been one of my life's top priorities. This past summer I

introduced the Rebuilding America's Schools Act, which would increase aid for school construction and renovation across the country.

My passion for improving our children's education is also why I continue to fight alongside President Barack Obama to pass the DREAM Act, which would provide 360,000 high school graduates who are undocumented with a legal means to work and attend college, and could provide incentives for another 715,000 children of illegal immigrants between the ages of 5 and 17 to finish high school and pursue higher education.

I strongly believe that we must give every possible amount of support to our students, teachers and educators so that future generations of Americans will have the ability to succeed in a global economy and face the challenges of tomorrow.

I would like to recognize all the public and charter schools in our District, and the numerous unions and organizations dedicated to educating our community such as the United Federation of Teachers, the New York State United Teachers, the Support Workers' Union, Harlem YMCA, Harlem Children's Zone, Harlem Center for Education, Children's Aid Society of East Harlem Center, and all the employees of the New York City Department of Education.

I would also like to encourage all the students in our District to keep working hard and reach for the stars because you are our future.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ADAM SMITH

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 18, 2011

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, on Friday, November 4, 2011, I was unable to be present for part of a series of recorded votes. Had I been present, I would have voted: "no" on rollcall vote No. 830 (on Agreeing to the Resolution H. Res. 455, providing for consideration of the bill H.R. 2838), "yes" on rollcall vote No. 831 (on the Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass H.R. 3321), "yes" on rollcall vote No. 832 (on Agreeing to the Cummings Amendment to H.R. 2838), "yes" on rollcall vote No. 833 (on Agreeing to the Thompson Amendment to H.R. 2838), "yes" on rollcall vote No. 834 (on Agreeing to the Napolitano Amendment to H.R. 2838), "yes" on rollcall vote No. 835 (on Agreeing to the Bishop Amendment to H.R. 2838), and "yes" on rollcall vote No. 836 (on Agreeing to the Slaughter Amendment to H.R. 2838).

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 2112, CONSOLIDATED AND FURTHER CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2012

SPEECH OF

HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 17, 2011

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of today's appropriations bills, which—

while far from perfect—marks a distinct and bipartisan improvement over the House's original product. Today's bill restores key investments in jobs, innovation and public safety that were eliminated in the original House bills. In addition, we have removed the extreme policy riders on issues ranging from Wall Street reform to women's health. Additionally, in order to give the Appropriations Committees time to complete the rest of their FY 2012 work, H.R. 2112 extends the current Continuing Resolution through December 16, 2011.

This conference report includes the Agriculture-FDA, Commerce-Justice-Science and Transportation-HUD Appropriations bills for FY 2012. Consistent with the \$1.043 trillion cap on discretionary spending for FY 2012 set forth in the Budget Control Act, these three bills contain \$128 billion in discretionary spending, with associated mandatory spending and transportation trust funds bringing the total to \$297 billion. An additional \$2.3 billion is provided for emergency disaster relief.

The final Agricultural-FDA bill provides a total of \$105.6 billion for domestic food assistance programs, including \$80.4 billion for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, SNAP, and \$6.6 billion for the Women's Infant and Children, WIC, program. This result is \$33 million more than the Senate mark and \$9.3 billion more than the original House bill, which is appropriate given the increased demand for food aid during this economic recovery. The Food and Drug Administration receives \$2.5 billion, which is \$334 million more than the original House level, and will allow FDA to continue implementing the landmark Food Safety and Modernization Act to better protect the estimated 48 million Americans sickened by food-borne illness each year. Of concern in the final Agricultural-FDA bill is misguided language barring USDA from implementing new child nutrition standards and clearly inadequate funding for the Commodity Futures Trading Commission which has been charged with regulating the rampant speculation that helped precipitate the financial crisis. Now is not the time to be under-resourcing our regulatory cops in this demonstrably troubled neighborhood.

The final Commerce-Justice-Science bill allocates \$751 million to the National Institute of Standards and Technology, NIST, including \$128 million for the Manufacturing Extension Partnership Program to provide training and technical assistance to U.S. manufacturers. The National Science Foundation, NSF, receives \$7 billion, or \$173 million above FY 2011, to enhance the basic research necessary to accelerate innovation and enhance U.S. competitiveness. And the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, NASA, is funded at \$17.8 billion, which is a 6 percent increase over the original House level and includes \$529.6 million for NASA's James Webb Space Telescope.

Finally, I'm pleased that the final Transportation-HUD contains \$18.9 billion for Section 8 vouchers and \$9.34 billion for the project-based Section 8 program, as well as \$45 million in housing counseling, which was not funded in FY 2011. Additionally, the THUD title in today's conference report preserves funding for key transit priorities, including \$10.6 billion for the FTA, \$1.95 billion for New Starts, \$500 million for TIGER grants and