

communities long targeted by displacement, denial of sovereignty, slavery, and other injustices. These persecuted but resilient communities continue to suffer through generations of disproportionately higher rates of unemployment, poverty, criminalization, and homelessness. Facets of the 1 percent campaign to blame these groups for these problems while obstructing healing and restoration.

Those with power have divided us from working in solidarity by perpetuating historical prejudices and discrimination based on perceived race, religion, immigrant or indigenous status, income, age, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, and disability, among other things. These divisions have inhibited our ability to work in solidarity, though today we recognize the power of uniting as the 99 percent.

Financial institutions gambled with our savings, homes, and economy. They collapsed the financial system and needed the public to bail them out of their failures yet deny any responsibility and continue to fight oversight. Corporations loot from those whose labor creates society's prosperity, while the government allows them to privatize profits and socialize risk.

Corporate interests threaten life on Earth by extracting and burning fossil fuels and resisting the necessary transition to renewable energy. Their drilling, mining, clear-cutting, overfishing, and factory farming destroys the land, jeopardizes our food and water, and poisons the soil with near impunity. They privilege polluters over people by subsidizing fossil fuels, blocking investments in clean energy and efficient transportation, and hiding environmental destruction from public oversight.

Private corporations, with the government's support, use common resources and infrastructure for short-term personal profit, while stifling efforts to invest in public goods.

The U.S. government engages in drawn-out, costly conflicts abroad. Numerous acts of conquest have been, and continue to be, pursued to control resources, overthrow foreign governments, and install subservient regimes. These wars destroy the lives of innocent civilians and American soldiers, many of whom suffer adverse effects throughout life. These operations are a blank check to divert money from domestic priorities.

Government authorities cultivate a culture of fear to invade our privacy, limit assembly, restrict speech, and deny due process. They have failed in their duty to protect our rights. Exacerbated by profiteering interests, the criminal justice system has unfairly targeted underprivileged communities and outspoken groups for prosecution rather than protection.

Corporatized culture warps our perception of reality. It cheapens and mocks the beauty of human thought and experience while promoting excessive materialism as the path to happiness. The corporate news media furthers the interests of the very wealthy, distorts and disregards the truth, and confines our imagination of what is possible for ourselves and society.

Leaders are trading our access to basic needs in exchange for handouts to the ultra-wealthy. Our rights to healthcare, education, food, water, and housing are sacrificed to profit-driven market forces. They are attacking unemployment insurance, Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security, creating an uncertain future for us all.*

A better world is possible.

To all people,

We, the Washington D.C. General Assembly occupying K Street in McPherson Square, urge you to assert your power.

Exercise your right to peaceably assemble and reclaim the commons. Re-conceive ways to build a democratic, just, and sustainable world.

To all who value democracy, we encourage you to collaborate and share available resources.

Join your voice with ours and let it amplify until the heart of the movement booms with our chorus of solidarity.

*These grievances are not all inclusive.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 16, 2011

Mr. COFFMAN of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, on January 26, 1995, when the last attempt at a balanced budget amendment passed the House by a bipartisan vote of 300–132, the national debt was \$4,801,405,175,294.28.

Today, it is \$15,098,098,486,788.82. We've added \$10,296,693,311,494.54 dollars to our debt in 16 years. This is \$10 trillion in debt our nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

HONORING THE LIFE OF MR. CLYDE MCINTOSH OF NORTH CAROLINA

HON. HEATH SHULER

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 16, 2011

Mr. SHULER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of an outstanding public servant and dedicated volunteer in Yancey County, North Carolina. Mr. Clyde McIntosh of Burnsville committed his life to service and activism. After graduating from Burnsville High School in 1950, Mr. McIntosh proudly served four years in the United States Navy. Upon completion of his service, he moved back to the mountains of Western North Carolina where he built a successful real estate and development business and operated a dairy farm. During this period, he worked diligently toward the goal of preserving the rural heritage of the area.

Mr. McIntosh assumed public office when he was elected Sheriff of Yancey County in 1986. From 1999 to 2005, he served on the Board of Directors of the Yancey County Department of Social Services, spending a portion of his tenure as Chair. For many years, Mr. McIntosh was an active community volunteer for the Lions Club and Meals on Wheels.

Mr. McIntosh worked for years to educate Yancey County youth on the importance of civic engagement and community involvement. He acted as a mentor for the Young Democrats organization of Yancey County, encouraging young people to be politically active.

I commend his outstanding contributions to the Democratic Party. In April 2001, he was named Mountain Democrat of the Year and also served as the Yancey County Democratic

Party Chair. He served as Precinct Chair for both Jacks Creek and Burnsville Townships.

Our mountain community is a better place because of Mr. McIntosh's devotion to activism and service. Mr. McIntosh was an invaluable presence in the lives of the many people he inspired and helped through his work. Though he will be missed, I know this legacy will live on for years to come.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the exemplary life of Mr. Clyde McIntosh of Yancey County, North Carolina.

WE MUST GET OUR FISCAL HOUSE IN ORDER

HON. SCOTT DESJARLAIS

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 16, 2011

Mr. DESJARLAIS. Mr. Speaker, I have made it clear from the beginning that until the Senate leadership can pass a budget, the House should be using the baseline off of the framework included in the House-passed 2012 budget. The Path to Prosperity is a credible and commonsense proposal that would put our nation on the path to balanced budgets and debt reduction.

Unfortunately, the spending levels set forth in today's omnibus appropriations package exceed those numbers established in the Path to Prosperity. For this reason, I had to cast my vote against the legislation considered in the House today.

It is impossible to get our nation's fiscal house in order unless we have a budget framework to work off of. House Republicans have done their job and passed a budget, it is now time for Senate Democrats to do the same.

My constituents sent me to Washington to make the difficult spending decisions, and I'm more than willing to make them. Continuing Resolutions and omnibus packages are not the sort of bold action that the people in Tennessee's Fourth Congressional District expect. I applaud efforts by the House Leadership in which a number of our appropriations bills were considered this year under regular order and under open rules which allowed for debate and amendments. Unfortunately, this process was unable to be completed and many of the bills passed by the House have simply languished in the Senate without consideration.

I am hopeful that United States Congress will restart a process in which budgets are passed and the 12 appropriations bills are considered in an open process. Omnibus bills are unpopular to our constituents. They invite poor legislating and lead to increased spending. Our constituents expect and deserve more.

I have made a commitment to continue the fight for long-term solutions to rein in Washington's out-of-control spending, and I am appreciative of the constituents in the Fourth District of Tennessee who have sent me to Washington to do that very thing.

CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF COMMAND SERGEANT MAJOR PATRICIA GRIFFIN CARDWELL, NCANG, RET.

HON. G. K. BUTTERFIELD

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 16, 2011

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the life of Command Sergeant Major Patricia Griffin Cardwell. CSM Cardwell passed away last week on December 7. She was a veteran of the North Carolina Army National Guard (NCANG) and is survived by her mother, two brothers, and her niece and nephew.

CSM Cardwell was the daughter of Betty Nowarah Griffin and the late Reginald Griffin. She was a native of Martin County, a graduate of Williamston High School, and a member of the First Christian Church.

CSM Cardwell began her distinguished 28-year career with the NCANG on December 5, 1979, as a Specialist, and became a full-time member of the Guard in 1984. From 2001–2002, she attended the United States Army Sergeants Major Course at the USA Sergeants Major Academy in Fort Bliss, Texas. CSM Cardwell made history on April 1, 2004, when she was promoted to the rank of Sergeant Major, becoming the first woman to rise to this rank in the NCANG. She was later laterally appointed as a Command Sergeant Major of the 217th Human Resources Battalion Headquarters, and served in a dual status in both this post and as the Chief, Personnel Services of the Human Resources Section at Joint Forces Headquarters in Raleigh until her retirement on December 31, 2007.

CSM Cardwell served our country for three decades with tremendous character and devotion. She deserves the highest appreciation and commendation. I pray that her family is able to find peace in this difficult time. I ask that my colleagues join me in honoring her today.

220TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE RATIFICATION OF THE FIRST 10 AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION, THE BILL OF RIGHTS

HON. CORY GARDNER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 16, 2011

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to mark the 220th anniversary of the ratification of the first 10 amendments to the Constitution, the Bill of Rights. The Bill of Rights serves to check the power of government and preserve the freedom of Americans. Our founding fathers realized that even well intentioned governments answerable to the will of the voters can grow to be tyrannical. They recognized that protections were needed to guard against government interference and so they enshrined those protections in the highest law of the land. The Bill of Rights is unique in that it is a document that outlines government power not by what the government can do but by what it CAN'T do. The spirit of our nation is in that distinction. We are a nation built on the

idea that private individuals could create private industry with private interests and build a great society without an all knowing bureaucracy telling them how to do it. Times have changed since 1791. Our nation has grown, our government has grown, and today we inhabit a different world. There is no way that Madison and Jefferson and the rest of the founders who fought for a Bill of Rights could have envisioned the country we have become. Over the years we have fought many battles over the interpretation of these amendments and these principles have stood the test of time. The Bill of Rights is a fundamental feature of our country and a beacon to the rest of the world that freedom works, it is to be celebrated, and not repressed.

IN RECOGNITION OF MR. HAROLD L. WILLIAMS

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 16, 2011

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Mr. Harold L. Williams as he retires after 35 years of service at the Legal Aid Society of Cleveland.

Legal Aid Society of Cleveland is a law firm for low-income individuals and provides services in the areas of consumer rights, domestic violence, education, employment, family law, health, housing, foreclosure, immigration, public benefits, utilities and tax. It was founded as a nonprofit in 1905 and until 1966 operated primarily with volunteers. In 1966, staff attorneys were hired and today there are 53 attorneys, 40 staff members and more than 1800 volunteers that serve Cleveland's low-income individuals. Legal Aid's mission is to secure justice and resolve fundamental problems for those who are low income and otherwise vulnerable by providing high quality legal services and working for systemic solutions.

Mr. Williams began working at Legal Aid Society of Cleveland in 1975 in the Law Reform Unit. Since 2003, he has served as the managing attorney of Legal Aid's Consumer Law Unit. Mr. Williams also supervises Legal Aid's law participation in Ohio's Save the Dream foreclosure prevention program. He is the editor and principal author of Ohio Consumer Law.

Because of his dedication to serving the people of Cleveland and his vast expertise in consumer law, Mr. Williams was the recipient of the William J. Brown Consumer Protection Award from the Ohio Attorney General in March 2010.

Mr. Speaker and colleagues, please join me in congratulating Mr. Harold L. Williams as he retires after 35 years of dedicated service to the Legal Aid Society of Cleveland.

END OF THE WAR IN IRAQ

HON. HENRY A. WAXMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 16, 2011

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, this week America solemnly observes the end of an era. After almost nine years of war in Iraq, our

troops are finally coming home, and Iraqis will assume the full responsibilities of self-government. The Obama Administration's leadership and the skill and bravery of our military men and women have made this moment possible. But as we welcome those troops returning home to their families, we must also remember the tens of thousands who came home with wounds both seen and unseen, the more than 1.5 million Americans who served in Iraq, and most of all the nearly 4,500 brave men and women who made the ultimate sacrifice in pursuit of this day. America's military families have born a heavy burden, and we must continue our commitment to support our troops, veterans, survivors, and families.

Iraq will face significant challenges in the days ahead. But America has an interest in Iraqi security and stability, as with all of our friends and allies in the Middle East. So when Iraq encounters those challenges, it will do so as a sovereign nation, with America as its partner.

HONORING MR. MIKE BUNCH, DEPUTY COMMANDER OF THE JOINT MANUFACTURING AND TECHNOLOGY CENTER AT ROCK ISLAND ARSENAL

HON. DAVID LOESACK

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 16, 2011

Mr. LOESACK. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to recognize the long, successful, and highly dedicated career of Mr. Mike Bunch, the Deputy Commander of the Joint Manufacturing and Technology Center, which is located at the Rock Island Arsenal. Mr. Bunch has served our country as an employee of the United States Army for over 34 years. A native of Moline, Illinois and a proud graduate of Upper Iowa University, Mike followed his great-grandfather, grandfather, grandmother, mother, and father to work on the Rock Island Arsenal. His first job on the Island was as a second shift keypunch operator earning \$3 an hour. Since then, he has worked on Rock Island Arsenal for all but three years of his adult life, even meeting his wife of 34 years, Julie, on the Island.

During that time, Mike served with the Army Material Command, Information Systems Command, and the Army Corps of Engineers. He has dedicated his career to ensuring that our Soldiers have the equipment they need to safely carry out their missions. I have not met a person more dedicated to our Soldiers, the United States Army, or Rock Island Arsenal than Mike. His expertise has served the Joint Manufacturing and Technology Center and our nation exceedingly well, and I have often relied on his years of knowledge and expertise in my work for the Rock Island Arsenal and our Soldiers.

Mike is very humble and most likely would not admit this himself, but, while his retirement is well-deserved, it is also a significant loss to the Rock Island Arsenal. His commitment to the Arsenal and the work of the Joint Manufacturing and Technology Center to equip our troops is unparalleled. Whether it was during his time as a tool grinder at the Arsenal or his four years as Deputy Commander, his commitment to producing nothing but top quality